



40 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

A Forty Day Devotional Guide



DR. RAY SPENCE II

Unbelief/Belief

Devotion One

Matthew 13:58

“And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”

This is one of the saddest verses in the Bible. It is the account of Jesus going to His hometown to teach. When people heard Him, they were astonished. However, their astonishment did not lead them to respond to His teaching in obedience and faith. Their lives could have been radically changed for the better. However, not positive changes occurred in the people or the town of Nazareth. Why? The scripture gives the reason, “because of their unbelief.”

Unbelief shuts the door on the transformational power of Jesus. Faith opens the floodgates that same transformational power. In contrast to this passage of scripture are countless others where Jesus worked miracles in response to the faith present in the lives of people. (Read Matthew 9:2; 9:22; Mark 10:52; Luke 8:48)

When Jesus looks at your life what does He find? An attitude of faith? or unbelief? Do you believe Jesus can do a work of renewal and revitalization in your church? Do you believe He will? Do you believe that to the extent you are praying for Jesus to bring renewal/revival to your church?

Pray today: If your unbelief is a roadblock to Jesus working in your church, confess the sin of unbelief. Ask God to strengthen your faith in Him. Mark 9:24

Now do you believe?

God's Power

Devotion Two

Jeremiah 32:17

“Ah Lord GOD! behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee.”

Sometimes we forget how powerful God is. We forget the great things that He has done in the past. We often allow the immensity of our own problems and challenges to overshadow the greatness of our God. Our view of God diminishes to an anemic, powerless God.

In order to build a case for the greatness and power of God. Jeremiah reminds us of what God has done in the past. He reminds us that God “made the heavens and the earth.” What a display of power! God spoke, and the world came in existence. No one but God could do that. Creation itself is a testimony to the fact and God can do anything.

Creation was just the beginning of God's mighty display of power. Jeremiah reminds us that this same God led His people out of Egypt with signs and wonders (verse 21). As we read the scripture, we are reminded that this same God sent Jesus to be born of a virgin, live a sinless life, die on a cross for our sins, and be raised to life on the third day. Only God can do anything.

Have you forgotten God's ability to do anything? Today, recall the many great things that God has done as recorded in Scripture. Remember the great things He has done in your life personally. Remember the great things He has done in your church.

Pray: Ask God to do a work of revitalization in your church that only He can get credit for.

Confession/Humility

Devotion Three

Luke 18:9-14

(9) "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

(10) Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

(11) The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

(12) I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

(13) And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

(14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Pride is a subtle sin. It is not always easy to detect in our own lives. Jesus understood this, so he gave us a picture of what pride and humility looks like with the two characters in this parable. The pharisee was an example of how pride behaves. The tax collector was an example of how humility behaves.

Pride refuses to admit it has a need. Not one time in the parable did the pharisee admit he had a need. Humility on the other hand readily admits it has a need. The tax collector struck his chest and admitted he needed forgiveness as a sinner.

Pride has an eagle eye for other people sins. The pharisee said "I thank you that I am not like those other who are greedy. Unrighteous adulterers" Humility on the other hand sees its own sin. The tax collector declared: "*God turn your wrath from me, a sinner*"

The main concern for pride is "what do other people think of me?" The pharisee prayed about himself stating, "I fast twice a week, I give a tenth of everything I get." Humility's main concern is "what does God think about me?"

Pray: Ask God to reveal any areas of unhealthy pride in your life and show you His way to true humility.

Purify

Devotion Four

Matthew 5:8

“Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

I love to watch snow fall as it accumulates on the ground. However, once the snow has fallen it begins to lose that pure white color because of the dirtiness of our world. After that beautiful snow falls on the roads and vehicles begin to move about, the snow changes to a very ugly brown.

Jesus teaches that the pure in heart are blessed. To see God is an awesome promise.

When was the last time you saw God? You see, we can never see the wonder of God’s presence until we have a pure heart. Satan doesn’t mind if we have a little pureness as long as we have a lot people playing church. As a result, our spiritually pure heart looks more like day-old snow. I see in God’s word that pureness of heart has a great promise, which is, that we will see God. To see God in the midst of our evil world causes our heart to be purer. As you read this verse today, is your heart pure? Are you focused on seeing the God of a pure heart? Has your pureness from God been mixing with some of the world’s color?

Your church needs people with a pure heart to see God working in your church. Pray for the members of your church that have shown you how to have a pure heart.

PRAY: God show me today areas in my heart that are not pure, giving me the strength to turn those parts over to you for cleanup. Give me the passion to keep my heart pure.

Search Me

Devotion Five

Psalm 139:23-24

(23) "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

(24) And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

It's one thing to pray for a larger house a newer car a different Job or a salary increase. It's another thing to ask the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to search our hearts and test our thoughts. The Bible reveals that God is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. In fact, He knows us better than we know ourselves. Nothing catches our Father off guard.

Health experts tell us that annual physical exams are wise and necessary. Early detection is key to physical health and personal longevity. Spiritual health requires periodic exams also. Therefore, we need to make a decision, and set a date to get away from the obligations and responsibilities of ministry. We desire solitude with the One who can reveal the most intimate things about us. During these moments of solitude, we ask the Lord to search our hearts and attitudes. Is JESUS still our first love? Are we guilty of simply going through the motions of ministry? Do we lead with an attitude of humility or pride? Our solitude and transparency with God may lead to personal revitalization. It's documented that a revitalized leader is often what God uses to revitalize a church.

How long has it been since your last examination?

PRAY: Consider making a decision, setting a date, securing a place, and practicing a time of solitude with God. With an open Bible and Blank pieces of paper, ask God to search your heart and attitude.

Greater

Devotion Six

John 3:30

“He must increase, but I *must* decrease.”

Ministry involvement isn't immune from dangers. The enemy loves to see Pastors and Christian leaders disobey God, divide churches, and destroy ministries. One tool the enemy uses is pride. As Proverbs 16:18 “Pride (arrogance) comes before a fall (destruction)”. John's heart was in the right place. He desired to see people focus on the Son of God and the Savior of the world. John wanted the watching world to remember *Jesus'* name not his own name.

Trouble comes when pastors and leaders fail to follow John's example. God longs for His Son to increase and for His servants to decrease. Jesus increases when He becomes the “thread” of every sermon and Bible study; when He receives the glory and honor that are due Him; when His grace is embraced and given, and when he is followed with heartfelt devotion and surrender.

As you reflect on your life and ministry, are you following John's inspirational example? Is the spotlight of ministry shining on you or on the One who converted and called you?

PRAY: If Jesus is increasing, praise the Father; if you're increasing, repent. Repent and experience a new beginning.

Take a Soil Test

Devotion Seven

Matthew 13:1-9

(1) "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

(2) And great multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

(3) And He spoke many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

(4) And when He sowed, some *seeds* fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

(5) Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

(6) And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

(7) And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

(8) But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

(9) Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Jesus addressed a large crowd of people, telling a parable (an earthly story with a heavenly meaning) to talk about a person's heart. As the farmer scattered seed, it fell along the path, on rocky ground, among thorns, and on good soil. Jesus desires for His followers to have hearts (soil) that yield a harvest.

What is the present condition of your heart? In Jesus' parable, he talks about four kinds of soil (hearts):

1. **A calloused heart.** This person lacks spiritual and ministerial expectations, goes through the motions, and relates to God with a selfish agenda.
2. **A shallow heart.** This person is often immature in the faith and busy in ministry. It's possible to be a mile wide and an inch deep.
3. **A distracted heart.** This person battles the worries of life and the deceitfulness of wealth.
4. **A productive heart.** This person lives his or her life to fulfill God's mission. In order to plant a garden, the ground (soil), must first be broken. If you desire to yield a spiritual harvest, brokenness is often what God uses.

Are you willing to be broken for Jesus' glory? What is currently breaking your heart and spirit? What kind of soil are you?

Pray for the Lord today to show you the real condition of your heart. If you have a calloused, shallow, or distracted heart, allow the Lord to change you. He wants you to have a productive heart, meaning a heart that loves Him, builds His church, and expands His kingdom.

Stop Drop and Pray

Devotion Eight

As Believers in JESUS, we must see our sinfulness the way God sees it...

Psalm 51:10-12

(10) "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

(11) Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

(12) Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me *with Thy* free Spirit."

Preparation:

- Praise God for who He is.
- Confess your sinfulness and need for cleansing.
- Allow His spirit to draw you near.

Ask the Holy Spirit to:

- Search through your life and reveal any sin.
- Help you be honest with Him about your sin.
- Fill you with a deep desire for holiness.
- Help you hate sin in your life.
- Help you surrender sinful thoughts and practices.
- Help you live more faithfully.
- Restore any lost joy in your walk with Him.

Thanksgiving:

- Thank God for hearing you.
- Trust that God is at work to accomplish His will.

Get a notebook and begin to write down the first names of those of whom you are not sure that they are born again.

Pray for them daily to be saved.

Ask, Seek, and Knock

Devotion Nine

Matthew 7:7-12

(7) "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

(8) For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

(9) Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

(10) Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

(11) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

(12) Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets."

The Bible is clear that God answers the fervent prayer of His people according to His will, and we know it is His will for His Church to be in revival and be healthy. Perhaps revival tarries because we give up on prayer too soon.

A small girl watched as her mother smeared cold cream on her face. She asked, "Mommy why are doing that?" Her mother replied, "To make myself beautiful." In a few moments, as the mother started wiping off the cream, the child asked, "Are you giving up already?"

We should never give up on, or in prayer, as we ask God to bring revival to our church. In fact, we should pray regularly and intensely until the answer comes. The verbs "ask, seek, and knock" are expressed in a form that denotes continuous action. Jesus is literally saying: ***"Ask and keep on asking. Seek and keep on seeking. Knock and keep on knocking."***

Do you regularly pray with intensity for revival for your church? If your church needs revival, whatever you do, do not stop praying until the answer comes. Ask, seek and knock!

Pray for your journey to begin and be ongoing in fervent prayer for revival. America's only hope for survival is revival.

That Great Name

Devotion Ten

1 Samuel 12:20-22

(20) "And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

(21) And turn ye not aside: for *then should ye go after vain things*, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they *are* vain.

(22) For the LORD will not forsake his people for His great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you His people."

The year 2008 changed the value of many things: houses retirement accounts, salaries, etc. There will be long lasting effects on the companies and individuals impacted. Value is something that changes. What would it be like if something of great value never changed? The value of something that is priceless remains priceless throughout all eternity. Yes, each of us knows that we have a priceless Savior!

These verses in 1 Samuel remind us that even during times when we have sinned against the Lord, we must not turn from Him. The name of the Lord has Great value for us. One of the ways we see the value of the Lord is, He will not forsake his people. Not that we have that much value; but because His name and reputation is that valuable.

Do you see the value of the LORD? Does your life reflect how much value you see in the LORD?

In your notebook today: On one page write Monday at the top of the page. Then take your church roll and divide it by seven. Whatever the number is write the names of that many people on your church roll. Repeat this for all seven days of the week. Then pray daily for your church family to have revival.

Pray today that the value of God's name would be seen in your life so that a world may see Him. Pray that your church would reflect the value of the Great name of the LORD.

Production

Devotion Eleven

Galatians 5:22-26

(22) “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

(23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

(24) And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

(25) If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

(26) Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

As followers of Jesus we are to daily yield to the control of the Holy Spirit. Verse 25 encourages us; that to live in the Spirit is the only way we can live this verse. This, I believe, is the tangible evidence that the Holy Spirit is in control of our life, when we let Him.

Just as an apple is the outward evidence of the inner reality of an apple tree, so the fruit of the Holy Spirit is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is in control of our lives.

When the Holy Spirit is in control of lives we will be characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faith, gentleness and self-control. God's plan is to produce all of these qualities in us as we yield to Him. When the Holy Spirit is not in control of our lives, we are unloving, joyless, restless, impatient, unkind, and out of control.

If the person who knows you best used the qualities in verse 22 and 23 as a checklist, what words would they choose to describe you? Would they describe you as a loving person? Would they describe you as a person characterized by joy? Would they refer to you as a patient person? How about a kind person?

Pray to yield to the Holy Spirit in you today. Ask Him to produce in you the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Forfeit My Agenda

Devotion Twelve

Luke 22:39-46

(39) “And He came out, and went, as He was wont, to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him.

(40) And when He was at the place, He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

(41) And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

(42) Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done.

(43) And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

(44) And being in an agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

(45) And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, He found them sleeping for sorrow,

(46) And said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”

Jesus was fully God and fully man. In this passage we see the humanity of Jesus as He struggles with the will of the Father in Light of His imminent suffering and death. Jesus realized that in a few short hours He would carry the weight of the World's sin in His body. The Scripture states that, He who knew no sin became sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

As Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, He prayed with such intensity that His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. As stated in verse 44, He wanted the Father to remove the cup of suffering. On the other hand, He realized that same suffering and death was necessary for the salvation of precious souls and the fulfillment of the Father's plan for Him. Therefore, He ultimately prayed, not My will be done but Yours.

Above all, Jesus wanted the will of the Father to be carried out in His life.

Pray today that you would be willing to lay down you own plans, preferences, and our own agenda for your church, in order that the plan of God might be carried out. Pray as Jesus did, “Not my will be done.”

Controlled

Devotion Thirteen

Romans 8:5

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.”

Years ago, on Saturdays in the Fall, I used to love to watch college football. I would wake at day light getting all the honey-do list done. Then I would flip through the channels from one game to another until my team played. In those days all we had was cable. Most of the time it would take two remotes, one for TV and the other for the cable box. Because of this if the cable remote would get turned off you would lose your game. It would be the best play of the day and somehow, I would drop it and loose a very important play.

The text in Romans 8:5 reminds me that by nature we are controlled by sinful desires. That we are created a sinner is not unbelievable to us because it is so easy to live life as a sinner, right? The text also tells us that those controlled by the Spirit respond in a spiritual way. In a normal day as things happen around us, how we respond shows which we are controlled by: either our sinful nature, or our spiritual nature.

We must choose what controls us, whether sinful nature or spiritual nature. In our churches today, we often speak before thinking and then we make the wrong selection of control. How would your life be different if every day you chose to be controlled by your spiritual nature? What about your church? Over these next weeks, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and guide you to revival in your life and your church.

Pray that God will show you areas of your life you need to allow Him to control. Also, pray for your church to be guided by the Holy Spirit to revival.

Forgive

Devotion Fourteen

Ephesians 4:25-32

(32) “And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

One thing we will all have in common is that we have all been hurt by other people. Others have said or done things that have hurt us. Sometimes we have been hurt by what someone failed to say or do. The issue in life is not “will we be hurt” but “how will we respond when we are hurt by others?”

The Scripture passage for today cites several possible responses that often accompany the hurts we encounter: Anger in verse 26; Bitterness, Wrath, and Malice in verse 31. When we identify these things, in place of these, respond with forgiveness.

Forgiveness is the way God has chosen to relate to us. Forgiveness is the way God encourages us to relate to each other. Forgiveness means we treat the person in the future as if they had not hurt us in the past. Forgiveness involves refusing to relate to the person out of anger and bitterness. Forgiveness means we choose to extend grace to a person who hurt us. Just as JESUS did for you.

Have you harbored anger, bitterness, wrath or malice toward someone in your church? Take time today to confess your sinful response to that person. Choose, with the help and grace of God, to forgive that person.

Pray and ask God to identify the presence of unforgiveness in your life. Confess the sin of unforgiveness. Ask God to produce in your life a humility that honors Him.

MULTIPLE

Devotion Fifteen

2 Timothy 2:1-2

(2) And the things that thou hath heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

One of the common needs voiced by pastors and churches I have heard the past four years is the need for more leaders. These concerned people of our Lord are saying we need people to lead in the children's programs, to work with students, to do outreach (which is home missions), and to give financially for the work of the church, and on and on. But where will these leaders come from unless they move into your area from another community or transfer to your church from another. Or still yet, maybe we can lead someone to share JESUS with family, friends, or even foe's, and bring them to church after they have led them to JESUS, and mentor them until we see JESUS.

Are you willing to personally train another person in your church to become a leader, or would you be willing to be trained yourself to eventually lead in some way in your church? Just think what would happen if just five people in your church decided, I am going to live the gospel. I am going to share JESUS daily for the rest of my life. If just five people lead one to JESUS yearly, and discipled that five to do the same thing, what would happen in five years? The five turns into 160 leaders the way JESUS taught us to multiple. My challenge is MULTIPLY!!!!!!

Pray today for your church, that God will give you a vision for what you can do. First, walk with JESUS daily in prayer. Second, just do it; do what JESUS said. Go for it, church!

Praying for A New Day

Devotion Sixteen

We will now transition into looking at what has happened in years past when people attempted something. Unless our Lord JESUS gets involved in it, it will not happen. Let's begin with a flashback to 1990. A study was beginning that was written by Henry Blackaby called, *Experiencing God*. He gave us a picture he drew that he called, "God's pattern for revival and spiritual awakening":

- Phase One: God is on mission to redeem a lost world. God calls His people into a relationship with Himself, and He accomplishes His work through them.
- Phase Two: God's people tend to depart from Him, turning from Him to substitutes for His presence, purposes and His ways.
- Phase Three: God disciplines His people out of His love for them.
- Phase Four: God's people cry out to Him for help.
- Phase Five: God calls His people to repent and return to Him or perish.
- Phase Six: God revives His repentant people by restoring them to a right relationship with Himself.
- Phase Seven: God exalts His Son Jesus in His people and draws the lost to saving faith in Him.

Now let's take a Journey seeking the Lord together.

Do you believe He will do what He says He will do?

Read Malachi 3:16

Today, we are facing a period of moral and spiritual decline like we have never seen. It seems to be slipping very fast. In the last 50 years much has changed. I believe we have hope in JESUS. I believe if we will cry out to our Lord, He will rescue us with revival and great awakening. Our only hope for survival is revival.

God's Word has an answer for us. God has revealed Himself and His ways as He has worked with His people down through the ages. He has spoken clearly about His expectations and standards. He has revealed principles and described examples. Our Lord stands ready to pour out times of refreshing.

Notice in Malachi 3:16: "those who feared the Lord". The key is our position to hear. I believe our Lord is waiting to pour out refreshing and blessing on His people.

Pray and ask the Lord to send a time of refreshing to us now and in the days to come. Pray for our Country and pray for our leaders.

Spiritual Awakening

Devotion Seventeen

Acts 3:19-20

Peter had just healed a crippled man at the temple gate, and a crowd came running to see what had taken place. Peter preached to the crowd and invited them to repent so that “times of refreshing” might come from the Lord. And many did: “many who heard the message believed and the number of men grew to about 5,000” **Acts 4:4**. The early church was in the midst of a spiritual awakening. Not long before, on the Day of Pentecost, 3,000 accepted Peter’s message of the gospel. Those early believers experienced life like most of us have never tasted. Now as you read the following scripture, underline the words that describe the early believers’ emotions.

(Acts 2:42-47) Underline in your bible or write down in the space below the words that describe the early believer’s emotions.

They devoted themselves, were filled with awe, and had glad and sincere hearts. They shared their resources in such a way that “there were not needy persons among them. They enjoyed the favor of all the people. And people were being saved daily.”

Oh, that we could experience a time of refreshing like that! We’ve seen God work in history. (I will share a few of those stories.) Perhaps you are like us, we want to see God renew His works in our day.

Please stop and pray the prayer of Habakkuk: Lord, “LORD, I have heard the report about You; LORD, I stand in awe of Your deeds. Revive Your work, in these years; make it known in these years. In your wrath remember mercy!” HCSB (Habakkuk 3:2)

What is Spiritual Awakening?

Devotion Eighteen

Acts 2:42-47

Some things happen, and the only explanation is that JESUS did it. He can do it again and again, if we will humble ourselves and pray, and seek His face, and turn from our ways of thinking, and do what He says. Let's continue on this journey.

Spiritual awakening is when large numbers of people (or a high percentage of people in an area) experience the new birth to spiritual life in a short period of time. Spiritual awakenings are not just times of mass decisions for JESUS. Often Spiritual awakening results in a changed society, a city, or a nation. Major social reforms have often accompanied spiritual awakening. When people put off the old life of sin and put on the new life of JESUS, things are different. **2 Cor. 5:17**.

Examples in History of things that change in Spiritual Awakening:

- Bars and taverns close due to a lack of business.
- Police and law-enforcement personnel face a decrease in workload, due to decrease in crime.
- Businesses receive money and merchandise from thieves, employees, and shoplifters who are seeking to return stolen goods.
- Christians and churches begin serious efforts to help the poor and needy in the community through orphanages, rescue missions, and other needs-based ministries.
- Laws change or are enacted to protect the oppressed and to uphold Justice.
- Reconciliation takes place between races and ethnic groups.
- Foul language is replaced by civil and wholesome talk.
- Evil practices cease and are often outlawed.
- Private and public acts of immorality decrease dramatically.
- Marriages are restored, and family life is strengthened.

If this is what we are seeking for your family, your church, your town, your state, your nation. Let's do whatever it takes, to see this happen. If our nation is going to turn around from this moral and social decline people's lives must change. Only JESUS can change lives. So let's seek revival and spiritual awakening together.

Pray for your family. Pray for your church, pastor, and leadership. Pray for the moral decline and social decline. Pray for our nation and leadership by name. Pray for the lost.

The Wales Awakening

Devotion Nineteen

2 Chronicles 7:14 (remember who is speaking in this text, it's the Father speaking)

Today we will look back in time and see something that can only be explained as being JESUS!

Psalm 139:23-24

(23) Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

(24) And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

The Fall of 1904 a revival broke out in Wales. During the next six months, 100,000 people were saved in a great spiritual awakening! No one organized the campaign. They did not use advertising, public relations, radio broadcasts, or great soul-winning and witnessing campaigns. God did a sovereign work that captured the attention of the world. When the Spirit of God fell on a people who were right with him, the lights came on everywhere without anybody witnessing to them. People cried out, "what must I do to be saved?". Let us pray for the LORD to do something that can only be explained, other than, it's JESUS.

We are going to look deeper into the facts of this subject in the weeks to come. But I do have a few observations about this fact in history. Several things caught my attention, such as no advertising, this does not mean we should not do any of these things. But I will tell you in every great awakening prayer was the primary focus. Have you started your list of friends list yet? Remember your friends you are not sure if they are saved. Have you started praying for your pastor, staff, and church leaders daily? Something I ask myself daily. Do I have any unconfessed sin in my life?"

Pray, the Scripture today: "Search me, O God, and know my heart, every thought, and put your finger on the wicked ways of mine that I try to hide from You and others, such as my bitterness, pride, and anything else You reveal to me. Guide me in Your ways and Your thoughts."

The Wales Awakening

Part One

Devotion Twenty

READ: 2 Chronicles 7:14 (Remember Who is speaking in this text, it is the Father.)

Psalm 139:23-24

(23) Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

(24) And see if *there be any* wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

Wales is a principality of Great Britain west of London. The area has a wonderful history of revivals among God's people. By the beginning of the 20th century, people had a longing for a fresh wind of God's Spirit. The last great revival had taken place in in 1859-60. Church membership was in decline. People were indifferent to religious matters. The Churches were formal, and spiritual life was at a low ebb. God's people needed revival.

By 1904, God was at work in many places and in many people throughout Wales leading up to the revival. The nation was like a tinderbox. God had prepared for the quick spread of revival fires. He chose to use a young man named Evans Roberts in a special way. Evans worked in the coal mines of Wales, but he had a great burden for revival. For thirteen years he prayed for an outpouring of God's Spirit. Prayer meetings with different groups of God's people became a major emphasis in his life. Early in 1904, Evans accepted God's call to preach, and he went to school to prepare.

Following a Sunday service, Seth Joshua led in prayer. One of his requests was "Lord, bend us." The Spirit of God used that simple statement to touch Evans' heart. On his way out the door, he kept praying, "O Lord, bend me!"

God gave Evan a burden to go to his home church in Loughor for a week of services with the young people. Following Monday night prayer meeting on October 31, 1904, seventeen young people stayed to hear Evans' message. His message had four points:

1. You must put away any unconfessed sin.
2. You must put away any doubtful habit.
3. You must obey the Spirit promptly.
4. You must confess Christ publicly.

Pray these four points today!

The Wales Awakening

Part Two

Devotion Twenty-One

READ: 2 Chron. 7:14 Remember who is speaking in it. It is God the Father.

Psalm 139:23-24 (23) “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

(24) And see if *there be any* wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”

If you look back, you will remember we stopped at Evans’ sermon points, and this is where we will start today.

That night all seventeen responded to Evans’ appeal. Crowds increased nightly. The Spirit was poured out on the region, as God’s people returned to Him. Joy was restored to their worship. Lost people were dramatically converted—70,000 in two months, 85,000 in five months, and the number had grown to more than 100,000 in the six months.

These commitments were life changing. Taverns closed due to the lack of business. Crime dropped dramatically, leaving the police with little to do. People paid old debts and made restitution for thefts and other wrongs committed. There was even a work slowdown in the coal mines because the mules had to learn a new language of the converted miners. News of the revival spread to other countries, and people were stirred to prayer. Soon, God was at work in cities and nations around the world bringing people to Himself.

Let’s look back to Evans’ message:

1. Do you have any sin that remains unconfessed that you need to make right with God or others? Is there a wrong that needs to be made right or a debt that needs to be repaid? Be specific in acknowledging your sin to the Lord and return to Him for restoration of life. If your sin involves others, make things right with those you have offended.
2. Do you have any doubtful habits—actions that you question, but you don’t know for sure whether they are right or wrong? Don’t even take the chance. Put them away and keep your conscience clear.
3. Have you sensed that God has spoken to you by His Word or by His Spirit and you have not obeyed Him? Have you delayed your obedience? Choose to be prompt in your obedience to the Holy Spirit.
4. Have you confessed your faith in Christ publicly? Do the people in your family, at your workplace, and in other circles of influence know of your relationship with Christ? If not, tell them the story of what Christ has done for you.

Pray that many Christians around the nation, in your own state or community, and your church will respond to God’s call to holy living, prompt obedience, and public witness to the joy of following JESUS.

Pray for Transformation in your life and pray for widespread spiritual awakening.

The Cycle

Devotion Twenty-Two

Rev. 2:4, 5

(4) Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

(5) Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Though spiritual awakening is God's plan for the fruitfulness of His people, churches like the one described above in Ephesus, have a tendency to depart from the Lord. We see the cycle throughout the history of God's people. Over and over again, the Book of Judges describes the cycle among the Israelites in Old Testament times. The following verses describe the first cycle in Judges 2:

1. People served the Lord. "And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that He did for Israel." (Judges 2:7) This is frequently the case. The generation of people who have experienced God's mighty works are faithful to Him for the rest of their lives.

2. People forsook the Lord. (10) "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. (11) the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served Baalim." (Judges 2:10-11) The next generation turned away from the Lord and served other gods.

3. God defeated them through enemies. (14) "And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.(15) Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed." Judges 2:14-15

4. The people cried out for help. (18) "And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them." (Read Judges 2:15-18.) Who is crying out today? Maybe this is our greatest need.

5. God had compassion and delivered. (17) "And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so." (Judges 2:17)

Some people think God worked this way only in the Old Testament. Part of the reason we don't see the same cycles in New Testament times, is that the church was in the midst of spiritual awakening most of that period. However, by the time we reach the end of the New Testament, we see the cycle had begun again in some churches. Revelation 2-3 we read the words of the resurrected JESUS as He called different churches to repent and return to him.

Look up these verses in your Bible and underline the sin problem for which Jesus was calling for repentance. Also, notice the kinds of discipline JESUS promised to those who would not repent.

Rev. 2:14-16; Rev. 2:20:25; Rev. 3:1-3; Rev. 3:15-19

The Cycle of departure and return to the Lord is a sad characteristic of God's people throughout the ages.

Pray and ask Him to reveal to you what message He wants you to respond to, and then respond appropriately.

God's Pattern

Devotion Twenty-Three

“Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from Mine ordinances and have not kept *them*. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, ‘Wherein shall we return?’” **Malachi 3:7**

God has revealed in Scripture His pattern for using His people to bring about the kind of spiritual awakening the early church experienced. The problem we face in our day is that God's people have departed from God's standards, and we are no longer the kind of clean and faithful instruments through which He can work to bring spiritual awakening. In Scripture we've seen a cycle of departure that brings God's discipline and a call for repentance. Whenever His people have returned to Him, He has revived them and restored life and vitality, together with a manifestation of His presence and power. By understanding the pattern and God's requirements, we can ask the Lord together for such a day in our own land.

Today, let's take a look at the pattern.

Phase 1: God is on mission to redeem a lost world. He calls a people into a relationship with Himself, and He accomplishes His work through them. God has chosen and saved a people who are his own. His plan is to work through His people to proclaim JESUS and bring lost men, women, and children to faith in Him. Our mission is to be on mission with Him.

Phase 2: God's people tend to depart from Him, turning to substitutes for His presence, His purpose, and His ways. Individuals and churches tend to depart from the Lord. The departure begins with a shift of their hearts that causes them to not love the Lord as they once loved Him. That shift of their hearts leads to a lack of obedience, and they begin to accept substitutes for God, his purposes, and his ways.

Phase 3: God disciplines His people because of His love for them. God knows that people and churches can experience fullness of life only in a right relationship with Him. Because of His love He disciplines wayward Christians and churches to bring them back to Himself. He also disciplines them because His plan for world redemption slows down when His people have departed from Him. He loves the lost world too much to permit that to continue.

Phase 4: God's people cry out to him for help. God is patient and long suffering. Like the loving Father of the prodigal son. God eagerly waits for His children to return to Him. God's discipline becomes more and more intense until His people cry out to Him.

Phase 5: God Calls His people to repent and return to Him or perish. God clearly defines requirements for repentance. He doesn't give options. People and churches can return to Him or suffer the consequences of their sin. He sets before His people a choice of life and death. When a church continues to refuse to repent, it is no longer of any use for the kingdom. God may remove the church from usefulness or existence, as He claimed He would to the church at Ephesus. God's great desire, however, is that His people return to Him.

Phase 6: God revives His repentant people by restoring them to a right relationship with Himself. God stands ready to receive His people when they return. He cleanses and forgives. He gives a new heart to

serve Him, and the fullness of the Holy Spirit to empower them for His work. He restores the joy of being in the family of God.

Phase 7: God exalts His son Jesus in His people and draws the lost to saving faith in Him. When God has a people rightly related to Himself, He is able to display His glory to a watching world. When a people experience the mighty power of God bringing wholeness to their lives, others will notice and want a similar experience of life. Spiritual awakening becomes a natural byproduct of a revived people.

Where do you think our nation is in God's pattern? Phase ___ Why?

Where is your city? Phase ___

Your church? Phase ___

Your family? Phase ___

YOU? Phase ___

Pray that we will have a growing awareness of our need to return to the LORD and a willingness to repent. Pray for God to help you understand the way to revival so we can have a spiritual awakening.

Revival

Part One

Devotion Twenty-Four

- (1) "To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah. LORD, thou hast been favorable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.
- (2) Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.
- (3) Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.
- (4) Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease.
- (5) Wilt thou be angry with us forever? wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?
- (6) Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:1-16)

The word revive has a variety of meanings for Christians today. For some it means a series of meetings in the Spring or Fall. Some think of revival as a time when people place their faith in JESUS and receive Him as Savior and Lord. Others have used the term revival to describe spiritual awakening in which large numbers of people are converted.

I remember Grandpa Hall (Amanda's grandfather) describing when he was a boy. He was born in 1899, and his father was a preacher, as his father was before him. Around 1910, a revival would go three weeks. The first two weeks was to revive the church. The last week was evangelistic outreach to the area. I remember him telling us about the people in the small towns of Florida getting things right with people whom they had wronged. People payed debts they owed. There was much prayer that happened before, during, and after. Six weeks out of each year they had this focus. He shared that by the time the 1920's came along, he was called to preach. During those days, the three-week revivals were now two week revivals. By the time he was telling me about those days, it was 1987. Revivals have declined to a week, to three days, and in our day, many churches only have one day of revival, most have none.

What is genuine revival? The word *revive* is made up of two parts, (*re*) meaning again, and (*vive*) meaning to live. So, revive means to live again, or to come, or to be brought back to life, health, or vitality. Revival is a time when spiritual life and vitality are restored. If I may explain by telling a story. In August of 2019, I received a call that informed me that my son Cody had been in a water accident, and for hours I knew nothing except it was **serious**. That evening I found out he had drowned. I also found out days later what had happened. Cody jumped off the high dive in a Mississippi lake. After some time had expired, the lifeguard realized Cody had not surfaced, and something is wrong. He jumped in and found Cody on the bottom of the lake **face down**. He then quickly grabbed him and began swimming to the beach. **Several events happened perfect for Cody to be revived**. You see, my son had died at this point. Because of the **efforts** of nurses who were at the beach, and a lifeguard, they began to do **CPR**. In time, the ambulance arrived with an **AED**, and after shocking him three times, he **revived**. I am so thankful for these people who worked so hard for my son to be here today. Can I make some spiritual observations? Until this time in my life I do not believe I understood that prayer must be happening for our nation and our local churches with desperation. When my son's life was hanging in the balance I was praying with desperation, unlike before his accident. I do not believe we are praying this way in our day or we would not be flatlined as churches. We have drowned in our substitutes for our LORD. And we need to be revived. If I may focus on several words that were used in the paragraph above about my son to help you see the state of the church.

- **Serious:** The state of the church is in a serious condition. We are declining as a whole across our nation. And if something does not change, many churches will drown or some may have already, and they do not even realize it.
- **Face down:** I am also afraid the churches are in what is called a Hail Mary. Some of you may be aware that this is the last hope when someone is in ICU with COVID 19.
- **Several events happened perfect for Cody to be revived:** So, for things to change we must realize we need to be prepared. Some things can happen perfectly, and will, if we realize it is time to respond as the medical staff did for my son.
- **Efforts:** What efforts are you prepared to make to be used as an instrument in revival in your church and nation—things such as, your personal prayer time, or your willingness to be His hands and feet in your home, church, and workplace.
- **CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation):** To understand how to perform CPR you must be trained. After you have been trained, you have a test, and if you pass you are now qualified to perform CPR. What qualifies you to perform CPR **cardiopulmonary resuscitation spiritually** in your home and church? It's the blood of JESUS. Remember He does not call the equipped, He equips the called. Are you called? If you are called, are you being equipped in the realm of spiritual CPR?
- **AED (automated external defibrillator):** This is an electrical shock that stimulates the heart to beat after it has stopped. Here is a thought: if what we are doing is not working, maybe we need to pray. It seems like the last thing we do is pray when it should be the first thing we do. Where is the fire of the gospel in our churches? JESUS has not changed, yet we have pushed back from the forefront of reaching this world, and we are content to lay face down in our communities and virtually do nothing but lay there. Dear JESUS shock us! We need your resurrection power running through our vascular system again.
- **Revived: (regain, restore to life or consciousness)** This is the place I believe our nation needs to be in today. The only hope for survival is revival. It's time to pray, prepare, and produce.

Pray for the LORD to search your heart, and as He reveals things to you, respond to Him.

Revival

Part Two

Devotion Twenty-Five

While I was in undergraduate school in Florida, once a week I would go see Grandpa Hall. He was blind so I would drive him around. During one of our days out he shared with me about revivals of old. He made a statement he said his father told him. “You can’t be ‘Re-lived’ unless you have first been ‘Vived’!” Those who are dead in trespasses and sins don’t need revival—they need life that comes only by being born again. Revival is a return to spiritual health after a period of spiritual decline into sin and broken fellowship with God. We will use the word revival to describe what God does to restore His people to a right relationship with Him. Revival is for God’s people when they need to be forgiven and restored to life, spiritual health, and vitality. Thus, revival occurs when God restores spiritual health and vitality to His people.

Revival is an act of God. We cannot force Him to do anything. Yet in His plan, God has set forth the requirements for revival. He has said “Return to me, and I will return to you.” Malachi 3:7. The essence of revival is returning to the Lord. This can happen quickly, or it can take place over time.

Think about this, (Church A) needs revival. Sin and compromise have become common, even among the members. Even though the church hears preaching and studies the Bible Sunday after Sunday, people are not repenting and returning to the Lord. They may even resist the whole idea of repenting of sin. But then God gets the attention of His people through a crisis or a significant experience in a service. They recognize how displeasing they are to the Lord. In deep brokenness and shame, they come before the Lord confessing sin and seeking forgiveness, cleansing, and restoration. When God sees that they are returning with their hearts, He sends genuine revival. This kind of revival experience can happen quickly and almost unexpectedly.

Think about this, (Church B) has similar spiritual needs, but God begins to convict the people of this church of sin through preaching and Bible Study. When God surfaces sin, the people respond to the Lord with repentant hearts. God peels off a layer of sin, like a layer of skin on an onion. Then He begins peeling away another layer. With each step along the way, the people of Church B respond to the Lord by repenting of their sin and retuning to God and His ways. With no special event and with no ability to pinpoint a day or a time that revival came. This church eventually comes to understand that things are different. They say, “we are not the people we used to be.” God’s presence and power have returned. We love one another and are experiencing unity again.”

God sent revival to both Church A and Church B. For some, revival comes quickly and for others, it may be slower—but it still came. Let us remember to seek and pray for revival in our churches.

Pray Psalm 85 back to the Lord.

Pray for God to send revival to yourself, to your family, and also to our Nation.

Revival Leads to Harvest

Devotion Twenty-Six

1 Tim. 2:1-4

(1) "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men..."

In 1993, at a church in Texas, they made prayer a priority for seven years. They built a new building for worship and in the first week it was used 600 people were saved. During this time many were called to preach and to do missions. A church in Mississippi, in 2007, made prayer a priority and nine years later it had impacted the region and world. They were coming alongside more than 100 churches to assist them to reach at least one person for salvation. During this time many were called to the ministries of preaching and missions. Please realize, the fuel for the church only comes through prayer. Teaching what JESUS taught the disciples. Both churches prayed and planned for revival, and the results produce in the lives of the believers a spiritual refreshing.

Prayer will cost you time. But not praying will cost you a generation! Remember, JESUS did not teach the disciples how to preach or praise, but he did teach them how to pray.

3 Things Happen When A Church Refuses to Pray:

1. **The church will be Deprived of the power of God.** Acts 4:31-33 (31) "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."

(32) And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

(33) And with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all."

A generation is hanging in the balance. Much prayer means much power for the church, little prayer means little power for the church.

2. **The Christian will be Denied the promises of God.** You only get promises by faith through prayer (Hebrews 6:12). Three key elements for claiming Gods promises are found in James 4:2. You have not because you do not ask. **One: The Trust Element**—Romans 4:2 reminds us to trust the Word of God. **Two: The Time Element**—Patience means time. Pray the scripture 2 Peter 3:9 also claim it for the lost and for our nation. **Three: The Thrill Element**—When One and Two are at work in you, then the the Third Element is experienced—You are Thrilled at what God does.

3. **The Cross will be Despised.** In Matthew 21:12-14, I see a picture of Purity: When we spend time alone with our Lord, He will purify our hearts and lives. I believe the House of prayer will be a House of Purity. When we place prayer as a priority we will be known more for our prayer. It's at this place we will see a demonstration of the power of God. It's this place of healing spiritually when people change their eternal address. They trust JESUS as Savior and LORD. It's now we will praise like never before. we

want be pouters, but we will praise the LORD. We will not be churches that start at 11:00—Dull and stop at 12:00—Dead.

Let us pray and believe for a revival to take place starting with you and I. Believe the Word, and we will receive refreshing. Then, let's pray for our City, County, and Country to experience a Great Awakening for the Glory of God. Our only hope for our survival, is revival.

The Mission

Part One

Devotion Twenty-Seven

1 Peter 2:9

“But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

In JESUS, God established a new covenant. This new relationship was based on faith and not keeping the law. God chose and called out a new people (both Jews and Gentiles) who responded to His offer of salvation through faith in JESUS. Through Peter, God said the Church is a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people belonging to God. God chose His people in mercy and love. His purpose for them was that they declare His praises to people living in spiritual darkness. His purpose for the Church was a continuation of what He began with Israel. God wants to redeem a lost World. It's His One will for His church.

Notice these Words:

“Chosen Generation”: As God's people, we are chosen to be God's special treasures. We are special because we are related to Him. We belong to Him. We are not our own. We belong to another, but what a wonderful privilege we have to belong to the family of the almighty God. Because we belong to Him. He deserves and expects our obedience.

“Royal priesthood”: God did not say that they were a kingdom with a priesthood—a select few who can relate to Him. He said, you are a royal priesthood. Every single believer is a priest to God. Royal means each one has direct access to the King of kings and is a part of the royal family by adoption. The role of the priest was primarily to bring a word from God to the people. The priest also represented the people before God. We have that assignment and privilege to represent God to humanity and humanity to God.

“Holy Nation”: We are also to be a Holy nation. The word holy means set apart for God's exclusive use. We are to be separated from the common and separated from the ways of the World. We are different from the World. We are to reflect God, His nature, and His ways. We are commanded to be holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:6; 1 Peter 2:11-12).

So, if God the Father evaluated your life or your church, how well do you measure up to the standards of holiness described in the previous paragraph?

Confess to the Lord any ways you are not holy as He is Holy. Pray that you and your church will become the kind of people He can use mightily.

The Mission

Part Two

Devotion Twenty-Eight

I Peter 2:9

“But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.”

Workers together with God

God has a people, and He is at work through His people to accomplish His redemptive work. His goal is to exalt JESUS and draw a lost world to faith in JESUS. This is summarized in Phases 1-7 of God’s pattern. In 2 Corinthians Paul described these workers, and their relationship with God.

2 Cor. 5:18-20

(18) “And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

(19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

(20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

Reconciled, means to be restored to a right relationship. God is the one reconciling the world to Himself through JESUS. Yet he has given the ministry and message of reconciliation to the Church. In that ministry, we are JESUS’ ambassadors and God’s fellow workers (2 Cor. 6:3). Our motivation for this work is the love of JESUS. JESUS’ love compels us (2 Cor. 5:14).

God is the one who is on redemptive mission. The mission is His. In His love He has chosen the Church to work together with Him in His mission. The mission is not one we can accomplish on our own; we can do nothing apart from Him (John 15:5). God does the work through us. When God works through us, however, we will bear much fruit for the kingdom—fruit that will last (John 15:8-16). With God at work through His Church, the Church will accomplish greater things than JESUS did in His earthly ministry, as He said in John 14:12.

When humanity sinned, and broke fellowship with God, God began to prepare a people through whom He would work to redeem a lost world. He provided for redemption through the death of His son. Now, when God has a people rightly related to Him, He can work in mighty ways to significantly impact a lost world. When that happens, Spiritual Awakening takes place. Spiritual Awakening is a natural by-product when people and churches are rightly related to God.

Ask God to reveal JESUS’ love to you, so that you will be a faithful ambassador to implore others to be reconciled to God.

Departure

Part One

Devotion Twenty-Nine

Please read through the Phases that repeats itself throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

- **Phase One:** God is on mission to redeem a lost world. God calls His people into a relationship with Himself, and He accomplishes His work through them.
- **Phase Two:** God's people tend to depart from Him, turning from Him to substitutes for His presence, His purposes and His ways.
- **Phase Three:** God disciplines His people out of His love for them.
- **Phase Four:** God's people cry out to Him for help.
- **Phase Five:** God calls His people to repent and return to Him or perish.
- **Phase Six:** God revives His repentant people by restoring them to a right relationship with Himself.
- **Phase Seven:** God exalts His Son Jesus in His people and draws the lost to saving faith in Him.

Deut. 30:17

"But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them."

"God has "blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3) With all that God has done for us, God's people still tend to depart from Him. How do you move away from God? How does a church move away from God?

Read Deuteronomy 30:17. How do we begin to turn away from the Lord and obedience to Him?

Moving away from God does not begin with a wrong activity. It begins with a radical shift in your heart. Departing from God follows a progression. It begins with a shift of your heart away from Him. You do not love Him as you used to love Him. It may be such a gradual shift that you do not realize it is happening until you are a long way from Him. Once your heart has shifted, you do not obey Him. You choose not to keep His commands, thinking, "This is not all that bad." Or, "God doesn't really care if I don't do this." Next, you turn to substitutes for Him, and you "bow down to other gods and worship them." Here is a summary of how a person, a family, a church, a denomination, or even a nation can depart from God.

1. The heart shifts away from loving God fully.
2. The will no longer chooses to obey God.
3. The life turns away to follow substitutes for God's presence, purposes, and ways.

God knew that his people would tend to depart from Him, so He gave them a stern warning in verse 30:

"If your heart turns away...I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess."

In your prayer time, think about your heart and your love relationship with God. Has your heart departed from loving Him completely? Do you lack obedience?

Departure

Part Two

Devotion Thirty

Please read through the Phases that are repeated throughout the Bible from Gen. to Rev.

- **Phase One:** God is on mission to redeem a lost world. God calls His people into a relationship with Himself, and He accomplishes His work through them.
- **Phase Two:** God's people tend to depart from Him, turning from Him to substitutes for His presence, His purposes and His ways.
- **Phase Three:** God disciplines His people out of His love for them.
- **Phase Four:** God's people cry out to Him for help.
- **Phase Five:** God calls His people to repent and return to Him or perish.
- **Phase Six:** God revives His repentant people by restoring them to a right relationship with Himself.
- **Phase Seven:** God exalts His Son Jesus in His people and draws the lost to saving faith in Him.

Deut. 30:17-20

(17) "But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; (18) I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, *and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou pass over Jordan to go to possess it.* (19) I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, *that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:* (20) That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, *and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*

This passage was a warning to God's people. In love, He wanted to choose life and prosperity, not death and destruction. God gave only two options. He offered position of compromise in the middle. God wants a love relationship with you and with His people. You are to choose Him with all your heart. With your will, choose to obey Him fully. And with your life, cling to Him. Scripture doesn't promise that the Lord will give you life. The Lord IS your life! He gives you Himself. He wants to take up residence in you and live through you.

Some people have a tendency to say, "But that is Old Testament." They have a tendency to think that God changed in the New Testament, and no longer brings consequences on His people for sin. Look, however, at what JESUS Himself said to the church at Ephesus:

Rev. 2:4-5

(4) "Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. (5) Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

The departure of your heart from your first love for JESUS is serious. In fact, it can be fatal for a church. Today many churches are disbanding and dying. One reason may be that they have refused to

repent and return to their first love for JESUS. Just as sad, are churches that are still going through the motions of church; but, because of their departure, they are of no usefulness to JESUS and His kingdom. Departing from God is serious. WE need to be able to identify a heart shift, so that we can deal with it like a fatal cancer that can destroy our life and vitality.

When you pray today, think about a few things: Do you lack obedience? Have you turned to substitutes for Him? If so, remember the high points in your life with Him. Ask Him to draw you back to your first love. Ask Him to show you the things that have captured too much of your love and attention. If He reveals something, confess, agree with Him about it.

The Plumb Line

Devotion Thirty-One

Amos 7:7-8

(7) “Thus, He shewed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall *made* by a plumbline, with a plumbline in His hand. (8) And the LORD said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them anymore.”

In Scripture, God uses the idea of a plumb line to describe what He does with his rebellious people. A plumb line is a weight on the end of a string, and it is used to make sure a wall is straight (perpendicular to the ground). God had built His people like a straight wall—true to plumb. But in Amos’ day they had departed from His standard and didn’t realize how far they had departed. God was preparing to send judgment on them, and He wanted them to understand why.

When we depart from Him, we often do not realize how far we have departed. When we compare ourselves with other people or churches that have departed from God, we may look okay. We may not realize how close we are to complete collapse or destruction. In order to help His people, God holds a plumb line beside them so that they can see how far they have departed.

The Leaning Tower of Pisa is a physical example of this spiritual truth. A bell tower was built in Pisa, Italy. The ground beneath the tower was not solid enough to support the weight of the tower, and it began to sink on one side. Now the tower leans more than seventeen feet off center. The walls are straight, but the whole building leans. The problem is with the foundation. If the foundation were formed in line, the walls would be in line as well. Even if a huge crane pulled the walls to plumb again, the problem would immediately return. Without a solid foundation, the tower would sink and be crooked again.

In a similar way, your spiritual life has its foundation in a love relationship with God. The way you live your life, practice of your faith, and obey God’s commands can be represented by the tower. If your life or your church is out of line with God’s plan, that is merely a visible symptom of a root problem. The problem is in your love relationship. JESUS said, “If anyone loves me, he will obey My teaching.” John 14:23

God’s Word reveals God Himself, His purposes, and His ways. Scripture serves as God’s plumb line for us. When we can see that we have departed from His Word to us, we can clearly know that we have a problem. The problem is that we have left our love relationship with Him. JESUS said, “He who does not love me will not obey My teaching.” John 14:24

If your obedience to the Lord’s commands is the clear indicator of whether you love Him, what would your obedience say about your love for JESUS? What would your church’s obedience say about its love for JESUS?

In His first letter to the churches in Revelation, the risen JESUS invited the church in Ephesus to hear and respond to Him. JESUS commended its hard work, perseverance, and intolerance of evil. Yes, it had a fatal flaw. JESUS set a plumb line alongside the church, so they would clearly know what was wrong.

You read that “plumb line” yesterday in Revelation 2:4-5. They had departed from their first love, and they needed to return or suffer the consequences.

The primary reason we need revival is that we have forsaken our love relationship with God—our first love. God invites us to repent and return to our first love. His WORD to the church at Ephesus indicates that failure to repent can be fatal. To the extent that we fail to return to our first love, we will miss out on the abundant life He intends for His people, and a lost world will continue its march into a lost eternity.

As you continue to read these daily devotions, let the Holy Spirit begin to set the plumb line of Scripture alongside your life, your family, your church, your denomination, and even your nation. Let Him show you any place you have departed. When you see the signs of departure, remember that restoration must begin in the heart. Let God bring you to a place where you experience a broken heart. Let the Holy Spirit bring you to a place where you experience a broken heart over your broken relationship. “Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret.” 2 Cor. 7:10

In your prayer time, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His plumb line alongside your life so that you can see where you are in your relationship to Him and His standards.

Pray for those in your family and church, that they too will understand their relationship with the LORD and respond to Him.

Symptoms

Part One

Devotion Thirty-Two

John 14:23, 24

(23) "Jesus answered and said unto him, 'If a man loves Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. (24) He that loveth Me not keeps not My sayings: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me.'"

In departing from God, the Father, we follow a progression from a shift of the heart, to a lack of obedience, to turning to substitutes for God. Usually, by the time God gets our attention, we have been going that way for a long time. Just as a divorce begins when a couple gradually grows apart, we don't suddenly jump away from God. It usually takes time—a period of neglect, carelessness or rebellious choices. The symptoms may have been present in our lives or churches for a long time, but somehow, we fail to pay attention until we are far away from Him. We take small steps away from God. Suddenly, we realize we have departed and are far from Him.

How do you know whether your heart has shifted as an individual or as a church? Two signs are clear indicators: a lack of obedience, and a turning to substitutes for God. As a doctor looks for symptoms of the real problem, you can look for these symptoms as indications of a problem with your love for God. Today, let's look for the lack of obedience or disobedience.

Review the Scripture above and just ask the Holy Spirit to search you, and then respond to what He says.

Do you see the connection between the heart and obedience? JESUS says that it is spiritually impossible to love Him and not obey Him. When we disobey, the problem is not obedience; the problem is love. If you do not obey, it is because your heart has shifted. Love will always obey. But we protest strongly and say, "Lord, it's not a matter that I don't love You; it's that I'm having difficulty obeying You."

God the Father would say, "If you are having difficulty obeying Me, it is because you do not love Me." If you do not understand that, you will always be trying to get right with God. You will try to reform your behavior, and you will fail. You can try to straighten out the walls of your life, like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, but if you don't fix the faulty foundation, the repairs will be short-lived. We have a tendency to treat the symptoms instead of the cause. Do you know how to solve the problem of disobedience? Return to your first love for JESUS. If you want to correct your disobedience or your lack of obedience, the place to begin is the heart. If you return to your first love—a love relationship with JESUS, you will resolve the obedience problems in your life. "Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16).

Is there something the Holy Spirit has asked of you which you have not done? When JESUS gives a command in His Word and you start to argue with Him, you are giving evidence that your heart has shifted. Are there things JESUS has commanded that you, or those in your church no longer choose to obey? This is not a push toward legalism. It's a call to return to your first love, JESUS. Obedience is not a problem for a lover of the LORD.

Obedience Test for Home/Church

- Do you love one another as JESUS loves you? (John 13:14)
- Do you forgive others, so that you can be forgiven? (Mark 11:25)
- Are you known as a people who pray? (Luke 19:46)
- Do you tithe and practice justice, mercy, and faith? (Matthew 23:23)
- Are you actively going to make disciples of the Nations--even those around your community? Are you teaching them to practice all that JESUS has commanded? (Matthew 28:18-20)
- Are you witnessing about JESUS to the world in the power of His Holy Spirit? (Acts 1:18)
- Are you displaying unity with other believers in your church, with other churches, and Christians of other denominations? (John 17:23)

Based on these few commands of the Lord, would you say that your church is obeying all He has commanded? If you see that your church is no longer obeying the Lord's clear commands, this is one clear sign that you have departed from God. A church may sincerely seek God's will. A great number of members clearly sense a direction from God. Some in the church, however, may raise such a storm of protest that the church decides not to do what God directed. This would indicate that the heart of the church has begun a shift. The next time the church senses JESUS' directions, they may choose again not to obey. By this point the heart of the church has begun to harden.

Hebrews 3:

(12) "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. (13) But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

IF you have realized that your heart has turned away or that your church's heart has turned away from the Lord, ask Him to show you how to begin returning to your first love for JESUS.

We love Him because He first loved us and gave His life for us. Pray that Holy Spirit will use your next observance of the Lord's Supper to rekindle a deep love for Him, as you remember the sacrifice of love He paid for you. Think about His love and thank Him now.

Symptoms

Part Two

Devotion Thirty-Three

Deut. 8:11-14

(11) "Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day: (12) Lest *when* thou hast eaten and are full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein*; (13) And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; (14) Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."

Every time a believer moves away from JESUS, he puts a substitute in His place. When we no longer turn to Lord, we replace Him, His purposes, and His ways with something from the world. A major tragedy of the Christian community is that individuals and churches are filled with substitutes we have chosen instead of time with the Holy Spirit. We have often substituted work, ritual or traditional religious activity, relationships with others, or a love for things for a love-relationship with God.

A pastor from the USA was in China talking with Christian leaders. One said, "Christians in China are praying for our Christian brothers and sisters in America. We believe we are handling our persecution better than you are handling your prosperity." Have we allowed our prosperity and materialism to become a substitute for God? God the Father warned us against this substitute in Deuteronomy 8:11-14 at the beginning of this devotional. The danger of prosperity, like any other substitute, is that it can cause us to forget God. Pride in the heart exalts self and claims credit for wealth. JESUS warns us to "Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions." (Luke 12:15). Material things are not the only substitutes we turn to in place of God. One good way to determine things that have become substitutes for God is to ask yourself, "Is there anything that is causing me to forget God?"

Underline some possible substitutes for God.

Psalm 20:7 "Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God."

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." (6) "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and He shall direct thy paths."

Isaiah 30:1 "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of Me; and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin."

Isaiah 31:1 "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help and rely on horses, and trust in chariots because they are many and in horsemen because they are very strong, but they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek the LORD!"

Substitutes for His Presence:

We may place our trust in methods, programs or people to accomplish spiritual growth and church growth rather than trusting Him.

We may substitute emotional hype, pageantry, entertainment, or ritual for the reality for His intimate presence in worship.

Substitutes for His Purposes:

We may conduct Baptism and the Lord's Supper as tradition or ritual, when He intended them to be times of public testimony, remembrance of Him, personal examination, and renewal of fellowship with Him.

We may spend much of our time and resources on selfish pleasures and ignore justice for the oppressed or meeting the needs of the poor.

We may conduct "evangelistic" visits primarily to ask people to come to church for an attendance goal, when God wants them to come to Him for redemption.

Substitutes for His Ways:

We walk by sight, when God says to walk by faith.

We affirm self and give ourselves first consideration, when God says to deny self.

We exalt self, when God says to humble yourself.

We try to save our lives-hold on to what we have-when God says lose your life-to give away what you have for the kingdom's sake.

We try to manipulate people to serve, when God says to pray for Him to call forth laborers.

God the Father warns us about forgetting Him: Deut. 8:19 "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish." You may think God's promise of destruction for going after other gods is rather severe. It is. That reveals how seriously God treats sin and rebellion. Scripture says God is jealous for our love. He created us and deserves our love and our lives.

Have you recognized some ways you have turned to substitutes for God? Confess them to the LORD and put away the substitutes. Return to your love relationship with Him.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will help your church identify ways you may have turned to substitutes for God, His purposes, or His ways.

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any actions you need to take to put away idols of the heart that hinder your love for Him.

The First Great Awakening in The American Colonies

Devotion Thirty-Four

Isaiah 58:8

(8) “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.

(9) Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I *am*. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity.”

The First Great Awakening in the American Colonies is often dated 1740-43. As in other great revivals, the spiritual climate of the churches had reached a low point. Practices like the Half-Way Covenant brought many into church membership without requiring any indication of saving faith. Consequently, churches were a mixture of believers and unbelievers. The Christian testimony had been watered down, and the church was mixed with the world.

The Lord used traveling evangelists like George Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent to quicken the spirits of His people. Under their preaching, many church members and even preachers came under conviction of the Holy Spirit that they had never been converted. They were greatly distressed until they had made their salvation sure. Historians estimate that 25,000 to 50,000 people were added to the churches in New England alone, amounting to seven to fourteen percent of the population. New churches were started in record numbers, and colleges like Dartmouth and Princeton were started to train missionaries and ministers to carry the gospel to the lost world. This revival also laid the foundation of the cooperative relationships among denominations. The religious liberties guaranteed in the new republic had their birth in the revival.

Sometime around 1734, revival began to occur in several locations in New England. God used these early revivals and awakenings to prepare the soul for the sowing of the gospel that would follow.

Northampton, Massachusetts, was the site of the city-wide, awakening in 1734-35. Jonathan Edwards was the pastor of the Congregational church. Prior to the revival, the town experienced a “degenerate time” with the a “dullness of religion.” According to Edwards, the young people were addicted to night walking, tavern drinking, lewd practices, and frolics among the sexes the greater part of night. “Family government did too much fail in the town.” And for a long period, the town was sharply divided between two parties who jealously opposed each other in all public affairs.

In a nearby village, two young persons died in the spring of 1734. People began to think soberly about spiritual and eternal matters. In answer to the prayers of His people, the Holy Spirit began to move. In the Fall, Edwards preached on justification by faith alone. In December 1734, five out of six persons were converted. One of them was a young woman who was “One of the greatest company keepers in the whole town.” Her life was so radically changed that everyone could tell it was a work of God’s grace. The tide had turned. During the following six months, 300 people were “hopefully converted” in this town of 1,100 that is twenty-seven percent. Edwards said: “God has also seemed to have gone out of His usual way in the quickness of His work, and the swift progress His Spirit has made in His operation,

on the hearts of many. There was scarcely a single person in the town, either old or young that was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world...The town seemed to be full of the presence of God: it never was so full of love, nor so full of joy...It was a time of joy in families on the account of salvation being brought unto them...Our public assemblies were then beautiful, the congregation was alive in God's service, every one earnestly intent on the public worship...Our public praises were then greatly enlivened; God was then served.. in the beauty of Holiness." (Adapted from Jonathan Edwards' "Narrative of Surprising Conversions")

Look again at the fruits of the revival in Northampton

- Nearly everyone was concerned about eternal things.
- The town was full of God's presence.
- The town was full of love and joy.
- Families were joyful because loved ones had experienced salvation.
- Church services were beautiful.
- Members were active in God 's service.
- Everyone was earnest in attending worship.
- Praise in worship was greatly enlivened.
- God was served in the beauty of Holiness.

When that kind of experience began to spread throughout the colonies, godly foundations began to be laid for the birth of our nation.

Thank God that He is willing and able to change a city and a nation in this way. Ask Him to increase your faith to believe Him for a mighty movement of His Spirit in our day.

Ask the Lord to use circumstances in your community (like the unexpected deaths of the two young persons near Northampton), to cause people to begin thinking about eternal matters.

Pray for God energize us as His children, His preachers, and His churches.

The Truth About God and His Judgments

Devotion Thirty-Five

2 Peter 3:9

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Many of God’s people have lost a reverent fear of God. We no longer believe that He disciplines and judges His people. Many think the God of judgment and wrath was the God we see in the Old Testament. They think of God revealed in the New Testament as only a God of love and mercy. Such thinking shows that a person does not know Scripture, or the God revealed in it.

God said, “I the Lord do not change” (Mal. 13:8) “Jesus Christ (God) is the same yesterday and today and forever.” (Heb. 13:8) We do not serve two Gods, one O.T. and one N.T. The Lord is one. He doesn’t change. Let’s look together at some of the truths about the nature of our God.

- God is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness. He relents from doing harm, as we notice in Jonah 4:2; Neh. 9:31; Jer. 9:24.
- God is just when He speaks, and blameless when he judges Ps. 51:4
- God is love; He desires what is best for those he loves. He so loved the world that He sent His own Son to pay the price for the ultimate judgment on sin—death on the cross. John 3:16; 1 John 4:7-8
- God’s righteous judgments sometimes include His wrath Rom. 2:5
- He is full of compassion and forgiveness, often turning away His anger and wrath Psalm 78:38
- God is “love righteousness and justice” Psalm 33:5

God is beyond our understanding. Yet, He has revealed Himself in Scripture. He is perfect love. He forever convinced us of his love through JESUS’ death on the cross. God is kind, compassionate, patient, and slow to anger. He is also just. He never punishes the innocent. His judgments are always right and fair. Yet, He also is merciful. He seldom gives us the punishment we deserve. He forgives us when we repent and return to Him.

But, God is Holy and Pure. He cannot and will not tolerate our sin. Because of His Holiness and justice, He must deal with our sin. He gets angry at times, and he sometimes displays His wrath on rebellious people. We need to develop a healthy fear of our Holy God. When you enter His presence, you will sense Holiness. You will also clearly see the sin in your life. When a church experiences genuine worship in His presence, it will become aware of any sin of which it needs forgiveness.

Ezekiel 18:23 “Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: *and* not that he should return from his ways, and live?”

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

What does God take pleasure in?

God does not delight in the death of anyone who needs to repent. He wants all people to repent and turn to Him. Notice in Scripture these other important truths:

- Judgment should begin with the people of God: 1 Peter 4:17 “For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God.”
- Every deed, including hidden things, will be judged: Eccl. 12:14 “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be good*, or whether *it be evil*.”
- Jesus came to bring Judgment: John 9:39 “And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.’”
- God’s Judgments are always right, true and fair: Rev. 16:7 “And I heard another out of the altar say, ‘Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are Thy judgments*.’”
- God’s discipline is progressive: Lev. 26:14-33. God is longsuffering and merciful in dealing with us. Yet when the time comes that we refuse to repent, He will deal with his people. When He disciplines and judges us, He is right and justified in all He does.

Abraham summed up the truth about God’s judgments “Will not the judge of all the earth do right?” Gen. 18:25

Yes, he will. Pray that He will work with us in such a way that we will repent and return to Him.

God Will Do It Again

Devotion Thirty-Six

Isaiah 43:19

“Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.”

God has renewed our own vision for revival in America and in Europe. Through specific promises He has once again burdened us to believe Him for a mighty awakening as in the days of old.

Dr. Stewart tells of waiting before the Lord, and receiving definite promises of revival, for different churches and different countries. The result has been a mighty quickening among the saints and the salvation of thousands of souls. Some of the promises which he claimed were:

Isaiah 43:19 “Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert.”

Genesis 12:2 “And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.”

Isaiah 41:15-18 “Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. (16) Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the LORD, *and* shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. (17) *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is* none, *and* their tongue fails for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. (18) I will, and the dry land springs of water.

Jeremiah 33:3 “Call unto Me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”

Jeremiah 32:27 “Behold, I *am* the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?”

Daniel 11:32 “And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong and do *exploits*.”

John 11:40 “Jesus saith unto her, ‘Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?’”

Joel 2:25-27 “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. (26) And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. (27) And ye shall know that I *am* in the midst of Israel, and *that* I *am* the LORD your God, and none else: and My people shall never be ashamed.”

Ezekiel 36:23 “And I will sanctify My great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I *am* the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.”

Mark 11:23 “For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, ‘Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea’; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

John 7:37-38 “In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

Hag. 2:19 “From this day will I bless *you*.”

Dr Stewart continues by saying “A few souls in any church or school or mission field may inaugurate a new condition by praying through and standing on the promises of God. My brother, my sister, if the Lord has laid it on your heart to pray for revival in your sphere of labor, go alone on your knees with the Word before God. Make sure the desire is from the Lord, so that the motive will be for the glory of His dear Name (See Daniel’s prayer in the following passage.).

Daniel 9:17-19 “Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.”

Ask the Lord to seal to your heart some portion of His Word, according to that which He desires to do in your midst. Once you have obtained such a promise, stand on it unflinchingly until the answer comes.

Pray, Pray, Pray!!!

What's Prayer Got to Do with It? Everything!

Devotion Thirty-Seven

Morning Reading:

Prayer is the Key. (John 14:14-15)

"A few souls in any church, school or mission field may inaugurate a new condition by praying through and standing on the promises of God." (Dr. Stewart quote.)

"The need of the hour is for intercessors in vital union with their ascended Lord to agonize inside the veil for the deliverance of the Church from its spiritual slump." (Dr. Stewart)

"Doubtless, one of the great secrets of the unsatisfactoriness, and superficiality, and unreality of any of our modern so-called revivals, is that more dependance is put upon man's machinery rather than upon God's power, sought and obtained by earnest, persistent believing prayer." (R.A. Torrey)

"The great cry of our day is work, work, work. New organizations, new methods, new machinery. The great need of our day is prayer." (James Stewart)

"If every true pastor, evangelist, and missionary throughout the world would simultaneously turn unto God in utter self-humbling intercession, in seeking the face of God and in repentance, such an upheaval of holy prayer would shake the world." (D.M. Paton)

All forces of the enemy are used to hinder the believers in JESUS at this strategic point. No matter how admirable the sermon, how attractive the service, how faithful in visitation, how true the gospel, and earnest the laborer, it all accomplishes little if prayer is neglected. When the church shuts itself up to the power of the prayer closet, and the soldiers of the Lord have received on their knees "power from on high," then the power of darkness will be shaken, and souls will be delivered.

Now let us look into effective prayer. It is, however, not enough to just pray. To pray successfully we must prevail in prayer. Just praying will become merely a habit, and a hard one to overcome, if the one who prays is not a true intercessor. By praying and yet not prevailing continually, a condition is entered into, which eases the conscience because it is felt that duty has been performed. Finally, the result becomes such that the person does not expect an answer and can hardly believe for one. Many a good believer, after many years of praying finds a solace in his much praying; but has failed utterly to see the real power of answered prayer. Contrast this with the words of the Apostle James, "the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

Prayer influences both man and God. To see and experience revival we must pray. Prayer influences men because real prayer touches Heaven. Since God knows all things and has always been perfect in knowledge, we do not change His mind by praying. But prayer produces such changes in us, and fulfills the conditions to His promises, that it becomes consistent for God to do as it would not have been consistent for him to do otherwise. By beholding Him, we are changed, so that we do not become full of self-praise, because we have been thus used in getting a great answer. We become so submitted to God that it is realized that He, after all, has done the work.

When a sinner repents, it becomes proper for God to forgive him. He knows that his works have not saved him for he has repented of them. It is not the sinner's repentance that renders his forgiveness and is the occasion of God's moving in the case. When believers offer effectual prayer, their state of mind renders it okay for God to answer. He was always ready to give us the blessing on condition that we pray properly and are then sufficiently changed to receive the blessing. In this condition, it would be dangerous to the believers to receive an answer, for he might be ruined by his own request. Thus, God, without any change in Himself, can answer and change a condition. When effectual fervent prayer is offered for others, the fact that we offer such prayer renders it consistent for Him to do what we pray for, when otherwise it would not have been consistent.

Prayer is an essential link in the chain of causes that lead to a revival—as much as truth is. Some have used great zeal in promoting the use of means of every kind. They have talked, invited, distributed tracts, and advertised with little success. But nothing is done by truth alone, unless there is a spirit of prayer in direct connection.

It is specific prevailing prayer is more than good desires. Effectual prayer is that prayer which obtains the blessing it seeks. The very idea of effectual prayer is that it affects its object.

It is necessary to pray for a definite object. Look through the Bible, and whenever you see that the blessing sought for in prayer was obtained, you will find that prayer which was offered was for that definite object.

It is according to God's will. With this in mind, it becomes necessary to find out the will of God. The will of God is shown by promises set forth in His Word, by the providence of God, and by the blessed paraclete, or Holy Spirit. If the prayer-warrior will carefully determine from these his course, he need never be doubtful about the answer. (Matthew 6:9-10) We must get into Heaven and bring it back here.

There are over thirty thousand promises in the Bible which should take in most of the desires of the true saints. After being sure that the condition given with the promise is met with, we may be free to take hold of it in prayer.

It would be impossible for God to reveal everything in the Bible. But God often makes such things clear to those who have spiritual discernment, that it is His will to grant blessings. These revelations are never contrary to what God has revealed in His Word. Thus, When God makes it clear that there is a specific need in our home or country we are in God's will. Thus, we have God's will revealed in His providence.

Often, when we know not what to pray about in His will, the Spirit will instruct us. We are told that "the Spirit also helps our infirmities" and "the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered" So we can pray in faith for things not revealed, by being led by the Paraclete. "And He that searches the heart knows the mind of the Spirit" Thus he often leads believers to pray in the will of God with groaning that cannot be uttered."

If we expect an answer, our desires for an answer must be equal to the importance of the answer. If a person truly desires any blessing, his desires will bear some proportion to the greatness of the blessing.

Pray without stopping as you go through this day!

Evening Reading:

John 14:14-15 “If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do *it*. (I believe when we are walking with JESUS daily, we will pray for our region to be revived and those lost saved.) (15) If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”

It is prayed in the Spirit. Prevailing prayer is prayed in the Spirit. You can never expect to offer prayer in the will of God without the Spirit. We do not look around or get into the flesh. All heart is put into such prayer, and the Spirit cooperates, and God delights to answer. To prevail in prayer, it must be persevering. Believers who have backslidden and lost the spirit of prayer will not quickly get into the habit of persevering prayer. Their minds are not in the right state, and they cannot fix their hearts and hold on till the blessing comes. But they have to pray again and again, because their thoughts are so easily diverted. Most believers come up to prevailing prayer by a protracted process. Their minds gradually become filled with anxiety about an object, so that they will even go about their business sighing out their desires to God. A lack of such prayer in the Church is the reason for such death and lack of revival.

Prevailing prayer—what is it? In some revivals, people have prayed until blood started flowing from their nose. Others have been all wet with perspiration in cold weather. People have prayed for hours, till their strength was exhausted with the agony of their minds. These prayers prevailed. So great was this prayer spirit in Edwards’ revivals that people opposed to the revival were stumbled by it. In His thoughts on revivals Mr. Edwards remarks partly as follows:

“We cannot determine that God never shall give a person so much of a discovery of Himself, not only as to weaken their bodies, but to take away their lives. It is supposed by learned divines, that Moses’ life was taken away after this manner. There is one particular kind of exercise and concern of the mind, that many have been overpowered by, that has been especially stumbling to some; and that is, the deep concern and distress that they have been in for the souls of others. Men may be allowed, from no higher a principle than common ingenuity and humanity, to be very deeply concerned and greatly exercised in mind at seeing others in great danger of no greater a calamity ten times greater, to be still much more concerned; and so much more still, if the calamity was still vastly greater. And why then should it be thought unreasonable, and looked upon with a very suspicious eye, when persons are extremely concerned at seeing others in a very great danger of suffering the fierceness and wrath of almighty God to all eternity? It will doubtless be allowed that those that have a spirit of divine love, may well be supposed to have vastly more love and compassion on their fellow creatures, than those that are unconverted. Those that have the Spirit of Christ should love the lost souls, in proportion to their ability, as Christ did. He had so strong a love for them as to be willing to drink the dregs of the cup; and at the same time He offered up His blood for souls, offered up also, as their High priest, strong crying and tears, with an extreme agony, when the soul of Christ was, as it were, in travail for the souls of the elect; and therefore, in saving them. He is said to see of the travail of His soul.”

“As such a spirit of love to, and concern for souls was the spirit of Christ, so is it the spirit of the church; and therefore, the church, in desiring and seeking that Christ might be brought forth in the world and in souls of men, as is ‘a woman crying, travailing in birth, and pain to be delivered.’ The Psalmist cried out in 119:53 “Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that have forsaken Thy law.” And that of the prophet in Jeremiah 4:19, “I am pained at my very heart; My heart maketh a noise in me: I cannot hold my peace, because Thou has heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.” And why then, should persons be thought distracted, when they cannot forbear crying out at the consideration of the misery of those that are going to eternal destruction?

In the great revivals, these things have been common, and have been more or less common in proportion to the greatness, extent, and depth of the work.

Answer the questions:

1. To pray successful we must _____ in prayer.
2. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man _____ much.
3. To get revival we need to influence both God and _____ .
4. _____ is used to touch men, _____ is used to touch God.
5. List four conditions for effective prayer: _____
6. The will of God is shown by the _____ set forth in His Word, by the _____ of God.
7. Do you believe God wants to bring revival in your church? Yes or No
8. Pray, Pray, and Pray some more!

Believing God for Revival

Devotion Thirty-Eight

Morning Reading:

Matthew 9:29 “Then touched He their eyes, saying, ‘According to your faith be it unto you.’”

Romans 14:23 “And he that doubts is damned if he eats, because *he eats* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.”

Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

No matter what we do, it must be according to God’s established plan if it is to be effective. One of the most basic principles laid out in God’s Word clearly indicates that He works according to our FAITH. JESUS even said at one point that He “did not many mighty works because of their unbelief.” This principle of faith has remained consistent throughout the history of mankind, whenever God has chosen to reveal Himself to His people.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, we have the account of how faith has always been. It is God’s way for man to relate to Him and accomplish His work. In one way or another every person that God ever used in the Bible is mentioned in this chapter, some by name others by reference. Verse 12 indicates that all of the seed of Abraham who were of faith ultimately received the promises, although some died before it actually came to pass. Faith gave them the “title deed” for that which they had hoped. In verse 13, we find the pattern of faith that is used throughout the entire Bible as the way for man to get in on what God is up to. When Jesus was asked, “What must be done to work the works of God?” He answered, “Believe on Him whom He (the Father) hath sent.” (John 6:29). God has chosen to make faith the key to our relationship with Him, and we must work according to the principle of faith if we are to see His will accomplished.

I have a question—How can we believe God for revival? The same way that men and women have believed God for anything throughout history. Hebrews 11:13 reveals the pattern: They **saw** the promises, they were **persuaded** of them, they **embraced** them and **confessed** them. This is the biblical and historical pattern. We must receive a word from God, we must be persuaded of it, we must embrace it by faith and confess it. Of course, we must keep in mind that confession is the expression of faith. It doesn’t “make” something happen it reveals that something “has” happened. Luke 6:45 says, “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” James 4:2 reveals that we “have not” because we “ask not.” Asking is an expression of faith. JESUS told us to pray that His will be done in earth as it is in heaven. He also told us to bind and loose that which has been bound and loosed in heaven. This is within the context of having been given the “keys” to the kingdom. This is the faith pattern over and over. We must “see” it, be “persuaded” of it, “embrace” it, and “confess” it. We must realize that the faith life is unique in the economy of God—it is the means whereby man is able to discover the will of God and be persuaded of the will of God and the insufficiency of man, thereby enabling him to trust the Lord. Man is able to trust the Lord so completely and fully with his heart, that he confesses with his mouth his faith, and thereby sees the glory of God in his life, through his life, and for his person.

Does God promise Revival? There are many believers who believe that God only sends revival at His pleasure and according to His will. In one sense this is true, in that he is not coerced into doing something that he never planned or was aware of, on the other hand there are many things that God will not do, if we as believers do not cooperate in faith. Adequate Scripture references have been given previously to impress upon you, the reader, with responsibility of man in God's economy and these principles of faith must apply to revival as well as everything else.

On what basis do we believe that God has promised revival today? The most outstanding passage in the N.T. is found in Revelation 3:20. Within the context of the passage there can be no question that the message to the Laodicean Church is one of Revival! Whether one believes that the seven churches stand for different "periods of time" in the history of the church, or whether they are only representing "problems" that may exist in any church, the message is still the same: He is knocking, and if any man will open, our Lord will have intimate fellowship with him and he will be an overcomer

The unrevived church is a lukewarm abomination to the Lord and it is His desire above all else to revive her and awaken her out of slumber. To even imply that God does not desire to send revival is to indicate that He wants His church to remain apathetic and ineffective.

Historically, the Word "revival" has always expressed that change in God's people that has taken place as they have repented of their sin and been obedient to God's command. In the O.T. the message was delivered by the prophet of God and the people were given opportunity to obey before judgement was delivered. If the principles of God's Word are true, then it is time for judgment among the people of God, and this very fact is an indication that God wants to send a mighty awakening among us.

In the N.T. there are not very many direct references to "revival" because the church as a whole had not fallen so low as a whole and had not fallen so low as to need it. Today, the church, at least in America and Western Europe, is functioning well below the N.T. standard; but there are individual congregations and believers who have experienced personal revival. This is the complete opposite of what the first-century Christians were facing. The early church as a whole was experiencing the level of fellowship with the JESUS that we would call revival, with "lukewarmness" being the exception rather than the rule. Vance Havner says, that what we call revival is simply N.T. Christianity. Eric Hayden states it better when he identifies N.T. Christianity as revived Christianity.

If there is any question about whether God wants to send revival or not, Dr. Stewart suggests that the doubter go aside for fasting and prayer according to the passage found in Joel 2:15-26. "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: gather the assembly, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children and those that suck; let the bridegroom of the chamber and the bride out of her closet. Let the priest, and the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say 'Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people. "Where is their God?"' Then will the Lord be jealous for His land and pity His people...And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall never be ashamed."

Dr. Stewart points out that if God was jealous for His earthly people, how much more is He jealous for those who have been purchased by the precious blood of His Son?

In any case, once the issue of God's desire to send revival is settled, we must still believe if we are to see its culmination. In Mark 6:5, we see that JESUS did not accomplish all that He desired because of their unbelief! In Hebrews 3, it is obvious that there is a place of "rest" to be found by the believer which can

only be embraced by faith. While this level of Christian living is not specifically identified by the writer, he clearly warns that unbelief results in failure to obtain it.

Pray, Pray, Pray.

Evening Reading:

The Basis for Believing God for Revival

There are Three basic reasons to believe that God will send revival today. Some of these have already been addressed in a specific way, but it is important to see them expressed together in a systematic manner.

The Character of God. God has in times past poured out His Spirit when His people have met the conditions set forth in His Word. Are we to be so bold as to imply that He is no longer capable or no longer desires to see His church mobilized in a manner worthy of His name? Are we to insinuate that God is pleased with the state of His body in the world today and that He does not have plans to judge and ultimately restore them? Scripture and history both verify that God has a Divine standard for His people, and that through judgment He hopes to bring them to repentance and revival. The psalmist asks in chapter 85, "Wilt thou not revive us again..." and the answer was and still is, Yes! It goes against the very nature of God to assume that He would deal with His people one way in the past and suddenly change today. This is not to say that man began revival, but it is to say that we must co-operate if it is to come. God will not pour out His Spirit on unclean, unprepared hearts.

Now let us look into the principles of Scripture. If it were not enough that God's character would be compromised if revival were not available, then it would most certainly violate the principles set forth in Scripture. Scriptures that are written to God's people that demand repentance would be a farce if repentance and restoration were not possible. Some will say that Scripture only refers to individual and not corporate revival, but the promises found in the Sermon on the Mount and the Revelation are without question made to groups of individuals. All passages that identify the plan of God for the Church with regard to purity, holiness and purpose, verify in principle that a revival is always within God's plan for His people.

The next section to notice is the promise of Scripture. God's Word falls into basically two categories: those that are given to all of His people for all times, and those that are given to a specific group or individual in a specific time. In the first category, any promise, and there are many, that applies to the repentance, forgiveness, and restoration of God's children may be claimed for revival if the conditions are met. However, in the second category, God must personalize the promise to you specifically if it is to become the basis for believing. Both kinds of promises must have witness borne by the Holy Spirit in order to create faith in your heart (Romans 10:17). But, those that are given to you personally in answer to specific prayer, should not be used to teach the possibility of revival for the believer. Many verses that God gives us in answer to our own questions about matters, are not within the context of the passage, and although God expects us to embrace them in faith, it would be presumption on the part of anyone else to try to believe them without a personal prompting by the Spirit.

There are hundreds of Old and New Testament promises that reveal God's desire for His people to repent that they might be Revived, Cleansed, Forgiven, Restored and made useable once again. As did the men of old, we must see them, be Persuaded of them, Embrace, them and Confess them (Hebrews 11:13).

Without faith there will be no revival, because it is clear that God has placed the responsibility of Believing and Obeying on our shoulders. This the Law of Faith! Without faith it is impossible to please God, because by faith: Abel worshiped God—Enoch walked with God—Noah worked with God—Abraham reproduced for God.

It Is By Faith That...

The just shall live Heb. 10:38

Your heart can be made pure. Acts 15:9

We are sanctified. Acts 26:18

We are comforted. Rom. 1:12

We are justified. Gal. 2:16, 3:24

We stand. Rom. 11:20, 2 Cor. 1:24

We walk. Rom. 5:7

We live. Gal. 2:20

We have access. Eph .3:12

We are God's children. Gal. 3:26

We have eternal life. Gal. 3:22

Through Faith...

We understand. Heb. 11:3

The Law is made void. Rom. 3:30

The heathen are justified. Gal. 3:8

We are saved. Eph. 2:8

We are righteous. Phil. 3:9

We are risen with Him. Col. 2:12, 2 Tim. 3:15

We inherit the promises. Heb. 6:12

“If”

Devotion Thirty-Nine

Morning Reading:

2 Chronicles 7:13-14 “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

- **Phase One:** God is on mission to redeem a lost world. God calls His people into a relationship with Himself, and He accomplishes His work through them.
- **Phase Two:** God’s people tend to depart from Him, turning from Him to substitutes for His presence, purposes and His ways.
- **Phase Three:** God disciplines His people out of His love for them.
- **Phase Four:** God’s people cry out to Him for help.
- **Phase Five:** God calls His people to repent and return to Him or perish.

When we depart from the Lord, He disciplines us in love. We need to make the connection between our sin and what is happening to us. If we are experiencing God’s discipline, the sooner we respond, the better. The longer we delay, the more intense His discipline becomes. God deals with us more and more severely until He finally gets our attention. Then we cry out to Him for help. When we cry out to Him, He calls us to repent and return to Him. “Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, ‘Wherein shall we return?’” Malachi 3:7

King Solomon was the wisest person ever to live. He understood that God’s people would sin and depart from Him. As he dedicated the temple. Solomon asked God if He would forgive His people when they cried out to Him.

Read 2 Chronicles 6:14-42 Write down some of the ways Solomon anticipated that God might discipline His people for their sins.

God disciplines His people when they sin against Him. Notice that the sin is against God. Solomon knew that God used disasters to punish and correct His people. God used things like drought, famine, blight, mildew, insects, plagues, military defeat, and captivity to discipline His people. Solomon’s question of God was this: “Lord if You punish Your people because of their sin and they turn their hearts back to you, will you forgive?”

God answered Solomon’s prayer in 2 Chronicles 7:12-22. We began today’s devotional with God’s promise to His people God Answered, “YES! If I punish my people and they return to Me, I will forgive them and heal their land.” This was God’s promise to Israel. But it also describes the way God deals with His people when they sin and when they return to Him. In this passage, God identified four requirements for revival: Humble yourselves, pray, seek God’s face, and turn from your wicked ways. God wants His people to return to a love relationship with Him. He wants His people to spend time with Him in prayer. He wants them to seek his presence and communion with Him. He wants them to repent of their wicked ways. Then He will forgive and heal!

When you go to a doctor with an illness, he examines you, looking for symptoms of the illness. Once He sees what illness is doing to you, he often knows what the cause is. Then he knows how to treat it. In a

similar way, we can observe symptoms of spiritual illness. We have already identified three symptoms of spiritual sickness or departure from God:

- God's discipline indicates a sin problem.
- Turning to or accepting substitutes for God, His presence, His purposes or His ways indicates a spiritual problem.
- A lack of obedience or disobedience to the clear will of God in His Word indicates a sin problem.

Question: What was the root problem that leads to these symptoms of our departure from God?

Deuteronomy 30:17 _____

All of these symptoms indicate that our hearts have shifted, that our love relationship with God is not right. Once you see the symptoms in your life, family, church, community, city, or nation, you need to cry out to God for help. You cannot fix the problem by yourself. The good news is that God has the help you need. In fact, by the time you respond to His call, He already has everything planned and in place for revival. When God took Israel into captivity because of their sin, He sent a message through Jeremiah. God took the initiative to call His people back: **Jeremiah 29: 11-14** "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."

Even when He brought great disaster on His people, God had all of the plans in place to bring them back to Himself. He was ready to prosper them and give them hope. God was standing ready for their call to Him in prayer. When they would begin to seek Him, He would respond to their plea.

Pray, and respond to the Holy Spirit as He calls you to be revived!

Evening Reading:

1857-58 What happened?

John 4:34-36 "Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work. Say not ye, 'There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest?' Behold, I say unto you, 'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.' And he that reaps receives wages and gathers fruit unto life eternal: that both he that sows and he that reaps may rejoice together."

With little in the way of human planning, a nationwide revival broke out in America among God's people in union prayer meetings beginning in 1857. In the awakening that followed, nearly one million people accepted JESUS, and became involved in churches in a single year.

The years leading up to 1857 were years of tremendous growth and prosperity of America. The population was booming. People and businesses were becoming wealthy. The cares of the world

captured the minds and hearts of Americans, choking out their interest in God and His Kingdom. Churches were declining in numbers, strength, and influence.

The growth of New York City began to force wealthy residents out of the downtown area. They were replaced by unchurched masses of common laborers. Many churches decided to move to “more fruitful” locations. In a state of decline, the North Dutch Church decided to stay and reach the lost masses around them. They employed a businessman, Jeremiah Lanphier, as a lay missionary. He began to visit homes, distribute Bibles and tracts, and advertise church services. Facing a discouraging response, he found comfort in prayer.

One day he prayed. “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” He sensed God’s leadership to begin a weekly prayer service for workers and businessmen, who would meet at the noon hour for communion with God. He began on Wednesday, September 23, 1857, with six persons attending. The second week, twenty attended, and forty the third week. The hunger and thirst for God were evident, and daily union prayer meetings were begun. In the fourth week, people of all classes of society and from every denomination attended.

God had a praying people in place when the financial crash of 1857 hit just weeks after the prayer meeting began. “When the crash came, merchants by the thousands all over the country were forced to the wall, banks failed, and railroads went into bankruptcy.” In New York City alone 30,000 lost their jobs. Added to the financial crisis, the nation was gripped by the tensions over slavery. The future of the nation was bleak indeed.

In the midst of disaster and with a great hunger for God, people flooded the prayer meeting by the thousands. The meetings spread all over town and then across the nation. Businesses even closed to allow their employees time for prayer. The newspaper gave front-page coverage of revival news, and revival spread like wildfire across the country. Religion became the common topic of conversation. Special newspaper editions were printed to carry the revival news.

When the revival/awakening was at its peak, 50,000 people were converted every week. Within a year, nearly one million people were converted.

Bishop McIlvaine, in his annual address before the Diocesan Convention of Ohio, said: “I rejoice in the decided conviction that it (the revival/awakening) is the Lord’s doing; unaccountable by any natural causes, entirely above and beyond what any human device or power could produce; an outpouring of the Spirit of God came upon God’s people, quickening them to greater earnestness in His service; and upon the unconverted, to make them new creatures in Christ Jesus”

This prayer revival, like so many other revivals, is an example of God’s pattern for revival and spiritual awakening. God began a work among His people. But as His people got right with God and became faithful in prayer and witness, a harvest began among those who had not yet believed in JESUS. The flames of this revival spread all around the globe to other cities and countries.

Question: Would you be willing to pray, “Lord what wilt thou have me to do?” and wait on the Lord until He tells you what He wants to do through you for revival in our day? **If yes, pray it now.**

Personal Revival

Devotion Forty

Morning Reading:

I believe God is eager to manifest His reviving presence and power in every generation. But we must take steps to prepare for the release of His fullness in our midst.

On the eve of their passage over Jordan into the promised Land, Joshua charged the children of Israel to prepare their hearts, "Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." (Joshua 3:5)

The psalmist understood the importance of spiritual preparation for revival: "Righteousness shall go before Him and shall set us in the way of His steps" (Psalm 85:13).

The questions on the next two pages are designed to reveal specific areas of spiritual need in our lives. These areas must be dealt with in preparation for personal and corporate revival:

Steps of Action

- Pray the Prayer of the Psalmist "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting" Psalm 139:23-24.
- Be Totally Honest as you answer each question.
- Agree with God about each need He reveals in your life. Confess each sin, with the willingness to make it right and forsake it.
- Praise God for his cleansing and forgiveness.
- Renew your mind and rebuild your life through meditation and practical application of the Word of God.
- Review these questions periodically to remain sensitive to your need for ongoing revival.

Questions/please look up scripture listed below:

- 1. Genuine Salvation. 2 Corinthians 5:17**
 - A. Was there ever a time in my life that I genuinely repented for my sin? (Yes or No)
 - B. Was there ever a time in my life that I placed all my trust in JESUS Christ alone to save me? (Yes or No)
 - C. Was there ever a time in my life that I completely surrendered to JESUS Christ as the Master and Lord of my Life? (Yes or No)
- 2. God's Word. Psalm 119:97, 140**
 - A. Do I love to read and meditate on the Word of God? (Yes or No)
 - B. Are my personal devotions consistent and meaningful? (Yes or No)
 - C. Do I practically apply God's Word to my everyday life? (Yes or No)
- 3. Humility. Isaiah 57:15**
 - A. Am I quick to recognize and agree with God in confession when I have sinned? (Yes or No)

- B. Am I quick to admit to others when I am wrong? (Yes or No)
 - C. Do I rejoice when others are praised and recognized, and my accomplishments go unnoticed by men? (Yes or No)
 - D. Do I esteem all others as better than myself? (Yes or No)
4. **Obedience. Hebrews 13:17; 1 Samuel 15:22**
- A. Do I consistently obey what I know God wants me to do? (Yes or No)
 - B. Do I consistently obey the human authorities God has placed over my life? (Yes or No)
5. **Pure Heart. 1 John 1:9**
- A. Do I confess my sin by name? (Yes or No)
 - B. Do I keep “short sin accounts” with God? (Yes or No) If yes, confess and forsake as He convicts.
6. **Clear Conscience. Acts 24:16**
- A. Do I consistently seek forgiveness from those I wrong or offend? (Yes or No)
 - B. Is my conscience clear with every man? (Yes or No) If yes, confess and forsake as He convicts.
 - C. Am I willing to give up all sin for our LORD? (Yes or No)
7. **Priorities. Matthew. 6:33**
- A. Does my schedule reveal that God is first in my Life? (Yes or No)
 - B. Does my checkbook reveal that God is first in my life? (Yes or No)
 - C. Next to my relationship with God, is my relationship with my family my Highest priority? (Yes or No)
8. **Values. Colossians 3:12**
- A. Do I love what God loves, and hate what God hates? (Yes or No)
 - B. Do I value highly the things that please God, such as: Giving, witnessing to lost souls studying His Word, prayer? (Yes or No)
 - C. Are my affections and goals fixed on eternal values? (Yes or No)
9. **Sacrifice. Philippians 3:7-8**
- A. Am I willing to sacrifice whatever is necessary to see the LORD move in my life and church—my time, convenience, comfort, reputation, pleasure? (Yes or No)
 - B. Is my life characterized by genuine sacrifice for the cause of JESUS Christ? (Yes or No)
10. **Spirit Control. Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 5:18-21**
- A. Am I allowing JESUS to be Lord of every area of my life? (Yes or No)
 - B. Am I allowing the Holy Spirit to “fill” (control) my life each day? (Yes or No)
 - C. Is there consistent evidence of the “Fruit of the Spirit” being produced in my life? (Yes or No)
11. **First Love. Philippians 1:21-23**
- A. Am I as much in love with JESUS as I have ever been? (Yes or No)
 - B. Am I thrilled with JESUS, filled with His joy and peace, and making Him the continued object of my love? (Yes or No)
12. **Motives. Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:28**
- A. Am I more concerned about what God thinks about my life than about what others think? (Yes or No)

- B. Would I pray, read my Bible, give, and serve as much if nobody but God ever noticed? (Yes or No)
- C. Am I more concerned about pleasing God than I am about being accepted and appreciated by men? (Yes or No)

13. Moral Purity. Ephesians 5:3-4

- A. Do I keep my mind free from books, magazines, or entertainment that could stimulate fantasizing or thoughts that are not morally pure? (Yes or No)
- B. Are my conversations and behavior pure and above reproach? (Yes or No)

14. Forgiveness. Colossians 3:12-13

- A. Do I seek to resolve conflicts in relationships as soon as possible? (Yes or No)
- B. Am I quick to forgive those who wrong me or hurt me? (Yes or No)

15. Sensitivity. Matthew 5:23-24

- A. Am I sensitive to the conviction and prompting of the Holy Spirit? (Yes or No)
- B. Am I quick to respond in humility and obedience to the conviction and promptings of the Holy Spirit? (Yes or No)

16. Evangelism. Romans 9:3; Luke 24:46-48

- A. Do I have a burden for lost souls? (Yes or No) If No, start praying for the lost now.
- B. Do I consistently witness for JESUS? (Yes or No) If No, start now.

17. Prayer. I Timothy 2:1

- A. Am I faithful in praying for the needs of others? (Yes or No)
- B. Do I pray specifically, fervently, and faithfully for revival in my life, my church, and in our nation? (Yes or No) Remember, the only Hope for Survival is Revival!!!

Evening Reading:

Maintaining Revival will take constant renewing. The premise of this 40 days has been to bring us together on a journey to revival. I believe it's natural, spiritually, to walk in our Lord's presence. This is revival—To be in His presence. It's daily meeting with Him and renewing the relationship daily. As Dr. D.M. McIntyre reasons, "If we could imagine an unbroken progress of the Church, in faith and obedience, we might still suppose that she would be called to pass, at recurrent intervals, through a climacteric experience. There are always the emergence of new truths, the acceptance of fresh obligations and the realization of a richer and more elevated experience, which inevitably impart an added splendor to the glory of the Bride of Christ"

It might appear on the surface that there is nothing to induce spiritual decay in the church of our day, but as we are too sorrowfully aware, the spiritual energy of the Church of God has ebbed and flowed like tides since the beginning. There is always a tendency to degeneration which belongs to every Christian Life. Individual Christians are apt to decline from their first fervor of devotion and sacrifice to JESUS, at which time the fire burns low on the altar of their heart. God has declared "This is the law of the burnt offering...the fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" Lev. 6:9-13. Even Paul had to exhort young Timothy to "Fan the flame" (2 Tim. 1:6), or to keep the fire burning brightly.

Early Church Renewals Necessary (Revival meetings)

We see in the Acts of the Apostles that even the members of the early church needed fresh renewals. In chapter two, we find that the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit in the upper room. Yet in chapter four, we read of their being filled once again: "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness." This does not mean that they had been living in sin and had followed the Lord from a distance, but that they needed a fresh infilling to finish the work our Redeemer has called them, and us to finish. Those that were endowed habitually with the power of the Spirit had yet occasion for fresh supplies of the Spirit, according to the various experiences in their ministry. As John Bunyan says, "The apostles had now used up their spending money and needed to go back to the Bank of Heaven for more." Had these disciples not waited on the Lord for a fresh anointing, they would have been living on the fast diminishing capital which would have ended in spiritual bankruptcy.

The church at Ephesus, which had but lately thrilled with life at the touch of the Redeemer, soon languished under the Pallid hand of death; and He whose eyes are as a flame of fire, whose voice is as the sound of many waters, and whose feet glow like brass molten in a furnace, comes with swift words of rebuke saying "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, repent and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" Rev. 2:5. Here, from the ascended Lord JESUS Himself, is a clear call to revival.

Abiding Work Needed

I want to reemphasize again it is not a special meeting or speaker that brings revival. It is a steady, vital ministry in the church each day, with every member walking with JESUS daily. Revival is a work only our Lord can do in our lives drawing us closer to Himself. To be as real as I can be, requires a steady walk with JESUS that builds to a place of overflowing in our lives. As we come together weekly, all of us overflowing and building each other up in prayer and word. When this happens, we will see awakening of the lost around us. "How?" you may ask. It will be the Holy Spirit inside of you guiding you from Heaven. This is something Hell cannot stop. This kind of church will cost us everything, as it did the early church.

Fellowship

The prophet Habakkuk prayed fervently, "O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years." I have story to share that I believe will pull the 40 days together. It concerns Professor J.A. Bengel, in the eighteenth century. His students used to wonder at his great intellect and great humility and Christlikeness. One night, a student decided to find out what was that Dr. Bengel's secret to his holy living. So, he slipped up into his apartment while the professor was out lecturing in the city. He hid himself behind the heavy curtains in the deep recess of the old-fashioned window. Quite a while he waited, unto he grew weary and thought of how weary his teacher must be with his long hours of work in the classroom and the city. At length, he heard the step in the hall and waited breathlessly to learn the coveted secret. The professor came in changed his shoes to slippers and, sitting down at the study table, opened the old well-thumbed German Bible and began reading leisurely page by page. A half-hour he read, an hour and more. Then, leaning his head down on his hands for a few minutes in silence, he said in the simplest, most familiar way, "Well Lord JESUS, we are on the same old terms. Good night."

My prayer is that we might live such a life of unclouded fellowship with our Lord JESUS, always doing that which is well-pleasing to Him, depending upon His Grace for our living moment by moment. That would be a life fragrant with the very presence of the Holy Spirit.

Pray that God will stir up an intensity in the lives of many in the church who will not let go of Him until He pours out blessing.

Pray that we would develop a deeper concern and compassion for those who are lost and have yet to believe in JESUS, than our concern for the physical healing of those who are sick.

Pray that we will be stirred to be the house of prayer for our nation and nations of our world. Isaiah 56:6-7

Pray for an awakening—A time and place when large numbers of the lost are saved.

Pray the Word this week:

1 Samuel 3:10 “And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, ‘Samuel, Samuel.’ Then Samuel answered, ‘**Speak; for thy servant heareth.**’”

Psalm 119:12 “Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: **teach me Thy statutes.**”

Psalm 119:18 “**Open thou mine eyes,** that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.”

This week let’s pray 5 things:

Number One: That we will grow spiritually as a church. Col. 3:16

Number Two: That we will change the World. Matt. 5:14-16

Number Three: That we will reach the World. Acts 1:8

Number Four: That we will have a true Word Revival. Psalm 51:10-14

Number Five: That we will see the lost saved. Hosea 6:2; Prov. 11:30

Let us not forget, we will get out of Revival what we put into it with prayer. One last promise: 2 Chronicles 7:14. Trust the Word of God, stand on it and believe. Then, expect to see a move that can only be explained by saying, “**It was a JESUS deal!**”