

# The Church in Revival

by Don Courville

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*The sermon calls for a personal relationship with Jesus, emphasizing the importance of humility, unity, and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit for true revival in the church.*

**Duration:** 29:17

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:5, Luke 2:14, Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, Ephesians 3:21, Colossians 2:10, 1 Timothy 1:17, 2 Peter 3:18, 1 John 1:7, Revelation 21:23

**Topics:** "Revival", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Don Courville emphasizes the necessity of a personal walk with God for true revival in the church, urging believers to rely on the Holy Spirit rather than human efforts or organizational structures. He reflects on the importance of humility, transparency, and spiritual growth, highlighting that true revival comes from a deep, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Courville shares testimonies of revival in Africa, illustrating how the Holy Spirit can transform lives when believers unite in Christ. He encourages the congregation to seek spiritual growth by glorifying God in all aspects of life, as this is the key to experiencing true revival.

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## Transcript

All right, good morning. It's good to be with you today. We've had a very exciting week, interesting week, and we want to make sure that we stay tuned in with the Lord.

Let's have a word of prayer. Heavenly Father, what an exciting thing to walk with You. What a dangerous thing to not walk with You.

How our lives would be in tremendous danger if we would not walk with You. We pray that Your Spirit would open up our ears to hear this morning, and our eyes to see that we would walk in the Spirit. If we've been born again by Your Spirit, You want us to walk in the Spirit, to live in the Spirit, that we might have the fruit of the Spirit.

We pray that we would see Jesus, that we would understand that He is to be glorified and lifted up. The Father is to receive all the glory, and Lord, we just thank You for Your love for us. And I pray that if there are any that do not know Jesus, maybe driving down the road, sitting at home, maybe just tuned in for the first time, and maybe they've gone to church and they're all burnt out, they look at life, they look at all of the things of life, and they wonder what's it all about.

Heavenly Father, I pray that You'd open up their eyes to see Jesus. He's what it's all about. In Him we live and move and have our being.

The Apostles said in the book of Acts, in Jesus we have life. You say in Your Word, He that has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son does not have life. So we pray that Your Spirit would draw.

You said if You'd be lifted up, You'd draw all men unto Yourself. We pray that Your Spirit would draw the hungry. We know that You're drawing out a people for Yourself in these last days to be godly, holy, filled with the Spirit, and to please You, and to live by Your Spirit, and to live for Your glory.

We pray that this morning now, as You lead us, You direct us, we don't always know the way that You're leading us, but we know that if we follow You, we'll go the right way. So we thank You now in Jesus' name. Amen.

As I was driving here this morning, I was just reminded again about the Lord Jesus Christ, and how wonderful He is. I just, as the years go by, I appreciate Him more and more and more. I don't get over Him.

Some people that seem to get saved, they get over it. If you get over it, you probably never got in it. You just can't get over Jesus.

He is so wonderful. And I was reading in Isaiah about the Lord Jesus, how Isaiah recorded, this is God's perspective of His Son. He said, Behold, My servants shall deal prudently.

He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. As many were astonished at Thee, His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men. So shall He sprinkle many nations.

The kings shall shut their mouths at Him. For that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard they shall consider. Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.

He hath no form nor comeliness. And when we shall see Him, there's no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

And we hid as it were our faces from Him. He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. And with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray.

We have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth.

He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before His shearers is dumb. So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment.

And who shall declare His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living. For the transgression of My people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in

His death.

Because He hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He hath put Him to grief.

When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed. He shall prolong His days. And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.

He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many. For He shall bear their iniquities." A wonderful, wonderful Lord Jesus.

I've got a little pamphlet here. I've never shared this. I don't know how long I've had it.

I think I've had it for quite a while. But it's the testimony of Paul E. Wilhimer. Many of you are familiar with his books.

Tremendous books. Heaven's Throne and Overcoming. He's got several books that he's written down.

And he's a tremendous man of God in taking us to the cross. And I have a little pamphlet sometime I might share with you. Maybe even today.

We'll just see how it goes on fellowship around the living Christ. And it's a story of revival. Actually, he uses the verse in 1 John 1.7 for the main text, for this whole little testimony.

It's what God taught him about revival. We've been talking the last few weeks about the church and how we need to come back to God's ways. Looking at the wrong and then looking at the right.

But amidst all of this, there still is this one thing. You must walk with God personally. You must develop a personal walk with Him.

You can't trust your church to take you through your Christian life. You can't trust your mate or your parents, teenagers, young people. You must trust Jesus.

And the scripture says, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. In the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1.7. And Mr. Bilheimer, he shared the testimony about Africa, which happened a number of years ago, over 20 years ago.

About in Africa, he said, of all places where God was giving the world an object lesson in revival. And he said, actually what we've done, and this is what we say and we've been saying through the years, is that we have been copying the world with all of our man-made organization, all of our ambitious financial machinery, and all of the promotional fanfare and spectacular human leadership that we have, and all of the stuff that we can do to promote revival. It has a lot of noise and a lot of bang.

But when the smoke all clears, really lives have not been changed like the Holy Spirit can do it. And he said that this modern evangelism that we've borrowed so heavily from Madison Avenue, and the advertising and the promotional gimmicks that we've learned from Hollywood, the entertainment that we do, we can't see revival. We can't see it in our mind because when we think of revival, we think of man's terms.

We think of man's terminology. We think of man's ways. And all of our, we think of our meetings.

We have a week of meetings or because of our schedule. We're so busy. We can't give God much time.

We give him four days and a lot of times we give him one night. And we're not experiencing revival, but he shared how in Africa, God began to move in the deep heart of Africa, and the Holy Spirit began to bring a work in the lives. And he said it was very quiet.

The Holy Spirit just moved among the church, and a large part of an area in Africa was touched. And he said it was his privilege to go over there and to meet the two men in whom God worked in the very beginning. And he's, by the way, when God works, he uses people.

His Spirit will come down and use people. And he said he met the two men that were used at the beginning. One was a missionary doctor, and the other was a highborn educated African.

And let me read a little something from this. He said after describing the sense of frustration and defeat, which characterized the mission and the missionaries at that time, Joe Church pointed out to me the very spot on the veranda of the Church Missionary Society guest house in Kampala, Uganda, where Shimeo Nishimbambi, and he sat when the Holy Spirit brought them face-to-face with the spiritual bankruptcy of the flesh. Have you ever been there? Have you ever been there when the Holy Spirit came in and put his hand upon you? I have.

It's a moment when you never will get over it when God comes in and he speaks to you. And he said, through a united study of God's Word, they came into a humiliating self-discovery. And this is the thing the Spirit of God seems to have been pointing us to this week, is the absolute vital necessity of humility.

I've been meditating upon this week, and God has been, even for my birthday, as I shared last week as my birthday, for my birthday, my good friend, one of my good friends up in Nebraska sent me a book, a very, very good book by Andrew Murray on humility. I've got this thing in my briefcase here this morning. Did you know that Andrew Murray struggled for years and years and years with pride? That was the, I guess maybe you'd say his besetting sin.

That was the thing that would get him, and many that God uses mightily, and probably many never do break through into the victory, but they struggle in this area of pride. And he struggled with this until he said, Jesus finally got the complete victory. As Jesus got the complete victory in your life.

And as the Spirit of God began to use the Word of God in their lives over there, it resulted in a new shattering, he said, of their self-complacency. The Holy Spirit brought in a new repentance and a brokenness, a new humbling, and a crucifixion of their natural pride, brought in a new honesty and a transparency with each other. This thing of being transparent, we must be transparent.

We must be transparent with each other, with our mates, but most of all with our Lord. And he said in this disillusionment with self and human effort, unitedly they came into a new place spiritually. From that small beginning, without the energy of striving of the flesh, dependence upon human personality, or the glamorizing of human leadership, the Holy Spirit has moved from within outward to the very ends of the earth.

And many of you, if you're acquainted with revival, you know how this mighty revival has continued to burn and spark fires. And you know what, the Spirit of God, when he does bring revival, there are several keys, and he's got these things outlined in this little pamphlet, just a small little pamphlet, but one of them was the believers were united, not in creed, but in Christ. In doctrine, many times we don't have unity, but in

Jesus we have unity.

If there's not unity in your church, then Jesus is not all and in all. Paul Bilheimer, he said when his traveling companion and himself reached East Africa, they thought what they would do is they'd go to Rwanda, Urundi, to contact what in the beginning was known as the Urundi Revival. And what they said is that they came into that area, they went into that area, and they were surprised to find a large, very large area of people that had been touched, but also they'd go in over in small areas.

There were small revival groups in almost all parts of East Africa, without respect to race, tribe, nationality, or their church affiliation, where the Spirit of God had just moved into this area. We, in America, have sensed so little of what the Holy Spirit wants, and we're receiving, I believe, so little of what the Holy Spirit wants, because we desire so little of what God wants. We do not understand, many times, in our whole Christian life, we can go through our whole cycle of life and miss out on the reality of the freshness of the Spirit of God.

They said wherever they went, the spirit of these groups was the same. There was one united fellowship in Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit of God. It was working with a freshness and a vigor.

There was this one thing, there was this unity of the Spirit. They were surprised also to learn that what is now known as the Revival Fellowship was not confined to East Africa, but it spread to other African countries, and it went round and around and around. Now, why am I sharing these things with you? I'm sharing these things, and I don't know how far I'll go in sharing some of these things, because he gets into some things that really, probably, we won't understand, even if, unless we have a real opening of the Holy Spirit, because we don't understand these things by the flesh.

When we talk about, when he talks about the Spirit of God coming in and beginning to bring people to a point where they had self-judgment, you know, Paul said we have many in our churches that are sick, many are sleeping, many are weak, because we will not judge ourselves. One of the products of being filled with the Holy Spirit is a self-judgment and a transparency, walking daily. We have a daily adjustment to the light, and we have, what we've done, we have moved ourself into being programmed by man, so we're boxed in, we're not free.

I have been in groups, I've been in denominational groups where everybody had to, about, dress the same way, and talk the same way, and preach the same way, and it was, if you dared move out of the little mode, and what was accepted by that group, then you would be looked upon, frowned upon, and even not invited back to speak, and there, we've boxed ourself in. We have boxed ourself in so many times with these things, and thus, as a result, we don't grow, which is one of the things that I wanted to share with you, just to take you into a little study, maybe a little short series, of how revival, when you meet the Spirit of God, He will bring you into a freshness of growth, of growing with Jesus Christ. I was just reading about growing in 2 Peter 3, 18, where Peter said, but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We have grown in the ways of man. We have grown in our own ways, and not God's ways, and he said, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and forever.

Spiritual growth. I have a man that received Christ a few weeks ago, and I'm beginning to disciple him, and I'm watching very carefully at the beginning, because he's calling me up and wanting to get together, and

he's gone through some tough times, but I'm watching very carefully to see if he really wants to go with Jesus, and if he does, I plan on taking him. Last week, we sat down in a park, a little small town south of here, and I took him to the cross, and I showed him the cross.

You know, when I got saved, nobody sat down with me and showed me the cross. It took many years before I understood the cross, and that it meant that my life was finished, and that Jesus was now my life. And I very carefully went through the cross, watching him, watching his spirit to see how he is responding to see that his life was finished, that now Jesus was his life.

Spiritual growth. Spiritual growth is the normal atmosphere of the working of the Holy Spirit in your soul. Sometimes we see people that have never grown physically, or mentally, or socially, and we look at them and we say, oh boy, there's something wrong there, or that's a tragedy, or that's a shame.

But how about in our own life? Have we really grown? How many times have you gone into a Sunday school class, it's year after year after year, the same old thing. You go through your book, you go through your quarterly, and same old thing. It's boring, you're glad when it's over, and you don't get anything fresh.

That's not spiritual growth. How can we grow in our spiritual life? How can we become a normal, mature Christian? This is some things I want to share with you. How can we grow? There are some basic things to remember, though, and I think I need to go over through these things with you, because a lot of times we have spiritual growth equated with something that isn't really real.

Spiritual growth is separate from our position in Christ. You do not grow into a Christian. You are born spiritually at a point in time, out of darkness into His marvelous light, as Peter said, 1 Peter 2.9. And you become a new creature, 2 Corinthians 5.17. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Spiritual growth is separate from our position in Christ. You are born into Christ. You are placed into Christ.

You are covered by Christ. You are seated in the heavenlies. You are complete in Him, Colossians 2.10. And God has given to us all things that pertain unto life and godliness the moment you are born again, positionally in Christ.

But spiritual growth is something more than your position in Christ. And spiritual growth is just not a matter of God's favor, of where God commends His love towards us, it says in Romans 5.8. And that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. It's more than just God's favor on your life.

And it's not just a matter of time, either. Some, you know, have been Christians a long time, but yet they've not grown very much. They don't know the Word very much.

They don't walk very close to Jesus. As a matter of fact, I was just, if I can flip back over to it, you remember when Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3, And I, brethren, cannot speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I was in my camper yesterday, just out thinking of some of the deep things of Christ, how sometimes I just long, I just long to just cut loose and share some of the deep things of Christ.

But I don't want to go off and leave the crowds many times. And this is the way Jesus was. When He was out with the crowds, He spoke with the parables.

He spoke and watched to see if they had ears to hear. And then those that would seek Him out, like Nicodemus, He would take them on in deeper and deeper. And His disciples, He kept taking them deeper and deeper into the spiritual things.

Walking down the Emmaus road, after His resurrection, He took them into the deep things of Christ. Don't you long to know God? I love to go out early in the morning when I wake up. Go out and meet God and look at the new day He's making.

And then the last thing at night before I go to bed, I slip out on the porch and I sit out there and I look at the stars. And I meditate upon God just before I go to sleep. Don't you like to spend time with God? Don't you like to have Him teach you and to teach you how to grow? So spiritual growth is not just a matter of time.

You can go a long time. But it's a matter of growing in Him. So, oh, what a sad thing if Paul would knock on your door, write you a letter and say, Brethren, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I fed you with milk and not with meat. For hitherto you were not able to bear it. Neither yet now are ye yet able.

For ye are yet carnal. And how do you know if you're carnal? He says, whereas there is among you envy and strife. Is there strife in your life? Divisions? Are you not carnal and walk as men? What a sad thing to have the Spirit of Christ living in you, but yet you walk as a man.

And spiritual growth, by the way, also is not just a matter of knowledge, because we have more knowledge. Oh, boy, do we have knowledge. And what's knowledge do? Knowledge alone, without the anointing and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, it puffs up.

1 Corinthians 8, 1. Knowledge puffs up. Colossians 2 and verse 18, Paul wrote that they were vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind. And you can go through years of Bible college, years of Bible teaching in church, and yet you can be puffed up.

You know, if you're puffed up, you're just all full of air. Somebody might come along and stick a needle in you, and what do you do? Well, they deflate you. Whatever it takes to deflate you shows you.

Just that what you're there. But if somebody comes and sticks a needle in a Spirit-filled Christian, they don't go down. They don't get discouraged.

They don't get angry. They don't get depressed, because they're filled with Jesus. And Jesus doesn't let you down.

But I'll tell you something. The flesh will always let you down. You can't trust in it.

Paul said, I have no confidence in the flesh. Knowledge without being Spirit-controlled leads to pride. It always does.

And we are a very proud church today. And we are proud of our buildings. We're proud of our programs.

We're proud of everything. And we'll even boast of Jesus. But if Jesus walked in many times, I believe He'd just turn around and walk out.

He says, depart from me, you workers of iniquity. He has nothing to do with pride. I'll tell you something else.

Spiritual growth has nothing to do with activity. Been in the church for years and years. You've been on the board.

You've been in the choir. You've been a Sunday school teacher. And etc., etc., etc.

You've been there. You've done it. You've done it all.

But then when you go to work every day, they don't see any more of Jesus in you than they do a dog that walks down the sidewalk. And you wonder, why don't they get saved? Why won't these people that I work with at work get saved? It's because your walk doesn't match your talk. And if our walk doesn't match the talk, it's a whole lot better to be quiet.

Matter of fact, our walk will speak mighty loud if we're walking in the Spirit because we will know what to say. We'll know how to act. Being busy won't get you saved.

And being busy won't make you grow. And there's one other thing about spiritual growth. Spiritual growth has nothing to do with prosperity.

Wealth has nothing to do with spirituality. What is spiritual growth then? Because we've had many equate financial blessing with spiritual growth. It may be tied in, but it's not necessary.

Years ago, there was somebody that always measured me by the amount of my salary. Well, I never did measure up too much, and I probably never will. If that's the measure of spirituality, that's not it at all.

What is spiritual growth then? Let me tell you what it is in a nutshell. We won't have much time to go much deeper into this, but spiritual growth is this. It's matching my practice with my position.

Many of us were like the old soldier in the Civil War. You've heard this. He didn't want to get shot.

And he didn't want to fight. So he put on a blue coat and gray pants. And he went out there, and you know what happened to him? They shot at him from both sides.

It's just like years ago when I was over in Israel. I wanted a cab driver to take me down to the Jordan River. This is 1968, so it's quite a few years ago.

But I wanted to go down to where they were baptized. And he said, No, Abbie, we go down there, they'll shoot at us from both sides. He didn't want to get shot, and I didn't know any better.

But he wouldn't take me there, so we went off down to the Dead Sea and saw some things. But many times, we're getting shot at from both sides. And actually, we're like the fellow that has... He said he's got enough of religion to make him miserable, but not enough to make him happy.

And many of us, we've got enough of Jesus to just make us miserable, but we don't have enough to make us happy. Are you happy in Jesus? Maybe I ought to talk about happiness sometime. Many of us wear burdens in our souls, and maybe our happiness doesn't show in our face as much as it should.

But because we're burdened down with so many things that God is showing to us and leading us into carry. But happiness of soul and your spirit should be the mark of Jesus. Now, matching my practice with

my position, that is spiritual growth.

A few weeks, I'm going to take you through a little series. If God allows us to just give us some practical things. There's a clue, there's a key that will unlock this secret of spiritual growth.

And there is a key. Because when He tells us to grow in grace, God always gives us the ability. And I'm going to tell you this key, and then we'll get into it later.

Because we hear these things, we know these things, but here's the key. Growing in grace, growing in Christ, is related to always giving God the glory in everything that happens in our life. Always giving God the glory.

You know, we've been taught that the purpose of the universe is to glorify God. The whole reason for creation is the glorifying of God. This is the reason of our existence.

The heavens declare the glory of God. The beast of the field shall honor me, Isaiah said. The New Jerusalem is lit by the glory of God, Revelation 21-23.

Luke 2-14, when Christ was born, they sang glory to God in the highest. Ephesians 3-21, unto Him be glory in the church. 1 Peter 5-11, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. 1 Timothy 1-17, now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

And when you and I begin to live for God's glory, we begin the process of spiritually growing in Christ. Well, I trust these thoughts, these simple thoughts, and you've heard them, there's nothing new. Ben shared, nothing new under the sun, as Solomon said.

But sometimes the Spirit of God will just take something that maybe we've looked at or we've seen or we've heard for years and years and years, and all of a sudden He'll open us up to see, wow, did you give God glory this week? Did you give God glory in everything you did, in everything you said? I must confess to you, I did not give God glory in everything I did and everything I said. And that is the process of growing. When God had to show me that I fell, someone slipped and fell.

Was that someone you? Well, Jesus is there, always. He's always there waiting for us to acknowledge that we fell, that we didn't glorify Him. Heavenly Father, Lord, glorify Yourself in our lives.

I pray for my friends. I thank You for those that I walk with, I have fellowship with, my wife, my family, my friends around. Thank You for the encouragement that they are to me, to help me grow in Christ, to bring glory to You.

We are so needy. We are so humbled to recognize that You are so holy, that You desire to walk with us. If we walk in the light as You're in the light, we will have fellowship with You.

We'll have fellowship with each other. Thank You, Father, for blessing us. Thank You for giving us life.

Thank You for sparing our lives. Thank You for working in our lives to teach us about Jesus. And again, I pray if any need Jesus, that they just call out, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, that they call out to Jesus.

In His name we pray. Till next time, I trust that God will continue to richly bless you, my friends.

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