

# What I Learned About Revival

by Erwin Lutzer

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*Revival is a deep and painful work in our own hearts, where God breaks our pride and humbles us, allowing us to live in accordance with what we know to be true.*

**Duration:** 49:07

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:21-22, John 13:34, Romans 12:19, 1 Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the topic of revival and its characteristics. He emphasizes that revival is not complicated and can be understood by anyone. The preacher mentions two important aspects of revival: afterglow services and restitution. Afterglow services are moments of intense worship and spiritual connection, while restitution involves making amends and seeking forgiveness for past wrongs. The preacher also highlights the intensely personal nature of revival, emphasizing that it starts with individual transformation and revival of the heart.

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## Transcript

was given by Reverend Erwin Lutzer at the Sessions on Revival Ministries in Elyria, Ohio, August 1984. For additional copies of this message, or for other messages available, please contact Sotero Twins Crusade Team, 1801 Stony Ridge Court, Mansfield, Ohio, 44904. Or, in Canada, contact Canadian Revival Fellowship, Box 584, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 3A3.

The good graces of the law, which we did. You know, Ralph, hearing my brother up here, I felt, why doesn't he just take over? And he can, yes. And I did not know that he was going to be here.

I walked in here and saw him, and my heart almost stopped. I see, that goes to prove that you don't listen to me when I talk to you on the phone. Oh, no.

No, no, no, that's right. I'll take that back. I have to apologize.

That's right. Please do. I told your brother that you were going to be here.

Oh. That's a big difference, Ralph. You get that? There's a big difference between those.

Actually, Erwin is not only a guest speaker. We are good friends. We were.

You know, I think it'd be well to say that when Harold stood here a few moments ago and said that the Lord touched his life and his family and then called him into this ministry. You need to recognize that Harold still is a farmer who farms the land in western Canada and was a carpenter. One of those perfect examples, again, of how God laid his hand on a layman and his family.

And I don't think he's really touched a hammer since, as far as carpentering. He still has the farming that he does in the summer and operates the fellowship center through the winter and as well through the summer when he can. But that's another example of a layman that has been changed by the power of God.

Have you seen a change in your brother? Sure. Incidentally, do you want to preach the rest of my message for me here? Here's my outline. Just take it away.

Oh. Actually, he's just been to China. I think this is in Chinese.

But I really did not believe fully when Harold said in February in Edmonton, the comments, that the fact that he could stand up and speak was a miracle in itself. Is that right? Somewhat, yes. Yes.

That he could somewhat speak. That he could somewhat speak. Amen.

Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

Now, if you want to say anything else, you know, just feel free. Well, it's true that my brother Harold has not perhaps spoken a lot in the past, but it is also true, Ralph, that as a result of revival, the Lord has really laid his hand upon his life. You know, it was Augustine, sometimes pronounced Augustin, who said that the Lord cut loose the cords of his tongue so that he could speak.

And this is certainly true, what has happened also in revival. It's great to be with you here in the great state of Ohio, to know that the sun shines on this side of the world as well. And Ralph is quite right.

We returned from China this past summer. And sometime, I'm not sure during which of the sessions, I'm going to speak on the topic what we can learn from the church in China. One of the most amazing phenomenons to see what God did during the cultural revolution, during the time when the communists took control, and of course they are in control today in China, to see what God is doing among the house churches.

Just to whet your appetite a little bit, there were 750,000 believers when the communists took over back in 1949, three quarters of a million. If I told you that they doubled after the communist rule began and during the cultural revolution, wouldn't that make you happy? Wouldn't that make you your afternoon to know that the church doubled? What if I told you that it didn't just double, but it increased tenfold? That ought to really excite you. What if I told you that it was perhaps 15 or 20 times greater today than it was back then? And you'll see one of the most wonderful examples of what God is able to do, even in a communist country.

We have lots of stories to tell from China. There are many that I don't tell publicly because of the fact that the Chinese intelligence is very, very accurate and very thorough, though of course no one knows that I'm here so I can say whatever I like. But we have much to share regarding what God is doing in that great country of China.

More than perhaps 1.3 billion people, a billion is a thousand million, and a very small percentage know Christ as Savior, but those who do are proclaiming the gospel secretly, cannot be done openly. Today I would like to speak on the topic, Ralph asked me to do it, what I have learned about revival. And as I think of being here in, how is it pronounced, Elyria, I realize that perhaps many of you may not be totally acquainted what happened in Canada in 1971 and 1972.

For many of you this is repetition because you are Canadians, we actually have some Canadians here that have come across the border and you can tell it by their accent. But what we'd like to do is to share very briefly what happened and then I'd like to give you seven principles of revival that I think we have seen in the Canadian revival and what God did down here also in the United States. Now most of you I'm sure know, and pardon me if I'm repetitious in the sense of your knowledge that you already know this, but I don't want to necessarily assume it, but really God began the revival in Rives Junction, Michigan, that little town 10 miles north of Jackson, which is known as an interlude between two cornfields.

You remember there was that Baptist church there and Baptists have a habit of doing this. There's a Baptist principle, divide and multiply. And the Baptist church split and about 75 people, about 75 people stayed in this church and another group left to form another church across the street.

Now, Rives Junction has an overwhelming population of perhaps somewhere near 250. And this Baptist church split. They thought that they might have to close the doors of this church, but there's an intriguing story of how the satyrs just happened to have an extra week available.

Bob Maines asked them to come and God put it together and he began to do some unusual things. The people in Rives Junction said that the last thing we need in the month of May is a series of meetings because they were out in the farm fields planting their corn and they didn't want to be interrupted. But because of what God began to do in that little town of Rives Junction, the satyrs were up all night on three instances because there was a revival that began that continued all night.

I mean, even today you can talk to Maine's son who will tell you that one day he went to school right after he had been to the revival meeting. It lasted all night and he went to school in the morning. God was doing unusual things.

The radio station WUNN picked up the story and began to share. And I think that sometimes they had up to 800 people in a little church designed to seat about 350. Bob Maines said, we put chairs in that place where chairs had never been put before.

They had about 50 adults sandwiched in the nursery. Well, as a result of what God was doing there, and it's a remarkable story, and if you've never read *Flames of Freedom*, you may have the opportunity to do that. I do have some copies in the trunk of the car, which is at the other church.

And not only do I not listen to Ralph's phone calls, though he did not tell me that my brother would be here, we've not spoken on the phone for months. Ralph has a bad memory. And then there's one other thing that he has a problem with that just skips my mind.

But I also have a habit of not reading the brochure, nor the correspondence which is sent to me from time to time. I read the first paragraph. If you don't put it all in there, then don't expect me to read the rest.

But as a result of what God did in that little town of Rives Junction, news of the great things that God was doing, unusual things, came to Canada. And when the satires began in October of 1971 in Little Ebenezer

Baptist Church where there was supposed to be a 10-day meeting, it was then that God again began to repeat what he had done in the cornfields of Michigan. And I think of Irma Dirksen sitting there praying at five o'clock in the morning.

She was up at five praying for her country, for her family, and for her church. And I think it was the second night she responded to the invitation. And she said the reason she came was because of concern for her country and her church.

And I guess it was Ralph Saterra. He's the most outspoken of the twins. He said, Irma, your problem isn't the country.

It isn't the family. Your problem is you. Now, that's not very welcome news to the human heart.

But she admitted that she was proud and critical and unbroken. And she was there at the altar until she, quote, met God, end of quote. Her husband had given up on prayer.

Can you be a deacon in a Baptist church and give up on prayer? I guess it may not be legal here in the United States, but it happened in Canada. Her husband had decided that God no longer answered prayer because he had a brother with whom he had been feuding for 13 years. They had not spoken together for two.

And yet, as a result of what God did in his wife's life, these two brothers were reconciled. Someday, Bill McCloud may tell you that story, if he hasn't already, how that they were in the basement of the church and he got the deacons around. And he said, I'm not letting you two guys get apart until God has reconciled you.

And one finally said to the other, in order to get out of this uncomfortable situation, OK, so it's my fault. And McCloud said that that wasn't good enough. And he stayed there until the spirit of God took those men apart piece by piece.

Someone who was in the upper auditorium said that they heard one of the men, the harder of the two, pound the downstairs floor and cry up to God for 15 minutes for forgiveness as the spirit of God finally united those two brothers. And the next night, they sang a duet together. Well, wonderful things happened.

And of course, you may know the story of how Ebenezer Baptist Church became too small. They moved to an Anglican church, which seated 600. Then the University Drive Alliance Church, which seated 800.

Then the Third Avenue United Church, which seated 1,600. 20 churches spontaneously participated in the revival. And the closing meeting was in the Centennial Auditorium on Gray Cup Sunday, which means nothing to Americans.

Gray Cup Sunday is the Super Bowl Sunday in Canada. And two meetings were held in the Centennial Auditorium, a crusade which was supposed to last 10 days ended up lasting seven weeks. Now, you know, the heart of that Canadian revival, which eventually spread to Western Canada particularly, the heart of it was the afterglow.

When people would sit around in the basement of the church in a circle and stand up and share and give testimonies, and someone who had a problem would indicate it and say, I need prayer because, you

know, my marriage is falling apart, or I need prayer because I'm on drugs. And other people who had had similar problems and God had helped them would take them aside and pray with them. And they wouldn't come back until God had done something in their hearts that assured them that this problem had been taken care of.

And so you had afterglows. People who had broken their marriage vows through immorality were remarried sometimes. People also were up late at night, sometimes all night.

They said that the joy of the Lord was their strength. You know, the reason that some of us need a full eight hours of sleep is because we need such little joy. You know, excuse me, let me run that through.

I'm still thinking about that drive that I had from Chicago today. We have such little joy and that's the reason we need so much sleep. You know, there's a real direct relationship between the state of your mind and the physical needs of your body.

When you're in a good mood, you need less sleep. That's why if some of you can remember back this far to the days when you were courting, you know that you needed less sleep in those days because you felt so great you could get by with five hours. Now, some of you can't do it in 11.

It's because of the relationship of the human mind and heart to the body. So there were these afterglows that took place. Another thing that was characteristic of the revival, and I have not yet gotten to the seven characteristics, but there was a lot of restitution, restitution.

People were making things right. In fact, that's why it hit the secular press. I think it was on page three of the Saskatoon paper where it says that there was a renewed morality in the wake of revival.

And the reason that the press carried the story is because of the number of people that were going back to all of these stores and saying, you know, 20 years ago I stole this. 10 years ago I did this. And they were going back to various people that they had wronged trying to make it right.

And word of what was happening began to spread through the city of Saskatoon. Now, you know, it's amazing how sometimes people carry things with them for a long time. My own sister-in-law, Harold's wife, Charlene, years before had purchased a 99 cent bag of potatoes and she had it on the bottom of the shopping cart.

And so the cashier didn't see it. And she got through that area without having paid for it. For years that was on her conscience.

But then what's 99 cents? Well, it's not very much, particularly if it's Canadian money. I can assure you of that. But you know, the spirit of God pointed out to her that this was wrong.

And so she went to the manager and she said, you know, I had this bag of potatoes years ago that I didn't pay for. And the manager said to her, he said, either today is my lucky day or else something's happening in this town because you're the second person that has come to me today to make things right. Well, she assured him that something was happening in the town.

And she said that he seemed visibly shaken. You know why, don't you? It's because the people of the world have all kinds of skeletons in their closets. And when they begin to see righteousness, they feel very, very uncomfortable.

One of the reasons that the world is not too uncomfortable in our presence is because we don't necessarily make them uncomfortable by our scrupulous, righteous living. We blend in with the world fairly well and we play the same games as they do. So the heart was the afterglow services and restitution.

Now, very quickly, seven things that I have learned about revival. Incidentally, revival isn't that complicated, by the way, since you're getting your notebooks out. Revival isn't that complicated.

And I want you to take your notebooks out. I didn't mean it that way. I don't want you necessarily to write these in your Bible.

We'd hate to open the canon just to add these seven points. But, you know, revival basically is nothing more than allowing your experience to catch up to your theology. That's all that it is.

It's allowing your experience to catch up to your theology. Most of us have good theology. Particularly those of us who, well, never mind.

I don't know how well you know me, so I'll skip that. But most of us have very good theology. It's just that we don't live up to all that we know.

Most people know that bitterness is sin. They don't have to come to revival to find that out. But you see, if you are not living in accordance with what you know to be the case, God has his ways to help our experience catch up with our theology.

One of the things I try to do in the ministry, and you know, those of us who preach every Sunday, we have to make a lot of sermons. Not only every Sunday, but sometimes twice a Sunday, sometimes Wednesday. I always pray that I will not necessarily get out and preach on things that I've not experienced.

I haven't always followed that because it's hard to experience all the things you have to experience when you have to preach. Every week, but you know, God is saying to all of us, begin to live up to what you know. And if you do, I suspect revival will come.

Are you ready now for the seven characteristics? I see three heads nod. That's enough for me. We're two or three.

Agreed, we can carry on. Number one, it is intensely personal. It's intensely personal.

Revival is you being revived. You know, in Canada, there were people who prayed for revival before revival came, and they were the ones who rejected it when it came because they said, this isn't what we were praying for. We thought that when revival came, God was going to shut down all of those sinful movie houses, and he was going to go down those streets and take those theaters and close them.

And the unsaved would be smitten with conviction on the streets. But they said, we did not know that God was going to do such a deep and painful work in our own hearts. What do you think of when you think of revival? You think of the fact that we're going downhill morally and that we have 1.5 million abortions a year in the United States.

Yes, that's all true. And that's all symptomatic of the fact that we need revival. But if God is going to do it, he's probably going to do it through his church.

And he's probably going to begin with the best people he's got. The sort who'll make an effort to be at a revival rally on a Labor Day weekend of all things. God begins with his own people.

If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves. That's the beginning point. Now, since I'm preaching, I might as well just keep plowing through.

God often begins with Christian workers and pastors. You see, sometimes it's harder for us to allow God to do his work because more is expected of us. There's so many people who think that pastors are perfect.

I've never yet met a pastor's wife who's believed that, however. It's just parishioners that live with this myth. But you see, God likes to begin with his own people and it's intensely personal.

One man said, I always believed that revival was for those who had major spiritual problems. Three days into what God was doing, you know, I just came to the conclusion I have major spiritual problems. God begins with his own people and it is personal.

I don't know what you're expecting from this revival crusade. Maybe you're expecting sparks to begin that will go across the whole nation. We'd like to sure see that.

But even if that doesn't happen, are you prepared to agree with God on everything that he brings to your attention? That's the real issue. Because if it's going to start, it's going to begin with you and me. Second, revival demands humility.

Humility. If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves. Humble themselves.

You know, Martin Luther said in a very famous quote, which I happen to have quoted in an article in Moody Monthly some time ago, that all sins, including immorality, actually begin with pride. There is a sense in which we think that we can get by with things and that the root sin is actually pride. You think of Lucifer who said, I will, I will, I will, I will.

And a little drop of this poison has dropped on every human heart. And so you see, we come to a time of revival and we find that it's very difficult for some people to admit needs. I think that it's hard for all of us.

I think that there has to be a certain atmosphere. There has to be a certain openness. Sometimes there has to be a beginning of one person sharing openly and honestly.

And then everyone else seems to say, you know, I guess it's safe to really say where I'm hurting. And revival was showing above all things that God had to break people and all of us and our pride. You know that the scripture talks about that and how God abhors the proud.

The scripture says that the Lord is at war with the proud. Did you know that the Greek word there really means he has taken up cause against the proud. He is in a battle against the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.

One pastor sitting in these revival meetings said, you know, I couldn't go forward because of my reputation. Everyone would think that I was really worse spiritually than I really was. They'd all think my word.

Here's this guy who's been instructing us in righteousness and now he needs it. And they begin to think terrible things about him. But he said, you know, the spirit of God kept being so persistent.

Apparently, God didn't care about my reputation. You know, it's funny. God just doesn't care about our reputations.

In one sense, of course, he does. He does not want his people to drag his name into the mud. But in another sense, during the time of revival, when there's cleansing, God does not respect persons, whether we're Christian workers or not.

When the spirit of God begins to zero in, he does his work. This is parenthetical. You know, one of the things I think I noticed in doing research for the Canadian revival was that people couldn't really seemingly get right with God unless they did it publicly.

Now, that isn't really scriptural, maybe. Well, maybe it is because you can get into your own room, can't you? And just yield to God and deal with all these issues. But, you know, it's so much easier to be humble before the face of God than it is in the presence of other people.

And it almost seemed as if God was demanding something more than just being right with God in your room. God was saying, I want you to feel free to humble yourself even in the presence of others and acknowledge a need. Now, let me say this.

I don't know what God is going to do during this time of revival. But it's important to tell people, and I may say this in one of my messages over the weekend, that really going forward to the prayer room because you have a need is really no big deal in one sense. It doesn't mean that you've been living a defeated life all up until this moment.

It simply is this. It's like house cleaning. You know, just because you have a thorough house cleaning in the spring doesn't mean that you're a messy housekeeper.

It just means that there are times when we have to deal with God in thoroughness. Doesn't mean that he hasn't been working in your life before or that you've always been defeated. It means that God sometimes wants to do something extra special in terms of our meeting with him.

But it demands humility. Third, demands the healing of personal relationships. The healing of personal relationships.

If you want to know where revival begins, it begins in the church. But don't get it to the church yet. Revival begins best in one's own family.

You see, each of us is able to give a certain impression when we go to church or when we teach. It's easy to give a message perhaps and impress people. But you know, and I know that nobody can fake it continually at home.

What you are really like comes out in the pressure cooker of that existence. And that's why revival so often means that we get right with those that are closest to us. I mean, husbands and wives and uncles and aunts and brothers and sisters and cousins and relatives that you'd prefer not to see month by month.

Revival means that those kinds of things get straightened up. Now, you know, there are so many families in which there is division. I could tell you one story after another where one child was chiseled out of an inheritance because of the shrewdness of his brother or whatever.

And bitterness persists and there is latent anger and hostility. And the Spirit of God always deals with those issues. You know, one of the things that the Lord wants us to learn is the need to forgive and that forgiveness is not an emotion.

You know, I think I was counting up yesterday, Ralph. I think I'm supposed to preach about eight times this weekend. My word.

I wonder if you have a wheelchair to carry me out at the end of the weekend. You have crutches. And, you know, it just dawned on me.

I don't even plan to preach on forgiveness, but that's so essential. And, you know, there are situations where people have been hurt in churches. I heard just the other day, someone called me and told me about a well-known Christian leader in the Chicago area who was upset because of something that happened in a church 40 years ago, and to this day, he will not get involved.

And I say shame on him. Shame. You know that unless bitterness is taken out of your life, you won't hear much that is being said over this weekend.

I'll tell you that, you know, there are people who sit in churches and because they have something eating on them, everything else goes past them. And so the spirit of God is asking us to make things right. Parents going to children to make things right.

I think of that man in Detroit who was out golfing early in the morning. And this was when the revival was going on about 1972, I think the fall of 72. And he came in after his golf game just to see who was there.

And 200 men were there and they were on their knees and they were weeping. And he sat in the back row. Where else would you expect a golfer to sit since he was supposed to be there and was out doing other things? He sat in the back row, but he took his fist and he put it into his hand and he said, God, you'll never get me.

You'll never get me. What would make a Christian man say in anger, God, you'll never get me? It's because that Christian man had five children and a hot temper. It's a terrible combination.

And frequently he would wound the spirits of his children by his erratic behavior and discipline. And he knew that if God ever got him, he'd have to go back and to make things right. And he was a real he man.

You know, one of these proud men who never does anything wrong. Well, the good news is God got him, God got him. And I know his story because I listened to it on tape as he wept, telling the story in the presence of perhaps five or 600 people of how God had to get him.

But you see, there's hardness of heart that develops within us. And revival means that there is a healing of all personal relationships. I think of the editor Sherwood Wirt, who since revival has written many books on the topic, but he said he was working for Billy Graham, but God wasn't working for me.

He was the editor of Decision and he and his wife were not getting along. And how God showed him that until that was right, nothing else ever would be. You know, God has a funny way of putting his finger on something and saying, unless that is right, nothing else ever will be.

We can get everything else right. God says until that thing is right, nothing else will ever really be put in its place. Number four, it means taking the scriptures very seriously, taking the scripting scriptures very

seriously.

It means that you actually believe that worry is a sin. And if it's a sin, you confess it like other sins. And you don't just call it concern.

Now there's a legitimate area of concern. Paul says he has concern for the churches. But that's different from worry and anxiety.

You know what anxiety is really doing? It is. It is taking responsibilities that God never intended any person to carry and bearing them on your shoulders. You know, I have an excellent message on that.

Didn't plan on bringing that one either. My oh my. Let me just explain that your body has antibodies to fight colds and disease.

I wish mine had stronger antibodies to fight the particular form of allergy that I pick up every fall on the 28th of August. But your body does not have antibodies to fight worry and anger. Consequently, there is no way that it can resist the impact.

It's like driving a car with its brakes on. And God never intended you to bear those burdens. And so you begin to call things like worry a sin.

Self-pity, like Doris, whose last name used to be Hodges. Self-pity. We ought to get Doris to tell us that story sometime.

There are people who say that because they have been wronged, they feel it is legitimate to hold bitterness within them. When we begin to take the scripture seriously, we begin to see that there is no way that we can justify our actions. We take full responsibility for our behavior.

And when God says that we should love one another and that we should forgive one another, we take those as words right from his hand and we accept it. Number five, it necessitates appreciation for the body of Christ. Appreciation for the body of Christ.

You see, within the body of Christ, there's a tremendous amount of power. Tremendous amount that is not being utilized in churches today. You know, in America here, we have such individualism.

Everybody likes to be an individual. And we don't like people. We don't like to have to depend on people.

We don't like to admit that we need them. We like to do our own thing at our own time. And we are just stubborn.

I mean, even at the Moody Church, where everyone is nearly sanctified. You know, it's amazing how you can find out exactly what is in the human heart. You can do it one of two ways.

Either bump someone's new car. That's one way. Or the second way is to ask them to move as to where they're seated and put ropes up in areas of the sanctuary that you don't want to be used.

One of those ways will just tell you exactly where people are at spiritually. We have such individualism. People just want to do their own thing.

And of course, in our churches, no demands are made on anyone. You can come in, nobody asks you, did you witness this past week? Have you been reading your Bible? Nobody will ask you a question. In fact,

there's a church here in the United States that even has, and I won't tell you where it is, but it even has the doctrine of privacy.

And the doctrine of privacy means that you should be able to come into church, sit down, walk out. And if you want, no one should speak to you. And you have no responsibility to speak to anyone else because it's just between you and God and nobody else.

You can come in, you can walk in at five minutes to 11 sharp. You can leave at 12 o'clock dull and you have no responsibility. You don't even have to bring a Bible.

In fact, you don't even have to stay awake. There is, however, one requirement and that is that you stay alive. It's the only requirement that we have.

You know what happened in revival? God began to show people that there were gifts within the body that were not being used. I don't even like the term layman because that somehow indicates second-class citizens. As a result of what God was doing, you know that many more than 5,000 teams spanned out throughout Western Canada and in places in Michigan, all lay teams spreading revival.

You say, how does revival spread? It spreads through the testimonies of godly people. And the lay people particularly could identify with others much better than pastors could. Now, you know, this is sort of for Christian workers and all.

So we can just sort of tell it the way it is, okay? There are many people in our churches who come and they listen to messages by folks like me and they say he doesn't know what he's talking about because he doesn't work where I do. Has he ever spent 12 hours a day in a factory with men cursing and bringing pornography to work? He doesn't know what it's like where I am. Somebody stands up and says, you know, I work in a factory and I have these problems.

And guess what? God is adequate. And they say, I can't believe it. If God did it for him, maybe he can do it for me.

Here's a widow who's angry at God for taking her husband. And she stands up and says, I was angry at God, but I submitted it to him and God has met this need. And immediately 30 widows in the congregation identify and say, my word, I can't believe it.

God actually can do something for a widow. And you see what happened was the spirit of God, used lay people, therefore, to communicate the truths of revival in ways that were probably better than those of us who have public ministries. And so the spirit of God was bringing people alive.

I think of another situation in Detroit where a woman apparently came to a meeting as I heard the story who had pills in her purse to commit suicide. She cleaned her house. You know, if you're going to go, at least leave it clean.

She cleaned her house, put the pills in her purse, was going to do it, but as a last gesture to God, she stopped in at the church. They were all singing, oh, say, but I'm glad, I'm glad. She felt like screaming, oh, say, but I'm mad, I'm mad.

But you know, the people, the women took her into the prayer room and they said, we're not leaving here until God takes away all your depression. They stayed there a couple of hours. But when she came out,

she said, thoughts of death were far from her.

Four years later, I wrote her a letter to verify the story and it occurs in *Flames of Freedom*. And she says, even though I have many physical problems, the depression has never returned. You see, what God was saying is that there are resources within the body, if we ever get serious about it, there are resources within the body of Christ by which emotional and spiritual problems can be taken care of.

And they are within the body of Jesus Christ. You know that lay people witness much better than pastors do. When I ride on a plane, I have a rule to follow that almost always I witness to the person next to me.

Sometimes I don't feel like it, I just wish that right at that time, I'd like to have the doctrine of privacy. You know, I'm tired and all these other things, but invariably, God opens the door and I try to walk through it. But the minute I say I'm a minister, oh, suddenly, you know, the curtains go up.

Their defenses begin to arise. Why? Well, I'll tell you why. They are expecting a sermon.

Why? Because they know that I'm paid to be good, right? And the rest of you are good for nothing. See? That's why God was beginning to show people in revival. I hope you'll be all right here.

God was beginning to show people. The tremendous untapped resource in the church was the body of Jesus Christ. Gifts being exercised that people never thought they had.

And of course, much else could be said. So, number six, revival means saying no to self, no to self. I suppose that was the message of the revival.

That's what the satirist preached night after night. The whole idea was that you were supposed to go to the prayer room and take care of self. Well, how in the world do you do that? You know that there are people who are involved in certain habits and certain thought patterns and certain behavioral experiences.

In fact, just yesterday... Wasn't it yesterday? I get my days confused. Today is... Yes, just yesterday. No, Thursday.

I was on Primetime America. Was that Thursday was yesterday? Fine. Fine.

I was on Primetime America. I don't know if you get it over your radio station here. But discussing child abuse, you know, which is absolutely rampant in our society.

You know that the estimates now are that one in six children are going to be abused before they become adults sexually. We are being overrun literally by wicked spirits, I'm convinced. But you know that the question is, what do you do? What do you say to a person who says, I hate myself for doing it, but I am driven.

I am driven. And of course, the message of revival was that we believe that God has an answer for that. And I suppose that the answer is twofold.

First of all, the cross. Well, maybe only one answer, namely the cross. That it was possible to apply the work of Jesus Christ on the cross to your individual life in such a way that you would not be propelled by self or the flesh, whatever all those desires may turn out to be in your own personal experience.

And that there was a remedy that was stronger than the flesh. There was a remedy that was stronger than the flesh, because you need that. You just can't say to people, now, what you should do is try harder.

What you should do is begin to do thus and so and begin to and then give them a series of things to do. All that is good and maybe even necessary. But more importantly, what they need is some kind of a power that's stronger than the devil and the flesh that has to be applied to their experience.

And that's what was happening in the prayer room. People were saying that they were going to stay there until God released them of this difficulty. And they had this subjective witness of the spirit that indeed this problem had been taken care of.

Now, I know that there's a lot of discussion of what it means to die to self. And I don't pretend to have all the answers. But if we may simply summarize it, the view was that the cross was sufficient to, as one brother put it, put the ax to the root of the tree and finally get at the very bottom of problems that people had long ago decided were insoluble.

And then, of course, after that, there is the work of resisting Satan and so forth. One of the problems that resulted in the revival was that people thought that having done that, they had finally crossed the Rubicon, that there would be no more real big struggles. They had finally settled the issues.

And then a couple of days or weeks later, some of the same things began to surface in their life and they didn't know how to handle it. You know, I would simply say this, that if God really does a thorough work in your heart and mine in revival, this weekend, probably when we leave here, it's going to get worse before it gets better because we arouse all type of antagonism in the spirit world. So there is really no one experience that anyone can have whereby all these problems are solved.

And until people began to realize that this was only a beginning, it was only a first step, it was only a breakthrough which had to be nurtured and strengthened and understood, it was then that people really began to grow. And that's why there are hundreds of Christians today in Canada who point the beginning of a changed life back to those days. But they are the ones who recognize that it can only be a beginning because there is no experience that I can have today that is going to guarantee that I'm going to be victorious over Satan tomorrow.

None. Tomorrow has to be begun at the foot of the cross. So it means saying no to self.

Finally, it demands excellent leadership. Demands excellent leadership. In some churches, there was so much sharing that people began to say, well, you know, we don't need brigade.

We don't need Sunday school. Let's just get together and share. Well, that was really sweet for a couple of days or weeks, but soon they began to wear out because after you've given your fantastic testimony, how many times can you give it to the same people? And so in those churches where there was Bible studies, where there was follow-up, where there was teaching from the pulpit, there was a greater continuation of what the Spirit of God was doing during those days.

But in and of itself, the experience could be washed out unless people began to understand that revival is an unusual thing that God does. Isn't necessarily the normal thing, but it is an unusual thing that He does and it has to be understood and interpreted properly so that it is within the framework of the Scriptures. Many people, of course, were so excited because of their emotional highs.

And I think that God expects us to have emotional highs. You know, why else did He give us emotions? One woman was so excited because of all the answers to prayer. She said to somebody, don't tell me about another answer to prayer because if I hear one more, I won't be able to take it.

Well, that's a bit of a switch, by the way, from what we usually hear from people. They say, I can't remember an answer to prayer in the last 20 years. But at any rate, she was so excited.

So there was so much joy. One person said, I asked God to turn down the joy so that I could get some sleep. Well, later on, after that began to subside, they began to wonder, was this experience real? Was it really of God? Why isn't it lasted? And that's why the teaching ministry of so many people like Richard Siple and the Soteris and a number of other people was so helpful to help people to understand that revival has to be put into the perspective, the right perspective from the standpoint of the scriptures and the framework.

You know, revival is maybe a little bit like a rainstorm. When it's really dry, and it was really dry up in Canada this fall, we were up there in July after we got back from China and found out that it had only rained perhaps three quarters of an inch out there all summer. Terribly dry.

In fact, the crops never did recover. But I understood later after we returned to Chicago, my mother said that they got about six inches one day. That's a lot of water.

Well, when six inches come down in a few hours, you know, it takes some of the landscape with it. Sometimes in revival, when God does a great thing, some of the landscape gets taken with it. He's refreshing his people and people get excited.

And sometimes things are said that shouldn't have been said, or sometimes things are done that shouldn't have been done. And so some people become critical. But the simple fact is that when revival comes, it is God restoring his church to health.

And even though at times it may be overdone when you haven't had rain all year, you're willing to put up with a cloudburst. You're willing to put up with a cloudburst because you realize that you're thankful for the moisture, even though it's come perhaps unexpectedly and somewhat with more force than you originally believed. Here are seven observations about revival.

I don't claim to be an authority on revival by any means. There are many people that know a lot more about it than I. These are just some things I learned when I wrote *Flames of Freedom*. Let's pray together, shall we? Our Father today, we thank you for the faithfulness of your Holy Spirit to speak to us.

We only ask that you will help us to be quiet enough to listen to his tender voice. And we pray that he might not be drowned out through the activities, the pressures, and all of the other diversions that Satan would like to lead us into. We ask your blessing upon this conference.

Father, we do not look to man, no way. We have not come with revival in our pockets. We come imperfectly.

We come with only little knowledge. We do not come depending upon sermons. We come depending upon the Lord, our God, and our expectation is from him.

Therefore, lead us and guide us and make us open to your truth. We ask in Jesus' name, amen. Thanks so much, Erwin.

I appreciate those comments. I have been very impressed in our time together here in the way in which it's as if God has said the same thing over and over again through every voice. You would have thought that he was here all day or yesterday, would you not? Comments? And others who've come on talking about the, what did you say, the demons of sex? Is that what you call it? What did I say this morning? The demons of lust.

Same thing, isn't it? And that was the other thing that has impressed me. So many have related to that very problem as becoming such a severe problem such as we've not seen before. Therefore, to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

If ever we need to be on our faces before God, there is nothing that has ever happened to anyone that could not happen to any of us apart from the grace of God. Am I right? We're all the same kind of flesh and we just allow the flesh to function and the self-life to have room to operate. There's no sin that any of us are not capable of committing apart from the grace of God.

So let's just believe that God has brought us together so that our hearts and our minds can be refreshed about those things that are urgent and important that we must hear in the days ahead. Amen? Well, does anyone like anything else to do? Stand and let's sing.

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