

Returning to the Reviver

by David Ford

This sermon emphasizes the need for a revival and a return to God's presence, highlighting the importance of brokenness, humility, and a genuine desire for God's glory. It calls for a deep reliance on the Holy Spirit, a recognition of personal sinfulness, and a willingness to surrender to God's will. The speaker shares powerful stories of past revivals and challenges the audience to seek God's presence with faith and expectation.

Duration: 1:06:20

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for a revival and a return to God's presence, highlighting the importance of brokenness, humility, and a genuine desire for God's glory. It calls for a deep reliance on the Holy Spirit, a recognition of personal sinfulness, and a willingness to surrender to God's will. The speaker shares powerful stories of past revivals and challenges the audience to seek God's presence with faith and expectation.

Transcript

Lord, Father, we just bless your holy, precious name. We bless the name of Jesus. We bless the name of Jesus.

And we have come to hear from you today, Father. We have come to hear words from you, Lord. And Lord, I pray that you would bless this messenger.

I don't even want to say his name, Lord. I just want to say that you would bless this messenger. And that we would have ears to hear the word that you would speak to us through this brother in Christ.

And that his heart would be yielded and open to receive what he has brought here today, Lord. And his heart is humble before the people. It's a mighty thing to carry the word of God, a message to the people.

It's an awesome thing. It's a responsibility. And I pray that my brother would open his mouth and we would hear God speak to us today.

And that we would hear what he has to say to us. And I just pray that he would be anointed this day, anointed right now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you, Jesus.

Once again, Heavenly Father, we are bringing our brother before you. He comes in weakness as we all come. And so I ask that thou fill him with your strength.

That the anointed power of the Holy Ghost would be upon him. That he would bring forth the message. He would be the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message.

And that our ears would be opened to hear what you have to say to us. May we not miss what you have for us. In Jesus' name.

Father, just by your living Holy Spirit, flow through this great jar. Don't let him touch your glory while it comes through. And don't let him hold it back.

Just flow through him with your wind, Father. And whatever you have to say, say through your servant in Jesus' name. Thank you, gentlemen, for your prayers.

For me. And it is a great honor to be here today. In light of the magnitude of the need of the hour that we face.

D. M. Panton defined revival that we pray. That prayer is God the Spirit talking to God the Father in the name of God the Son. And that believer's heart is a prayer closet.

And how God can enlarge our souls to pray. The man or woman quickened by the Holy Spirit of God in his spirit. Regenerated, his spirit being made alive under God.

Indwelt by the spirit of the living God. The soul is for communion. And the key to usefulness is when there's been a brokenness.

And when the place of the spirit of communion can flow through our soul. There's contemplation. On who Jesus is.

There's the release of the spirit from our innermost man. Out of us through our soul. And we can truly contemplate.

And look upon the face of Jesus. The often finisher of faith. Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despised and ashamed.

And is sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. It was in Isaiah was in the presence of God in Isaiah 6. He said, woe is me for I am undone. For I am a man of uncleanness.

For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. And when there's a brokenness. When God smashes you.

And works out as it were by the power of the cross that Jacob in our own nature. Then all we want is to see Jesus. All we need.

Is to see Jesus. And the greatest need that a man has is not a new program or plan. It is a fresh revelation of Jesus.

That's why Fanny Crosby writes. When I shall see him face to face. Blessed assurance Jesus is mine.

Oh what a foretaste of glory divine. Heir of salvation. It goes on this is my story.

But the second verse perfect submission. All is at rest. I am my savior.

I'm happy and blessed. Watching and waiting. Looking above.

Filled with his goodness. Lost in his love. This is my story.

This is my song. Praising my savior. All the day long.

This is my story. This is my song. Praising my savior all the day long.

In the book of Ruth. You'll turn there if you have your Bible. Ruth chapter 1. Joshua judges Ruth.

Deuteronomy Joshua judges Ruth. Then a wonderful passage of scripture. The story of a person who lost this vision of God.

Who left this vision of God as it were. The Bible says. Now it came to pass.

In the days when the judges ruled. That there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem Judah went to sojourn.

In the country of Moab. He and his wife and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech.

And the name of his wife Naomi. And the name of his two sons. Mahlon and Chilion.

Ephrathite of Bethlehem Judah. And they came into the country of Moab. And continued there.

And Elimelech Naomi's husband died. And she was left and her two sons. And they took themselves wives of the women of Moab.

The name of the one was Orpah. The name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years.

And Mahlon and Chilion died also. Both of them. And the woman was bereft of her two sons.

Her husband. Then she wrote with her daughters-in-law. That she might return from the country of Moab.

For she had heard in the country of Moab. How the Lord had visited his people. In giving them food.

Amen. Wherefore she went forth. Out of the place where she was.

And her two daughters-in-law with her. They went on the way to return unto the land of Judah. And Naomi said unto her two daughters-in-law.

Go return to her mother's house. The Lord deal kind with you. As you have dealt with the dead and with me.

The Lord grant that you may find rest. Each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them.

And they lifted up their voice and wept. And they said unto her. Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

And Naomi said. Turn again my daughters. Why will you go with me? Are there yet any more sons in my womb.

That may be your husbands? Turn again my daughters. Go your way. For I am too old to have a husband.

If I should say I have hope. If I should have a husband. Then I should also bear sons.

Would you wait with Terry for them till they were grown? Would you refrain from marrying? No my daughters. It grieves me much for your sake. The hand of the Lord is gone out against me.

And they lifted up their voice and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law. But Ruth clung to her.

And she said. Behold thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people. And unto her gods return you after your sister-in-law.

And Ruth said. Entreat me not to leave thee. Or to turn away from following after thee.

For where you go I will go. And where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people.

And your God my God. Where you die will I die. And there will I be buried.

The Lord do so to me. Death part thee and me. When she saw that she was fastly determined to go with her.

Then she ceased speaking unto her. So they too went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass when they were come to Bethlehem.

That all the city was moved about them. And he said. Is this Naomi? And he said unto them.

Call me not Naomi. Call me Marah. For the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

I went out full. And the Lord has brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me Naomi? Seeing the Lord hath testified against me.

And the Almighty hath afflicted me. So Naomi returned and Ruth the Moabitess. Her daughters-in-law with her.

Who returned out of the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem. At the beginning of the barley harvest.

Lord Jesus. We bow in prayer this afternoon. And I confess Lord to you.

My absolute dependence on you. Lord Jesus. A man does not show up with revival in his pocket and pull it out.

I come to you through the blood father of your son. The cleansing and conquering blood of Jesus. And I ask you Lord to fill your servant afresh.

Because I leak. And I ask you oh God. To show us Jesus.

To show us Jesus. Sir. We want to see Jesus.

And we bless your holy and glorious name. And in the words of that song. Descend holy fire on me.

Descend holy fire on me. Oh purge me. Cleanse me.

Enflame my soul. Descend holy fire on me. On us.

Ascend holy fire from us. Ascend holy fire from us. A fragrance so pure for thy glory.

Ascend holy fire from us. Please send holy fire through us. Please send holy fire to us.

To all that's lost in the darkness of sin. Please send holy fire through us. In Jesus name we pray.

And all God's people said it. Amen. Proverbs 14.14 says a backslider at heart should be filled with his own ways.

We have a cast of characters here in the book of Ruth. I'm going to go slowly. Because I want us to see who's involved here.

We have Elimelech. Whose name means my God is king. Naomi means pleasure.

Pleasant one. Moab literally means God's wash pot. Malan means sickly.

Chilion means failing, pining in death. Ruth connotes friendship. Orpah means hard neck.

Boaz means swift strength. And here we have a story where it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled. As you recall in the book of Judges.

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. And whenever you have that kind of philosophical ideology filling and flooding a land. God will withdraw his glory from the land in greater and greater measure all the time.

Because they cease believing in and trusting in the living Christ. Be the God of who they are and why they're even there in the first place. This nation was founded by believers in Jesus Christ.

Who would get on their knees and cry out to God for God to move. This man was founded upon the preaching of George Whitefield. Who died September 30, 1770.

Who cried out to God day and night for God to shake the land. And God did. It was founded upon men like John Nettleton and Charles Grandison and other men of God.

And women of prayer. And God used them mightily to turn this nation upside down. When Columbus landed they knelt on their knees.

And committed this land to the glory of God. To be a place of the movement of the spirit of God and evangelism. That's how it began.

And by faith I'm going to keep right there and stay there praying that and claiming it. I'm not going to get away from it. You may back up and shut up.

But don't give up until Christ comes back again. Don't give up the territory. You keep praying, oh God, that you would bless me indeed.

God, that your hand would be upon me. God, that you would move out the borders. And oh God, that no evil would come upon anybody because of me.

Keep praying that prayer of J. Meyers. Sorrow once again. God uses sorrow in your life and my life.

God uses the breaking experiences of life to bring us to the end of self-dependence. And self-effort and self-glory. That we might come through death to self.

Into resurrection life. That Christ in his power might stand tall among us. In all of his glory and strength and efficiency and might.

Like what Elliot Maxwell said years ago. At the Prairie Bible Institute. And I recall reading his Born Crucified years ago.

My freshman year at Prairie. He said, we need to die daily. But don't take all day to do it.

You see, there's a time to mourn and bemoan our sins. There's a time of brokenness and dependence. And we must get there.

We must go there. Because there is a famine in the land. But when God breaks you and God brings you through to a place of brokenness and cleansing.

And rejoicing. And restoration. Then stand tall in the authority of who Jesus is himself.

Walk in boldness. My mentor and father in the faith Stephen Orford used to say. They'll follow you anywhere they hear you preach.

When you walk in the authority of the spirit of the living God. He was a man of brokenness. And here we are because men are ruling and men are doing these things.

There was a famine that came into the land. I recall not so very far from here. I was in the very church Saturday afternoon.

When my aunt and uncle celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Praise God that's a miracle nowadays. Amen.

And I recall years ago hearing an old time evangelist preach in that church. And I was in my college years or just out of high school. And I was coming through reading Amos while he was preaching.

And my eyes came down to those powerful words. Where the word of God says. Behold the days come says the Lord that I will send a famine in the land.

Not a famine of bread nor thirst for water. But of hearing the words of the Lord. And I sat there in that seat as a teenager and wept.

Because I said oh my God. That's America right now. And we say oh God where are the Adrian Rogers.

Where's the Whitfields. Where's the Stephen Ophirs. Well let's just pray God raises up a few.

Amen. Because there's a great famine in this land. And I tell you as I travel across this nation and all over the world.

I meet Christians especially all over America. I call them Christian homeless. They're the Christian homeless.

They tell me David I can't find the church anywhere where the words are really being preached David. I can't find a church anywhere where God falls on that place David. I can't find a house of prayer anywhere where God really comes.

What do I do? And our heart breaks because there truly indeed is a famine in the land. A famine of hearing the voice of God. A famine of seeing the glory of God.

A famine of the glory so overwhelming. That all you and I can do is sit and tremble and melt to our knees in the presence of a righteous and holy God. Last night God came in this house very much like that.

Amen. We had a prayer meeting in here. God met us and God melted us.

And we couldn't even talk, pray out loud, sing, nothing. All we could do is just sit in the presence of Almighty God. You see it's the spirit that makes alive the flesh profits nothing.

Jesus said the words that I speak they are spirit and they are life. And I reviewed that verse about a week ago. And I forgot about the verse after it because it says this right in that context.

But there were some that doubted. I tell you I've been in meetings where God has graciously come. And I don't like talking about it many times because it's such a holy place.

When you go week after week after week after week in one church in the council meetings. And God shows up every night. And during the day there's prayer going on all day long.

And there's prayer in the mountainside. And there's prayer in the church house. And people come.

They don't know why. They're just drawn by. They drive by the church and email me later and say, Oh, I couldn't come in today but they got near the church.

And I knew God was there. I felt the glory of Christ just driving by. And they were drawn in.

What God does when he comes like that when there's a famine is we just get on this and say, God you're right. There is a famine. I've been in some prayer meetings in my life.

I don't ever want to be in again. They were so dead. And instead of saying, Oh, God, we're so dead in prayer right now.

They keep trying to swing that axe without an axe hit. I'll crank it out. We'll make something happen.

Instead of saying, Oh, God. That's me. That's me.

You see, access time is a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. In Corinthians it says that a believer comes in and falls on his face and says, I'm a truth. God is in this place.

Can I ask you about your church? Where's the last time an unbeliever came into your house or your gathering and fell on his or her face and said, I'm a truth, trembling. I'm a truth. God is in this place.

Now all of a sudden it's not someone else who needs revival, is it? I remember a move of God so greatly. One of the men in the meeting walked down an aisle. And there was a teenage young man sitting where my brother is about right there.

And I watched that young man. And all of a sudden he just began weeping. He just began crying.

And later on when it was over, he said, I can't explain it. But every time that man walked by, I felt the presence of Almighty God walk by. And I couldn't, all I could do was weep.

I didn't know what was wrong with me. Because God had come. I remember in a meeting one night in New Mexico.

Teenager came, dressed in black, black everything, black hair. You know how that is nowadays. And he had told someone, if your God is so real, I should be able to feel him.

And someone let me know what he said. And in my heart I said, oh good. Because you see, God said when I see the blood, I will pass over, I will hover over you.

When you and I walk in the light, and we walk under the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we can by faith claim the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. And that night that teenager sat over here on the side. And I just began to do all this up here.

And it had nothing to do with who was behind the keyboard. It had to do with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It had to do with the hand of Almighty God.

And we start that service and usually within 5 or 10 seconds, all of a sudden the presence of God would just set down on that place. And I would kind of peek at him once in a while to see what was going on with him. I went ahead.

I preached, I think, up there that night. And God came at that place. He was the first guy out of his seat, hitting his knees in that altar, giving his heart to Jesus.

Why? Because of the glory. Because of the presence. They left.

There was a famine in the land. They left Bethlehem Judah. What is Bethlehem Judah? Bethlehem, the house of prayer.

Oh, the presence of God. That's what they talk about in the tabernacle. The bread of his presence.

And you see what church ought to be today. Please get this. What church ought to be is a place where people come and they receive the bread of the presence of the word of the living God.

I was in a meeting a few weeks ago on a Wednesday night. There was about 60 to 70 teenagers and youth there in the place. I've never been in a place in North America like it where God came and did what he did in that place.

And we were singing and whatnot. And God came. And I opened the altar.

And the youth, they flooded. They cleared out all the seats. They flooded across the front of that church.

And I watched children, tears streaming down their faces, crying out to God in this nation. I want to say something parenthetically right here. And if you have children's church in your church, I'm not saying it's sin.

I'm not saying quit doing it. But out of all the statistics we have today, they're saying that the least I've heard is about 70 or 99 percent. But upwards of 90 percent of our high school kids, when they leave high school, they're also leaving the church.

It begs the question. We're missing it somewhere. You see, when some of us who are older were young, we were in church.

We'd watch the pianist play piano. We'd watch the organist play. We'd watch that deacon come and take up an offering and pray and watch the tears stream down his face as he prayed over the offering in the church.

And we sat there with our eyes glued to those men of God who knew how to get a hold of the horns of the altar. We'd sit there and watch people kneeling in the altars of churches, weeping and broken and getting right with God and wiping tears away. God would give us a burden to pray for lost souls in the auditorium.

And oh, I remember well a man sitting to my right when I was just a kid. And I said, oh God, I don't think that man is saved. Lord, your word says if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me.

Jesus, your name was lifted up tonight in this message that preacher preached. Jesus, you said if we do this, you'll do that. God, do it in Jesus' name.

I'd look up and look over. He was nowhere to be found. He was walking down that aisle.

That is the effectual, fervent prayer born of the indwelling spirit of the living God. Not just for adults. I'd rather hear my little sister right there, I'd rather hear that young girl pray than almost anybody I know that I've met in all my travels.

She's so transparent in her prayer life. She is so honest and real. There may be a famine out there.

But she's going to say, Jesus, you're the God that sends the rain. You're the God that does it. And beloved, if your church is not a place of the bread, of the manifest presence of Almighty God, I would go home and call my entire church to a season of a solemn assembly of fasting and prayer and stay there until God comes to your church.

So do yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground, for it's time to seek the Lord. Amen? Until He comes and rains righteousness upon you. There's a famine of the presence of God.

There's a famine of praise. Judah means praise Yahweh, praise Jehovah, praise the Lord Jesus. And we've sacrificed in many places a false fire fanaticism for a no fire orthodoxy.

And then we have the audacity to say, but my doctrine is pure. If it's not purely ablaze with the Spirit of God, how pure is it? I tell you, when God led years ago to travel with the Stephen Ophir, I wanted to know why God used that man of God. I'd watch him, I'd listen to him.

And I left traveling with him, realizing he was a man on fire for God, filled with the Spirit of the living God, ablaze for God, and nothing was going to get in his way of walking with Jesus. He told me this, he said, David, my boy, he said, when you get up to preach, my son, open your mouth wide, and God will fill it. Beloveds, go back to your churches, go back to your home places.

The anointing abides within you. Don't merely pray for God to come, and His manifest presence, although you and I do, and we should, but live, pray, not merely for the anointing of the Holy Spirit, pray from the indwelling anointing of the Holy Spirit. A famine of praise.

You see, we want revival until something in the music isn't something that we think it ought to be. Can't have that! You see, we want revival, but we want it on our terms, the way we think it's supposed to look. We get like David's wife sitting up there in that window.

I can't believe David's acting that way. I can't believe he's doing it. I can't believe, David.

You're just making an idiot out of yourself. Look at how you're acting, David. David was a man of brokenness.

He tried to bring the ark back the wrong way, and knew his life was taken out, and snuffed out, because David disobeyed the ways and plan of God. People say, you ain't gonna like this, people say, don't have anything with syncopation in it, because that's not of God. Can I ask you a question? Who makes the thunder in the heavens? God does! Is it 3-4 timing, or 2-2 timing, or 4-4 timing? Be very careful what you think is the way revival is supposed to look, and what God says is supposed to look like.

I can get up and say, it has to happen this way. If you love it, when God began to move in revival and brokenness, excuse me, I had to die to my Pharisee-ism. I thought certain things were real-worldly.

You know what God showed me, son? They're not real-worldly. You're just so stinkin' Pharisaical. You're missing me in the midst of it all.

I used to think Dallas Home was too radical. Beloved, I remember, and I don't accuse anybody, I remember when God broke me. He broke me.

How dare you sit back and criticize someone else when you don't know the storms they've gone through! You don't know the trials they've gone through! You don't know how many churches they've gone to, and someone in that church has pushed them aside, and the women have talked about them because they've got tattoos down their arms! You don't know what they've gone through! Don't you dare sit back and ridicule how someone else praises God! You don't know the storms they've gone through to get there. Peter, going to the temple with his prayer mate, at three o'clock in the afternoon, a man there, lame, all those years, and Peter said, look on us. And he did.

He said, silver and gold, have I none, but such as I have, I give unto you. In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk. They took him by the hat, and he jumped leaping.

Amen? I remember Ted Rendell, a dear friend of mine, based in Memphis, Tennessee, and I was at prayer for many years. He told a story years ago about a man in a church in Canada, and he was just a new believer. He got so excited about his walk with God, he couldn't hold it in any longer.

Finally, he said, praise the Lord! They'd look at him, you know, and one of the deacons walked up and touched him and said, sir, we don't praise the Lord in our church. And yet, haven't we all been guilty of that somewhere? It's not a wonder God uses any of us. We get this God complex that we're going to tell you what righteousness looks like.

And if you don't fit in the, I grew up with those lies, you have long hair and short skirts, you're dying and going to hell. Where's that in the Bible? I'm not saying it won't change your life, but where is that in the Bible? It's not there. We start preaching things that never is in the Word of God.

That's what the Pharisees did. Listen, when you get Jesus on the inside, He'll work on the outside. Amen? He'll take care of it.

Beloved, a famine of the presence of God. A famine of praise. A famine of pleasure in serving the Lord.

There's some people, they're enduring the Christian life. They're not enjoying it. They're enduring it.

I go to church, oh, mom, another prayer meeting. Oh, man. No wonder Phineas felt what he felt like when they asked him, do you want us to pray for you? He says, I don't think God much answers your prayers.

Why would I want you to pray for me? He says, you've been praying for the Bible for so long, you haven't seen it yet. Why would I ever want you to pray for me? And, beloved, there are people sitting at our temple doors, as it were, dying, crushed, broken, been lame for 38 years, some people. And then look at us.

And some of us, we look like we've been eating prunes all day long. Don't get me wrong. On the other side, I've hardly said anything about this in public.

I don't know why everyone has to have a Christian comedian come and speak at their events all the time anymore. Nothing wrong. God bless the people.

It's clean humor. We need to laugh. And I know all of that.

But my heart says this. We are in such dire straits. And we are in such a great famine in America.

And we need such a mighty move of God. How come you can have a Christian comedian come and pack the house out, but have prayer meeting with just God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and barely fill the vestry? I tell you why. Because we've gotten away from the glory of God, and we've moved to entertainment.

Entertainment won't grab. It won't grip. It won't transform.

But I tell you what, when God shows up and God sets down, that's all you need, baby. And all of a sudden, the happy, clappy stuff where there's no richness to it. Listen.

And you realize that's not the way to get to the glory. The way to get to the glory is the way it's always been. Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

And that's it. The Holy of Holies. The place where the blood is shed.

The washing of the water of the Word. The candelabra. The bread of His presence.

Oh, the place of prayer. The incense going up into the nostrils of Almighty God. Then the Holy of Holies.

And I tell you something. Peter said something of utmost value. Silver and gold have our numbers such as I have.

I give unto you. Beloved, you can't give what you don't have. You have to have the Christian life before you can live the Christian life.

As Griffith Thomas said, Christianity is Christ. Jesus. To me, to live is Christ.

Listen, can I say this? The Christian life is not a difficult life. It's an impossible life. Only one person ever lived it.

His name is Jesus. Only one person can live it. His name is Jesus.

So the secret of prayer of moving from the famine to a whole new place is realizing where you are. There's a famine in the land. First, they went there.

They visited there. They sojourned there. Just a visit.

And in verse 2, they continued there. They put down roots. Verse 4, they dwelt there about ten years.

They had become accustomed to the lack of the presence of Almighty God. And how many have come to that point? We've become accustomed to the death in the church. And we accept it.

That's called complacency. I tell you, it would behoove every one of us to minister the Word of God. Be it us men who preach or you ladies that teach the Bible.

I'm not going to get into all that. It would behoove us to get to the book of Acts chapter 10 and take what happened to Peter while he preached the Word of God. The hand of God fell upon the people.

May we begin preaching, my brothers, with the saturation of God upon our preaching. I am so sick of painted fire preaching in our pulpits today. Talking about the glory of God.

Talking about and painting the walls of fire. Oh, we've got... No, you don't have fire there. You have flesh there trying to act like fire.

When you learn to die, to you and in desperation cry out to God from the depth of your being, Oh God, fill me. Close me. Come in this place.

Oh God, in your glory come. And you stay there in the place of prayer until God gives you that holy indwelling. Yes, I'm going to come.

You stand trembling. You stand in weakness. But my child, I've given the approval of what I've called you to minister today.

You get up. And like a friend of mine used to say, you clear the decks, my brother. I'm going to preach.

It's time for us preachers to get back to hearing and getting a thus saith the Lord before we ever ascend steps on a pulpit anywhere we ever go to minister or preach. May we learn to hear and know the voice of God. They heard about it.

There was a famine in the land, but they had a future. There was a voice in verse 6. She had heard in the country of Moab how the Lord had visited His people in giving them food. There was a voice.

Beloved, she finally got tired of same old, same old. How many are that way? You're just tired of same old, same old. And you know what I've noticed today in traveling and what I've noticed in churches today, even those have gone the more contemporary route and that's, amen, amen.

Nothing wrong with the guitar and all that stuff because we read the book of Psalms. But I have noticed that even in many of those now, they have become so traditional in what they're doing. If the Spirit of God wanted to move in, they'd push Him right back out as well.

You see, that was a response to the dead churches that all they sang were the hymns. They got tired of death. All of a sudden, the presence of God could set down in a room.

We were in meetings one time and it went four months in one church and I recall one night. I used to just sit over here until it was my time. They had a microphone set up.

They said, brother, just take it anytime you want to. Take over the service. I could tell that night that those up ministering and singing were off, off.

As we all have times like that, amen? I walked up. Normally they stay up, not this time. I said, you can have a seat.

Have you ever, you ministers of music, you lead worshipers, have you ever been in a service where you're singing and it's dead? So you stopped everything and you said, y'all, or you guys, or whatever, we're not going to fake this until we make it. Let's just be real with God this morning. In fact, let's just come and get on our knees before we go any further today because if God does not move in our midst, all we're doing is rearranging the furniture.

Have you ever just stopped a song service? We call it songs, worship. Let's just stop. You're not condemning anybody.

You just say, let's just stop. And let's just start confessing our coldness to the Lord Jesus. Let's just be honest with God and tell him, Lord, I don't sense much of any fire in my heart today to worship.

And Lord, I know it's not your fault. It's my fault. And Lord, I know this isn't a condemnation thing right now.

I just know this, that I can't do it without you. So God, right now, I'm just going to stop. We're just all going to stop and focus on you and pray.

And all of a sudden, in the quietness, the presence of God, like dew, comes on the surface. And your little list of all the songs we're going to do goes out the window. And all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit prompts.

And you just start quietly singing, Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true, with thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you. And just like Moses turned and inquired at the burning bush, can I encourage you with something, beloved? We're all praying for the great move of God. But don't miss your burning bush by just focusing on the greater move.

It may be that in the service, my dear brother sitting here, all of a sudden, it's like a little bush, God begins to work in his heart and life, and he says, Yes, Lord. And all of a sudden, someone over here, and they say, Yes, Lord. And all of a sudden, people in the choir, they start walking out of the choir, and they just come and they fall on their knees.

Just obey the Holy Spirit. Leave Moab. Go back to Bethlehem, Judah.

He made a choice. Orpah kissed her on the neck and went back. How many kiss Jesus on Sunday and go back on Monday? Not Ruth.

Ruth used covenant terminology. Ruth was steadfast. Where you go, I will go.

Where you die, I will die. I'm not going to go back to Moab, the place of the wash pots. I'm not going to stay there any longer.

I'm going with you. You see, sometimes, we want to push sorrow aside when God is saying, Embrace the sorrow because the sorrow will take you back to the place of God's presence and power and praise. Don't curse what's happened to you.

Oh, the Mephibosheth here today, that nurse carried him out when they were under siege and dropped him, fell, and he was mangled on his legs and he was on the ground. David came to the throne. David seized the incision on his wrist because a covenant had been made with Jonathan, the house of Saul.

Jonathan was dead. Saul was dead. David, is there anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness? One old guy said, I'll trust him because, you see, the flesh has said for years, don't you ever let David get to the throne.

If you do, you've had it, you're over, you're sunk. The flesh always resists the lordship of the Holy Spirit. One guy believed him.

I know where he's at. Where is he? He's out there at a place called Lodibar, the place of no word. Ever been there? Could you just imagine with me for a second, David sends his royal chariots out there and they go to Lodibar and Mephibosheth pulls himself over to the window and looks out that window and he sees the dust coming over there.

Oh no, I can tell, that's the crest of King David. I know, I know, I know who this is. And they come to the door, knock on the door, open the door in the name of King David and he crawls over and gets over and crutches over and opens up the door.

And they come and say, are you Mephibosheth? Yes, I am. And as it were, he had his old dirty blue jeans on and an old sweat shirt on, and he was sweating dirty. And they take him and they take him back to Hebron where David's at.

And they take him in and they set him before the throne of David. Ah, at last I found you, Mephibosheth. I'm nothing but a dog, David.

I don't fit here. I don't belong here. Have you ever felt that way where you minister? Have you ever felt like you were kind of an odd duck, trying to get that last man out? You didn't really fit.

Playing baseball, they choose teams. You're the last one they choose. I'm glad when God decides to put people around His table, He goes to the bottom seat first and moves from the bottom to the top.

The problem is, if we want revival, we've got to get to the bottom seat and get out of the top seat. We go to these meetings sometimes and conferences. I haven't seen Him up there once this morning I can't even say it right.

Praise God, it's His thing, amen. I go to some conference and I see these people walk around as if that world should bow and worship them. Oh, you pastor the big church and what? You know what? It grieves my soul because on the inside when some of those people are home alone and nobody's watching, they are looking for answers to their own demise on the inside.

They're saying, I preach every Sunday. It's all alliterated. Everyone listens.

Great television ministries. But there are some that because unknown to other people they have the zeal, the charisma. Oh, everyone watches, but I see them and I've heard with them on the inside.

They are dying because there's a famine in their hearts. Can I remind you in that message by Parrish Reedhead, 10 shekels in his shirt. The young man came to Parrish Reedhead, drove up in his fancy car, came in and said, I heard you had an experience of the Holy Spirit.

I thought you might be able to help me. And what did he say? I don't think I can help you. He said, why not? He said, well, you've come up here in your Cadillac and whatever it was and all you've talked to me about with your radio ministry and your this ministry and your that ministry and your this ministry.

All you've really come to do is you want to get God's fuel, put it in your car and you stay in the driver's seat. You're not ready for God to help you yet. Can I talk to someone who's young in the ministry? You see, David knew the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God as a boy, but he didn't yet have the crown.

That was still on the head of Saul. Saul lost that anointing. David had it.

Don't think because you're not yet up on a platform somewhere that the anointing of God is not upon your life. You just pray. You just obey.

You just stay obedient. Don't chafe at those times back there in the wilderness writing Psalms, just killing lions and bears. Amen.

But there came a day when those who did have the crown, God took them off the throne and God took the anointed ones and said, now is the time and He put them in those positions. You say, where are the Whitefields today? Where are the Finneys today? Where are the Nettleton today? I'll tell you where they are. They're back there taking their sheep right now.

And when we least expect it, God is going to raise up not another Whitefield, not another Nettleton. God is going to raise up somebody who's a nobody, knowing all that they have about them is that He is somebody. As if we keep clamoring, preaching at Liberty University, they said 8,500 students, it doesn't matter to me.

I don't care whether there's 8 or 8,000. I don't care. All I care about, many of us here, all we care about is not the size of the audience, it's the fact that God shows up or not.

When we come together and eat, that Jesus is glorified, that His name is proclaimed, that lives are transformed, that's all that matters. I met a guy today, I tried to go into this next town up to try to find a certain bank and there wasn't one there. My iPhone was wrong, amen.

I got soaking wet on that Harley I have. Can you believe that, a Harley? It's fine though, amen. It was given to me, amen.

And I go up and a guy comes out of the bank and looks at my motorcycle. We start talking. He went to Liberty University.

He graduated there. We're talking about the presence of God and moving to this. I said, brother, I said, oh, I don't know if you were there when God opened the doors and He let me be there.

I remember the first time God opened the doors to go to Liberty. They had the students all on one side. Halfway through the sermon, they begin to come out of the arena stands.

Don, they were broken, weeping. One guy couldn't even walk. His friends had to carry him by the elbows and move him down to the floor and put him down on his knees.

And I had to quit preaching. God came and watched him weep and cry, seeking the face of God. The next time, years later, the place was about full, 85 to 100 people, doesn't matter how many.

God came again. They flooded the floor. They flooded the whole place.

Tears all over the floor, everywhere. A girl said to me that night at banquet, she was an RA. She said to me, Mr. Ford, we sat up there with my girls from my floor where we sat up there in that area.

And she said, we sat there. She said, we sat there. And all we could do was sit there.

We just spoke the wave after wave after wave after wave of the presence of God in that arena. We couldn't even move. We see floods of joy o'er my soul.

I can see billows roll as Jesus came into my heart. Be careful that when God begins to move, you don't get critical and begin labeling as something that's your brand of Christianity. God had mercy on us.

And God fell on that place. She said, what do I tell my girls? I said, you tell them God came. And you find a little book by Dr. Wesley Duell called Revival Fire.

And you take the chapters on college revivals. And when you have your floor meetings, you read to them how God came to Wheaton College in 1950, 1970. Later on, read to them how God came.

It's not in there, but how God came to the Christian college in Texas back in about 97 or so. Read how God has been moving on our Christian college campuses. I remember Dr. Ofer telling the story when he was at Wheaton College in 1950.

He'd come across from the old country to come over here, you know. He said that he was supposed to preach evangelistic meetings. He preached all day Sunday.

And walking back to him and the president of the school, he preached at the church across from the school there. He said, brother, he said, brother, I don't know this is the right direction for these meetings. He said, Stephen, you preach whatever God lays in your heart to preach.

He said, all right. He said, would you pray the night through with me on this? And they joined together. They prayed.

The dear brother, he had to go on and get some sleep because of his responsibilities the next day. But Stephen stayed on his knees throughout the night crying out to God. He said, I got behind that pulpit and I began to preach while I was preaching.

All of a sudden, suddenly, God sat down in that chapel service. He said, I was young at the time. I did not know what to do.

So instead of doing anything, I just stepped back away from the pulpit. And I backed away. And the president got up there.

It was maybe the pastor, one of the two. He walked up to the pulpit. He said, I have sin to confess in my life.

He said, I have to confess my sin that I have curtailed my sermons. I have written my messages so that I wouldn't offend anybody, so that it would please those of intelligence who are here in this church. And God has convicted me.

It's sin in my life. And I repent before you and before this body. But it's sin in my life.

Will you please forgive me? His wife responded. She came. I'm not going to let him take all the responsibility.

I confessed to God my sin. I've been pushing my husband, telling him what to preach, telling him what to do because of those who are here in the place. It broke out in the campus the next day.

God began to move. They counted classes for a whole week. Students getting right with each other.

God came and revived the Wheaton College. Driving through that school in Texas, after John A. Vance and Cognon Avenue at the church, God broke through there on a Sunday morning in the first service. And one of the college kids wanted to share something, and John said, normally I don't do that.

He said, I wonder how many times John said this, how many times I've missed God because I didn't want to have someone else preaching in my pulpit in the adventures of somebody. How much I've missed the move of God because of my own pride. But I felt led to let this young man say something.

In the early service, he did. God came. God broke loose.

Convictions swept across that whole campus. Their first service went into the next service. Live radio.

People calling in. Something's wrong. You have last week's program honors.

What's going on over there? God came to that church. God came to that campus. They cried out to God.

God came. That college campus in Wilmore, Kentucky. Students gathered together nightly to ask God to come on a revival to their campus.

Simple. Faith-filled. Bright-eyed.

Believing. Students. And they would say to each other after every time they got done.

Prayer meeting. Is God going to come tomorrow? Is God going to come tomorrow? Is He going to come tomorrow? And one night, after the prayer meeting, God gave them assurance. He was going to come in chapel the next day.

You see, beloved, may, may God, may we stay in the place of prayer until we get the divine assurance. I'll do it. That's what Ed Roberts did.

I'll do it. And they came to chapel that next day. And God came in chapel.

Chapel didn't end. The president was up in Canada. The president was up One of the men of the school, seven o'clock that night, called him.

He said, we have a problem on campus. He said, I was in this phone booth talking to him, the president. He said, this was back at the end of the 60s.

I thought, oh, no, is there a riot? Who knows what's going to happen in that era? He said, well, what's the problem? He said, it's chapel. He said, okay. What's wrong with chapel? He said, well, nothing.

He said, it's still going. It's still going. Reagan said, yeah, it's still going.

And that went on for something like 183 hours. The speakers who were supposed to speak, no one preached all week long. Students came to the platform to confess their sin, to get right with God, to get right with each other.

Many students began to get saved. Word went to other Christians colleges across this nation. And God began to move and they'd send teams across this nation to other places.

And the same thing would happen at those schools. Naomi said, I went out full, but I returned empty. Yet it says it was the season of the harvest.

God is so merciful. He's so merciful. Our heavenly father, Lord, when we come to the place in our lives, when we don't care whom you use to do it, we don't care who you use, we don't care whether it's in our church or someone down the street, when we simply accept our unknownness as God's divine hand, and not clamor to be seen or heard.

That's when you lay your hand on somebody in your sovereign hand. I wonder in the quietness of this room in closing, have you been in a Moab? And maybe someone else. It's their decision to put you there.

But you'll say, I will arise. I've heard God has visited his people. I will arise and go back to Bethlehem, Judah.

The place of God's presence. The place of prayer. The place of praise.

Somebody once came and said, David, revival is a sovereign move of God. There's nothing you can do to make it happen. I said, yes, I know.

But what if God is sovereignly willing, but you're not? The children of Israel could have gone in through Kadesh Barnea, but they didn't. My brothers, oh my brothers and my sisters, let us enter in by faith. Father, we praise your name, Lord, today.

And let your word have its effect on all of our lives and your spirit. And unto you be all the glory and all the honor and all the praise. Thank you, Jesus.

It's in your name we pray. Amen. We have designated this to be a place of prayer.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/AM4KT10WHxI.mp4>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-ford/returning-to-the-reviver/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net