

## Preparing For Revival

- *II Chronicles 7:12-14*

- **In just a few weeks, we will be having an evangelist come & speak to us & I am praying for God to send Revival to our church. But God can only send Revival if we are prepared & we are ready to be Revived! I don't believe it is too early to begin praying & asking God to not only come down & meet with us, but I am asking for God to do a work in our hearts & in our lives.**
  - I believe Revival can come & God wants our hearts to be revived, but it doesn't come through a speaker or through singing, it comes through preparation of God's people & a willingness to invite the Holy Spirit into this place.
  - Like many of the blessings of God, the blessing of **Revival** is conditioned. God has made promises, but also He has given precepts, and unless we obey He cannot and will not fulfill.
- **Folks, we ARE living in a dark world today, but the biggest obstacle we need to face today is SIN. And unfortunately sin is not just in the world today, it has crept into our homes & in our churches.**
  - The truth is when you talk to other people about revival, especially in religious circles, you will find a lot of people doubting revival can or will ever take place again because of the **world** we are living in & b/c how bad the **world** has gotten.
  - Well folks, the condition for revival is not that the world get right & start doing what their supposed to be doing, the condition is that the church, God's people, get back on the right track & in a right relationship with God & put Him back where He deserves & commands to be, 1<sup>st</sup> place in our life.
    - Psalm 85:6 - "Wilt thou not revive us again, that *thy people* may rejoice in thee?" So when we speak of revival we must not think of the sinner so much as the Christian.
      - I want the unsaved to come to our services & what a joy it would be to see them get saved. The sinner needs regenerating; he is "dead through...trespasses and sins" ([Ephesians 2:1](#)).
      - But revival is about the Christian being revived. We may have life in Christ but we need life more abundantly. This is why the Lord Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" ([John 10:10](#)).
- **We need revival in our country, but we first have to start revival in each of our own hearts.**
- **Much has been said about revival over the years:**
  - G. Campbell Morgan – "Revival cannot be organized, but we can set our sails to catch the wind of Heaven when God chooses to blow upon His people once again."
  - Howard Spring – "The Kingdom of God is not going to advance by our churches becoming filled with men, but by men in our churches becoming filled with God."
  - Stephen Olford – "Revival restrains the righteous anger of God, restores the conscious awareness of God, and reveals the gracious activity of God."
  - James Packer – "Revival is the visitation of God which brings to life Christians who have been sleeping and restores a deep sense of God's near presence and holiness."
- **Back in II Chronicles 6, Solomon had asked God to make provision for the people's sins, so in II Chronicles 7, Solomon has just finished the Lord's house and then God appears to Solomon one night.**
- **In 7:12-14 God made this provision, "I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or I command the locusts to devour the land, or I send pestilence among my people;"**
  - He begins by assuring the king that He had heard his prayer and would answer it. His eyes would be on the house Solomon had built and dedicated, and His ears would be alert to hear the prayers of His people. The people and their king had dedicated the house to the Lord, but now He would sanctify the house and make it His own.

- And then in v.14, God gives to His people a conditional promise that would be based solely on their obedience to God's request.
- **“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.”**
  - Do you know how revival can come to the First Free Will Baptist Church? It will come by way of HIS people (the church, the saved, those that have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb) getting God back in their life.
- **So church, let me ask you this evening, do you want revival? I am not talking about a week of services, I am talking about genuine revival beginning in your heart & life & then spreading to the people around us, is that what you want? If so, God lays out a plan that will send revival our way .**
- ..

## I. **If My People Will Humble Themselves**

### a. **We Must Rid Ourselves of Pride**

- i. One of the great mistakes of a country and many a people that has led to their fall is the sin of pride.
  1. Proverbs 16:18 – “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
  2. You say, well he must be talking about those people that only come on Sunday mornings. No, I am talking about you.
  3. Some of you will make plans not to attend the revival services. You say, “Well I don’t have to come to every one of the services, its for the lost people anyway.” No my friend, revival needs to take place in your life as well or you would make it a point to be at every service.
- ii. One of the great stumbling blocks in the church that has closed the door on the Holy Spirit and shunned the presence of God from their service & their lives is pride.
  1. We are more concerned with our way than God’s way.
  2. We are more concerned about our desires than God’s desires.
  3. What we deserve than what God deserves.
  4. What we love than what God loves.
  5. And unfortunately many have chosen their own way to God rather than the ONLY way that God has provided through His Son.

### b. **We Must See Ourselves As God Sees Us**

- i. A part of humbling ourselves before God is being honest and transparent enough to see ourselves for who we really are.
- ii. Everybody is a good person. Everybody deserves more than they get. This has become the theme of our society, but also the motto of our churches.
  1. I’m a good person, why would God send me to hell?
  2. I’ve been a part of this church for years.
  3. I know a lot about the Bible.
  4. I give a lot of money to various ministries every year.
- iii. It is so difficult & so hard for us to see ourselves as who God sees us. He sees us as:
  1. Unrighteous
  2. Born & enslaved into sin
  3. Separated from Him.
  4. No hope of Heaven on our own.
  5. Fallen short of God’s standard for our life.
- iv. Instead of seeing ourselves as deserving of God’s love & His sacrifice, we instead need to see ourselves as worthless sinners in need of a Savior or just a sinner saved by the grace of God.

## II. **If My People Will Pray**

### a. **For Our Needs**

- i. There is NOTHING wrong with praying & asking God to meet your needs. We all have needs that only God can meet, and as a matter of fact, God expects us to come before Him.
- ii. How many of you have needs today?
  1. Matthew 6:8 – “for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”
  2. Luke 11:9 – “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”
  3. Hebrews 4:16 – “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
- iii. In the book of Acts 12, the church came before the throne of God pleading that Paul’s life would be spared as he was facing execution.
  1. King Herod had already taken James and killed him with the sword and b/c the Jews were grateful and this murder was pleasing them, he commanded that Paul also be brought before him.
  2. So the church intently came before God & earnestly cried out on behalf on Paul’s life as if his life depended on it.
    - a. When is the last time we prayed as though our life depended on it?
    - b. When is the last time we prayed for the souls of others as if their eternal lives depended on it?
  3. We ought to be earnestly praying for any need that we have in our life.
    - a. Don’t look at your watch to see how long you have been praying.
    - b. Take whatever sacrifice needed to kneel down on your face & come boldly to the throne of God & seek to find an answer in your life.
- iv. There are lots of things that we as a church SHOULD be praying for:
  1. Finances
  2. Country
  3. Leaders
  4. Wisdom
  5. Protection from the enemy
- v. So it is perfectly OK for us to pray for our needs and for the needs of others, but we also need to pray . . .

### b. **For What We Need Most . . . Forgiveness**

- i. Sometimes people will say, “Oh, I feel so guilty praying for myself.” Why? It is b/c we ARE guilty that we SHOULD be praying for ourselves.
- ii. There is not a day that goes by that we should not be asking our Savior to forgive us of our sins.
  1. Maybe you haven’t lied or stolen or committed adultery today.
  2. But what about your attitude?
  3. What about your harsh or degrading words towards others?
  4. What about your wicked thoughts that you had while you were by yourself?
  5. What about your neglect of God throughout your day?
- iii. You see, in order for true revival to take place in our hearts, we must first be willing to ask God to forgive us of our sins & trespasses before we can ask Him to forgive others. Isn’t that how Christ himself taught us to pray?
  1. Matthew 6:7-12 – “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which

art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. **And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

2. Colossians 2:13 – “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;”

iv. Leonard Ravenhill, a Christian author, wrote this ... "The Church is dying on its feet because it is not living on its knees."

### III. If My People Will Seek My Face

➤ What is seeking the face of God all about? Is it just prayer?

#### a. Cry Out For The Presence of God

i. One of the greatest joys we will ever have in our Christian lives is the times where we are in the presence of God.

ii. One of the things that I specifically ask for each and every service is that the Spirit of God would come and minister & convict the hearts of our church.

1. If the Holy Spirit never comes in our service, then we are meeting in vain. If He is not welcome, then none of us are.

2. But we have experienced a lot of services where the Spirit of God was moving, and then we experienced special moments like last Sunday where the presence of God was so real in our service.

3. That is something that we should be striving for every single time we meet with God, but in large part many never think about meeting with God, much less allowing Him to speak to their hearts.

iii. But let me tell you that the presence of God should not just show up on Sunday, He should present Himself throughout your walk with Him. So let me ask you this, does He? And if not, why?

1. In part because many do not want God to be a part of their life.

a. Yes I am even talking about a Christian, maybe even some of you this evening.

b. We love God, we believe in God, but we don't want Him as a part of our life. But why?

2. Other times, we simply never ask God to be in our presence & walk with us.

a. Coming before God in prayer & asking for specific needs to be met is great, but we also need to be crying out that the very presence of God would dwell with us.

#### b. Choose To Live In His Presence

i. After God created Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden, the Bible reminds us that God's presence was with Adam & Eve as they walked in the Garden.

1. He didn't just create them to do their own thing & go their own way.

2. He created them so that they could commune with Him & worship Him.

ii. Our churches today are so consumed with all that is going on around them that they forget the very purpose for which they were created.

1. We were not created to entertain ourselves & seek to meet our wants & needs.

2. We were not created to serve ourselves & be consumed with our own little world.

3. We were not created to run our lives the way that is comfortable & best suited for us.

4. We were created to commune with a Holy God & worship Him & to live in His presence.

- iii. As it was in the Garden of Eden, so it is in our world today. The very thing that has ruined the relationship with Man & God is sin, which leads me to point #4 ...

#### IV. If My People Will Turn From Their Wicked Ways

##### a. Forgiveness

- i. I John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
- ii. Let me tell you this morning that if you are a Christian and you are living in sin, you must find forgiveness for that sin before revival can ever take place in your heart.
  - 1. Maybe you are involved in an unhealthy relationship. You need to find forgiveness this morning & re-new your relationship with Christ.
    - a. Your hanging out with people that you have no business with.
    - b. Maybe you have a relationship at work that you need to stop immediately.
  - 2. Maybe you are involved in some things that you KNOW are wrong.
    - a. Alcohol / Drugs
    - b. Gossip
    - c. Immorality
    - d. If this is you this morning, you most definitely need revival, but first you need to find forgiveness in your life.
- iii. But for the most part, this is not the average Christian’s sin.
  - 1. Maybe your worship hasn’t been what it should be lately. You know what I’m talking about?
    - a. Church has sort of gotten old to you.
    - b. You have got into a comfort zone in your Christian life.
    - c. You don’t have the same zeal for God that you use to have.
    - d. You don’t sing with the same intensity.
    - e. You don’t praise God like you should.
    - f. If you miss a service it doesn’t bother you.
    - g. It’s been so long since you truly worshipped God you have sort of forgotten how to do it.
    - h. Christian if that’s you, you need revival today.
  - 2. Maybe you are not giving your all to God.
    - a. Your saved & going to Heaven, but that’s about as far as it goes for you.
    - b. You have very little spiritual fruit.
    - c. You are satisfied with where you are in your Christian life.
    - d. You have no desire to see unsaved folks come to know Christ.
    - e. You’re not a light of Jesus Christ today, as a matter of fact with the life you are living, you are actually a stumbling block to others.
    - f. Let me remind you this morning that Jesus Christ gave His ALL for us on the cross of Calvary. It is our duty, our privilege, our command & it is the least that we can do to give our lives completely for Him.
- iv. What we need as a church & as children of God is forgiveness on our lives. Forgiveness for doing the things that we shouldn’t & forgiveness for not doing the things that we should.
  - 1. Paul said in Romans 7:15 – “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.”
  - 2. And as we find forgiveness for our sins, may we choose ...

##### b. Repentance (Forgiveness-God doing His part; Repentance-Us doing our part)

- i. Acts 2:38 – “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
- ii. Repentance: to turn; to turnover; to change the mind.
- iii. Repentance is not a real popular subject today, even among the church because it requires some action on our part.
  - 1. What we want in our lives is forgiveness & mercy from any punishment or judgment that is coming our way.
  - 2. What we need is a re-commitment to God and a desire to walk with Him
    - a. Titus 3:5 – “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”

### c. Changed Life

- i. Having a changed life means understanding God’s ways & His direction and following after Him.
    - 1. Psalm 139:23-24 – “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 everlasting.”
  - ii. I was asked to do this for the first time in college & have challenged our youth & our Truth Seekers to do this. In the book, “Steps to Revival”, Mr. Robertson also requests the same thing of his readers in order to experience revival in their hearts. (Pg.9)
    - 1. Sit down with a pad & pen & don’t ask God for anything except this request that we find in Psalm 139. Ask God to point out the things or the sins that are in your life that are separating you from Him.
    - 2. Then wait & listen for God’s response.
    - 3. As God brings things to your mind & heart, write them down separately & be honest with yourself & God. This is NOT supposed to be an easy process.
    - 4. When God is finished, prayerfully ask of Him to forgive you of these things & set out to make a change in your life with God’s help.
- **I don’t know about you, but I need revival in my life and I desire for revival to take place in our church. Before we will ever be able to do anything great for God as a church, we must first allow Him to do a work in our hearts individually.**
  - **God says if we will follow these steps, He will hear our prayer & heal our land.**
  - **Do you want revival in your life? Do you want revival in this church?**
    - What if all God’s people chose to be revived, recommitted & renewed in Christ?
  - **Join with me as we ask for His healing upon our lives, our families, our church & our land?**