

What to Do if You Don't Want Revival

by Greg Locke

The sermon discusses the conditions necessary for revival and warns against spiritual apathy among believers.

Duration: 42:59

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Isaiah 55:6-7, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:2, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Revival Prayer", "Personal Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of prayer in seeking revival. He addresses those who are not interested in revival and outlines four things they can do to stay that way. The preacher highlights the need to be prayerless and apathetic towards church activities. He also mentions the responsibility of individuals to get right with God and not rely solely on God's intervention. The sermon references the story of Jesus preaching boldly despite opposition and criticizes liberal preachers who avoid preaching on sin and condemnation.

Transcript

2 Chronicles 7, we're actually going to begin in verse number 1. 2 Chronicles 7 and verse number 1. The Bible says, Now when Solomon had made an end of playing, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices. And the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.

And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped. And praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth forever. Go to verse number 12, we pick up our reading.

And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place for myself, for a house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven, that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, then notice this all-familiar verse, If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then when I hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal the land. Now my eyes shall be opened, and my ears attended to the prayer that is made in this place.

And as we begin our series of meetings this week, I want to preach on this subject, What To Do If You Don't Want Revival. Thank you so much, you may be seated. Let's bow our heads and hearts and pray,

and ask the Lord to bless our time together.

What To Do If You Don't Want Revival. Now my Father, I do pray that you would empty me completely of myself, and fill me completely with the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Lord, thank you for these my friends.

I pray that you would bless them as they listen to the Bible. And Lord, I've got enough spiritual sense to know that not one person has come here today to hear me, but we've all come to hear from thee. So I pray that you'd use the Word of God in a special way.

If there be one who has joined us in church, but has never come to Christ, I pray the Spirit of God would convict them of their desperate need of the Savior. Lord, today I believe when God's people get right, lost people will get saved. And so I pray for we as your people, that you'd reclaim the backslidden today, that you would call those who are disobedient back to yourself.

And Father, you would certainly restart and revive and rejuvenate our hearts around the Word of God. And we'll thank you for what you'll do. We thank you for stirring us through the singing.

And I pray now that you'd change us through the preaching. And we'll thank you for it. For it's in Jesus' name we ask it and pray.

Amen. In 2 Chronicles 7 and verse 14, we have probably one of the most familiar verses in all the Bible, especially the Old Testament, when it comes to the subject of revival that we're dealing with this week. But if we're going to understand and appreciate verse number 14, I want you to back up and get the context of verse number 1. Notice what your Bible says, 2 Chronicles 7 and verse 1. The Bible says, Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices.

And the glory of the Lord filled the house. For twenty solid years, Solomon had been a man that was building works for God. Thirteen of those twenty years, he built his house.

And seven of those years, he built the Immaculate Temple of God. Can you imagine something that was built every single day except for the Sabbath? It was built out of gold and silver and bronze and beautiful statues and marble and wood. And just about every major thing that you can imagine that was expensive went into this piece of artwork for seven solid years.

But in 2 Chronicles 7 and verse 1, we have the context of the dedication of that temple. This building's been around for many, many years. I believe Pastor said this auditorium was built in the early 1900s.

And you weren't here and I weren't here, but I know one thing, there was a dedication day of this building. And in 2 Chronicles 7, there was a dedication of the temple of the house of God. And the Bible tells us that Solomon got in the pulpit and he was the man of God that was going to pray and dedicate this building to God's presence.

The Bible tells us that when he lifted up his voice and when he prayed, when he made an end of praying, the Word of God specifically says that the fire of God fell out of heaven. It consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifice. And out of years of study on revival, I have not found a better phrase for the subject of revival than the end of verse number one, where the Bible says, and the glory of the Lord filled his house.

Now ladies and gentlemen, we may have some singing this week. We may have some preaching this week, be it good or be it bad. We may have a lot of people come and we may have some people say, but I'm telling you, what would be a marvelous, miraculous, supernatural thing is for us to be able to leave this building and not say, my, what singing, my, what choir music, my, what preaching, my, what an offering, my, what a crowd, but my, the glory of God is certainly strong at the house of God.

And that is exactly what happened in 2 Chronicles 7. We have an Old Testament, heaven-sent, heartfelt, Holy Ghost revival taking place in one chapter of the Word of God. But notice what your Bible says in verse number two, would you? In verse number two of 2 Chronicles 7, it gets even better than that. The Bible says, and the priest, the Levites, the preacher boys, if you will, and the priest could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house.

Isn't that a marvelous thing? The Bible tells us that the preacher couldn't even get in the pulpit, clip his lapel microphone on his tie, open his mouth and preach the Bible because God was doing all the preaching that day when there was revival happening in the temple of God. And that's a marvelous thing. And that's a miraculous thing and we ought not take that for granted, but wait just a minute, these people did.

They were in the midst of a revival meeting from God, but yet they were also in the midst of apostasy and rebellion and idolatry and iniquity. And God breathed upon them whenever they dedicated that temple after seven years of hard labor and hard work. And God was going to honor them for that, but yet it was only going to be a short-lived blessing because notice what your Bible says in verse 12, would you? In verse 12, the Bible says that God comes to Solomon and the Lord appeared to him by night and said unto him, I have heard thy prayers and have chosen this place to myself for sacrifice.

So God was happy about the place. But notice verse 13, if there is implying the fact that if they don't do this, I'm going to, if I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, God said, listen, you better get right with me. You better not take my grace and my mercy and my long suffering for granted.

He said, because if you do, He said, I'm going to remove my hand of blessing and I'm going to put upon you my hand of judgment. I'm going to send locusts to devour the land. Now to you and I, that may not be a big deal, but to these people, it was a very big deal because they were an agriculture type of people.

They were farmers. They had the crops. They had the cotton and the maters and taters and so on and so forth.

And God said, you keep messing around with sin and I'm going to send locusts and I'm going to send worms upon the land to devour it. He said, furthermore, the ground is going to be dried and parched like an old piece of leather. He said, there's going to be no rain from heaven and my judgment hand is going to be unmerciful upon you.

But then God said, there's something that you can do. Notice verse 14. If my people, that's not the devil's crowd.

That's not the bootleggers and the drunkards and the fornicators. No, no, that's not Hollywood's crowd. That's God's crowd, you and I this morning.

He said, if my people, which are called, notice, by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then, well, I like that word, then. T-H-E-N, it means been and only been. Then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

And a million and one times, we've heard Revival preached from 2 Chronicles 7, 14, and I've preached on many occasions, but I've learned something these past six years of holding Revival meetings. You believe anything you want to, but there are some people in this building and there are some people in every single Baptist church I'm privileged to preach in, who really and honestly in their heart, if their true intentions were to be well known among everybody, they really don't want Revival. They're kind of the average Joe Blow, Joe Smoes, Saddish Crow type of Christian.

They enjoy a little bit of singing. They enjoy a little bit of preaching. Every now and then, about once in 55 years, they come to the altar to get right with God because they're too good for that.

And there are some people, like it or not, a pocket of resistance that really don't want Revival. They enjoy going along like they're kind of these Christians who, you know, lay around on Sunday morning until the sun warms their feet. Sunday school is not important to them.

They come for preaching time. You never see them on Sunday night. You never see them on Wednesday night.

And they really don't want Revival. So you know what, I'm going to preach to you today on what you can do if you want to stay that way to the day you drop dead. There are four things you can do if you don't want Revival this morning.

You say, well, brother, this message is for me because I'm not interested in Revival. I'm not interested in singing. I'm not interested in preaching.

I'm not interested in getting right with God. Well, wonderful, I'm preaching to you and there's four things you can keep on doing and I promise you one thing, you're doing them right now. And there's four things in this verse that you and I can do if we really do not want the blessings of God.

Now understand, the first one I'm going to give you by way of the text is going to seem to be inverted. I will do that on purpose. Notice what your Bible says, verse 14.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my praise and turn from their wicked ways. Somebody said that a short pencil's better than a long memory, so you might want to write four things down. Number one, if you don't want Revival, first and foremost, just be prayerless.

Just be prayerless if you don't want Revival. You know, it's an amazing thing. We talk about prayer.

We sing about prayer. We teach about prayer. We preach about prayer.

But I wonder how often and how regularly you really pray. The Bible says in Daniel chapter 6 and verse number 10, now when Daniel knew the writing was signed, he went into his bedroom with his windows being opened and his chamber toward Jerusalem and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God as he did before time. It does not take a rocket scientist and a brain surgeon to figure out that every person who was ever used greatly of God in the Bible were men and

women who were used because they had an intimate walk with Almighty God.

James chapter 4 and verse 8, draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh unto you. But you notice who's supposed to take the initiative. The Bible says we draw and he draws.

Jeremiah 33, 3, call unto me and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not. Somebody says, well, okay, Brother Rock, if you know so much about the Bible, if God promised great and mighty things, how come we don't see great and mighty things? Well, I'm glad you asked. The Bible tells us in James 4, he hath not because he hath not.

Matthew chapter 7, verses 7, 8 and 9, asking it shall be given you, seeking it you'll find. Knocking it shall be opened unto you for everyone that asketh receives it. To him that seeketh findeth and to him that knocketh it shall be opened unto him the promise of God that if we would believe as preachers said this morning in Sunday school, by faith and trustiness, that he would give us the positions that we ask, but I wonder how much you pray.

I wonder how much you pray for your spiritual condition. I wonder how much you pray for friends and families and relatives and associates and so on and so forth. I wonder how much time you've spent in prayer, if any, for this revival meeting.

You know, it's an amazing thing. Jesus said in Luke 18, he takes a parable unto them to this end saying, men ought always to pray and not to faint. You know, I like to study characters in the Bible.

You know, when you study individuals, you begin to see their characteristics come forth. And you know, if there's anybody I want to pattern my life after, it's people that were used of God mightily in the Bible. Whenever I study certain people, sometimes I get perplexed.

Sometimes I get blessed. But I'll be honest, when I study the life of the disciples, I get confused. Now, this is Tennessee and I'm from Tennessee and I'm just a little old redneck hillbilly just like the rest of you.

So I can say this. These fellows were uneducated, backwoods, mountain boys, bowlegged, loudmouthed, barefooted, nobody. They'd never been to seminary.

They'd never been to Bible college. They didn't have a completed chapter of the Bible. They didn't have fancy clothes.

They didn't have any of those things. But here are men who were uneducated and what little education they did have spiritually, it was pretty ill, if you will. And yet the Bible tells us that these men under the power of God turned the entire known world upside down.

And I wonder in my heart sometimes, how in the world could God use such uneducated hillbilly rednecks? Then I wake up and look in the mirror and say, oh, that's exactly how you did it. Amen. But nevertheless, here are men in the Bible who didn't even realize whose presence they were in until after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

For three and one half years, they were ignorant of the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ for the most part. And I think within myself, how did God use them? And I believe with all my heart here's the answer. One day they were tired and weary.

Their flesh was worn out and they were starving to death. They'd been preaching and teaching and they'd been running all over the country side with Jesus in His itinerant evangelistic ministry. One day a spokesman, one of the disciples, comes to the Lord Jesus and says, Lord, I'm going to speak on behalf of the others.

And we have one simple request of you. Jesus said, well, what is it? I'll do anything you want me to. And by the way, they were not just in the presence of a son of God, but yea, God Himself.

And He could have done anything just like that at their beckoning call. And here's what they said. Well, Lord, we have one simple stirring request.

Would you teach us how to pray? Now, you think about that just for a moment. On the surface, I'll be honest, if I can say it this way, it sounds pretty generic, does it not? I mean, it sounds pretty kindergarten-like. It sounds pretty elementary.

They could have asked to do all these grand and glorious things and they simply said, Lord, we want You to teach us how to pray. I don't know about you, but if I had been one of the disciples, I would have said, Lord, teach me how to pray. Never a man speak like this man speak, for he taught them as one having authority and not as a scribe and Pharisee.

And you believe anything you want to about that Bible sitting in your lap, there has never been a greater preacher on the face of God during humanly speaking than the Lord Jesus Christ. He was not always the meek and mild baby Jesus. I'm telling you, when Jesus got in the pool pit, He bowed His back like a bandy rooster, jumped up on a hickory stump, opened His Bible, and opened His mouth, and He preached thus saith the Lord.

He didn't care if the scribes came. He didn't care if the liberals were there. He didn't care if the moderates and the new evangelicals were there.

I'm telling you, Jesus was a bold Bible preacher. He was not afraid to confront sin. He was not afraid to preach against immorality.

We're living in a day when people say, well, if you preach on sin, you can't build a church. Well, bless God, leave it unbuilt then. I've been to preach to five people who love the Bible, then 5,000 people who could give a flip of a wooden nickel, and Jesus was not in it for the static phone.

He wasn't in it for a parsonage. He wasn't in it because His name was going to get in some major periodical. No, no, Jesus was preaching thus saith Almighty God.

In every word Jesus went, He drew a crowd. He never had to give away pizza. He never had to give away He never had to have a bingo rally and give away some big, you know, Volkswagen or Mercedes Benz.

He never had to do that. Every word Jesus went, people just followed Him in that. I mean, crowds were amazed to hear what Jesus had to say.

I call Him the magnetic Messiah, and that's exactly what He was. He had a magnetic message when He stood in the pulpit. Everybody set an attention and they were absolutely overwhelmed with the words which ushered forth from His mouth.

Now, the Scribes and Pharisees didn't like that, but that didn't bother Jesus any. That wasn't going to stop His preaching. He was on a mission from His Father.

He came to preach thus saith the Lord, and that's exactly what He did. Now, know what Robert Schuller and his liberal, rogue-wearing buddies say out in Long Beach, California? They get up in their cool pits, you know, they... He's got that television program called The Hour of Power, and there ain't one ounce of power in it, I promise you that right now. He gets up and says, well, ladies and gentlemen, the problem in America are the preachers who preach on sin and hell and condemnation.

No, Mr. Schuller, the problem in America is the false preachers like you who all preach on sin, who all preach on hell, and who all preach on condemnation. And the problem in our churches is we've substituted everything in the wide world for the straightforward preaching of the Bible. And you cannot accuse Jesus of that because Jesus was a preacher, but the disciples did not say, Lord, teach us how to preach.

They didn't even say, Lord, teach us how to teach Sunday school. Boy, we had a magnificent Sunday school lesson that's more or less stirred me up in the book of Habakkuk. Boy, I love that book.

But I'll tell you what, there's never been a Sunday school teacher in all the world that could hold people out of tension like Jesus Christ could. You know, when Jesus got in the pulpit to teach and to preach, nobody was looking at the clock on the back wall. You know, thank God you don't have one here.

You've got a picture of the rapture, amen. I'd preach all day looking at that. Nobody looked down at their watch.

Nobody was giving themselves a manicure and cutting their toenails and fixing their false teeth and digging their nose and popping bubblegum and taking notes. I'm telling you, when Jesus taught Sunday school, everybody listened. They were like a bunch of kids in a candy store sitting on the edge of their seat listening to what He was going to say.

But the disciples didn't say, teach us how to do that, and I believe that. Matter of fact, this one stumped me. They didn't even say, Lord, teach us how to perform miracles.

And that's an amazing thing. Because you study your New Testament Bible and you will not show me one miracle Jesus performed in private. Not one.

God knows we've already got enough secret service agents as it is today. He did all in public, friend. He wasn't ashamed one bit.

And guess who was there? The disciples started to one of them. They were there at the marriage supper of Galilee when Jesus turned the water into wine. And it wasn't Jack Daniel's liquor, by the way.

Jesus turned it into it. The disciples thought and Jesus said, hey, give it to the people. They were there.

Hey, they were there in John chapter number six. When a little boy whose name is not even given. I couldn't even tell you what his name is.

Greg, Steve, George, Billy Bob, I don't know. But the Bible said he was a lad, L.A.D., just a little kid, maybe 13 to 14, 15, 16 years old. And the Bible said that he had just some little old insignificant lunch of a couple of hush puppies and some sardines.

And Jesus took it and fed 5,000 men, plus the women and children, just like that. And guess who saw it? The disciples. So how do you know? Because Jesus told them, pick up the 12 basketfuls that remain.

They started with a brown paper bag. They ended with a V.F.I. dump truck full, friend. And the disciples saw every bit of that.

One of my favorite miracles in the Bible is John chapter 11. Man, I love the raising of Lazarus. You talk about a miraculous story.

Here's a man who was on life support. Jesus was told about it. He said, don't worry.

He lingered around for two days, took him two days to get there. By the time he got there, Lazarus had been dead for four solid days. And Martha comes running out, keeps crying and squalling like a baby.

Lord, if you'd have been here, he wouldn't have died. If you'd have been here, he wouldn't have died. And he said, hey, your brother's going to rise again.

And I believe with all my heart, Martha went to an independent Baptist church because she gave an independent Baptist study to Lazarus. Well, I know he'll rise again at the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said, no, no, no.

I'm not talking about a resurrection. I'm talking about the resurrection. I'm the resurrection and the life.

Though he were dead, if you'll believe in me, he'll live, Jesus said. And the Bible tells us that Jesus looked at her and said, said not unto thee that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God. Then they rolled away the stones from the place where the dead was laid.

And Jesus lifted up his voice and said, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead. You get that word? D-E-A-D, literally, physically, clinically dead.

Came forth, bound hand and foot with gray clothes and a napkin was about his face. And Jesus said, loose him and let him go. And the disciples were there to see the raising of Lazarus.

Dr. B. R. Lakin, a great preacher from West Virginia, yesteryear, you've heard him, I'm sure. He said this. He said the reason Jesus had to be specific and use the word Lazarus is because when he stands in a graveyard and starts calling people up, bless God, the whole dead crowd would get up because Jesus is the son of God.

And he had to be specific. And the disciples were there to see those mighty miracles. They were there when he filled the waters in Mark chapter 4 and they scratched their tens in amazement and bewilderment and said, what manner of man is he? Even the very winds and waves.

Were they not there when over 2,000 demons came out of one man's body in Mark chapter 5 at one time? Certainly they were. They saw what I call the maniac who became a missionary. And story after story, miracle after miracle, message after message, Sunday school lesson after Sunday school lesson, the disciples were there.

And never one time said, Lord, teach us to preach, teach us to teach, and teach us to have this magnificent power at our fingertips. They simply said, Lord, teach us to preach. Now for my simple observation and study of the Bible, I believe with all of my heart, here's exactly why they said that.

Because for three and one half years, they were so intimate with the Lord Jesus. They were so close both spiritually and as far as proximity was concerned, they knew him so well that the disciples knew that every sermon he ever preached, every Sunday school lesson he ever taught, every miracle he ever performed was a direct result of his prayer life with his Father. And they did not have to learn to preach like Jesus.

They had to learn to play like Jesus so they could preach like Jesus. Sunday school teachers, they didn't need to learn how to teach Sunday school and build a class like Jesus. They learned to play like Him so they could teach and they could build a Sunday school class.

And they did not need that miracle working past their fingertips because Jesus said, if you'll just learn to walk with God, greater works shall ye do than I have done. And yet the Bible tells us right here in 2 Chronicles 7 that God came to these people and said they need Solomon to learn how. But I want you to back up if you would and look at the first part of the verse, would you? And I inverted it on purpose and you'll understand why.

If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray. You know, the pastor didn't tell me what Sunday school was going to be on. I didn't get with the pastor and say tell me all the prophets of your church and I'll preach on them.

Never have done that. Never will do that by the grace of God. If the Holy Spirit can't tell me what to preach, I'm in the wrong business anyhow.

But I love it how the Holy Spirit orchestrates things and puts it all together. Because if you were in Sunday school, we learned something about pride. You know what the Bible says? If you don't want revival, number one, be prayerless.

But number two, just be proud. Just be proud. You say, brother, why did you invert it? But why does the Bible start with humble themselves? Why did it say first they need to pray? But why did it say first that they need to seek my faith? Why does it say first they need to turn from their wicked ways? I'll tell you why.

Because you won't pray, you won't seek his faith and you won't repent and turn from your sin unless you humble yourself. And the Bible says right here, these people were filled with arrogance and cockiness and a proud and haughty spirit. Proverbs 16, 18, pride groweth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Do you know there's one verse in the Bible that tells us why there's a 75% divorce rate in America? One verse in the Bible that can tell us that. There's one verse in the Bible that can tell us why churches split. You know, in the past six years, I've been to over 300 churches.

And I've preached to some Christians who've been in about that many as well. They hop from this one to this one to this one to this one. Bunch of frogs on lily pads come sit in the back row and say, Edna, Edna, Edna.

You know why that church split? You know why people run preachers out of town and hang the dog and burn the cat and pop the tires on the car and the van? You know why churches can't get along over the color of the pews or the color of the carpet? You know why we have so many marriages that end in a divorce? You know why we've got so many kids that hate mom and dad and mom and dad can't get along? You know why America's in the mess she's in, Proverbs 13, 10? Only by pride comes contention. Now, buddy, you can argue with a Bible preacher, but you can't argue with a Bible. It says only by pride

comes contention.

Every divorce, every argument, every church split has always been for one reason. P-R-I-D-E. Pride.

That's exactly right. And the reason we don't pray is because we're proud. John 15, 5, the end of the verse, Jesus said, For without me ye can do what, church? Nothing.

And until we realize that, we are stubborn and haughty and filled with ourselves and we'll never have revival. Because real revival comes to those who realize I cannot live myself. I cannot live for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I cannot manufacture the power and the fullness of the Holy Spirit of God. I can't just get up and go on in the energy of the flesh over and over and over again. Those who humble themselves realize we need the power of God.

We need to be emptied of self and filled with the Holy Spirit and we must be Bible Christians. But yet, I meet so many people who go their own route. They do their own thing.

They go their own way. And there's a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end are of the ways of God. How many people do you know who really and honestly want to humble themselves before the mighty hand of God that He may exalt Him in due time? Do you say, well, Brother Locke, you know what? I'm coming this morning and I may be back a night or so to get in on things and see what's happening, but I'm just not real interested in revival.

Well, good. Just be prayerless. You won't ever have one.

Just be proud and you won't ever have one. But the verse doesn't stop there. Go back to verse number 14 again, would you? If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray... Now watch the words.

And seek my... You know, we're living in a generation of people who do not know what those three words mean whatsoever. Seek my faith. Somebody says, well, you know, before I go to bed at night, I'll read Psalm 117, the shortest chapter in the Bible, two verses.

I'll close my Bible now and lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to say, I've done my devotions for the day.

And might I say to you, friends, that day. That stinks to me. That stinks to you.

That stinks to your preacher. And I know it stinks to the thrice-holy God of the mind. So we have this idea that we can just kind of seek God.

He's kind of a, you know, a theological heavenly bellhop. We got a little bell in our pocket. We just ring it.

And God comes down and gives us revival when we want it. When we don't want it, we just kind of shoot him up in heaven. And we tell him to leave us be.

We kind of like the way things are going. We enjoy this. We enjoy that and the other thing.

And the Lord, when we need you, we'll call you. You pull up the limousine, we'll hop in the back and you take us to the buffet where we want to go. And friend, that's not the God of the Bible.

You've been reading the Reader's Digest Bible, but you've not been reading that King James Bible sitting in your lap because the God of the Bible is not at your beckoning call. You're at his beckoning call. You do what he says.

He's not going to stoop to do what you say. And yet, we have so many people who do not seek the face of God. You say, why? Because number three, you see, just be prayerless.

Just be proud and just be preoccupied and you won't ever have revival. You see, it takes time to seek God's face. It takes time to have the power of God upon your life.

And by the way, whenever a preacher stands in this pulpit and preaches on such a lofty and holy subject, I don't put myself in the maitre basket. I just seek His face more than I do. But I remind you, we'll never have revival until we do it.

We'll never have revival until we get back to the place where we pray and where we humble ourselves and swallow our pride and we bow our back and say, dear God, we're not going to get in sin anymore. Dear God, we're going to live for You. We're going to read Your Bible.

We're going to pray. We're going to be faithful to the local church. And oh, what a lack of commitment we see to the local church in the day and age in which we're living in.

We're teaching our boys and girls at the local churches like the local Mason Hall. It's like a Moose Lodge. It's no more big deal than the Golden Corral or a Wal-Mart Supercenter.

We have the idea that this is a little old building that's some spiritual super-duper place and we come in and we dress our best and we smile our best and we stay in this and we go out and live like the devil. And that's not New Testament Christianity, friend. I tell you, this is a local church, a group of believers that Hebrews 10, 25 tells us we should not forsake the assembly.

We ought to be here. We ought to worship God. We ought to live for God here.

But when you walk out of the double doors of this church, you ought to still worship God. You ought to still live for God. You ought to still do what's right.

And yet there are so few Christians who really know what it means to seek the face of God. We are so preoccupied with T-Ball and Hollywood and NASCAR and hunting and fishing and sports and everything in the world that we don't have time to seek God in the day and age in which we live. And I tell you, what a day and age in America when we'll take time to do everything in the world and give God five minutes of our day.

Give God five minutes of our daily day. The same God that gave you your breath that quick is the same God that can take it away. You better not take that for granted.

Somebody told me one time, you know, say, well, and I've heard it several times, but you preach too hard. You demand too much. And I'll tell you what I told them.

Bless God, you only live once. And I ain't got time to beat around the bush and mess around and play games. Did you know tonight over in these different Afghanistanian countries, these different places, over in Baghdad and Iraq and places like that, did you know they get their kids at five years old? You heard me.

They get their kids at five years old and they teach them how to be bombers. They teach them how to strike explosives to their legs. By the time they're 10, they're willing to die.

By the time they're 15, they're looking for an opportunity. And by the time they're 20, they blow themselves up and go to hell. Would you ever tell me I demand too much? Don't you ever tell me I preach too hard.

I never told anybody in a Bible college or a Christian school or a youth conference or a camp or a church like this one, I've never told anybody strap explosives to their legs. I've never told anybody start training your kids to kill people. And they're actually right now looking for opportunities so they can blow you up and blow I up and they want to get rid of America.

They want to get rid of the Jewish nation. And I tell you, friend, you talk about demanding stuff. Those people are demanding.

All I've done is go up and down this country and tell people, read your Bible, pray, seek the face of God, memorize the Word of God, be faithful to your spouse, be faithful to God, love the man of God, tithe the way you're supposed to, give the way you're supposed to. That's all I've ever done. And I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, our people and our churches will never see revival because we're too stinking preoccupied with our stuff and we don't have time for God's stuff.

We're so preoccupied with the television. We're so preoccupied with everything that's going on down at the schoolhouse. We're so preoccupied with our vehicles, with our houses, our clothes, our land, our stocks and bonds and everything else that we don't have time to serve God in the day and age in which we live.

You mark down one thing and believe it or not, a people that does not have time to seek God will have a God that does not have time to give them revival. It's too preoccupied. But keep reading your Bible because it gets even sicker than that.

If my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face. Notice this, and turn. What a word.

Same word in the New Testament. Repent. And turn from their wicked ways.

Now wait a minute. We're talking to God's people. He said, if my people, not that people, not those wicked, vile, ungodly folks down on the street corner.

He didn't say that. Not the drunkards in the rescue mission. He said, if my people will turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their plan.

Don't want revival this morning? Be prudent. Be proud. Be preoccupied.

But number four, just be perverted. Just keep sin in your heart. Somebody says, well, but what? There's something about me you don't understand.

I'm not perverted. I'm not a pedophile. I'm not some wicked guy who gets on the internet and looks at a bunch of smut and filth and pornography and nakedness.

You know, I'm not running around on my wife. I'm not doing this, that, and the other thing. And sometimes if we're not careful, we talk about all the big sins.

Well, I'm not a murderer. Well, I'm not an extortioner. Well, I'm not a fornicator.

Well, I'm not an attack surveyor. I'm not this, that, and the other thing. Yeah, but if you get on the telephone and got a tongue from here in the interstate, you're not right with God either.

You see, we forget about gossip. You see, we forget about, you know, lying and laziness and deceitfulness. You know, we forget about backbiting and a divisive spirit, which by the way, the Bible tells us in Proverbs 7, God hates somebody that divides the brethren.

And if we're not careful, we'll talk about all these big things. Well, bless God, I'm not this, I'm not that, and I'm not this, and I'm not that. Yeah, but if you've got gossip in your heart, if you've got bitterness in your heart, if you've got a temper that you can't control, if you're not filled with the Holy Spirit, you're just as wicked and ungodly and disobedient as that fornicating crowd according to the Bible.

We also talk about the big things, big things, big things. I remind you, the wisest man in the world was Solomon. He said it's the little foster.

It's full of lies. You see them big ones coming. Boom! You blow them away with a muzzleloader.

But it's them little ones that come in at night while you're sleeping and gnaw away on them. I was in an hour at a preacher's fellowship the other day. The preacher told me, he said there was this little old mountain fellow close to right here.

We've got mountains right here, amen. Smoke, you know, all that stuff. He said he's got in the mountains, and man, he didn't know beans about life.

He had never been out of his little mountain cabin before. Man, he'd never been to church. He'd never been to town.

He wouldn't know what a Walmart supercenter was. He'd come walking out one day and he told his wife, he said, honey, I'll be home in a couple of weeks. I'm going to go down to Civilization and see what's going on.

Well, he got his old dirty clothes on. That's about all he had. He walked out of that moonshine infested cabin and house and hills.

He'd come out of the mountains and come down to town. And in order to get into town, he had to cross over this bridge over a river. And then he'd come to a set of railroad tracks.

But he had never seen anything stapled down to the ground like that. And he got to look at them railroad tracks and he'd seen some lights blinking and these little arms coming out. He looked out in the distance and he heard a whistle.

And sure enough, on that whistle, there's a big old lamp coming at him. Big old light coming right at him. Man, he could hear that thing.

And it started real sang. And finally that train got up right on him. That little piece of metal was sticking out of the side of him.

It clipped him, cut him wide open, flipped him around like a wild man threw him over the ditch and they thought he'd die. A couple of people saw it, jumped out of their vehicle, picked him up, took him to the hospital and they packed him up and kept him in there for a couple of days. He was in and out of a coma, you know.

And this lady said, well, I don't know where he lives. He didn't have a stick of identification on him whatsoever. And so she said, well, I'll take him back to the house.

She took him back to the house. She laid him down in the bed and the family gathered around him and prayed. Boy, he's kind of in and out and all about.

And she said, well, I'll fetch the man some tea. And she went over to the kettle and she started that hot water and that train got to whistling. And it started getting a little louder and it started getting a little louder and finally it was a full-blown whistle coming off that tea kettle.

He jumped up out of that bed. Anesthesia, no anesthesia. He ran over to the closet.

He pulled out a baseball bat and just beat the devil out of that train. Water flying all over the place. That woman coming just as far as, what are you doing? He said, you better kill them things while they're little.

They get big fans, amen. I'm going to tell you something. You better kill them while they're small because they'll get big real quick.

Pride will grow and bitterness will grow. You wonder why there's so much trouble in our churches. I'll tell you why.

It's because of perverse. It's because we're not willing to call on our faith and humble ourselves and pray and seek God's face and get right with God. Repentance is not just for lost people, it's for God's people.

I'll remind you, it's not a one-time deal, it's a lifetime deal. Jesus said in Revelation 3, 19, As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and repent, Jesus said.

He was talking to a church. The church of Laodicea, no doubt. The last church.

The church age in which we're living in. And He says to us this morning at the Double Springs Baptist Church, Repent! Turn from your wicked ways. Maybe go home and have an old-fashioned Baptist burning and get rid of some things you know good and very well aren't supposed to be in your house.

And I wonder this morning if we're willing to pray, if we're willing to not be proud, but humble ourselves. I wonder if we're willing to not be so preoccupied that we seek the face of God this week and really want to see the glory of God come down. I wonder if you're willing to confess your sins and fall on your face and get right with God.

Proverbs 28, 13, He that covers his sins shall not prosper. I'll say it again, He that covers his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy. 1 John 1, 9, somebody says, well, that's an abused verse.

Well, thank God it's in the Bible. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Now this is the honest truth.

I've never told it, alright? I know these preachers, they say, well, you're an evangelist, you're evangelistically speaking. Well, this ain't preaching, this is the truth, alright? Now I was preaching at this church several years ago, and I've been there every single year. And Lord willing, I'll be there next July.

I go about every June or July, something like that. It's about the only revival meeting I hold during the summertime. And I promised them I'd hold this one week for them.

And I preach at the Bean Blossom Baptist Church. Can you believe that? The Bean Blossom Baptist Church of Bean Blossom, Indiana. I don't know who named it, but I'd have come up with a different name.

I'll tell you that right now. But the Bean Blossom... I was afraid to put the thing on my itinerary. I feared somebody would laugh at me.

The Bean Blossom Baptist Church of Bean Blossom, Indiana. Do you think that's bad? The preacher's name is James Brown. And he's a white guy, amen.

But I'll be honest with you, they had a double whammy on them. I'm telling you, I walked in that place with fear and tremor. I thought, man, what's this place going to be like? Bean Blossom Baptist Church.

Well, the first time I ever went five or six years ago, we didn't have a travel travel like we do now. And we were staying in homes and fathers chambers and just about everything you can imagine. And so we stayed upstairs at the preacher's house.

He had a little speaker's lounge, you know, a little speaker's place. And we'd stand up there and we'd come down one night. My wife was all dressed up.

I was all dressed up. They were all dressed up. And the church was just a fitting distance just from here to the fellowship hall or something like that to walk across to go to the meeting that night.

And we was walking out there. What I didn't realize is I didn't pay any attention to it, but we'd been a couple days into the meeting before we walked out that night and it was crisp and clear and the wind was blowing just a little bit. And they were about, I don't know, 100, 200 yards from a home.

Man, that east wind shifted. And I never smelled the likes of something so wicked in my life. I know other Jews, leave them alone.

I'm telling you, they stink to high heaven. That's a nasty smell. Now, how many farmers we got in the building? We got any farmers in the building? Put your hand here.

God bless your heart. Now, I'm going to tell you something. I'm not going to be rude and crass and ugly, but I'll tell you one thing.

There is a difference between cow manure and pig manure. And all of God's farmers said, amen. I'm telling you, that stuff is absolutely raunchy.

It's disgusting. Man, that east wind shifted. And it was one of them smells you could taste.

I mean, it was horrible. I thought the enamel would run off my teeth and my nose hairs would find refuge behind what few brain cells I have. I'm telling you, my tie kind of swiveled up like that.

I'd never smelled something so bad in my life. I turned around to Brother Brown and I said, preacher, what in the world is that wicked smell? And he went just like this. What smell, preacher? And you know, I learned something.

I learned that night, if you live next to a hog farm, it ain't long for hogs don't stink anymore. I learned something as a Christian too. If you live in sin, it ain't long till sin don't stink anymore, never.

If you hear me this morning, ladies and gentlemen, from the back and front, we need to get right with God. And until we're willing to pray and swallow our pride and seek the face of God and not be so preoccupied with our stuff, we get consumed with God's stuff, be Matthew 6, 33 Christians, until we get to the place we fall on our face and really desire old-fashioned revival, turn from our way, we will never, never, never have revival. We can sing about it, pray for one, preach about it, teach about it, and talk about it all we could until we want to, but we'll never have revival till we get right with God.

And the Bible tells us that the fire of God fell and the glory of God filled the Lord's town. I don't know about you, but you know, I'm a little bit tired just having meetings. I have meetings all the time.

That's almost 700 of them last year. Meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting, meeting, just preach, preach, preach, preach, preach, preach, and you just meet people and you meet people and you meet people and you meet people. Man, I want to meet God.

I want to see God come down and do something magnificent. There's been very few, and I'm ashamed to tell you, there's been very few times that I've really seen revival in local churches. And I'll tell you why.

It's because we're struggling. It's because we won't pray, we won't see God's face, we won't turn from our wicked ways. It's because we think we can go on and do everything like we've always done it before and it's no big deal and we don't even realize the spirit of God is just on us.

I wonder if you're willing to get right with God this time through. When I was 7, 8, 9 years old, I used to go to my grandmothers all the time before she went all to heaven. And on Friday nights, my mother would look at me and she'd say, now, honey, let me give you a little money and she'd give me a nice, crispy \$5 deal right out of her purse.

And she'd say, now, honey, don't you spend it all in one place. You don't tell an 8-year-old kid that, you know, if it's a bank burner holding my hand before I can even get it to my pocket. One thing about \$5, \$5.

What can I do with \$5? Man, I can get ice cream. I can get this. I can get Mountain Dew.

I can get this. Man, I'm thinking about all that good old-fashioned junk food from the South that I can fill my Benes lamb pool with. Well, I didn't tell Granny how much I had.

For all she knew, I had 50 cents or \$500. I wasn't going to tell her. I didn't want her to cash in on the product and take away my junk food money.

And so I filled my little pocket with that little old money. And I had a little skateboard at that time. I'd get on this little skateboard every Saturday of the world.

When I was a little boy, we'd go down to this little laundry mat in Hermitage, Tennessee. Just outside of Nashville. And we'd go down there, boy, we'd be doing the laundry.

I'd get to my little skateboard. You know, I'd be skating around. I'd say, Granny, I'd say, I know we got to go pick up Grandma Simmons in a little while.

And we're going to go down to the buffet over at Bonanza, Potarosa now. I said, but would you mind if I went down there and got me a cold drink? A Kroger's? I guess Kroger's is still around in supermarkets, you know. And so she said, sure, I'll be fine.

And so I'd get my little skateboard. I'd scoot on down there, you know. And I'd pass the produce aisle, you know, that rabbit food.

And I'd pass the vegetables. And I'd pass all the good stuff. And man, I'd go right to the junk food aisle.

I mean, right to it. And I'd walk down there. My little heart gets a beat and slam out of my chest.

I'd take that five dollar bill and I'd rub that thing like a genie in a bottle. And I'd be wishing for everything there. I'd get myself a 20 ounce Mountain Dew, a bag of Skittles, a bag of Funyuns, and a Snickers bar.

Amen. You talk about the marriage supper of the lamb, buddy. And I'd grab that stuff and I'd walk up there and I'd buy it.

And I'd tear that receipt up, you know, so Granny wouldn't find it. I'd go around back and I'd sit down on that skateboard and stuff my little eight year old belly slam full of the best junk food you could ever lay your eyes on. I mean, it was some kind of good.

And I'm sweating a bit thinking about it. Amen. But I'd wipe my mouth off real good and make sure there wasn't nothing in my teeth.

And I don't want Granny to find the evidence. Don't you be too pious because you've been there too. And so I got rid of all the wrappers.

Make sure the chocolate wasn't on my clothes. Got my little skateboard and rolled up there and helped my grandmother fold the rest of those clothes. We throw them in the truck.

And buddy, there we went to the little nursing home to pick up my Grandma Simmons. We picked up Great-Grandma Simmons and I'd sing to her everything I could just to keep her attention for a little while. She had Alzheimer's and she couldn't think real well and so on and so forth.

And you had to just about do everything for her. We took her out there. We put her in that car.

We went to Bonanza. Man, we'd go down there. If that's \$4.99, oh, you can eat buffet.

That's the best place for a Baptist to eat on Sunday. And I'd go down there and my grandmother, you know, she was always one of these petite people. There were some petite chickens, petite fish, petite serval, some petite, you know, for a woman.

And then she'd say, she'd turn around, she'd say, now, Mama, you want that buffet? She loved all that salad and all that soup, all that liver and onions and all that kind of stuff. She loved it all. So she'd get that.

And she'd turn to me and she'd say, now, Greggie. She'd call me that if you don't. She'd say, now, Greggie.

She'd say, now, honey, would you like something? What would you like to have? Would you like to have the buffet? Would you like to have a hamburger? Would you like to have a steak or some chicken or some fish? What would you like? And I said, well, you know, I'm not real hungry. You know, maybe I'll take a cold drink, maybe a bag of chips or maybe an order of fries or something like that. She'd say, now, wait a minute.

Look at all that food out there. She said, you can have steak, you can have chicken, you can have fish, you can have salad, you can have soup, you can have all this food out here, all these chicken fingers and all this stuff. And she said, all you want is a bag of fries or some chips and a cold drink.

Well, maybe a slice of pie would be all right, you know? And she'd say, well, you want this? He said, what's wrong with you? That's the way you want it? And my grandmother did this every Saturday in the world. It seemed like one of us would catch on and figure the thing out, but we never did. She'd put one hand on that hip, lean over, hunched down like that, and put that other finger right there in my face, and she'd say, you know what your problem is? She said, the reason you're not hungry is because you don't feel your belly with so much junk.

You don't want your belly stuffed now, do you? I'd say, yes, ma'am. Give me a buffet. Let me find it.

Give me a buffet. And I'd sit over there and stuff myself. I wasn't hungry to begin.

I'd put that soup in. I'd try to force it down. And you know what I found in churches? You know, I find that people can come to church and leave the same way they were, never been touched.

And we can rant and rave all we good and jolly we want. We can kick and holler and spit and jump all over the place like a ball in a band of circus clowns. Some of you are going to leave the same way you came in this morning.

Untouched, unchanged, unfocused. You know why? Because some of you, under the sound of my voice, you've come to the house of God so full of the world's junk that God can't feed you with a good stuff. And I'm telling you, we're going to have to get right with God this week.

We're going to have to confess and say, I want to see people saved. I do too. But you will never see lost people saved until God's people get right.

He's going to have to scrub us clean so we'll have a good atmosphere for the birth and spiritual growth of babies in the name of God. And that's what you do if you don't want revival.

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