

The Word and Faith

by Glenn Meldrum

The Word of God is essential for revival, and requires a deep trust in Jesus and His promises in order to be effective.

Scripture: Numbers 13:30, Deuteronomy 28:1, Psalm 12:6, Matthew 24:35, Romans 12:2, Hebrews 4:12, 1 John 2:4

Topics: "Faith And Scripture", "Biblical Revival"

Description

Glenn Meldrum emphasizes the importance of faith in the Living Word, Jesus, and belief in the truths of the Scriptures for salvation, holiness, and revival. He discusses how revival is sparked by a deep understanding and obedience to the Word of God, highlighting the need for doctrinal integrity and a restoration of the Scriptures in the Church. Drawing from the example of King Josiah's reform, he illustrates the transformative power of the Word when it is embraced and practiced wholeheartedly. Meldrum challenges believers to have a radical faith, rooted in Biblical truth, that leads to a revival marked by miracles, signs, and wonders.

Transcript

The devil is more knowledgeable of the Word of God than Christians are. Yet this knowledge will never save him. Knowing the Scriptures and even holding a correct belief in them will never redeem a person, make one holy or bring revival. Brother Yun took this thought further when he said, "You can never really know the Scriptures until you're willing to be changed by them" (Yun, 297). John Warwick Montgomery, in taking up this issue wrote, "Salvation comes when, by way of personal contact with the Scriptures, we personally meet the Christ of Scriptures, who loved us and gave himself for us" (Montgomery, 69).

Faith in the Living Word--Jesus and belief in the truths set forth in the written Word are intricately interwoven so that men can be saved. They are also essential elements in the scheme of revival. In this chapter, we will discuss how the Scriptures are a vital part of a spiritual outpouring. Then we will examine how faith in the Living Word and trust in the foundational truths of Scripture are indispensable to the commencement and advancement of a local or national awakening.

THE WORD

Revival is an explosion of divine truth upon the minds and consciences of men. When Jehovah rends the heavens, the pure truth of His presence exposes the lies and sins of men. The Lord is always true to His character and Word, for He does not change. The Author of Truth demands that His people walk in truth (1

Jn. 2:4). He gave us the written Word so we could know His commands and live His "good, pleasing and perfect will" (Rom. 12:2).

The written Word is the only sure revelation of divine truth and the only standard to define Christian faith and practice. Through the Scriptures, we come to know the character of God, the spiritual condition of mankind and the simple plan of salvation. The Holy Writ teaches us that the Lord desires to make His glory known to our fallen world. Great and precious promises have been lavished upon the church so she can be empowered to move heaven to shake earth.

There are no shortcuts that can manifest the glory of the Sovereign Lord. Those who yearn for revival must be determined to walk according to His Word while avoiding the host of strange and obscure teachings that continually pop up out of a fad crazed western Christianity. God will not rend the heavens because a preacher advances a "new" teaching or technique. The Almighty seeks to make His presence known to a people who will lovingly obey the timeless truths of His Word and faithfully fulfill His perfect will.

Repeatedly revival has died or been kept from the land because erroneous teaching crept into the church. The Great Reformation of the 1500's is a case in point. The Roman church, steeped in heresy and scandal, produced a spiritual wasteland throughout Europe and the known world. The Romish hierarchy kept the people in spiritual darkness by withholding the Scriptures from them. Men and women put themselves at enmity with the ecclesiastical giant so the life-changing truths of the Word could be read and plainly understood by the common people. As a result, the revival called the Great Reformation exploded throughout Europe. The moment people could read the Bible in their mother tongue the lies of the institutionalized church were exposed and they could be saved.

Doctrinal integrity is not a small issue with God. He gave us His Word for a reason and instructed us again and again to "FULLY obey the LORD your God and CAREFULLY follow ALL his commands" (Deu. 28:1). Many people, especially within the Charismatic/Pentecostal movement, have advanced "new" prophetic teachings, acts or rituals believing that they will produce a spiritual rain from heaven. They often advance some very bizarre teachings and perform many outlandish ceremonies that they call prophetic. Yet the world remains unchanged by all their "words," strange beliefs and behaviors. The Lord of miracles will pour out His wondrous power when we carefully obey His written Word, not if we advance strange teachings and practices.

It is imperative that the Scriptures be restored to its rightful place in the Body of Christ. Brother Yun declared, "The first thing needed for revival to return to your [Western] churches is the Word of the Lord. God's Word is missing. Sure, there are many preachers and thousands of tapes and videos, but so little contains the sharp truth of God's Word. . . . Not only is knowledge of God's Word missing, but obedience to that Word" (Yun, 296). Jesus does not need our innovative thinking or church growth principles to turn the world upside down. He is seeking those who will place a childlike faith in Him and lovingly obey His every Word. "One of these days," proclaimed Leonard Ravenhill, "some simple soul will pick up the Book of God, read it, and believe it. Then the rest of us will be embarrassed" (Ravenhill, Why, 70).

Josiah's Reform

King Josiah came to the throne of Judah at the age of eight and reigned for thirty-one years. When he turned sixteen years old, he began to seek the Lord. Four years later he set in motion numerous religious reforms. In the 18th year of his reign, he ordered the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. He followed the Lord to the best of his knowledge. During this period of Judah's history the Scriptures were not in

common use. Though Josiah instituted many religious and social reforms after he turned to the Lord it was not until the Word of God was restored to its rightful place that the king and nation were radically transformed.

Before Josiah came to the throne, Judah suffered under many wicked kings who refused to worship the Lord and obey His Word. Possibly, under the evil reign of Manasseh, the Scriptures were hid so the wicked king could not destroy them. Since the people no longer had free access to the Word of God they fell even further into moral and spiritual decay.

After Josiah began rebuilding Solomon's temple, some workmen found a hidden copy of the Scriptures. When the king's secretary read the Book of the Law in the presence of the king he was greatly distressed. The Law revealed the horrifying truth that divine wrath was kindled against Judah because of her idolatry and the multitude of her sins. Through humility and the fear of God, the king tore his robes in a desperate act of repentance and the Lord responded with mercy (2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chr. 34).

A radical reformation came to Josiah and the children of Israel when the Word of the Lord was restored to the people. The king aggressively went throughout Jerusalem and Judah cleansing the land of its idols. He removed every vestige of idolatry from the temple and tore down the area that housed homosexual prostitutes. "Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the LORD as he did--with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength, in accordance with all the Law of Moses" (2 Kings 22:25).

Though Josiah began many political and religious reforms before the Law was recovered, reformation and revival could not take place until the Word of God found its rightful place in the life of the king and the nation. For all of Josiah's sincere efforts to serve Jehovah, it was not until the Scriptures were planted in his heart that he knew how to recklessly abandon himself to the Lord. Only through the knowledge of God's will as revealed in His Word could the king walk in loving obedience and turn a nation back to their Redeemer.

In part, revival is kept from North America because we are ignorant of the Scriptures. This seems like a ridiculous statement in light of the phenomenal privilege we have, nonetheless, a spiritual famine has gripped the nation. The prophet Amos declared, "'The days are coming,' declares the Sovereign LORD, 'when I will send a famine through the land--not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD'" (Amos 8:11). We have a multitude of Bible translations, commentaries, dictionaries and study aids. The nation is flooded with Bible schools, conferences and seminars. The Christian book industry has skyrocketed which allows easy access to ancient, classic and pop authors. There are teaching tapes and videos, Christian TV and music, and tons of Jesus paraphernalia. In spite of all this, many are strangers to the Word. This is evidenced through the worldly lifestyles of the vast majority of acclaimed "Christians."

Reformation

The issue of reformation and revival needs to be addressed a little further. As stated in the last chapter, reformation is the restoring of truths that have been lost or neglected. Whole generations have lived and died ignorant of God's Word. In our time, the message of easy-believism has engulfed large portions of the church. Others are obsessed with teachings that feed the lusts of their flesh. All too often, we selectively apply the Word to our lives while diluting its radical demands so as to fit our self-centered lives. In the end, we want a gospel that makes us happy and does not upset our lifestyles or confronts us with

our sin.

In the days of Manasseh the Word was hidden from the people, however in our time, the people have willingly hidden Biblical truths from their own eyes. Our love of half-truths has hardened our hearts and so the Lord has given us over to teachers that feed the lusts of our flesh. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (2 Tim. 4:3). We surround ourselves with pastors and teachers who tell us what we want to hear, not what we need to hear. "When God speaks, we must listen," stressed Robert Coleman. "It is not our place to change or minimize the message. Nor are we called to defend what God says. The Bible is not on trial; we are. Our place is only to trust and obey" (Coleman, Coming, 42).

How strange it is when believers maintain that the Scriptures are divinely inspired and with the next breath claim that Jesus did not mean what He said. To illustrate this point let's examine Luke 14:33, "Any of you who does not give up everything he has CANNOT be my disciple." This is perhaps the most disliked verse in the Bible and possibly the most detested term of Christian discipleship. Many pastors, theologians and average church folk maintain, for a variety of reasons that Jesus did not literally mean what He said. Yet, throughout the ages, simple disciples have fully given themselves over to Christ's commands because they believed His words were true and that He knew exactly what He was saying. The fruit of these lives has repeatedly proved that the Master expected this verse to be literally interpreted and lived to the fullest.

Before we will radically live these Scriptural truths we must be willing for the Word to undo our entire existence--even our pet doctrines. Here is one reason why revival has not come to western Christianity and why we are not seeing our cities won for Christ--we do not want the truths of Scripture upsetting our selfish way of living. There is a reason why we do not want to forsake all and follow Him.

The Word of God had to be restored and practiced before revival could come to Judah in the days of Josiah. This truth holds good today. We can move heaven to shake earth when we are fully convinced that "the words of the LORD are flawless" (Ps. 12:6) and are willing to live those truths no matter the cost. Harold Spann noted, "There is little point talking about revival unless we believe what God says. If there is some doubt about the integrity of His Word, there is likely to be little concern for people to measure their lives by it. . . . Theological positions which discredit the Holy Scriptures never produce revival" (Coleman, Coming, 100-101).

Restoring God's Word to its rightful place will expose our worldly lifestyles and the sin that is deeply rooted in our nature. The "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" must be laid successively upon the root of our spiritual maladies (Eph. 6:17). Great pain accompanies the knives of a skilled surgeon. However, when his work is accomplished, there is hope for the dying patient. This is the hope the Great Physician offers a dying church. His healing hands will first inflict a holy pain that goes to the root of our spiritual afflictions. Then health can come to our sin sick souls and our sin sick churches.

Word Of Power

The power of the Holy Writ will only be realized when we abandon ourselves to it. "It is one thing to know the truth," charged Ernest Wadsworth, "another thing to understand it, but still another thing to feel its power. . . Truth must be felt as well as believed" (Wadsworth, 60). When the Word and the Spirit are present there is power. Not some subjective concept of power that is unverifiable, but that which makes men tremble under the soul shaking conviction of sin.

The Lord has not called us to dead and powerless doctrines. He has called us to a living theology whose "promises have been thoroughly tested," therefore "your servant loves them" (Ps. 119:140). If the Word is living, then it should be obviously manifested through His people. "Many churches and ministries start out as places of power, then evolve into museums and end up as prison houses. Altars of fire become artifacts, miracles become methods, and people end up powerless" (Murillo, 65). All because the Living Word is replaced with lifeless doctrines and programs void of the Spirit. The Scriptures define this as "having a form of godliness but denying its power" (2 Tim. 3:5). Paul commanded, "from such turn away."

Jeremiah wrote, "When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight" (Jer. 15:16). We must consume God's Word so it becomes our very life, and we need to be consumed by it as well. To be consumed by the Word means that our selfish way of living ceases as the life of Christ pulsates through our entire being. The world has not turned to Jesus because we have not demonstrated that the Scriptures are true, powerful and worth the abandonment of our lives. Instead, "We inoculate the world with a mild form of Christianity so that it will be immune to the real thing" (Hauerwas, 91).

King Josiah saw the power of the Word when he fully yielded himself to God's simple truths. A revival followed that changed a nation. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:2). What He has done in the past He can do today, for God does not show favoritism (Rom. 2:11).

FAITH

Biblical faith can only be founded upon Biblical truth. What value is it to believe in the existence of God if we will not believe that He is who He said He is and will do everything He said He would do? (Heb. 11:6). Genuine faith will cause us to abandon ourselves to Him through loving obedience whether His commands are convenient or not.

Faith, as it relates to revival, means that we believe the Spirit will bring a spiritual awakening to our churches and communities because we have fulfilled the covenant conditions of the Word. "Desire for revival is one thing," stated Duncan Campbell; "confident anticipation that our desire will be fulfilled is another" (Woosley, 112). Authentic faith is proved by the fruit it produces.

Idolatry

Lack of faith and surrender to the Lord is a form of self-idolatry. Tozer taught: "Among all created beings, not one dare trust in itself. God alone trusts in Himself; all other beings must trust in Him. Unbelief is actually perverted faith, for it puts its trust not in the living God but in dying men. The unbeliever denies the self-sufficiency of God and usurps attributes that are not his" (Tozer, Knowledge, 41).

Idolatry is placing one's faith in anything other than Christ, or endeavoring to share that place with another god. This means we cannot serve God and money, God and people, God and self or God and religion. Either Jesus will be our only Savior or not our Savior at all. Our faith must rest in Christ alone and the Word clearly expresses the fullness of His redeeming power. When Jesus is actually Lord of our lives there will be all the power necessary to correctly love people and rightly use the things of this world such as money, possessions and governments.

Idolatry, in all of its various forms, is breaking the first of the Ten Commandments, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). It is also breaking Christ's greatest commandment to, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mk.

12:30). To not love and trust the Lord with all that is within us means we are placing our faith in something other than God. Our claims of faith in Christ are very shallow if we are not willing to trust Him with our entire existence and wellbeing. True faith trusts that Jesus will fulfill everything He has promised and that every command He has given is true and worthy of our complete and loving obedience.

As we tear down the idols in our lives we must replace them with a childlike faith in Christ alone. Before we can believe God for revival, we need to begin with the foundational principle of trusting Him to care for our lives and families. This was a message Jesus taught the disciples (Lk. 12:22-40). For faith to grow we must use the faith we have.

Smith Wigglesworth was a man of faith who proved his faith by the signs and wonders that followed him. Once while in Ireland he saw a powerful move of the Holy Ghost, "There were many sick carried to that meeting. Many people were seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There were sinners there who were under mighty conviction. A moment came when the breath of God swept through the meeting. In about ten minutes every sinner in the place was saved. Everyone who had been seeking the Holy Spirit was baptized, and every sick one was healed. God is a reality, and His power can never fail. As our faith reaches out, God will meet us, and the same rain will fall. It is the same blood that cleanses, the same power, the same Holy Spirit, and the same Jesus made real through the power of the Holy Spirit! What would happen if we would believe God?" (Wigglesworth, edited, 194).

Radical Faith

What moved the early church to follow Jesus and His teaching even at the expense of their wealth, reputations and comforts? What made them victorious in the face of trouble and persecution? And what compelled them to preach the Gospel at the cost of life and limb? They had a radical faith in Jesus and His Word. They possessed a faith based upon the evidence that Jesus rose from the dead and they believed ALL of the promises He gave them. Their lives produced the fruit of living faith. As Wigglesworth preached, "You must have the Word of God abiding in you if you want faith to be in evidence" (Hacking, 69).

The Word of God is "living and powerful" (Heb. 4:12; KJV). When average people believe and live its promises, they will see a miracle working God in action. Wigglesworth used to say, "God says it, I believe it, and that settles it" (Madden, 78). The Lord used this lowly plumber to see the lost saved, the lame walk, the blind to see and the dead raised to life. Wigglesworth gave this account of the outpouring of the Spirit on a train, "I stepped out of a railway coach to wash my hands. I had a season of prayer, and the Lord just filled me to overflowing with His love. I was going to a convention in Ireland, and I could not get there fast enough. As I returned to my seat, I believe that the Spirit of the Lord was so heavy upon me that my face must have shone. There were two clerical men sitting together, and as I got into the coach again, one of them cried out, 'You convict me of sin.' Within three minutes everyone in the coach was crying to God for salvation. This has happened many times in my life" (Wigglesworth, 83).

When we believe the Word proof always follows. The cost of such faith is the surrender of our entire being to Jesus. Gary Harbaugh wrote, "Christ calls me to the righteousness of faith, which is a call for me to choose the death of my self-sufficiency" (Harbaugh, 127). There is no other path to revival and the power of the Holy Ghost.

One of the reasons we do not have revival is because we do not truly believe that God will bring it to our churches. The lack of faith in Christians is evidenced by their fear and hesitation to completely yield

themselves to Christ and His Word. Before Charles Finney was converted he attended a prayer meeting in his hometown of Adams, New York. On one occasion they asked the young lawyer if they could pray for him. He emphatically said "no!" because he did not see that God answered their prayers.

Finney further told them, "I suppose I need to be prayed for, for I am conscience that I am a sinner, but I do not see that it will do any good for you to pray for me, for you are continually asking, but you do not receive. You have been praying for a revival ever since I have been in Adams, and yet you do not have it. You have been praying for the Holy Spirit to descend upon you, and yet complaining of your leanness. You have prayed enough since I have attended these meetings to have prayed the devil out of Adams if there is any virtue in your prayers. But here you are praying on and complaining still" (Finney, Autobiography, 11). Thank God Finney was radically converted in spite of those faithless church attendees and that he did not become like them.

Genuine faith produces verifiable results. There are times when Christians, to save face when their petitions are not granted, claim that their prayers have been answered in the spiritual realm even though there is no certifiable proof. Such claims are fraudulent. If the confident belief in a God who answers prayer has any legitimate value, then demonstrable proof will follow. Elijah prayed for it to stop raining and it did not rain for three and a half years. When he prayed for it to rain the showers came. This does not mean that we will always instantly see the answers to our prayers. However, the answers will come. People of faith will leave a trail of the fruits of their faith wherever they go. Hudson Taylor taught, "All God's giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on God being with them" (MacDonald, 36).

Trusting God

The Lord commanded Moses to send one leader from each of the twelve tribes to explore the Canaan land. They returned with news that the land indeed flowed with milk and honey. Ten of the twelve leaders spread fear and doubt through the camp saying, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are" (Num. 13:31). They told the people, "The land we explored devours those living in it" (Num. 13:32). These unbelieving leaders started a rebellion against Moses that spread through the camp. Unbelief is an extremely contagious sin that destroys individuals, families, churches and even nations.

Joshua and Caleb stood against the flood of unbelief. "Caleb silenced the people and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it'" (Num. 13:30). Joshua and Caleb chose to believe the promises of God while the other leaders gave themselves over to unbelief because they were convinced that the wisest thing to do was to not trust God. How often are we guilty of this same sin? We say to ourselves, "we can't go to the mission field because our children may not be safe;" or "we can't take a pay cut so we can work more for the Lord;" or "I can't preach the truth in my church because the biggest givers will leave." If we truly trusted in the Sovereign Lord we would surrender ourselves to His promises, knowing that, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Mt. 24:35).

As the Israelites continued to grumble and complain, Moses and Aaron fell before the Great I Am in intercession. Joshua and Caleb pleaded with the people not to rebel against the Lord. In spite of this, the whole assembly thought of stoning these four men of faith. Therefore, the wrath of God was kindled against the people. The Lord told Moses He would destroy all the Israelites. Even though the people had plotted to kill Moses, he prayed that the Lord would be merciful and not execute justice. Jehovah responded to his plea by not destroying the people, but by sentencing the Israelites to wander in the

wilderness until that unbelieving generation died.

The Lord said to Moses, "But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it" (Num. 14:24). Caleb had a different spirit than all of the Israelites because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly. This wholehearted devotion was rooted in his simple faith and loving obedience. He believed in the Word of the Lord and lived according to those great and precious promises. Wholehearted devotion always produces a powerful faith.

As with Israel, unbelief resides in the hearts of most American Christians. The absence of revival in the land is proof enough of our unbelief. Not just that, we confirm our unbelief when we do not wholeheartedly yielding ourselves to God, when we question His ways, doubt His Word and disbelieve His promises. How few truly have a different spirit as Caleb did.

The Lord is the great Transformer of men and nations. He works from the inside out. We must first lay aside our unbelief that compels us to grumble, complain, doubt and fear. Then we must wholeheartedly abandon ourselves to Christ and His Word. This will bring to an end our aimless wandering through the spiritual desert our churches have been living in. We do not have to die in the wilderness of unbelief. Through unreserved devotion to the Savior, we can build His kingdom and see the fires of revival sweep the land. Revival can come. His Word has emphatically declared it. Its time we believe it.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/glenn-meldrum/the-word-and-faith/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net