

Heart Preparation for Revival

by Duncan Campbell

The sermon emphasizes the importance of heart preparation for revival, which involves sincerity, honesty, and a willingness to face the light of truth.

Duration: 48:01

Scripture: Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 6:33, John 3:21, 1 John 1:1-3, 1 John 1:7-9

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of walking in the light and having fellowship with one another. He highlights the need for genuine repentance and obedience in order to experience true holiness. The speaker shares a personal testimony of his own journey towards getting right with God and experiencing revival. He encourages the audience to have a hunger for God and to be willing to pay any cost to be in the light and experience the power of God.

Transcript

You will find our reading this evening in the first epistle to John, and we shall read chapter one. Might I ask, do you hear me all right at the back? Yes. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life.

For the life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness, and shown to you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. And these are things, write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

This then is the message which ye have heard of him, declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Amen. And God will add his blessing to the reading of that short portion. Before we turn to the word of God, might I say that I am happy and privileged to be with you here this evening to share in the fellowship and the ministry of these days.

Now, might I say also that God has placed, I believe, a burden on my heart for this meeting, and the burden is that of a message on heart preparation for revival, heart preparation for revival, a message that speaks, I think, particularly to those who are gripped by a desire to get into reality, or the need of reality in the field of Christian work and Christian witness today. It seems to me that we are living in a day when, particularly in the field of evangelism, everything seems to be real but God. You may disagree, but that is a deep-seated conviction with me.

Publicity so real, organizing so real, publicity so wonderfully real, yes, and even decisions. And perhaps I should say here, personally, I am tired of this trafficking in decisions. This gospel of simply believism has cursed your country and mind.

We do want to get into the grips of reality. Now, turn with me to this portion of Scripture which we read together, and to verse 7. If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. It seems to me that in that short portion of Scripture, we have in it a message, a word from God on what might be termed heart preparation for revival.

I find today, in many quarters, a hunger for the real, especially in the field of godliness. Or, I prefer the word holiness. I was deeply impressed by what the minister of the parish in which the revival broke out in 49, a statement that he made at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Edinburgh.

He made this statement, and I was deeply impressed by it. That night that God swept into a prayer meeting and the revival began, I made this profound discovery that a God-sent revival must ever be related to holiness and separation. I was deeply impressed by that statement, and I would reaffirm it this evening.

I believe that a God-sent revival, and of course, every revival is from God. I believe that God is sovereign in the field of revival. I am simply enough to believe that.

But, having said that, I also believe that we are the human agents through which God's revival is possible. That is why I believe God hath laid it upon my heart to direct your attention this evening to heart preparation for revival. I can well believe that there may be those listening to me here this evening who are very conscious of a heart need.

Conscious of a heart need. Men and women who have been led step by step in the ways of truth, and have suddenly discovered that their lives do not attest the reality of their faith or of what they profess. It is true that we talk about revival, we talk about Christian work and Christian witness, but what is it in our lives that corresponds to that great fact? That is a question I feel we would do well to face at this hour.

Now, with that conviction, there hath come an intense longing to get into the grips of reality, into the place where God touches the heart. My dear people, it's got to begin with God. Got to begin with God.

Revival begins in His heart. And He operates through my life. Some time ago it was my privilege to address a series of meetings in Cambridge, England.

One afternoon the meeting was chaired by a young undergraduate. And in his chairman's remarks he said this, Master Speaker, we are not here to listen to pious platitudes, nor are we interested in sentimental humbugging. We are seeking certitude in the realm of truth, assurance in the field of Christian experience.

Certitude in the realm of truth. Assurance in the field of Christian experience. And then he added, can you tell us that there is a Savior who can save young men and young women in this university city from sin? Now, I believe that that intelligent young man was giving expression to the thinking mind of intelligent youth today.

Thank God there's an answer to the supreme human problem, which, after all, is sin. I love to proclaim that there's a Savior from all sin. I believe that that is the most pious, poor, no-indulging with this great truth.

I would direct your attention to three simple thoughts. First, I must get into the light. That's the first condition.

And then I must acknowledge what the light reveals, and that brings repentance. Oh, the need for a message on repentance today. The crying for it.

And then we must be prepared to walk in the light. And that speaks, of course, of obedience following a genuine repentance. So, first of all, we must get into the light.

There is a very suggestive word in the Gospel by John, the third chapter and verse twenty-one. The man who is really sincere will face the light according to this verse. He that doeth truth.

Now, in my Gaelic revised version, it is slightly different. He that is truthful will come into the light. And he will come with a prayer that finds expression in the words, Search me, O God, and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting. That is the prayer of a sincere and honest man.

He is not even prepared to do the searching himself. There are avenues within the bounds of his personality. There are enemies well entrenched in the garrison of his soul.

That God alone can deal with. Search me, O God. And know my heart.

But I fear today a pleasure-crazed and morally bankrupt generation refuses to face the fact of grim reality. And I fear that to a very large extent that spirit hath entered the Christian church. But the man who is entirely sincere will live no longer under any self-created illusion about life in its immediate or in its ultimate aspect.

He will face himself with unqualified honesty and stand in the full blaze of God's searching presence. He will face the light and throw his mind and heart open to the searchlight of truth. Now might I say in this the opening meeting, are we really prepared for that? Are we prepared for it? If not, if not, can it be proved that our very coming together is just a laughingstock of devils? Oh, we want sincerity, we want honesty, we want reality.

That is, my dear people, the only way if we are to make contact with Christ that is vital. And know an experience that is real, such as Paul had when he referred to it and said, God revealed his Son in me. After all, is that not Christian, is that not true Christian experience, a revelation? My dear people, that is infinitely greater than mere decision.

God revealed his Son, that's why I'm constantly saying that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is, in its final analysis, just the revelation of Jesus. That's infinitely more, infinitely greater than anything else. You can speak of gifts, you can speak of miracles, and thank God that can be real.

Oh, it can be real, when God gives it. He hasn't given it to me. But to me, the supreme reality relative to the baptism is just the revelation of Jesus.

Oh, show me a man in love with Jesus. We have, or rather we had in Scotland, a very remarkable young woman saved during the revival, trained in our Bible school, was wonderfully used in revival in Scotland, years of it, years of it. She is now in South Africa, and I heard her make a statement at a conference of ministers.

She asked the question, What are we to understand by the sacrifice of praise? And she answered her own question by saying, The ecstasy of joy in the one I love the most. Man, I thought that's got it. The sacrifice of praise, the ecstasy of joy in the one I love the most.

Now my dear people, let's just face this with honesty and with sincerity. Ain't there a hunger in your hearts this evening to get into the light? To get into the light. My God, whatever it costs.

My young daughter said to me years ago, when I made the discovery that I wasn't just what I ought to be. Perhaps some night I may give my personal testimony. But when battling and seeking to get into the light, tired of dead formality in the church as a Presbyterian minister, tired of it all, that dear lassie came into my study, I'm lying on the floor, and said this to me, Daddy, whatever it costs, get right with God.

My dear people, that shook me. That shook me. She went on to say, You know that you were God's instrument in the Middegyll revival of years ago.

How is it that you're not seeing revival today? That question went home with conviction. And God, in his mercy, gave me back the years of the locust that he did. My dear friend, it just means that.

To go through whatever it costs. If you're interested in revival, if you're seeking the greatest power of God to course freely through the avenues of your personality, it just means that. Whatever the cost may be, are you prepared for that? You would do well to face that question with honesty and with sincerity.

Oh God, let me into the being that's flying from Zion's hill. The words of the paraphrase, the Scottish paraphrase. Let me in, Lord, get me in.

I'm sincere, I'm honest. My God, I want the best. That's your sincerity, that's your honesty, that's your conviction.

My dear people, if we get through there, we're going to see God at work here. But I say again, it's got to begin there. In the field of sincerity and honesty.

So that brings me to my second thought. We must acknowledge what the light reveals. I believe God has already begun to reveal.

I believe that. I believe that there are those here coming to this camp meeting. And on the road, God spoke to you.

Oh God, will you meet with me. God, will you do something for me. Causing me never to be the same again.

Is that true? I can well believe it is. You remember it was David who said, I acknowledge my transgressions. And my sin is ever before me.

That was a great moment in David's life when he spoke of my sin. You see, in the light he's made conscious of his awful sin. But brother, perhaps not a bit more awful than yours or mine.

But David was an honest man. Again, let me say, it begins in the realm of honesty. These are days when there is a tendency to cover up sin.

And we sing, Calvary covers it all. Now might I ask a question here that may disturb you. Is it true that Calvary covers it all? If you're thinking of the vicarious sufferings of Jesus, if you're thinking of his atoning sacrifice, if you're thinking of the glorious fact that he's tasted death for every man, is it true in that sphere that Calvary covers it all? Jesus paid it all.

All to him I owe. Listen brother, Calvary will not cover what you've got to uncover. Oh, let's get that clear.

Let's get that clear. If there is something hidden in your heart that you know to be wrong, if there's a habit, if there's a custom, if there's a friendship, oh, I couldn't mention ever so many things. Cover it and keep covered.

Brother Calvary will not cover that. I think I can perhaps illustrate what I mean by something that happened at Oxford, another university city. I was conducting a series of meetings there under the auspices of the InterVarsity Fellowship, and I made that statement, Calvary will not cover what you've got to uncover.

Now at the close of the meeting, a young undergraduate came to see me. He was obviously very disturbed in his mind. He was the son of a nobleman of high rank, and a professing Christian, made a profession under the ministry of Alan Redpath, a Baptist minister and now an evangelist.

He was counseled by a brother, I would say a very foolish brother. This young man had something on his mind. He had wronged a maid in his father's house, and he felt that he had to mention this to the man who was counseling him.

And this foolish counselor said, My young brother, doubt you confess that to God and Calvary will cover it. My dear people, no more damnable advice was ever forged from the anvils of hell than that. And he is now in this meeting terribly disturbed, because this keeps coming back.

And he faces me with a question, What can I do? What can I do? My dear brother, I said there is only one thing that you can do. Write to the girl and tell her that you're the father of her child. He had been denying that, and he got off with it because of his position.

Write to your parents and tell them the same truths, and write to her parents and tell it all. On the following morning, I had the pleasure and the joy of reading the three letters and saw them with my own hands posted. My dear people, Calvary will not cover where restitution has got to be made.

It's a truth that you seldom hear preached today, the truth of restitution. If a thing is wrong, it's wrong. There are two great words in the English language, right and wrong.

If a thing is wrong, be done with it. If a thing is wrong, put it right. I believe, dear people, that this is a truth. We must face it sincerely and honestly. But it means that I acknowledge it. I illustrate this by an incident in my own life.

At this time, I was a Presbyterian minister in the northeast of Scotland and was attending the Strats Pepper Convention, one of our great Scottish conventions for the deepening of spiritual life. And we certainly had a wonderful time. Oh, a wonderful time.

So wonderful that I and my young people found it most difficult to leave. So we lingered in the midst of the fellowship until midnight. And then we set off in my car.

Halfway between Strats Pepper and my home and church, we found ourselves in the midst of a terrific storm on a very dark night. And to make matters worse, the lights failed us. So here we are on the roadside, in the dark, not a move, as far from home as ever.

But there was one thing that I could do, and I did it. I made an honest confession. And, Matthew, it was honest.

I said there's something wrong with the lights. Of course, that was obvious. But it was honest.

It was honest. But, my dear people, my honest confession got us nowhere. We're still in the dark.

We're still by the roadside, not a move. It was during the first few months of the Second World War. And one of Britain's great battleships, the Warspite, was anchored in a bay.

And just at that moment, began to sweep the coastline with her searchlight. A girl sitting in the back seat suggested that we get out and push the car into the beam. No sooner said than done, the car was pushed into the beam.

And the officer at the controls, possibly seeing our predicament, allowed the beam to remain stationary right across the road. In front of the car, we pushed it in. And in a matter of minutes, I discovered what was wrong.

Disconnected wire. And made the necessary adjustment. And got back to my seat.

But I did not speak now in general terms. I spoke of a disconnected wire. But understand, I had to get into the beam to make the discovery.

And I had to act quickly in case the light would again become darkness. My dear people, it is one thing to make a general confession of course. We're all sinners.

We've all come short of the glory of God. We have left undone the things that we ought to have done. And done the things that we ought not to have done.

But you know and I know that gets us nowhere. That gets us nowhere. We're not a bit near a revival.

We're not a bit nearer sanctification. Not a bit nearer getting into a right relationship with God. But in the beam, if I make a discovery.

And I realize what is wrong, it may be in my prayer life. My prayer life. Oh my dear people, how we have failed God in prayer.

God speaks to you about that. It may be something else that deals with impurity in thought, in word, in action. I do not know what it is, but in the light you've made a discovery.

Oh, you've made a discovery. What is your reaction? Confession? Confession? It may be lack of fellowship. That demands confession in the church.

I was listening to a minister, as a matter of fact, Dr. Alan Redpath. And he told in his address of two women that he had in his congregation. They weren't on speaking terms.

Oh, they weren't on speaking terms. But one night, didn't both of them meet in the aisle of the church? And immediately one became an astronomer and looked up. And the other became a geologist and looked down.

And the astronomer and the geologist passed each other without saying a word. But at the prayer meeting on Thursday, both of them sang lustily, We're bound for the land of the pure and the holy. My dear people, what a travesty.

Oh, what a travesty. Why the laughingstock of devils. They're neither holy or bound for the land of the pure and the holy.

That is my conviction. Oh, we want to face this matter. One thing in a meeting, another thing in the home.

And Whitfield was asked, Is such a man a Christian? I cannot tell you. I never lived with him. Oh, to so manifest God that it becomes obvious.

Bearing about, said the apostle, bearing about in my body the dying of Jesus. That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest through my mortal flesh. Not just through my emotions.

Not just through my intellect. But my mortal flesh crying aloud, this is the work of God. My dear people, that to me is where revival begins.

Oh, that is where it begins. A willingness to walk in the light. After all, is it not stated that the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey? Now, what does it mean to walk in the light? It just means that you are going to let Christ the light lead you to where the blood can heal.

To me, this is the light of atonement made. The light of purity assured. The light of sin forever cleansed.

This is where we discover that the precious blood of Jesus reaches deeper than the stain can go. This is where we see the facts of the cross becoming glorious factors in our lives. Oh, get a hold of that, brother.

And come, and as you come, you will discover that what the light reveals, the hidden things, all the hidden things, that the light reveals. I make this glorious discovery that the precious blood of Jesus can heal. My prayer is that the penetrating light of God may get us this evening.

Now, I tell you, if you got through here, I believe we would see a moving of God within these walls. That would startle the very trembling gates of hell. That's what I believe.

After all, what light is this? To me, it's the light of his abiding presence. I am the light of the world, that Jesus, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness. It is Jesus himself who imparts his own life, who shares his own spirit.

Some years ago, I was brought back from the gates of death by a blood transfusion. Coming home from London on the night train, I had a fearful hemorrhage. Fortunately, there was a doctor on the train, and he stopped at the next station.

It was the express from London, stopped the express, and got in touch with the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh. And I found a team of doctors waiting for me at the station. And right there, I got a blood transfusion.

And it was that transfusion that saved my life. Now, I would say that in a spiritual sense, this is how Christ heals the sin-sick soul. Not only by the blood he shed for us on Calvary, but by the transfusion of his life into ours.

The transfusion of his life. Paul says this in clear light, For when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. Much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Oh, what a truth. My dear people, we must ever remember that the interpretation of Christ's righteousness is the foundation on which faith rests. But oh, bless God, it is the impartation of Christ's life that saves and empowers.

The life also of Jesus. Now, how is all this to become real? Just by coming into the light. And in the words of a prominent Keswick speaker of years ago, Let the healing, cleansing rays of Calvary play upon your heart until the very single angle is sterilized.

My dear people, if you wish to honor God, give him full credit for the excellency of his work in redemption. He provided a savior to save men from sin. So, come to his feet and lay open your story of sorrow, of suffering, of sin, and of shame.

For his pardon for sin is the crown of his glory and the joy of the Lord to be true to his name. That, to me, dear people, is heart preparation for revival. Are you prepared for it? Oh, that's a question.

Are you prepared for it? Now, before I sit down, I feel that I ought to mention at least it is on my heart that tomorrow evening I shall deal with revival and perhaps tell you of the remarkable move of the Spirit of God in the Hebrides just now. Not only in the outer Hebrides, but also in the inner Hebrides. Do you know, dear people, that we are in the midst of a holy ghost revival just now? Right in the midst of it.

All communities are being transformed by the grace of God and particularly among teenagers. My dear people, revival is the answer to the teenage problem that baffles us today. Tomorrow evening, in the will of God.

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