

# Revival

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**For Discussion: Bible Sales Boom Amid ‘Anxiety’ as Things Go ‘Off the Rails’** (newsmax.com; Dec 2, 2024)

Despite 28% of adults in the U.S. now religiously unaffiliated, according to Pew Research Center, Bible sales rose to 14.2 million in 2023 from 9.7 million in 2019, and have already hit 13.7 million in the first 10 months of this year, the Journal reported.

- Despite overall print book sales relatively stagnant in the past year (up less than 1%), Bible sales were up 22% through the end of October.

[https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/bible-books-religious/2024/12/01/id/1189932/?ns\\_mail\\_uid=4d369cee-436c-4dde-80b4-2e3919f6d5a9&ns\\_mail\\_job=DM716829\\_12012024&s=acs&dkn\\_nbr=010504ulmpsu](https://www.newsmax.com/newsfront/bible-books-religious/2024/12/01/id/1189932/?ns_mail_uid=4d369cee-436c-4dde-80b4-2e3919f6d5a9&ns_mail_job=DM716829_12012024&s=acs&dkn_nbr=010504ulmpsu)

## Why might there be more Bible interest recently?

Experts note the election, anxiety, and new curiosity if not commitments to faith.

- “It’s related to artificial intelligence, election cycles ... and all of that feeds a desire for assurance that we’re going to be OK.”
- “Things just went off the rails a little too quickly as biological men were entering women’s bathrooms, playing in women’s sports, and boys and girls were indoctrinated in schools on gender issues before puberty.”
- “It’s a combination of where we are in the world, general anxiety, and the sense that meaning and comfort can be found in the Bible.”

## How is it encouraging to see an increase in Bible sales?

It shows that more people are beginning to “get it,” that they recognize that the Bible really does help us make sense out of the craziness of today’s world.

## Will there be a worldwide revival before Jesus returns?

Yes and no. Yes, the Bible does predict times of turning to the Lord, but probably not in the sense that many people expect.

## What is a revival?

A revival is a spiritual reawakening in which a church or community is brought out of a state of dormancy or stagnation, resulting in changed lives and a renewed pursuit of personal righteousness.

- In one sense, revival can only happen among believers, since it is a restoration to life.
- In common usage, however, the word revival often refers to any large-scale response to evangelism in which new converts are made.

## What causes a revival?

Revival happens when there is an outpouring of God’s Spirit.

## What was the first revival?

At Pentecost (Acts 2); Peter explained what was happening there by quoting...

Joel 2:28 – *And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.*

So, the revival prophesied in Joel 2:28–32 was fulfilled 2,000 years ago when the Church began.

- The pouring out of God’s Spirit in Joel is represented by rain falling from heaven to earth, an early and latter rain (Joel 2:23).
- Pentecost was the early rain; the latter rain will occur just prior to the Lord’s return during the Tribulation.

## Have there been revivals during the Church Age?

The Church Age itself represents a great revival with a great influx of people into the kingdom of God, far more than there ever were in Old Testament times.

- The church has grown exponentially since the day of Pentecost.

## What does the Bible have to say about spiritual conditions before the return of Jesus?

There will be apostasy, a falling away from the faith...

1 Timothy 4:1 – *the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons* (also 2 Tim 3)

Jesus addressed this when He gave massive deception as a sign of His coming...

Matthew 24:11 – *many false prophets will rise up and deceive many*

Elsewhere, Jesus asks, rhetorically, “*When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:8).

### **But didn't Jesus also say that said He would build His church in Matthew 16:18?**

He did and He has been doing that despite the prophesied apostasy characterizing the end of the Church Age.

- The Church has seen periods of revival and great growth and periods of what seems to be stagnation.
- But Jesus never taught that a global revival would happen in the last days before the tribulation.

### **Will the Battle of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38-39) trigger a revival?**

If the Battle of Gog and Magog takes place during the Church Age, then we could see a revival in its aftermath. The nations of the world will see God's greatness and holiness demonstrated (Ezekiel 38:23). And, for Israel, specifically, there will be revival:

*Ezekiel 39:22, 29 – From that day forward the people of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God... I will pour out my Spirit on the people of Israel*

### **Will there be a revival during the Tribulation?**

Because of all the supernatural fulfillment of prophecy, a great multitude will accept Jesus as Savior...

*Revelation 7:9-14 – After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands ... These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation*

Certainly, God goes to great lengths to help people come to Him during the Tribulation...

*Revelation 14:6-7 – Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come”*

The Bible also speaks of a coming revival among the Jews/Israel...

*Romans 11:25-26 – blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved*

Revelation 7 mentions a revival among Jews led by 144,000 Jewish evangelists. The tribulation will have the effect of turning Jewish hearts to their true Messiah...

*Jeremiah 30:7 – It is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it*

### **How about after the Lord returns, will there be revival during the Millennial Kingdom?**

There can't help but be...

*Isaiah 11:9 – the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea*

Everyone on the planet will know of Jesus Christ and it will be politically correct to accept Him as Savior.

- Certainly people will exercise their free will to rebel against Him but at least the cultural forces will favor the Truth.

### **What does it tell us when we see signs of revival (such as increased Bible sales) at the end of the Church Age?**

In His Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24), Jesus said the signs of His coming would be like birth pangs.

- If there will be a great revival during the Tribulation, shouldn't we see a foreshadowing of this in the time leading up to it?

### **Knowing that the end of the Church Age will be characterized by apostasy, should we pray for revival?**

There is a principle in Scripture about that...

*2 Chronicles 7:14 – if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land*

Even though there will not be a worldwide revival at the end of the Church Age, there may certainly be pockets of revival in various places... like birth pangs of the Tribulation.

- So, we should certainly pray for revival where we are.
- We should also take personally the need for revival in our own lives.
- And we should do everything we can to help people around us be exposed to the gospel...

I heard a story about a couple of boys walking along the shore after a high tide seeing a bunch of starfish left dying on the beach. One boy started picking up starfish and throwing them back in the ocean. The other boy said to him, "you can save them all." To which the boy tossed another one into the sea and replied, "You're right, but I sure made a difference for that one."

- Even though we may not see a general revival, we can make a difference in the lives of individuals God brings into our lives.

### **What applications do we see from this discussion?**

- Worldwide revival is unlikely at the end of the Church Age but that does not preclude pockets of revival.
- Signs of revival can be birth pangs of Tribulation revival to the spiritually discerning
- Personal and individual revival is to be expected and prayed for.