

# Theology of Revival

by Bill McLeod

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*The theology of revival is about understanding how God brings people back to Himself through a renewed experience of faith and repentance, and how we can overcome the devil's influence by submitting to God and resisting him.*

**Duration:** 51:25

**Scripture:** James 4:6-8, James 4:10

**Topics:** "Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about a man who was struggling with darkness and confusion in his mind. The speaker prayed for guidance and was led to share the scripture from 1 John 5, which speaks about eternal life in Jesus. This scripture brought clarity and hope to the man, leading him to make amends for his past mistakes. The sermon emphasizes the power of the gospel and the opposition we face from the enemy, as well as the need for personal revival through humility and drawing near to God.

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## Transcript

Today, when everybody wants to know what the Bible says in the original Hebrew and the Greek, and nobody wants to do what it says in the English, you know, and could you imagine a couple of Greek scholars, I mean from Greece, and they're arguing about some point of doctrine and they can't agree on it, and so one of them says, hey, let's see what the English says. You know, and that's how they settle it, you know. Anyway, James 4, verse 5, and I don't know what translation you're using, so it may not be exactly the same for you.

Do you think that the scripture says in vain, the spirit that dwells in us lusteth to envy, but he gives more grace? It's a good thing he does. Wherefore, he saith, God resisteth the proud, but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts.

You double-minded, be afflicted and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

And this is followed by the simple statement, speak not evil one of another, brethren. I want to speak tonight on the subject of a theology of revival. I don't know what you think about the phrase itself.

What do we mean by a theology of revival? Have you got any clear idea in your mind? If you had, I wish you'd share it with me. A theology of revival. Since revival would not be necessary were there no devil, no adversary, we'll have to start, I think, there.

God created Adam and Eve as we know, perfect, sinless, no doubt very beautiful, with everything they needed. And this creature came and very adroitly insinuated into Eve's mind a thought that God hadn't really said what she thought he said. Now, the devil was smart enough to know that it would be harder to get Adam.

The Bible does say Adam was not deceived. He knew it would be harder to get Adam because Adam got it directly from God, but she got it from her husband, apparently. And so she was an easier mark, and his strategy worked, and she ate and gave to her husband, and he ate, and we know what followed.

In Isaiah, he speaks about a veil that is cast over all nations. Also in Isaiah, we have this phrase, he says, darkness shall cover the earth, that's the Gentile world, and gross darkness the people, that is the people of Israel. Why gross darkness for Israel? Well, because Jesus said, if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness.

Romans chapter 2, Paul talks about this, the fact that Israel was so sure they were the light bearers, they were the people of God, they had the truth, they had everything. The Gentiles knew nothing, and yet the fact was they were totally blind to the purposes of God and the person of God and all the rest of it. The light that was in them was darkness, how great was that darkness.

But there's a veil cast over the nations of the world. Paul speaks about that in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, when he says, if our gospel be hid, it's hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. And everybody's born with this veil on their mind, this darkness from Satan.

And then to add to this, in Ephesians chapter 6, he says, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers. Listen to this phrase, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. You ever think to yourself, isn't it, how come people's minds are so dark? They just don't see it.

Simple thing like the gospel, they can't grasp it, they don't see it. Well, it's because there's this satanic blindness on people's hearts everywhere. And we wrestle against evil spirits, who will do all in their power to keep you and me from spreading the gospel around, because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

To everyone that believes. Luke chapter 8 reminds us that after the word of God is sown in the hearts of men, then the devil comes and takes away the word out of men's hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. He'll do and his hosts will do all in their power to keep nations in total ignorance, keep them from darkness, the rulers of the darkness of this world.

And then, again in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. I think the reference there is to Genesis chapter 1. God said, let there be light, and there was light. God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has, or the marginal reading says, is he who has shined in

our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Years ago, I guess maybe 45 or 40 years ago probably, I was talking with a sinner. He'd been overseas in the war, and he said, well in his own confession, he crawled on his belly from pub to pub over there, and his mind was so dark. His father was a deacon in a Baptist church, and this kid never had a clue.

He kept shaking his head, and he kept saying, it's so dark, he said. My mind is so dark. I don't know what you're saying.

I don't get it, you know. And this went on and on. And I prayed rather in desperation and said, God, what will I show him? What will I say? And as clear as a bell, 1 John 5 came to mind, and I said, well, I said, listen, here's what God has said.

And I read from 1 John 5. This is the record that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son of God is life. He that has not the Son of God is not life.

And he looked at me and said, wait a minute, hey, he said, read it again. So I read it again. He said, I think I've almost got it.

He said, read it once more, would you? So I read it again. He said, I've got it. I said, what have you got? He said, eternal life is in Jesus Christ.

If I've got Jesus Christ, I've got eternal life. That's the story, isn't it? I said, yes. He was on his knees in the moment and called on God and got saved.

And by the way, he's not only still walking with God. I don't know how many people he's led to Christ over the years, but God touched him in the revival in Winnipeg in 1971, and in a way. At that time, he was very strong in predestination, and he loved to argue.

He'd argue by the hour. And he used to feel a little proud because people said that he could argue anybody under the table, you know. And God really dealt with him in the meetings.

He phoned me long distance one night, and he said, and he's just crying, he said, Brother Bill, he said, the Lord has torn me apart, and I'm lying in pieces on the floor. Do you think he can put me back together again? I said, be patient. Yes, he can.

He can. And, you know, he came forward in the Winnipeg meetings five times in five weeks. When I saw him coming the fifth time, I thought, oh no, not again, this poor guy.

But the night after the fifth time, the sharing time, he came roaring, I mean, he just came running up on the platform, and he got behind the Pope and he said, four weeks and five trips to the altar later, I can now say, I'm filled with God's Spirit. And he was just rejoicing. He's never lost it, you know, but five trips to the altar.

Well, I was in meetings in Victoria a year or two back with Ernie Craddick, I don't suppose any of you, well, Serge probably knows who he is, he was a missionary in the South for many years, and he came forward, I think, four times in the meetings, and they were only a week long, you know, eight days. And I remember the last meeting, he gave his testimony, and he said, if I had known that when Brother Bill came, I'd have to go to the altar four times, he said I would never have had him come. He was just kidding, you know, but God really met him in a wonderful way, but, you know, sometimes people, they don't even come to the

altar, they just, where they're sitting in the congregation, they see the whole thing and they embrace it and they've got it, you know.

And someone else at home, somebody in their car, and other people have to go to the altar five times. Well, I'm getting off the track a little bit here. The God of this world has blinded the minds of those who do not believe.

The gospel is very simple, but it's not easy to believe and understand because of this satanic blindness. We have to know that, and the only thing that will bring light is the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and that's being committed to our trust. It's not surprising, then, that the powers of darkness are constantly opposing us in our efforts to hand out a gospel tract or talk to somebody about Jesus Christ or preach the gospel somewhere.

They oppose this with all their power. We need to know what's going on here. Another problem is this, that we often, we find it so easy just to fall asleep.

You know, in the Old Testament there's a number of texts where people are calling on God to awake. Now, God doesn't sleep, but they're calling on God to wake up. It's just a cry to God for a revelation, something from God, for God to do something.

I mean, I'm sure they knew God was not asleep, but you find this in the Old Testament. In the New Testament you have God calling on Christians to wake up. There's at least three major texts in the New Testament that talk about Christians sleeping or Christians needing to wake up.

Romans chapter 13, he says, It's high time to wake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, let us put on the armor of light, let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and lustfulness, not in strife and envy, but put you on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

So he's saying, considering the time. It's high time to wake up out of sleep. And so only the Spirit of God can do that.

And he's doing it all the time. You know, in the Old Testament it's interesting. It speaks about God stirring up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, so that he issued a proclamation that he said, God, the God of heaven, has commanded me to build a temple in Jerusalem of all his people.

If you want to go, you go. God stirred up his spirit to do that. By his spirit God did this.

And then you find that God stirred up the spirit of the people. And many of them went back to Jerusalem, because God, by his spirit, stirred up their spirit. Now it's not what you'd call a revival, but it's related to revival because they were stirred up to do something that otherwise they would not have done.

First Corinthians 15, there's a verse that says, Awake to righteousness and sin not, for some have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. And you know, you meet Christian people that have never waken up to righteousness.

I led a man to Christ one time. He was so bad. He showed me where he'd been shot.

He was in a union, a union leader of some kind. They kicked him out of the union, he was so bad, you know. And he was living common law, and somebody told me about it.

I went to call on him, and he wasn't home. And she was very leery about inviting me in. But finally I got in the door, and I'm standing talking to him, and he walks in, and he walks up to me and says, And who are you, and what are you doing here? Just like that, you know.

I said, Chum, you better sit down, because when I tell you, you're going to fall right over. And he looked at me and kind of grinned and sat down. I said, I'm a preacher.

Well, he didn't fall down, but it really hit him hard. Anyway, he got saved that night. So did she.

He never had any clue about living a proper life, absolutely none. Nobody would give him a job. His reputation was so bad, nobody would trust a guy.

And so Gordon Bailey gave him a job working with Black Angus Cattle on the farm, just so the guy would have a few dollars so he could do something, you know. And one day this guy says, Hey, Gordon, I hear you're going to show some cattle at a fair or something. He says, Who are the judges? And Gordon said, Why are you asking? Oh, he said, There's no judge in Canada.

You can't buy with a bottle of whiskey and all. And Gordon said, Christians don't operate that way. This guy says, They don't? Really? Then one day he says to Gordon, he says, Hey, listen, he says, Some of your beasts are a little bit lean.

He said, If you get a syringe and put some water and just shoot it under the hide, it'll come out. It'll look nice, you know. And Gordon says, Christians don't operate that way.

He says, You don't? He never had a clue. He had no background at all of righteousness, you know. And we had to work with him.

And I married him shortly after I led the two of them to Christ. And then one day she phoned and she said, Can you come over? We've got a big fight on. So I went over to see him.

And she said, He's been offered a job in British Columbia at about \$50,000 a year, and it's crooked from start to finish. I told him I don't want any part of that. And he says, Honey, it's \$50,000 a year.

And she said, I'd rather have you work at \$5 an hour pumping gas than making \$50,000 a year, you know, illegally. He says, You're kidding. I almost gave up on him, you know.

But Gordon kept working on him. I kept working on him. And finally he began to see it.

They did move out to British Columbia eventually. He got an honest job out there. But, you know, it just took a lot of patience.

But I thought of that verse, Awake to righteousness, and sin not. And then in Ephesians chapter 5, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. See then that you walk circumspectly, and circumspectly means looking all around carefully exactly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil, where for be you not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is, and be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

So what he's saying there is wake up to the possibility of a Spirit-filled life. Awake to righteousness. Understand the times.

It's high time to awake out of sleep. My dad used to set the alarm a half an hour ahead of time, set the clock a half an hour ahead of someone's alarm or not, if he knew he had 30 minutes extra, you know. I've never really done that.

There are some people when the alarm goes off, they turn it off, or else they put a pillow over it, you know, or something else, you know, shut it up, you know. We do the same thing sometimes with God. The Holy Spirit comes to awaken us, quicken us, stir our hearts, and revive us, and we say, I don't want that, you know.

I'll never forget one time a lady, I was talking to her about the Lord, and she was a professing Christian, and she says, my, you're narrow-minded. And I said, you know something, I'm not as narrow-minded as Jesus was, I wish I were. And she just, hmm, and she walked away.

Fifteen years later, God wakened her up spiritually, and that poor woman, she began to seek the face of God again, and she spent a whole year. She couldn't find Him, she couldn't find Him. God really made her pay for those wasted years, you know.

And finally she came through into the light again. No counseling could really help her. I could see what God was doing.

He was burning it into her heart, so she would never make this kind of mistake again. We have an enemy. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, is walking about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Now this leads us to something else in James chapter 4. It says, Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Some of you are aware of this, I'm sure, and others may not be. It's a very important truth.

I have frequently over the years had people say, you know that verse, resist the devil and he'll flee, it doesn't work for me. One guy said, every time I resist the devil, he knocks me flat in the mud. I'm back in all the old problems again.

He said, why doesn't it work? I said, because you're looking only at half the verse. What do you mean? So we look at it. Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

I said, if you don't submit to God, you'll never be able to resist the devil. Because you don't have the power to do that. If you submit to the will of God, then the spirit of God will fill your life, then you'll be able to successfully resist the devil and he'll flee.

And so what is it? What area of your life is it that isn't really submitted to God? As a practical, an illustration of this, down in the Maritimes, there was a fellow named Dave White. He was an alcoholic, and he got saved eight months before I was in the area. But he got drunk at least once a week.

He had no victory over alcohol at all. He almost gave up on the whole thing. And he was in the meetings one night, and I happened to talk about this verse in James chapter 4, submit yourselves therefore to God

and resist the devil, and the light went on.

He saw the thing as clear as a bell. Talked to his pastor the next morning and said, would you drive me into St. John's? And you'll likely be coming home alone. On the way in he told the pastor what had happened.

Twenty-two years before, he had skipped bail. He was out on bail and he'd skipped, he'd been hiding from the police for twenty-two years in various small towns in the Maritimes. And he said, God showed me last night I've got to go to the police and make everything right.

And he said, I'll likely be in jail for a while, so you'll be coming home alone. Well, he got to see the chief of police. He was away on holidays, but the deputy chief was there, and he took one look and said, Dave White, where have you been? We've been looking for you for twenty-two years.

So he told him where he'd been hiding. And then the guy says, why did you come here today? Well, he said, I got saved a while ago. I came to know Jesus, my personal Savior, and I want to be right with every area with God.

And the deputy chief began to bawl and finally said, three years ago a preacher led me to Christ and I fell off in the ditch of the King's Highway. And he said, you guys coming today? He said, I'm back in the King's Highway. He says, Dave, you forget about the past.

We'll wipe the record clean. You go and live for your God. Do you know what happened? In twenty-four hours, he had permanent victory over alcohol.

That's all it took to submit to God, you see. And a parallel case like this, out in Alberta, a young man who was attending Prairie Bible School, woke up one morning and discovered he had very strong homosexual tendencies. He hated this whole thing.

He never had any interest in it. He hated it. He knew it was an abomination and all of this, but there it was.

It fastened on him and he couldn't shake it off. He never got involved in it, but he knew that down the road he was going to if he didn't get some help. He was afraid to go to the authorities at the school for fear they'd kick him out of the school.

And then Cecil Carter, a friend of mine, was ministering at the school and he went to him for counseling. And he told Cecil the problem and Cecil said, What's your attitude to your father and mother? And the kid looks at him, What in the world has that got to do with it? Never mind, he said. Just answer the question.

Well, he said, I love my mother, but I hate my father. He's a skunk. And so Cecil read to him from Ephesians chapter six, Honor your father and your mother, which is the first man with promise that it may be well with you.

He said, Young man, is it well with you? No, he said, It's awful with me. He said, It'll never be well with you till you honor your father as well as your mother. And explain this to him.

Submit yourself to God. Resist the devil. The kid went home, got to his dad, made everything right with his dad, and woke up the next morning and the homosexual thing was gone.

And Cecil checked him out twelve months later. It had never returned. He'd submitted to God, and this thing was gone.

It was broken by the power of God. And so sometimes what God will do to make us face up to issues, He will withdraw, He'll allow us to get into an area that we can't handle, because He's trying to get us to submit to His will in another area. So submit yourselves therefore to God, and then resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

We're talking, remember, about a theology of revival. Why do we need to be revived? We need to be revived because we have a powerful enemy called the devil. We need to be revived because we have an ally in that wicked old self that is an ally to the devil.

For example, in Isaiah 22 it says, The Lord God called to weeping and mourning and baldness and sackcloth and ashes. And what did He find? He found eating and drinking, slaying oxen, killing sheep, eating and drinking. And the philosophy was, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we dine.

God said, This iniquity will not be purged from you till you die. We have the same thought here in James chapter 4. Be afflicted and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. What does He find? Well, you know what they're doing in some of our best Bible schools today? They have youth plates where they invite comedians to come. And they send out their advertising.

I've seen it and I've read it myself. And the advertising goes like this. You won't want to miss this.

This guy will have you rolling on the floor with laughter. People, that stinks. That kind of stuff.

That's not what we need. Be afflicted, God says, and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness.

There's a place for humor. I'm not against that. Billy Sonny said God likes a little humor.

It's evidenced by the fact he made the monkey the parrot to some of you people. That's not the problem. But when we're seeking the face of God and seeking for revival and seeking for the power of God, there's no time to be listening to a bunch of wisecracks, you know.

And they're doing it, of course, in these schools to get crowds. It's much like the Willow Creek thing down in Chicago. They have dances for young people in the church and everything else.

Bill Hybels, you know. And a lot of churches have adopted this program. And they think it's great.

So some friends of mine went to a Willow Creek church on a Sunday morning service. They thought they were in a nightclub. The music was all from the world.

Everything was strictly from the world. You could come there just wearing a pair of shorts. You didn't have to wear shoes or a shirt or anything.

It didn't make any difference. Just come, you know. And the idea was to give the world what they're accustomed to and to get them into the church and then ask to get them into the church and sneak the

gospel in somehow.

Do you know what churches find who have adopted this program? I know one church that adopted this program. And through the program, they were adding 30 or 40 new members every year. And you know what they found? Their finances did not increase \$1 a year because of these new converts.

They were not committed. They did not want to teach Sunday school. They didn't want to be active in the church at all.

They just wanted to have a ticket to heaven. That's all. Don't bother me with anything else, you know.

I think of the Old Testament. There's a verse that says, "...Israel has forgotten his Maker and built temples." We've done something like that today in the church of God. Because we've lost the power of God, we need to see the return of God's glory.

So we're reaching out in desperation in all directions, trying to get a hold of something that will somehow bring the crowds back to our churches. You know, somebody went to Bill Hybels, the pastor of this huge church, 22,000 members in Chicago, this Willow Creek Church, and asked if he would mind if he was to do a little kind of a poll in his church. And Hybels said, fine, go ahead.

And I saw the poll. I read the results. Now, with 22,000 members, he's probably got several thousand people in the congregation who are divorced people.

And that's not unusual. I was in one church in the United States where everybody in the church, 500 members, everybody was divorced at least once. Some four times.

Anyway, in his poll he discovered that divorced people in the church, 42% of them were currently involved sexually with somebody else. That they were not married to. 42% of them.

And young people, I'm not sure, I think it was 28% of the young people in this congregation were currently involved in fornication. Almost none of them were tithing their income. He didn't find one person in the church that could say they had a meaningful relationship with someone else in the congregation.

So it's not the kind of a church we see in the New Testament. And I'm not trying to be critical. I'm just saying I'm concerned about some of the things we see happening today.

People reaching out to the world for help instead of reaching out to God. So, God is saying, wake up. Are you sleeping? A theology of revival? We pray for God to speak to our wife, or speak to our husband, or speak to our kids, or speak to our neighbor, or speak to our boss, or speak to our employees perhaps.

We rarely ever pray for God to speak to me. And that's where the problem lies. We assume we're okay.

And maybe we aren't. And the Spirit of God is constantly... As a matter of fact, you know, in Isaiah 66, God said, the heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. Stop and think of that for a moment or two.

If God was to walk through the Pacific Ocean, he wouldn't get wet up to his ankles. If the heaven is God's throne and the earth is just a footstool for God, it gives you a little idea of how great our God really is. So then he goes on to ask this question, you know, where is the house that you build unto me? If we could build a temple reaching right around the world, God could only get his feet in.

Where is the house that you build unto me? Where is the place of my rest? All those things are my handmade. All those things have been. But God said, here's where I'll look.

In other words, what he's saying is this. I won't look at your costly buildings. I've been in some costly buildings.

One building, they had a stone pylon which cost them \$40,000 or \$50,000 standing beside the church for the birds to roost on. \$40,000? Do you know something? In third world countries, you can fully support a missionary, a church planter, or a pastor for about \$30 a month. Do a little arithmetic.

\$40,000, how far would it go? Anyway, remember one church I was in? The baptistry was such a work of art. People used to come for miles just to see people baptized. Boy, I was in one church, you know, with seat 5,000.

And back of the platform, they had the Jordan River with the whole thing painted on this huge wall. And then they had water coming down into the baptistry. They could handle 30 people at a time in the baptistry.

Well, they were baptizing 1,000 converts a year. And personally, I was quite impressed with that particular church because they were really basing it on the Word of God. I remember being down in the basement.

They had a tiny little kitchen, you know, about the size we might have in one of our houses. And I said, Is this all you have for a kitchen? Well, sir, everybody's got a kitchen in their house. Why do we have to have a kitchen in church, you know? And I discovered that the organizations in church, they were only allowed to have one social a year.

And you talk about soul winning. That church had started 200 churches. That one church, Akron Baptist Temple.

Dallas Billington was the founder. Grade 5 education. Murdered the Queen's English every time he opened his mouth.

But the power of God was on his life in a remarkable way. His son Charles is now the pastor. They've had to enlarge the building to seat 7,000 since Dallas died and Charles was taken over.

But such a simple message they had. It was wonderful to be there. Oh, by the way, I asked Charles, I said, How did your dad get all these people soul winning? Oh, I said, It's quite simple.

Dad says do it and they do it. Boy, I thought that's pretty simple. No program, no plan, no training.

Go and do it. And they all go and do it because they love the man. They trusted him.

All right. So the Holy Spirit, because we have an enemy and because we have the flesh to contend with, because we're so liable to fall asleep, and we often do this, the Spirit of God is constantly knocking at our door trying to wake us up. I remember a fellow one time, he had a son, just one child, and he was not a Christian, although he came from a Christian family.

His son was killed in a tragic car accident where six young people were wiped out. And they had a community funeral at Strathclyre, Manitoba many years ago. Anyway, he got saved after this happened, after his son died.

And then he said to me, You know, he said, Think of it. What a fool I've been. I have to wait until God put a coffin on my back before I bend my knees.

And sometimes we hold out against God that far. You know. He's got to put a coffin on our back to get us to bend our knees and experience revival.

The difficulty doesn't lie with God, dear people. It lies with us. We've got a thousand other irons in the fire, you know, and other things we want to do and be.

And we don't want God saying too much or coming too close. And consequently, we're flat out spiritually oftentimes. As Christians, I mean.

He gives more grace. God resists the proud. God gives grace to the humble.

Surely, it says in Proverbs, He scorns the scorners, but he gives grace to the lowly. And sometimes, you know, in mock humility, say to God, Hey, God, I'm such a little guy. You know, I'm not anything.

I'm terrible. I'm horrible. I'm a piece of garbage.

It's mock humility. We don't really mean this. You know, if somebody else called us a piece of garbage, we'd be ready to fight.

I suppose that one of our major problems is this. We just don't have time to get along with God. We have the time.

We have to make the time. But we don't have the time. And we can hope for revival for 40 years and never see it because we didn't have the time.

I said something about the cost we paid in prayer in Saskatoon prior to the revival. And we did. God was waking people in the night.

And different people in the congregation were telling me how they're awakened every night. And they were telling me, You know, I used to be prayed out in five minutes. I'm not prayed out in a whole hour now.

I think what happened was this. When God saw we were in earnest about revival, He responded to that. And He gave us what the Bible calls in Zechariah a spirit of supplication.

That is a spirit of prayer. Because in Zechariah it says, God said He would pour upon the house of David and the heavens of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication. One translation says the spirit of grace to supplicate.

That's a gift from God. You know, Phineas spoke about what he called the spirit of prayer. He said if I ever lose the spirit of prayer, I can't converse effectively with sinners and I can't preach effectively to saints if I ever lose the spirit of prayer.

And he looked on the spirit of prayer as being a specific gift from God. You never hear anything of this today. You never read anything along these lines today.

But I think I know what he means. Because certainly God responded to us when we began to put prayer first and really get into this. And God responded to that and deepened the spirit of prayer that we had until the revival came.

So the Holy Spirit has to deal with the devil. He's got to deal with the flesh in us. And it's not an easy thing.

The eyes of the Lord, the Bible says, run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him. In other words, God is searching the world, looking for a man through whom He can show Himself whose heart is perfect towards Him. You read about people like Hezekiah in the Old Testament, Hezekiah and Josiah and so on.

And if these men and others like them, it will say that what he did, it says of Hezekiah, that what he did, everything he did, he did it with all his heart, and he prospered. Joseph became mighty because he prepared his ways before the Lord. He brought God into everything.

Let God give the plans and do the things that God wanted him to do. And so he became mighty before God. All right, so, a theology of revival.

I am nothing, God is everything, God wants to fill me. You know, in Ephesians chapter 3, he speaks about us being rooted and grounded in love. Do you remember that? That you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you might be filled with all the fullness of God.

I don't think there are such things as being filled with the fullness of God. You can be revived, but you may not be filled with the fullness of God, unless, unless we die to self. Spurgeon said, the fullness of Christ never enters our life until we die to self.

You know, Spurgeon, as a young person, he was 15 or so when he came to a conviction, got saved, and then he thought about baptism, and he decided he should be baptized, but then he discovered that baptism symbolized death to self. So he spent weeks with his Bible off in the woods. He prayed by the hour.

And he told friends, I refuse to be baptized until I can say that I'm dead to myself and alive to my God. And after several weeks of seeking the face of God this way, he came to a place where he could say that he was dead to himself and alive to his God. He applied for baptism.

He was baptized in a river dividing two counties in England, and he joined a Baptist church. His mother was congregational. She said, Charles, I often prayed you might become a Christian, but never that you'd become a Baptist.

And he said, well, Mother dear, you know, the Lord answered your prayer with His usual bounty and gave you more than you asked for. He was invited to pastor a little church at a place called Water Beach in England, not too far away from London. And it was instant revival.

It's just so great to read about it, you know. Here's this kid preaching in these cottages and whatnot, and about 300 people got saved in a couple of years, and drunkards were being converted, and the worst of people were finding Christ. It was just instant revival.

Now, people say, well, didn't Spurgeon smoke? Yes, he did. Well, how do you explain that? Was he really? The thing he was into, he gave himself to it day and night. And the doctor said, you know, what you need to do is to start smoking tobacco because it will really calm your nerves.

So he had this medical advice. He took this medical advice. He quit smoking after he discovered that he'd got some bad advice.

He did not smoke all his life. Matter of fact, I've read sermons of his in which he invaded very strongly against tobacco-smoking, beer-drinking pastors. Many people don't know that.

And so we have to remember this. Anyway, revival, the Spirit of God, I suppose, oftentimes, you know, there's a verse in Jeremiah. God says, Hear you and give ear.

Be not proud for the Lord has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before He caused darkness and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains. And while you look for light, He turns it into the shadow of death, into gross darkness.

And then God said, But if you will not hear, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride. And I'm sure that sometimes God is weeping in secret places because He's trying to revive an individual, to revive a church, to get the church on the road. One pastor said to me, My church is on the grease rack so much of the year, I never get it on the road.

And you hear this everywhere you go, see, never getting on the road. Got some people in the congregation that are always fussing, you know. People like this need to be dealt with.

You know, a friend of mine, he moved to Vancouver, and he was the kind of guy, as soon as he moves, he gets into a good church and gets busy and all. He attended the first business meeting, and it ended in a great big fight. It was a huge church.

I forget how big, I think around a thousand members. And anyway, they had this big fight at the business meeting. Because some guy got up and shot off his mouth and pounded the table and made a great big roar there.

And finally, ladies were crying and the pastor was embarrassed and finally asked everybody to get on their knees and the pastor led in prayer and dismissed the meeting and they all went home. So he made some inquiries, my friend did. How long has this been going on? Oh, they said 25 years.

This guy, he does it every time there's a business meeting. If he doesn't get his way, he does his thing and it ends up in a crying spell. Well, I had a second business meeting and the same thing happened.

And my friend Dave, he told me what happened. He said, we were kneeling there and I said, oh my, he said, I just prayed and said, oh my God, don't ever let it happen again. And there was a thud and the guy dropped dead on the floor from a heart attack.

And Dave said, I shook for a week, I didn't mean this to happen. But sometimes that's the only way. But God is looking for people and looking for churches.

They'll just give in and surrender to him. Like it says here in James chapter 4, draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Can I ask you a question? Do you believe that? That if you draw near to God, that God will draw near to you? That's what it says.

Some people say, well, I draw near to God, I don't sense that God is there at all. It's got nothing to do with how you feel. God said it, you have to believe it.

It says in 1 Peter chapter 1, Whom having not seen you love, in whom though now you see him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. There's a faith element there. Romans 14, 17, 18, the kingdom of God is not meat and drink.

The Old Testament kingdom was. You know, when David became king, he gave everybody a flag and wine and some flesh to eat and so on. And of course, the Old Testament system says in Hebrews, it stood only in meats and drinks and different washings and carnal ordinances imposed on the people during the time of Reformation.

But Christ has come. So the kingdom of God today is not meat and drink. He says it's righteousness and peace and joy and the Holy Ghost.

For even in these things serves Christ as acceptable to God and approved of man. That's Romans 14, 17, 18. Romans 15, 13 is kind of an echo to that.

And it says, A God of hope fill you with all joy and peace. And what are the next two words? In believing. A God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.

And Peter said the same thing, only he used the phrase yet believing. Whom having not seen you love and whom though now you see him not, yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The faith element, in other words.

So the Bible speaks about the gospel being preached in 1 Peter 1 with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. I'm afraid many times the gospel is preached without the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. In 1 Thessalonians 1 Paul said that the gospel came not to these people in word only but also in power and the Holy Ghost and in much assurance he said as you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.

I'm afraid many times the gospel comes in word only. The Holy Ghost is not there. We haven't asked him to be there.

We haven't prayed to be filled with the Spirit. We're not really believing God for that and so nothing happens. When the Bible says grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby you were sealed into the day of redemption he means exactly that.

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice and be kind and tender hearted forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. I was in a church one time that had a revival a year before about a thousand people in the church and they told me they said Bill I was only there for a Sunday morning and they said you'll be swept off your feet by the love and the enthusiasm of those people and man I just walked out there and sat up the platform and you could just sense it the air was electric you know. It was the easiest place I think I ever preached in.

Seemed like everybody was saying sickom preacher you know. Everybody was with you. And I mean the front pews were crowded with people.

There was a few empty seats at the back and you knew a revival had come. But so few churches are really being blessed in this way. Is the Holy Ghost dead? No.

Is God failing? No. Do you know how many promises there are in the Bible? There are 7,487 promises in the Bible. Do you know how many verses there are in the Bible? Just about 31,000.

7,487 promises in the Bible. Okay so some of you are saying in your hearts but a lot of those promises don't apply to me. Okay let's scale it down.

Let's say there's only 2,000 promises in the Bible applying to you. 2,000 promises? Hey wait a minute. How in the world can I be living at such a low level spiritually when I've got thousands of promises from God.

They are everywhere in the Bible. And Peter calls them exceeding great and precious promises. And says that by these we become partakers of God's divine nature having escaped the corruption that's in the world through lust.

And so the Holy Spirit comes with the promises of God and He tries to persuade us through the promises of God to stand on the promises to believe. Romans chapter 4 is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. It says about Abraham that he didn't stagger at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in faith giving glory to God being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform.

Do you live at that address? Dear people we need to live at that address. We take the promises of faith value and we stand on them. Ask you of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain so the Lord shall make bright clouds and give them showers of rain to every one grass in the field.

Why not believe that? I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my spirit in your seed and my blessing upon your offspring. They shall spring up as among the grass as well as by the water course.

Why not believe that? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Why not believe that? And I say there's thousands of promises like this in the Bible everywhere to encourage us. And the Holy Spirit is using them to try and bring revival to individuals and revival to churches so that the work of God may be accomplished. Well in James chapter 4 let's look at it again.

He gives more grace. Wherefore he says, God resist the proud but gives grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners.

There's two kinds of sinners saved ones and lost ones. Paul didn't say I used to be the chief of sinners. He said I am.

Cleanse your hands you sinners and purify your hearts. You double minded. Be afflicted and mourn and weep.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning. Your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.

I call this God's recipe for personal revival. It's part of the theology of revival. How God works in reviving individuals.

How God works in reviving churches. He tries to humble us so he can fill us with himself. You ever think of this? Like in Ephesians chapter 3. Jesus Christ lives in your heart and mine.

Right? Yes he does. When I sin I take Jesus into that sin with me because he lives within me. Take one example.

If I watch a pornographic movie a video or something on TV I'm forcing the Christ who lives within me to watch it with me. You ever think of that? Gordon Bailey and I were in a meeting one time and a fellow came for counseling. He was deeply involved in pornography.

But three weeks before he and his wife had gone forward in a missionary meeting and surrendered their lives to God for full time missionary work. They said there's no way we can carry this through because he said we're both hooked in pornography. I said don't you want to be free? No, he said actually I don't want to be free.

He said I enjoy it too much. I didn't know what to say and I just thought and God gave me the thought and I said well then just think of this. Every time you watch this filthy garbage you're forcing the Christ who lives in you to watch it with you.

Do you know what happened? He fell on the floor and he began to bawl like a baby and he began screaming to God oh my God I never knew what I was doing to you. And he just wept his way to the cross and God met him there. It was so beautiful to watch but he never thought of this before.

Last I heard of him and his wife they were in Bible college. They may be graduated now. I don't really know.

The problem's not with God the problem's with me. I'm standing in God's way and he's waiting for me to die to myself. There's a little poem Spurgeon sometimes quoted Praising God with all my might In the sea of God's delight Self is drowned and I am free Christ and love remain in me.

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