

Revival Is Also Being Faithful in the Small Things

by Alan Martin

Revival begins with faithfulness in the small things and grows through community and individual transformation.

Scripture: Isaiah 51:1

Topics: "Faithfulness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of the gospel and the expansion of the kingdom of God. He mentions that despite the small number of believers compared to the world population, the gospel is reaching every continent. The speaker also acknowledges the weakness in the church and the need for revival. He shares his own experience of being stirred by a message but realizing that true fruitfulness comes from submitting to the Holy Spirit. The speaker encourages believers to strengthen one another and to teach the foundational principles of God's word. He emphasizes the importance of living in a way that confirms the reality of God's presence in our lives and sharing this gospel with sinners.

Transcript

Okay, are you with us, Alan? Blaine? Alan, are you with us? Blaine, can you hear me? I can hear you, Jeanette. You're on my... It's star six, Blaine, not star five. Somebody else is talking, Blaine, it's not me.

Okay. Okay, star six. All right, Alan, press star six, brother.

Star six will unmute you. There he goes. Is that... I just heard it.

And you can probably hear me. Okay, we can hear you, brother. Now, go ahead and share now.

Okay, thank you. You know, we should not despise the day of small beginnings. You know, revival is something upon my heart.

Every time I meet a person whose faith is weak, I feel that they need to be revived. A person who's just faltering in their devotion to prayer, I feel they need to be revived. Every time there's a father and mother struggling to see their own children come into the spirit of adoption and see the love of Christ being shed upon their heart, I feel they need to be revived.

And so I'm going to acknowledge and be honest that although I'm very aware of the powerful moves of God of the wealth revival, I'm aware of Azusa Street. That's an area that I'm not certain that I am going to see. What I am certain of is that he that is faithful in the little should be made master over much.

And it would be foolish for me to anticipate something greater if I'm not even being faithful, you know, with where I'm at. If my own wife, if she's not being renewed, my own children, if they're not being renewed, and if the believers that I walk with and live with on a daily basis and meet with every week, or if they're not being strengthened and renewed and encouraged, I think I'd be thinking beyond. I wouldn't be in a sober, reasonable judgment according to the measure of faith.

So revival is very much upon my heart, and I would love to see it multiply to degrees that are beyond. I do believe that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think. But I believe he works with faithfulness, faithful individuals like Ezra.

The hand of the Lord with Ezra was with Ezra because it says he devoted himself to the study, teaching, and observance of God's decrees in Israel. And the hand of the Lord was with him. The hand of the Lord was with David, a man after God's own heart, because it says he shall do all my will.

And I want to become that kind of person. And I know part of the process of reviving a church, reviving a family, reviving an individual, is ministering the grace of Christ that we receive through him, through his Spirit, to other men, one at a time. And I'm not discouraged.

I'm not discouraged about the scale that I'm at least seeing in my own area. I've come to grips, I believe I'm coming to grips with the words of the Lord Jesus. He said himself that the kingdom of God is like a man who took a grain of mustard and planted it in his vineyard.

And though it's the smallest of all the seeds, it grows and it becomes the largest of all the garden plants. And that's the way it was with the Lord Jesus. When he left Jerusalem, when he ascended, he left behind 120 followers.

Out of the 100, Josephus estimated that there would be 100,000 people in Jerusalem during Passover and Pentecost. So 120 people, if you divide that 100,000 by 120, you'll see that that is less than 1.2 persons for every thousand people. That's a grain of mustard seed.

And yet look how vast the kingdom of God has expanded. It is reaching unto every continent so far. And our Lord said it would.

He said the end would not come until the gospel has been preached to the uttermost parts of the earth. And it's still being preached and I rejoice in that. And in the meantime, in my own area, in my own family and amongst the brothers and sisters that I walk with, I seek to strengthen the hands and lift up the hands that hang down and strengthen the weak knees.

Because I do see weakness in the church. I see people needing to be revived and needing to have a strong faith. And I just don't want to underestimate the power of how just a single person being revived can make such a dynamic difference.

And if it turns into that which happened like it did with Duncan Campbell, or the brothers of Azusa Street, or what happened with Hudson Taylor in China, or Spurgeon, or D.O. Moody, praise the Lord, but it's not going to happen in that way until it's happening with those I'm in direct contact with. And that's a desire in

my heart to strengthen them. And I'm encouraged by, I remember verses like, remember Abraham.

There in Isaiah 51, do you remember that verse where it says, Remember Abraham, look to the rock, hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord. Look into the rock when she are hewn, into the hole of the pit when she are dig. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bear you.

For I called him when he was but one, and blessed him, and increased him. And so from one man come descendants that cannot be counted. We can't underestimate the power of one conversion, of one person, one person in a town, one person in a country, being converted, being strengthened, being revived.

And if it, may the Lord do exceedingly abundantly beyond we ask or think. But he does work in small beginnings. And this we need to remember.

When he chooses a person to work through, he chooses that person for a reason. It says of Abraham that he chose Abraham because this. He says, for I have chosen him so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised.

And I know that my part of seeking to help bring revival about in our day is making disciples. Making disciples who will obey all things whatsoever the Lord Jesus has commanded them. And so I gather with a group of men and we pray together on a regular basis.

We cry out to God that all the people that we are directly associated will be being strengthened in the faith, will be abounding in the grace of God, and will be experiencing the life in the Holy Spirit that Jesus Christ called saints to walk in. And then as I have opportunity to see the Word of God and the Spirit of God minister life and strength among the saints that I gather with, I'm also blessed. I'm also blessed to be able to know and to be a part of and follow and lift up in prayer just the work of God I get to hear of and see and be a part of even through prayer calls like this.

And the people I've met through Sermon Index, Greg Gordon, Brother Frank, some of you know as Apollos, Brother Blaine, Brother Roger, Brother Leroy, Sister Charmaine, and there may be many more sisters that I'm not mentioning. But what a joy to know that the Lord still has His remnant and that there are a people still concerned for His name and His honor and that are still burdened to see the gospel go forth not only in our country but in other countries, in China, in Iran, in the Middle East. It's such a blessing to me to share in another brother's burden like Brother Blaine who has a burden for the persecuted church.

And through a heart to see the church being strengthened, I am edified and challenged by hearing and listening and rejoicing to be a part of what I'm aware at least the Lord is doing among His people in various places. I don't, I'm honest, I do not understand why the Lord moves so powerfully in some areas through spirit-filled men and through other equally spirit-filled men they don't get to see the same results. Isaiah saw an angel of the Lord slay 120,000 Assyrian soldiers when Sennacherib and his army mocked the Lord during the reign of King Hezekiah.

But was he any more of a prophet than Isaiah? Was he any more of a prophet than Ezekiel or Hosea or Amos or Joel? No. And how do we explain that? There was a revival during the days of Haggai and Zechariah when the spirit of the Lord came upon them and it stirred up the spirit of the people and the

people came again to work on the temple of the Lord. I don't understand why some men see such dynamic results like Brother K.P. Yohanan and Zach Poonen.

But I rejoice that they do. What I know is that I will never see them if I am not fully obedient and voluntary enslaving myself to serve the saints and devote myself to brotherly love and to see the name of Christ and the gospel of Christ become a reality beautifully adorned by the godly character and conduct that the Holy Spirit and the teachings of Christ and the apostles is producing in the life of the saints. We have a church called Believers Fellowship in Southeast Missouri and if our testimony in our own community is not that we are a joyful, humble, obedient, godly, righteous people all because of the grace of Christ, all because of the work of Christ in us, then we don't have a testimony worth even sharing on a conference call.

I don't have a book to write. And so I'm just honest about where I'm at. I want to see the reality of the grace of Christ actually abounding in all the believers in a local church.

And I want with all my heart to see that life and testimony spill out into a clear, powerful testimony in our community. And I want to come to the place like the early church experience where we were all together in one spirit, no divisions among us, devoting ourselves to the apostles' teachings, to the breaking of bread, to the word of God and to prayer so that the Lord can add daily to those who he's called and gathered. And I had that same desire for any of you on this call or any who might listen to this call.

If it happens in your area, I will rejoice. Oh, what a joy to hear that the word of God is abounding and that people are being changed and people are being strengthened. It's my desire.

I devote myself to this. I want to see the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom come and his will be done through his people experiencing all he desired for them to experience. One of the things we know, we may not know when and where another great awakening or revival will break out.

But we know that each of us have been called to make disciples and to teach all men everywhere to obey everything the Lord Jesus taught and to live in such a way that our lives are a confirmation of the reality of the truth of God's word because we manifest it and demonstrate that although we are weak, just as weak as any other man, that in these weak vessels of clay, the excellency of the power of the presence of the Lord Jesus in us proves to others that God is dynamically real in us and that's the gospel we share. It's that gospel that we have to tell sinners that as they hear through the divine work of the Holy Spirit and as they are granted repentance, that they can be brought into a vibrant, real family of believers who genuinely abound in brotherly love together who from the inside and the outside can be described as genuinely one. One in spirit, one in heart, one in purpose.

What purpose? Oneness. One goal to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to live in the Lord Jesus Christ, to bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, to advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. And on every scale we can, as we can travel abroad and help strengthen the work of the Lord in other countries, as we can pray for the work of the Lord in other countries, our persecuted brethren, our brethren that are poor in other parts of the earth, but just to continually stir one another up so that we can protect ourselves against what the writer of Hebrews warned against, just any of us developing this sinful, unbelieving heart because hearts being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

You know, in our day and time, the Holy Spirit expressly said perilous times have come and we see it. I used to, it was a nice thought when I could think for a season of the out there men turning away from sound doctrine, but I have good personal friends no longer enduring sound doctrine. People that I know

personally, people that I've prayed with, people that I've walked with.

And so, in this day and time, to see believers abounding and growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, becoming godly, being filled with His Spirit, becoming loving spouses, loving and godly and wise parents, and seeing the fruit of righteousness that can only come through the ministry of Jesus Christ, literally produced in the home of the believers so that we have something that the world can't find anywhere. The world can't find peace. The world cannot find the joy of the Holy Spirit.

We have it. If we live in it and we walk in this, this is the gospel we have to share. And we are aware.

And I'm sure most of you, at least the few of you that might be on this call, or those that might hear this message later, we have come to realize out of many years of experience, and myself, all the way back, I have heard Leonard Avenhill preach many times. During the days he was alive on the earth, I had that privilege. I went to the David Wilkerson's Call to Repentance conferences in those early days.

I was greatly stirred and moved. But until the message gripped me to the point where I was willing to submit to it and walk under the constraint of the Holy Spirit can have my life, have my thoughts in every way, it did not begin to bear fruit. It was a powerful truth and a powerful seed.

So it, the Lord in His mercy, preserved His own word in me. But I've come to an honesty that where God's people are, they need to be strengthened in His own way. If I could just pray and the Spirit of the Lord would fall upon people and transform them miraculously and give them instant maturity, how wonderful that would be.

But then why would the writer of Hebrews say to a people who'd become dull of hearing that they need someone to go back and teach them what are the rudimentary principles of God's word all over again. They're not able to handle meat, but they need milk. Sadly and groaningly, I realized we must do this.

Like it's almost as if the Lord, as powerful as He was, just having wiped out the entire Egyptian army, still chose not to lead Israel directly along the Mediterranean coast where the Philistines were because He said that the people were not yet ready. And if they faced war, He knew something would happen in their hearts. He didn't want.

Well, I want God's people to be revived, but I realize He has His own way. He wants to do a thorough work. And I want to labor and give all of myself and all of my time to pour my own life into those saints that I literally walk with and live with daily to see each one of them abound, taking very seriously, not only the hope for another great awakening, or like Azusa Street or the wealth revival or what happened in the ministry of Hudson Taylor or C.T. Studd or other dynamic moves of God, Jonathan Edwards and those in our own country.

But in the meantime, as I wait and hope for those things, I want to see those in my own life living with me, worshiping with me, gathering together, abounding in the grace of Christ now, overcoming sin now, being conformed to the image of Christ in a visible, tangible way so that the teaching of Christ is adorned in the way it's supposed to, by a godly conduct that is blameless before the world. And I believe, you know, it's like, my hope is that when the Lord sees this and He sees the people longing for this, then He will do even exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think according to the power we are cooperating with that is presently at work within us. And so that's, I appreciate all of you to give yourself to labor where you're at and pray for the move of God, not just here, but for the saints in other countries.

And I'm one with you. I want to be one with you. I want to labor with you, just describing a little bit of my own heart.

And, you know, my ability may be to only half of what the faith and vision that the Lord might have given to other brothers on this call, or certainly other brothers like K.P. Yohann and Brother Zach Foon and Brother Paul Washer. But while I bless God for those men that have such a far more reaching ministry than I seem to have, I want to be faithful with my little. And I'm so grateful that the Lord is willing to say, you know, if the two produces another two, you receive the same commendation and same blessing of the Lord.

And I know that there's no hope for a greater outpouring of the Spirit if I'm not even being faithful with the little He's already given. And that's just on my heart, and I want to just add my own labors and my own prayers to those of you that are laboring together to see the kingdom of God advance in our own country and around the world. And I'm grateful.

That's why I love brothers like Brother Edgar and Brother Blayne and Brother Frank, Brother Roger, Brother Leroy, Sister Charmaine, Brother Brian Long, and those that I've come to know through Sermon Index, Brother Greg, and other precious things. And I just want, you know, I'm just one other brother out there, but the Lord does have His people out there groaning and longing for a dynamic work while we're laboring and travailing all we can, you know, like Epiphias did there in Paul's in Colossians, to see a people fully mature and established in all the will of God. And so, Brother Edgar, if you're on the call, I just thank you for just the chance to come on and share my own heart, you know, my own love for the saints, those that I've met through opportunities like this.

And if any of you saints are ever passing through the Midwest and you come to St. Louis, you know, please come. Know you're invited. We'll put you up.

And we want to hear what the Lord's doing in your area so you can strengthen us, and hopefully you'll see something that He's doing among us that will encourage you as well.

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