

MOVING FORWARD PARTNERSHIP

SEPTEMBER 2025

MOMENTUM AND A MOVE OF GOD'

Momentum is a key principle in life and church. It is blessing to have it and can be very hard work without Definition

- Impetus gained by movement
- The forward motion of a moving body

The Leadership Teacher John Maxwell wrote a very simple but profound paper on Momentum, below are the key points

He starts by saying 'Without forward movement-Momentum-An express train could not crush an egg on the track. But with it, the train could smash through a wall. The issue is not the size of your problem, it is the lack of momentum' -

MOMENTUM BREAKERS

- Double-Mindedness
- Living in the Past
- Individualism
- A Critical Spirit
- Tradition
- Apathy
- Deceit
- The Status Quo
- Ingratitude
- Indecision

MOMENTUM MAKERS

- Focus
- Walking into the Future
- Team
- Constructive Attitudes
- Creativity
- Passion
- Character
- Changing the Narrative
- Gratitude
- Action

Philippians 3:13-14 The Message Bible - 'I've got my eye on the goal where God is beckoning us inwards to Jesus. I'm off and running and I'm not turning back. So let's keep focused on the goal, those who want everything God has for them. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision. You will see it yet. Now that we are on the right track, let's stay on it. -

- Isaiah 43:18-19 - 'Remember not the former things nor consider the things of old, Behold I am doing a NEW thing, now it springs up do you not perceive(aware, discern, apprehend, understand). I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert'
- Psalm 85:6-7 - 'Will you not revive us again that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your steadfast love O Lord and grant us your salvation' -

A question Kristian and me have often asked ourselves in the last few years is 'What is the next of God?' - Whatever it is Lord, may we be part of it. - Church History has been punctuated by Revivals, Renewal and the Restoration of God's intended purposes. Ultimately at the end of time everything lost will be restored(Acts 3:17-22). These have been so necessary, because many times the church has messed up, lost its 'first love', ran to tradition instead of truth, created hierarchies where none are intended, been carnal, often starting in the pulpit and so infecting the pew, and much much more. The church has often resembled

the prophetic picture of Isaiah (42:3ESV 'A bruised reed he will not break and a faintly burning wick He will not quench') - Yet, in God's grace never snuffed out and never extinguished. It's come close! In our ministry journeys many times the trek has seemed uphill. Post Second World War as this nation emerged out of real austerity it gave rise to the permissive 60's, Social liberalism that sought to crush biblical theology, The loss of the fear of the Lord, The repeal of blasphemy laws, The 1967 Abortion Act (There have been 8 million terminations since. At present 1 in 3 children in the womb are aborted) Recently legislation now gives the mother, in certain circumstances the right to terminate to full term, confirming the 'rights of the woman' over the child. The elderly more endangered than ever again through legislation. The rise of materialism that says you are defined by possessions, Jesus said the opposite, Aggressive new atheism fuelled by people such as Dawkins, Hitchens, Fry and more so called 'clever people' that didn't hide their disdain for the living God and so on. If you sense it has been hard ground for the gospel, it is because it has been hard ground for the gospel. Momentum has had its 'hot-spots' but has not been easy to find across the church.

But something is happening! God is doing a new thing!

Let me give firstly some anecdotal(stories) evidence

- In recent times through acquiring moribund Anglican Church buildings and sending in new teams and implementing Alpha, HTB have planted 184 churches
- This year in Germany Alpha attendance is UP by 65%
- There are stories all over the country of young people turning up to church, who barely know anything about Jesus, but have had dreams, visions and impressions to go to church
- St. Aldate's in the heart of Oxford, has always been a large church. It has been on that site over one thousand years. There are more people attending now than at any other point in its history!
- There was a lead article on the 'Quiet Revival' in the Sunday Express a few weeks ago
- More recently The Times ran a piece on a Saturday
- Saint Church, Hackney, where less than one percent of local population were church-goers is now packed with hundreds of young people. They are planting six other churches.

To back up the anecdotal we now have the statistical, critical data is the recent Bible Society report on The Quiet Revival - The data is incontrovertible.

- The bleeding and haemorrhaging of UK church attendance has stopped - Last six years church attendance in England and Wales attendance gone from 8% to 12% from 3.7 million to 5.8 million
- Young males attendants at church has gone from 4% to 21%
- For young woman from 3% to 12%
- In the 18-24 age bracket(Gen Z) from 4% to 16%
- Bible sales both here and in USA (Church attendance in the USA amongst young people is also increasing) are up exponentially as is engaged Bible reading

As Pete Greig said 'It's only something, a start, but at least it's something!' (As Pete has suggested in the 25th year of the 24/7 Prayer Movement, could it be to do with the fact that there has never been a day where Gen Z has never not be prayed for)

It is observed that New Atheism and Church Nominalism are both on the wane, and reflect less the young generation trends.

The Generations:

- The Greatest - 1901-26
- The Traditionalists - 1927-45
- The Boomers - 1946-64
- Generation X - 1965-80
- Millennials - 1981-96
- Gen Z - 1997-2010
- Gen Alpha 2011-Present

Is it revival(I'm aware there would be many definitions for such) probably not, but learned observers certainly speak of Pre-Revival,

Why? - The younger generations are

- Thirsty for truth - Embodied in Jesus Christ
- Openness to faith and radical commitment
- Searching for Reality - Still sometimes in the 'wrong places' but a great opportunity for the church. They've tried or are realising, materialism, promiscuity, and fake spirituality, doesn't cut it.
- Authenticity - Even if it is a bit ragged round the edges

- 'Full Fat' teaching - 'Churches in decline are generally those that have accommodated cosmopolitan liberal expectation to bring division on biblical doctrine'
- A strong justice mandate and wanting the church to find its prophetic voice in this broken world
- Community - Never more 'connected' and never more lonely. Never with more potential opportunities yet never more anxious about what the future hold. Never more 'happy' and with it all together and never more depressed. Social media, The Covid pandemic, peer expectations and more have extracted a huge price on generational mental well-being. The want to be around 'older people' who will father and mother, encourage and exhort, they want what they church is meant to be in the implementation of 'the one another's'. - Matthew 9:36 'When He saw the crowds(He still sees them) He has compassion('to feel in our bowels') on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd' -

As we seek to perceive the new things, What as Christian leaders to avoid?

- Cynicism
- The 'Paralysis of Analysis' - Let God do it
- Giddiness or Triumphalism - There are some wins, but much ground to take.- For every 3 churches closing 1 is being planted - If you are tempted to row back on vision for church planting, don't!
- Unawareness - Have an 'Issachar Spirit' - 1 Chronicles 12:32 'The men of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do' -
- 'Revival Voyeurism' - The Asbury Outpouring on the Asbury University, Kentucky began on February 8th 2023. By all accounts the preach at the Chapel Service bombed-the preacher himself Zach Meerkreebs admits this-1000 thousand attended Chapel and for some reason 19 stayed behind, and so a move of God began-Sixteen days later 80000 had attended the meetings, 1800 volunteers emerged. Eventually the College Head brought a conclusion to the move, some for the educational integrity of the University's courses. But also because many visitors did not behave respectfully. The infrastructure couldn't cope, the police were frustrated, cars were parked inappropriately etc. Is there something about going to a place? Yes. But may we not just be 'revival spectators' that leave behind a bad taste
- Owning Something God is doing - The 'revival' is quiet. No big personality 'No man or woman of the hour'. Happening in unlikely places
- Unpreparedness - Someone said 'Whilst we cannot create revival we can set the sails to catch the wind of the Spirit as it blows' - Prepare to welcome, to adjust, to disciple, to nurture, to pray.

What are some qualities to ask God to keeping laying in us

- Humility - 'Not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less'
- Vision - 'Its bigger than us, but needs all of us'
- Faith - 'We've not come this far, only to go this far'
- Dependency on the Holy Spirit - it's become a little cliched 'But come Holy Spirit'
- Unity - If we are deliberately 'at odds' with other leaders, groups or denominations, it's more likely to set us up for drought not deluge
- Fresh Consecration - To be separated unto
- Faithfulness - 'The cornerstone of God's reckoning'

Revival:

- 'A community saturated with the presence of God' - Duncan Campbell
- 'An unusual manifestation of the power and grace of God in Convincing, Converting and Quickening both believers and sinners alike' - Bob Dunnnett
- 'An acceleration of the normal work of the Spirit' - Jonathan Edwards

What will be the threads of any distinct move of God?

- Disruption - Great grace will be needed to handle such
- Deep Repentance - Both on the church and the World - We will probably find out we are more idolatrous(what really comes first?) than ever we realised
- Confession of sin to God and others in Repentance and Restitution- Radical Salvations - Forgiveness flowing
- Great Fruit - New callings, anointing and mandate- Fruit that is profound and protracted
- Heartfelt Worship - Even where 'time appears to stand still'
- A fresh yielding to the Lordship of Christ
- Ongoing Prayer - Prayer forever casts our dependency on The Lord

Lord - Do the new thing and help us to perceive it well

Lord - 'Will you not revive us again, that we may rejoice in you'

May the Quiet Revival gather pace and carry unstoppable momentum that causes us to declare as did the prophet Habakkuk - 'LOOK AMONG THE NATIONS AND SEE, WONDER AND BE ASTOUNDED. FOR I AM DOING A WORK IN YOUR DAYS THAT YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE IF TOLD' -