

A Desperate Hour Calls For A Radical Response

by Brian Long

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Duration: 1:02:54

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Transcript

It is a wonderful privilege to be here. And I want to thank God for Sermon Index and praise the Lord for Brother Greg Gordon. I know he he loves to stay low and hidden, and I appreciate that about him very much.

But I want to give at least one testimony to Sermon Index to the glory of God and how he's used Sermon Index. Um, I believe it was the second conference in Atlanta, near Atlanta, second revival conference. Um, in one of those prayer meetings, there was behind the scenes, um, the Lord spoke to us in that prayer meeting, and he said that he was linking the preachers together with the intercessors.

And he did that, and that has changed my life and ministry. And I was thanking God yesterday morning, and I just paused and I, uh, it occurred to me had I never come across this ministry, the number of brothers and sisters that are dear to my heart. That I would they would be out of my life right now, had it not been for this ministry, I think of my dear brother Frank, who I'm sure is online, I think of Sister Charmaine and Brother Merle and so many on this prayer call on Tuesday nights where my life and ministry has had a tremendous impact through that.

So there's much that the Lord is doing that may not be seen by the natural eye. But I tell you, God is at work through it. So I praise God for it.

And I thank God for Brother Greg. Would you turn with me to John chapter 11? John chapter 11. The message that the Lord has.

Spoken to my heart, I'm calling a desperate hour calls for a radical response. A desperate hour calls for a radical response, John chapter 11. Beginning in verse one.

Now, a certain man was sick named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore, his sister sent unto him saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God might be glorified thereby. Now, Jesus loved Martha, her sister and Lazarus. Let's pray.

Father God, I know that this message has come from your heart of God. For that, I don't doubt. But I'm asking you, Father, for the power of the Holy Spirit to deliver it, father, that it would be you speaking through this weak human vessel, Lord, that your power would be made perfect in weakness.

And father, that we would hear what you have to say to us and to your church at this critical hour, as if, Lord, it were our last call, as if it were our last conference. Lord, even as if it were my last time to preach, I sense a trembling, Lord, in my soul. And I'm asking you for grace.

I'm asking you, Lord, to help us to hear what you are saying in the name of Jesus. Amen. Let me draw your attention to verse three.

There's a simple but desperate prayer that's coming from these sisters because they're at a very critical hour. They see their brother and he's getting sicker by the day. They're very concerned.

And in verse three, they offer this. They sit for the Lord with this simple prayer. Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

Lord, behold, what does it mean to behold? Say, well, that means to see, but it's more than that, brothers and sisters. It's not a passive glance that they're talking about here. They're saying, Lord, behold, look, Lord.

One definition is it means to denote surprise. Look, Lord, look, it is an urgent hour. The one you love is sick.

It's not a passive glance. It's to look intently upon the situation. It's when your eyes, what you see, gets a hold of your heart.

What Mary and Martha saw and beheld was serious. It was very critical. Their brother Lazarus was dying and they could see it.

And what they saw had gotten a hold of their heart. And that's why they said this desperate prayer to the Lord. Behold, the one whom you love is sick.

This came home to me about a year ago this time. My oldest son, Luke, began to become very ill. And he was vomiting sometimes 13, 14, 15 times a day.

And he was growing weaker by the day. And we couldn't figure out what was wrong with him. And we took him from doctor to doctor and there was still no answer.

And this went on over a period of weeks. And he's getting sicker. He's not getting better.

And the day came when he lay in a hospital bed. Him and his mom, my wife and I just praying, crying out to God and praying desperately that this is not cancer. Because all the signs were pointing to the fact that that's what it was.

And the day came when this oncologist, a cancer doctor, walked into our hospital room and he asked to speak to my wife and I privately. And in the course of the conversation, he got straight to the point that he said, look, your son has acute myeloid leukemia. It's another way of saying, look, your son has cancer.

That's the word that no parent wants to hear. Another way of saying is, behold, the one you love, he whom you love is sick. And brothers and sisters, that's what my wife and I heard and saw with our eyes, got a hold of our hearts.

We beheld and it affected our heart. Remember the prophet Jeremiah in Lamentations chapter three, when he said, my eyes have affected my heart. Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, he says in verse 48 of Lamentations chapter three.

My eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. My eye trickles down and ceases not without any remission till the Lord looked down and behold from heaven. My eye affected my heart because of all the daughters of my city.

This is the kind of beholding that I'm talking about. It's when the spirit of God opens your eyes and you see the church like you haven't seen her before. And when you look at the church, once the Lord has opened your eyes today, you see that the church is in a very desperate and critical state.

It is a desperate hour. That's the kind of beholding I'm talking about. When what you see gets a hold of your heart, what Jeremiah saw, he felt.

But what Jeremiah saw pained him deep in his soul because the people of God were in a state of desolation. It was a time of destruction and despair. It was a critical hour.

It was a critical hour for Mary and Martha, and that's why they were so desperate for the Lord Jesus to come. In the same way, desperation for revival comes to the child of God whose eyes have been opened by the spirit of God to finally see. And I want you to notice two things that they're crying out to the Lord Jesus in this prayer.

First of all, Lord, behold, the one you love. And secondly, that he is sick. Behold, the one you love, Jesus loved this man, Lazarus, verse five tells us now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

Often he would go to their home and they would fellowship together. He would have a meal there. He loved him.

Later on in the thirty sixth verse, the Jews said, behold, how he loved him. Jesus loved Lazarus. Behold, Lord, the one you love.

But brothers and sisters. What about the church of Jesus Christ? Behold, her scripture says, husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church. Jesus loves his church deeply.

He bled and died for her. He gave his life as a ransom for her. She is his.

He shed his blood for her. He's preparing a marriage supper for her. He's coming back again just for her.

Jesus loves his church deeply and he loves his church jealously. Behold, Lord, the one you love. The secondly, Lord.

Behold, the one you love is sick. The church of Jesus Christ is in a critical, critical illness. A sickness.

And let me clarify, because I know the Lord will have a pure, spotless bride and he does have a pure, spotless bride. We've been talking so much about the persecuted church. And when we look at that beautiful bride of the persecuted church, beloved, she's not sick.

She is not ill. She is healthy. She loves her Lord Jesus deeply and supremely.

And we have much to learn from her. The Lord has a church, but he's also got a remnant, I believe, even in North America who loves him deeply, who is not sick. But we also know, don't we, that most of the professing church of Jesus Christ in the West today is anemic, powerless, lifeless and sick.

Behold, Lord, the one whom you love is sick. And I tremble to speak about the church this way because I know how much Jesus Christ loves her. But I remind you, brothers and sisters, that it was the church of Ephesus that the Lord Jesus had to rebuke and say, you've left your first love.

And it was the church of Sardis that Christ said, you have a name that you're alive, but really you are dead. And it was the church of Laodicea that the Lord said, I'm about to spew you out of my mouth, literally means I'm about to vomit you out of my mouth. You say that you're rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing.

But I say that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. And it was this church. Of Laodicea, that the Lord is actually standing outside, knocking, I drove into Dallas, I'm looking at all these churches and I'm wondering with tears, Lord, how many of them are you on the outside knocking, waiting for someone, any man to come and open the door that you will come in and stop again.

I was in a church a few years ago, just happened to be traveling, I was passing through on a Sunday, my family was with me listening to a Christian radio station. So I called up the radio station. They gave a number and I said, are there any churches in this city that you would recommend? We had about an hour before most churches begin their morning worship.

And the man said, yes, there's one in revival right now, I said, I want to go there. And he told me the name, how to get there, and we sat for about five, 10 minutes and my heart broke. Because what they were calling was revival was absolute chaos and flesh.

And it was grieving the heart of God, I kept saying, Lord, I don't want to be critical. I want to know if this is you, Lord, if this is me, tell me. And the spirit of God spoke to me so clear and he said, Brian, I'm not even in here.

And I saw in my heart, if you will, the Lord standing on the outside and it broke my heart. And I said to my wife and the children, let's go. The church is sick.

The one whom the Lord loves is sick. Laodicea is lukewarm. Sardis is dead.

And Ephesus, how much of the church today is like the church of Ephesus? She has left her first love, Jesus, and she has gone after another lover called the world. And she has done that because she has an undivided she has a divided heart, an adulterous heart. James, chapter four, says you adulterous and adulterous is no, you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God.

Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do you think that the scripture saith in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? Do you think he says in vain? That Christ loves his church jealously? He loves her deeply. And yet, what must we say about ourselves, what must we say about the church of Jesus Christ today? You see, Lazarus.

Was behind a stone, he ended up in that tomb behind the stone, Jesus said, take you away the stone, and I sense the spirit of God saying somebody has to remove the stone and get honest and see what's going on behind there. That's a place of death. That's a place of darkness.

And if we get honest with ourselves, we say what that church back there that's sick and is now dying and it is now dead, why? It's because she's looking just like the world, she smells like the world, she acts like the world, she loves money like the world, she winks at sin like the world, she's entertaining like the world, and really she bears no distinction between the world and herself. Can the church in North America today truly and honestly say we have no king but Jesus? Can she? Can she say he alone will we serve and that we love him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength? Can she say that with an honest heart? She can't say that, and the reason why is that she's left her first love, Jesus, and she's gone after another lover called the world. Verse two says Lazarus was sick, but it was a very serious sickness.

It was so serious, in fact, that it did lead to death. Verse 14 says, Then Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. You see, the church of Ephesus was sick.

She had left her first love, but the church in Sardis was dead. And what is a dead church? It's a church that is devoid of spiritual life and power. It's a church that is full of form, but no fire, full of words.

We have all these teachings and words, but where is the demonstration of the spirit and of power? A dead church. And the tragedy, folks, is that our country is full of them, absolutely full of them. Be it Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Presbyterian, Brethren, Mennonite, non-denominational, it really doesn't matter anymore.

Without the life-giving power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the manifest presence of the living Christ, it's a dead church. It's a dead gathering. And therein is the crisis.

And therein is the desperate need of the hour. The one the Lord loves is sick. Behold, Lord, the one you love is dying, and in some cases she is dead.

In some cases, it's been four days. And I know some of you know what I'm talking about, or you wouldn't be at a conference like this. You've seen the one the Lord loves is sick and your eyes have gotten a hold of your heart by what you see.

And you're tasting this thing that we tasted when we saw our son sick with cancer. You're tasting this thing called desperation. There's a desperation in your heart.

Because, you know, the time is short, your eyes have gotten a hold of your heart and there's a desperation for a God sent revival. You've read the Gospels, you've read the book of Acts and you read of great revivals and great awakenings in the past. And then you behold the church today and you see no comparison and you weep.

You've beheld. And your eyes have gotten a hold of your heart. And you're desperate for God.

And you're hungry and thirsty for Christ. And your prayer is like that of Mary and Martha, Lord, behold, look down on us. Lord, see us.

See the one you love, she's not well, it's been four days. Is it too late for revival? Four days wasn't too late for Jesus. And I don't believe it's too late for Jesus now.

But I'll tell you this. It is a desperate hour of crisis, and you've got to let that get a hold of your heart. We're not it's too late to play games.

It's too late to talk about things that don't matter. One of the things that would grieve my wife so much when we were in this battle with my son, who's dying of cancer, is when folks would show up and want to talk about things that don't matter. We're talking about life and death.

There's a desperate cry in our hearts, and you want to talk about who won the game? Or what the weather is like? Desperation. Because it's a desperate hour. And here's what makes it so desperate to me.

Not just what I'm beholding, what you're beholding, but what does our Lord behold? When he looks down and he sees the sad state of the church today and how she's given herself to worldliness instead of true worship. Entertainment instead of earnest prayer. Form, but no fire.

Talk and words, but no demonstration of power. I tell you, the Lord must weep. Even as he wept over Jerusalem, he must weep.

What is the Lord's perception? Of the untold lost multitudes who sit in church pews every single Sunday and they are destined for hell, but they don't know it because some wolf, some hireling, some wolf in sheep's clothing has deceived them into thinking, into believing that they're saved when they're not saved. And he's crying peace, peace, when there is no peace and judgment is at the very door. How does the Lord behold that? To see multitudes in America deceived on Sunday morning.

Who are lost. How does he behold what we beheld on those slides the other night in that Gospel for Asia prayer meeting, when you see multitudes, vast sea of souls who've never heard the name of Jesus. And never heard the true gospel of Jesus Christ, and you know why? Because so few preachers are going, so few missionaries are being sent out, which is a result again of the cold, callous, complacent condition of the church.

Behold, Lord, the one whom you love is sick, the one whom you love is dying. Another thing that gets a hold of my heart is when I think about how very near we could be to the return of Jesus Christ. Folks, he's coming again.

And if you know, you know Christ and you're walking with him, there's the spirit of God has given you an urgent there's an urgency deep within your spirit that says Christ is at the very door. And should there be no repentance and should there be no revival, what is the Lord Jesus Christ coming back for if he were to come right now? What kind of bride? Is he returning for right now? See, this intensifies the desperation in my own heart, is it not? I know it does many of yours as well. And that's why you're here.

You've tasted desperation and such God given desperation always compels us to do something. It compels us to desperately cry out to God like we've never cried out before. It compels us to pray.

Unlike we've ever prayed before, Mary and Martha were desperate because their brother was dying, and that's why they sent for the Lord with this simple but desperate cry. Lord, the one you love is sick, but we go on to verse 20. And you see that Martha continues to cry out.

Verse 20, then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. She went after him. She went to meet him.

We meet him, brothers and sisters in prayer. Verse 21, then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou had been here, my brother had not died. And surely when the Lord Jesus Christ is present and preeminent in the church, the church will never die.

She will live in revival. Verse 22, but I know, she says that even now, even now, whatsoever thou will ask of God, God will give it thee. When Luke was diagnosed with cancer, I remember desperately, desperately.

Immediately looking for somewhere that I could let this cry out that's coming up from my gut. This desperate cry to God, where can I need to find somewhere, some way, somehow, some quiet place where I can not just whisper a prayer, but cry out to God. I finally found my car, got in the car and I said, oh, God.

Oh, God. And by the grace of God, this just happened twice, but two times was enough. I remember one night, the only two times that he ever really broke down.

But the first time he said, Dad, I'm scared. I don't know if I'm going to make it. I put my arms around him and I buried my face in my pillow and I said, oh, God, oh, God, my son, my son.

This desperation compels a desperate cry, there's no more room for passive prayers and cliché type prayers, you're needy. You're desperate and you're saying, God, if you don't come, but see, there was a there was this hope within me like Martha had that even now, Lord, as gloomy as the situation looks. As hopeless as so many of these reports that are coming to us, look, even now, Lord, even now you can touch him, even now you can revive him.

But I'm telling you, it's coming from desperate crying out, desperate prayer, desperate prayer was my wife. Martha crying out to God day and night and it's crying, screaming, saying, God, just put the cancer on me. God, do whatever it takes, but please spare my son, desperation is seeing her, I couldn't get her to eat, I could not get her to sleep.

Why? Because it's a critical hour. Our son was dying and like the persistent widow in Luke chapter 18, you give God no rest day and night, but you pray and you pray and you pray and you pray until you know he's heard your cry, until you know you've been heard. Only the desperate will cry out, God, do whatever it takes, whatever the cost, but God, sin revival.

For your name's sake, for your honor, does it not bother you? I know it does, brothers and sisters, to hear the heathen mock and scoff at your God and they blaspheme his name because of the hypocrisy of those who are called by his name. The name of God is blasphemed among the heathen because of you, Romans says, Paul says, and it should bring us to a place of desperation of saying, God, how long? God does not hear every prayer. I believe there's much prayer that God never listens to, but he does hear the prayer that is prayed purely and desperately from the broken and contrite heart of his beloved child.

He hears that prayer. And there comes a time when a child of God must literally cry out to God. With from the depths of your soul.

But the truth is, most are too dignified to do that. Most are too sophisticated to do that. Most are too proud to do that.

You know why? Because they've not come to a place of desperation. They're not desperate enough. We get desperate enough, we cry out to God that way.

The cry of the desperate is, Lord, I can't live without you. And I can't I can't live just listening to sermons. I can't live just going to conferences.

I can't live just hearing about revivals in the past. Lord Jesus, I need revival now. I need you and I need you now.

In this present hour, in our day. That's the cry of the desperate. Desperate.

One preacher said, I'm so tired of hearing about someone who knew someone who knew someone who knew someone who knew you. I want to know you. Is he alive today? Is he the same God of revival today as he was yesterday? He is.

But are we desperate? Are we so desperate that we say, Lord, I cannot live without you. And because of that, you're desperately crying out to him in prayer. Desperate prayer.

Desperate prayer is the prayer of the Canaanite woman. In Matthew, chapter 15, one of my favorite passages on prevailing prayer. Matthew 15.

And look at verse 21. Then Jesus went thence and departed into the coast of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coast and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David.

She's crying, she's crying out in desperation. My daughter is grievously vexed with the devil. When I saw those pictures the other night of the Dalits.

And those women that were being treated the way they were, you know what I saw? My daughter, Kaylee, Hannah, Holly, my wife, Martha, and it brought me to weeping. You see them as your daughter, this woman's daughter was grievously vexed with the devil. And because she's crying out to God and she's not going to let Jesus go.

Until she gets an answer, but watch what happens. Verse 23. He answered her, not a word.

Most stop praying right there. I pray. He answered me, not a word.

And they stop. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away, for she crieth after us. There's the discouragement that comes as people say, why are you taking this so seriously? Let's just pray through our little health list.

Mary has a bad toe and whatever else and go home. And you get all this discouragement to pray for revival and most many stop, not this woman. Verse 24, but he answered and said, I'm not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, even more would give up praying here, would they not? It's like he's saying, I'm not sent for you.

She doesn't stop praying. Verse 25, then came she and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs.

Ninety nine point nine percent people praying for revival at this point would say there's no hope, let's stop. She is desperate, like Jacob, she's laying hold of God, I will not let you go to you, bless me. And so she says in verse 27, truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

And Jesus answered her, and I believe with a smile, said, oh, woman, great is thy faith. This is what I'm looking for. Someone who will believe me, someone who will get desperate enough to lay hold of me and not stop praying until they hear from me.

Desperate prayer, fervent prayer, but it's also we learn from this passage, it's faith filled prayer. She believed, and that's why she wouldn't let go. You see, if you have desperation without faith, then you end up with hopeless despair.

And you just give up. And the Lord says, can these bones live and the faithless say, I don't know. It's been four days.

Can these bones live and the hopeless say, our hope is gone and and we're cut off, where is faith? Where is faith when the son of man returns, will he find faith on the earth? He found it in the Canaanite woman. We were desperate when Luke was suffering with cancer, but we were not in hopeless despair. And this is why.

God gave us three, he gave us more than three, but especially three wonderful promises from his holy book made personal to our hearts. The first one was Psalm 41, verse one through three, blessed is he who has regard for the weak. The Lord delivers him in times of trouble.

The Lord will protect him and preserve his life. He will bless him in the land and not surrender him to the desire of his foes. The Lord will sustain him on his sickbed and restore him from his bed of illness.

The second promise was John 11 for. This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God might be glorified thereby. And the third one came on the day that we were just before we were the Sunday, just before we were to go check into the hospital.

And I asked my brother Kevin Turner to come preach for me that morning. And I'm sitting on the front pew, and just before he gets up to preach, the Lord speaks to me just so clearly. John 11, 40 said, I not unto thee that if thou would believe, thou should see the glory of God.

My wife had stayed home with Luke that day. I couldn't wait to get home and share with her this promise. She said, Brian, let me tell you what happened to me today.

She said I was in streams of the desert. You've heard of streams in the desert, that devotional. She said, I pray, God, I don't want to, you know, I don't I'm desperate.

So I'm just going to open this up, and I'm going to trust that it's a word from you. And she grabbed streams in the desert, and she opened it up. And it was to Martha, said I not unto you.

My wife's name's Martha. She said, did I not say to you, Jesus said, that if you would believe, you would see the glory of God. Faith, three promises that we laid hold of by faith, and on March the 2nd of this year, God turned the tide for my son.

He had a bone marrow transplant, which brought him to the very brink of death itself. In fact, the doctor told me he pulled us aside and he said, we are going to bring your son to the very brink of death. And on March the 1st, I saw that he was not exaggerating, it was bad before then, but nothing like that night.

And that night, Luke had vomited so much blood, you can't imagine, he was actually vomiting the lining of his stomach and some of the lining of his throat. And it was the smell of death. I grew up on a ranch and I smell lots of dead cattle, and this is what I was smelling coming out of my son's mouth, black blood.

And I stayed up all night crying out to God, and looking over what appeared to be, finally, the lifeless body of my son, too weak to cry, too weak to even groan, pale, white, and it looked like it was too late. But I remember crying out to God, staying up all night and saying, but Lord, you promised, you promised, remember your promise, Lord. This sickness shall not be unto death.

You see, before that, before I got those promises, I ran outside and I said, Lord, unless I'm mistaken, you can only be saying one of two things to me. Either you're saying that you're going to take Luke to be home with you in heaven for your glory, and it's going to be difficult, Lord, but I'll submit to that. Or you're saying that you're going to touch and heal him for your glory.

I'm willing to submit to either, but God, you have to give me a promise. I won't make it through, Brother Jose, without the word of God. I won't make it through unless I know I've heard from you, unless I know I have a promise from your book spoken to me.

If I have that, by your grace, we can go through either one. And that's when he gave those three promises. So the night of March the 1st, I'm crying out, Lord, remember your promise.

And March the 2nd, that morning, something happened. God turned the tide. And Luke opened his eyes, the life flowing through his veins, he began to speak.

And he, his body was restored rapidly, amazed the doctors, one doctor who was not a Christian at all. He was beside himself. So I don't understand.

He said, we haven't seen this quick of a recovery. And by the grace and mercy of God, we soon after walk out of that hospital, not never to go back, not even to look back. I remember walking out of that, praising God, except for to go back and pray for those who are suffering for the same thing and pray with them.

But God revived him. And during that time, I believe God was speaking to my own heart that my own son was a type of the church. It looks too late.

Some people are saying it's too late. But Jesus says no. And, you know, I'll share this with you briefly.

I didn't know if I would share this, but on our way down here to Dallas, my wife was cleaning out some boxes upstairs. And she came to this notebook and she opened it up and it was a little journal that Luke had kept. We never knew about this before he ever got sick.

And she read this to me just weeping over the phone, I said when I got to the motel, read it to me again, I'm going to write it down. Luke writes, 12 years old. God is the light of the world.

He's like a forest fire that cannot be stopped. But we're like a big house where everyone looks at us and admires us when they don't know what's coming. Then the fire hits you and you're on flames, but there is firemen trying to put you out.

Will you give in or will you keep on burning with heat? I let them put me out, but I'm letting him come back and light me up and I'll burn until I die. Then the fire will spread off of me and light other things on fire and hopefully the whole country will be on fire for God. I want to be a seed, not a weed.

Brothers and sisters, the church whom the Lord loves is sick. Most of Christendom today is but dead religion. We are desperately in need of a visitation from the almighty God.

But God awaits the desperate, fervent, faith filled cries of his people. Those who will lay hold of God's promises. You say, do we have such promises for revival? The whole book is full of them.

But just this 11th chapter of John, three of my favorites, one being this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the son of God might be glorified thereby. John 11, 40, did I not say to you, if you would believe you would see the glory of God and then my favorite of all. John 11, verse 25, Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? Jesus is saying, I am revival.

I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

The question is, do you believe this? Do you believe that this is the truth? Do you believe that that Jesus Christ is revival? Martha says, Lord, if you'd only been here. But Jesus says, no, Martha, if you would only believe, did he not say. That if you would believe you'd see the glory of God and when we cry out to God with fervent, faith filled prayer from hearts that are desperate for God himself, something happens.

God answers our cry. To him with his cry to us, we cry out to God and he answers and responds with his cry. You see, Martha's cry was Lord, even now.

Yes, they say it's too late. It's been four days. But but Jesus, even now, and Jesus responds to Martha's cry with his cry.

And what is his cry? John 11, 43. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. That's his cry to the desperate cries of his people.

You see, we cry out, Lord, your church is sick and we are a part of that, brothers and sisters. I put myself in that circle and say we have sinned. We have left our first love.

We have a name that we live, but are really dead. We are lukewarm and have grieved your heart. And we cry and Jesus cries, then church come forth, arise, come forth to Christ.

His call is a cry to come forth out of the grave. Look at verse thirty eight. Jesus, therefore, again, groaning in himself, coming to the grave, it was a cave and a stone lay upon it it was a cave, it was a place of darkness and death.

It reminds me of a time when Elijah, the prophet. That mighty prophet of God who had seen revival. But just days later is running for his life and so depressed and discouraged that he's even requesting to God that he might die.

And he ends up in a cave. A place of darkness, a place of death, a place that no child of God belongs in the church sure doesn't belong. You remember what happens? God comes to Elijah and he stands outside of that cave and in a still small voice, he says, Elijah.

What are you doing in here? Two times, Elijah, what are you doing in here? And I believe the Lord Jesus Christ would say to his church today who are wrapped in grave clothes. And it's swallowed up in darkness as it is in this place of death to his bride, what are you doing in here to the request we had a while ago, people watching online saying I have this besetting sin, this addiction, you're crying out for prayer, you're in a cave because there's a false sense of security and there's a place of death. You have a bottle or pills or whatever in there.

And God is saying, what are you doing in there? You don't belong in there. You don't belong in there, child of God, Jesus Christ did not save us and call us out of darkness into his marvelous light so that we would go right back into darkness. Set us free from the grave clothes of sin only to go be wrapped up in them again.

God forbid, here is a prophet of God cowardly hiding in a cave. Jesus is coming soon, and when he does, is he going to find his church cowardly hiding her light in a cave? A darkness wrapped in grave clothes. Swallowed up by death.

God forbid it, God forbid it. God called Elijah out of that cave and he's calling the church of Jesus Christ. Come forth, come forth, church, out of your darkness and into his life, out of your death and into his life, out of the grave, come running to Christ.

And this is the beauty of it to me, is this call to come forth is not just a call to come out of the grave. It is especially a call to come unto the Lord Jesus Christ, who is revival. He said, I am the resurrection and the life.

What are you saying? Christ is revival. Revival is Christ. And if we could see the glorious risen Lord Jesus Christ standing outside of that grave, we would shut off our grave clothes.

We would come running out of that place of darkness and what am I doing here? We would run to him one glance at the glory of Jesus Christ and we would run to him. We would come running out of the cave. Lazarus, come forth.

Verse 44, he that was dead came forth. Bound hand and foot with grave clothes in his face was bound about with a napkin. And Jesus said unto them, loose him and let him go.

That's revival. Revival is Christ. Revival is coming out of the cave when Jesus says, come forth, it's responding to his voice and coming forth.

And listen, you can come out of all the dead religion you want, all the traditions of men you want, all the dry doctrines. But if you don't then wholeheartedly come to the person of Jesus Christ, you're just as dead. You just end up with crazy chaos and lasciviousness is all the difference.

But you're just as dead. It's coming to Christ, not just out of, but unto. You can come out of all the worldliness and the compromise, and so we must.

But if we then don't come to Christ, our first love, you end up just as dead, only with legalism and rigid rules and lifeless, powerless churches. Revival is Christ and Christ is revival. Many are so convinced they have all their doctrines and theology, right? They have all their eyes dotted and all their teeth crossed, and they're so convinced of it, they'll tell you so.

But they're just as dead as Lazarus's tomb. You know why? They did not embrace the person of Jesus Christ. He is not their passion.

Why is doctrine your passion and not Christ? Why is theology your passion and not Christ? Listen, if anything is a greater passion to you than the Lord Jesus Christ, you're guilty of idolatry. When Christ is your passion, when Jesus Christ is your greatest, grandest obsession, your doctrine will fall into place, your theology will be right when Jesus is everything to you because he is revival. He is life.

And I know doctrine is important. I'm telling you, Christ is everything. He is all in all.

I am the resurrection in the life. I love that. I am.

This is not just a promise for revival of yesterday. I'm so weary of that. I love hearing about what God did, but within today now and Christ is standing outside the grave saying I am.

Nor is it just a promise for tomorrow and for the future. I am the resurrection in the life. Come forth to him and whosoever lives and believes in him is revived.

You see, if we really believe this. There is no reason at all that every single one of us right here could not or should not leave Dallas, Texas, fully revived if we're not already. If Jesus says I am the resurrection in the life and it's simply a matter of responding to his voice when he says, come forth and you come running to Christ, to his life, we should be living in revival and we should not have to say, well, maybe next year.

Christ is here, I am the resurrection and the life. Come unto Christ. He is life is called to Lazarus was come forth, is called to you and I is come forth, is called to his church, is come forth.

It's really the same cry that we read of in Revelation, chapter 18, when God's people are caught up in Babylon. And what is his cry? Come out of her, my people come forth. Judgment is coming, come forth, come out of her, my people, that you be not partaker of her sins and that you receive not of her plagues.

I'm not at all a promoter of the kind of church splits that come because of schisms or division in the body that are caused by carnal arguments and strife among brethren. I know that that kind of division absolutely grieves the heart of God. But did you know there's another kind of division? And that is actually brought about by God himself, where God is the author of it.

There's a time when Jesus brings not peace, but a sword, and men have to decide to stay in Babylon where man has the preeminence and where Christ is no longer exalted or to come out of her. To follow Jesus Christ as their all in all, and together with believers who want Christ to have the preeminence and who will worship him and follow him as their all in all. And that kind of division is what we experienced in Barnstall about three months ago.

It wasn't planned, it wasn't pre-orchestrated, we didn't even know what we were doing really, except for that we were basically being pushed out, but we didn't know what we were doing when we came out, except for that we wanted Jesus Christ to have preeminence in everything, in all things, beginning in my heart and then in my home and then in all things. And the first time that we met outside of the established church that we were in, we actually met in a barn. And the Lord filled that barn with people and with his presence, especially with his presence.

He met with us and his glory was manifested and people were encountering the living God and experiencing his presence unlike they ever had before. Some of them been in church all their life. God is just waiting for a people who will be hungry for him.

These are people who are hungry and thirsty for the Lord Jesus Christ, not just what he can do for me, but who he is. And they gather and the Lord filled the barn. And then after being there several weeks, we get this call and this lady who doesn't even live in our town, but owns an old building.

She had heard about what was going on and she gave us the old building down on Main Street for two years. She said, do whatever you want with it. It's an old bar.

So if you want to sell anything in that bar, sell it and keep the money for the ministry. And we went into this old bar and we're cleaning it out and one old brother, Brother Leon's walking around and he said, last time I was in here, I was drinking whiskey. Now I'm cleaning it out as a house of worship.

That literal, the literal actual bar had a padded lining around the edge of it. As soon as I saw that, I said, altar, kneeling altar, and we cut down the bar and we made an altar. One brother said, I used to rest my elbows on this and my drink.

Now he's resting his knees as a child of God, he's here today. We prayed over that altar and we said, Lord, let this altar be covered with tears of repentance, soaked with tears of repentance and tears of joy for people who are coming to know you, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let it be a place where they kneel and they encounter you and they come to know you.

Where they are saved. And God is answering that prayer and he's doing it over and over again. Hallelujah.

It's the work of the Lord. Come out, come forth. It's the cry of his heart.

The Lord Jesus will have a church and she will be a pure, spotless bride. There will be a remnant. The question is, will you and I be a part of it? You see, young Evan Roberts was in a meeting.

When a deacon stood and posed a question that deeply challenged him. That deacon asked. What if the spirit came? And you were absent.

What if the spirit came? And you were absent, what if revival comes? And you're absent, many are absent. And Evan Roberts said right then to himself, I will have the spirit. There was a desperation in this young

man, I will have the spirit.

And he said, through all weather and in spite of all difficulties, I went to the meetings, the prayer meetings. Many times I was tempted to turn back, but no, I said no. I said to myself, remember your resolve to be faithful.

And for 10 or 11 years, he prayed for the revival until finally in 1904, God stepped down upon Wales, but he used a young man who said, I will have the spirit. I will not be absent. The Lord will have a church.

He will have a remnant. Will you be a part of it? Will I be a part of it? I will, Lord, by your grace, I will. I'm coming forth.

I've heard your voice. There's a remnant who will hear his voice and the big question, OK, who is this remnant, Brother Brian? It's whosoever will respond to the sound of the Lord Jesus Christ's voice when he says, come forth, that's the remnant. It's whosoever will believe Christ and take him at his word when he says, I am the resurrection, I am the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

Who believes that? Who lays hold of that? Who responds to that? That's the remnant. Whoever will come out of darkness and into his marvelous light, who will come out of the grave and come running to Christ and listen, this remnant, when they hear the sound of his voice, they will throw off every stitch of grave clothes. These grave clothes represent sin, and this remnant gets serious about repentance, serious about obedience.

They strip it off. You know why? Because they love the one standing outside that grave who sets them free. And that's my prayer, that's been my prayer even here is, Lord, if there be a stitch, a thread of grave clothes, pride, seeking honor, anger, greed, love of money, whatever it is, if there be even a stitch, get it off of me.

You've got to be radical about repentance. I'm telling you, a desperate hour calls for a radical response, and that radical response is to get rid of your grave clothes, turn from your sin and come running to Christ. That's the remnant.

They follow him because they love him. They follow him wherever he leads. Once having been a slave to sin, they become a bond slave to the Lord Jesus Christ, a love slave.

They love him and they will not go back. They will not even look back. Can you imagine Lazarus coming out of those grave clothes and running to Jesus and having any desire whatsoever to go back to that tomb? No.

It's now, Lord, wherever you lead, I'll follow. This remnant, their first love is Jesus Christ, their grand obsession is Jesus Christ, their greatest passion in life is to glorify Jesus Christ. Christ is everything to them.

He is their life. He is their breath. He is their all in all.

Christ has their loyalty, all of it. He has their affection, all of it. He has their devotion, all of it.

Therefore, when the Lord Jesus says to this remnant, take up your cross and follow me, they obey. When he says, go and preach the gospel to every creature, they go. And they go forth in the same power by

which they came forth.

They go in the power, the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit. This remnant will refuse, they will absolutely refuse to just do church and business as usual. They can't do it, this remnant will not be satisfied, they cannot be satisfied without revival, they cannot and they will not be satisfied with anything less than Jesus Christ himself.

They will not rest day and night until Christ alone has the preeminence in everything, in all things. That's the remnant. They will cry out to God day and night.

The scripture says today, if you hear his voice, harden not your heart. And so here's the danger, brothers and sisters, hearing a message, hearing the Lord Jesus say, come forth and you think it's for another day. He says, I am the resurrection and the life.

And you think revival tomorrow. No, revival now, if Christ is here now, he is the resurrection and the life. The destiny of each and every one of us here today depend upon our prompt response and if you will, our radical response to the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When he says, come forth, the revival we seek depends upon our response to Jesus Christ when he cries, come forth out of the darkness, a desperate call, a desperate hour calls for a radical response. Come forth. That's his message.

And when you hear him say you see that the response really is crying out to God in desperation. With faith filled, fervent prayer. But I'll tell you, I'll guarantee you, if you pray this way with a burden that comes from the Lord for revival, you pray this way, your cry will move the Lord Jesus to cry, come forth, and when he cries, come forth, you better come forth, you better come out of the grave clothes and come running to him and go follow him wherever he leads you.

Father God, Lord God, no man can work up desperation, Father. You have to open our eyes by the spirit of the living God, by your spirit, you have to open our eyes, Lord, to see what you see. You have to open our ears to hear what you hear.

You have to open our hearts, Lord, to feel what you feel. And Father, I'm thinking of when we were praying over Luke and how desperately, Lord, we were crying out to you. I believe you've given me the same burden, Father, for the church.

It's a desperate, critical hour. Help us, O God, help us to cry out to you, Lord, help us to cry out to you in desperation, Lord, to come, Lord Jesus, to come hear our cries, to come revive us once again. Lord, we have sinned against you.

We have grieved your heart. Lord, we've been lukewarm. We've had a divided heart.

We've had a name that we live, Lord, but we're dead. We've left our first love and Lord Jesus, the risen Christ, we hear your voice standing outside the grave, crying in a loud voice, come forth. Give us the grace, Lord, to respond to your voice with all of our hearts, with every fiber in our being to respond to you, God, to come running to you, Jesus, be our greatest, Lord, our greatest love, our grand obsession.

Let every other passion die, but my passion for Christ. Thank you, Lord. Come forth, church, come forth.

Amen.

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