



*The Church Captive and Revived!*  
A Guide to Discussion

These two books, taken together, can help churches begin to recover some of the vision, mission, and power that characterized churches in previous generations.

Churches have lost influence in the world today, beginning in their own communities. But we are supposed to be salt, light, and leaven, a people who turn our worlds upside-down for Jesus. This is not happening in our day, and concerned Christians will want to know why and what can be done about it.

*The Church Captive* shows us how churches throughout the course of history have become ensnared in moral and cultural compromise, sometimes without even knowing it. When we are captive to anything other than Jesus and His Word, we can expect our mission to stall and our vitality to wane. *The Church Captive* provides insights and tools to help you help your church break free of any restraints that may be hindering the life and mission of Jesus.

*Revived!* encourages us to seek a fresh upwelling of the Holy Spirit, as has often happened in the past, so that God infuses us with new vision, conviction, and will to obey His call to make all the nations disciples.

These two books can help you and your study group make a solid ongoing contribution to helping your church become more the Body of Christ God intends.

We hope you will use this Discussion Guide to encourage and equip your fellow church members in their walk with and work for the Lord. Take your time discussing the questions that follow. Don't feel like you must get through them all in one session. The issue at hand is too important.

Both books are available as free PDF downloads in our bookstore, [www.store.ailbe.org](http://www.store.ailbe.org). Download each one and make a copy. Save one copy in a file and load another copy of each onto your e-reader. You can share these copies with anyone.

May the Lord bless your efforts to help His Church realize more of the presence, promise, and power of the Kingdom of God.

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## The Church Captive

### Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. Churches fall into captivity when affections become misguided. What does that mean? How were the affections of the Corinthians misguided? How do misguided affections creep into the life of a church? How can we know when that's happening?
2. Over the years, what have been some of the reasons churches have become captive to the world? Becoming captive to things other than Jesus can take hold in a church either from its leaders or its members. Explain.
3. How does being captive to the world affect a local church? In its worship? Disciple-making? Mission? Is becoming captive a sudden or gradual thing? Explain.
4. What are some of the obstacles preventing a church from seeing that it has become captive to the world? Do you think it will be difficult for a captive church to break free of that captivity? But is that a good reason for not trying to break it free? How do the examples we've seen in *The Church Captive* encourage us?
5. What did Paul mean by saying that the Corinthians had become captive to—"restricted by"—their affections? Does this mean that affections are not to be trusted? What kinds of affections *can* we trust? What kinds of affections lead us astray from Jesus?
6. What can church leaders do to prevent their churches from becoming captive to anything but Christ? What part should church members play in keeping this from happening?
7. Some church leaders today are persuaded that the Church has become captive once again. What are they seeing that makes them think this?
8. What can we do if we determine that our church has become captive? Do you think a study like this might help people understand the need for revival and renewal? How?

9. How do you respond to each of the following quotes?

“Do Western Christians take the necessary advantage of their freedom? One is forced to the conclusion that they do not. Religion has become something of a vestigial custom, instances of which one finds in the folklore of various nations. Perhaps some pressure is needed if Christianity is to be reborn.”

Czeslaw Milosz

“...we Christians are conquered in this spiritual warfare, first by our carnal vices and proud way of life, and then by the weakness of our wavering faith, whose feebleness is the reason for being surrounded unawares by our enemies in triple ranks, who have been given to punish our luxurious ease. For prosperity’s blind ease is the cause of all the evils.”

Columbanus

“Oh! blind Pharisees who measure righteousness and sanctity by size or number, or some such standard; although, in God’s sight, it is measured solely by faith.”

Martin Luther

“We’re not doing people any favors by pretending they are the center of the universe. Either people will be awed by the sacred or they will not. If the sacred is not enough, then it is clear that the Spirit has not done a work in their lives. If the sheep don’t hear His voice, let them walk away. Don’t call out with your own voice.”

Francis Chan

10. What is your primary takeaway from reading *The Church Captive*? Has your reading suggested any next steps for you or your ministry?

## Revived!

### Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. What do we mean by “revival”, and why is it important that we seek it? Why do we have to seek it? Why do you suppose more people aren’t seeking revival? How can using the psalms help us in seeking the Lord for revival?
2. What are some obstacles that can keep us from praying for revival? How can we overcome these obstacles? Why is it important that God’s people pray together for revival? What are some ways you might do that? How can you help to bring praying for revival to all the various groups in your church?
3. What conditions suggest that we and our churches need revival? Do these conditions make people more or less willing to seek the Lord for revival? Explain. What can you do to sow seeds of revival?
4. Why are confessing our sins and repenting of them important first steps in seeking revival? What is repentance? Does every believer need to repent? Explain.
5. How would you describe the scope and focus of revival, as we have seen these in the psalms we have reviewed in this book? Why should we expect revival to have such a broad scope? What does the scope of revival suggest for your own sphere of influence?
6. In what ways does God expect His people to bless the world? Can we do this apart from trusting in Him? How does blessing the (your) world flow from daily and ongoing revival?
7. What reasons do we have to believe that God will bring revival if we seek it faithfully? Do you pray for revival in the various groups you meet with?
8. What is your role in seeing revival come to your church? Do you talk about the need for revival? Have you tried to start a prayer group to seek the Lord for revival?
9. Summarize the promise of revival, as God offers it in these psalms. Do you believe this promise? Is this a desirable promise?
10. What’s the most important lesson you’ve learned from this study on seeking the Lord for revival? How are you putting that lesson to work in your daily life?