

The Need of a Revival

by L.R. Shelton

The sermon emphasizes the urgent need for revival in the church, highlighting the loss of Christ's presence and the call for repentance and prayer.

Duration: 29:04

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 85:6, Isaiah 57:15, Joel 2:28, Habakkuk 3:2, Matthew 6:33, Acts 3:19

Topics: "Hell And Sin", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses vivid imagery to convey the urgency of warning others about the danger of sin and the existence of hell. He tells a story of a man running to warn a train engineer of a broken trestle ahead, symbolizing the need to warn others of the impending consequences of sin. The preacher emphasizes that many in today's ministry do not believe in hell, leading to a lack of urgency in addressing sin. He concludes by expressing hope that the Holy Spirit is moving again, prompting sinners to repent and believers to heed the call of God.

Transcript

This is the Voice of Truth, the Voice of God's ever, absolute, eternal, unbroken, verbally inspired Word. The Voice of Truth is coming to you from the Metropolitan Tabernacle, 501 Opelousas Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. This is Pastor Alvin Pendarvis, pastor here at Radio Mission speaking, inviting you to stay tuned to hear God's message by our late pastor, Pastor L.R. Shelton, Sr., on the subject, on this subject, The Need of a Revival.

What a gracious message it's going to be, The Need of a Revival, and this is number 193 in this series. First, I want to show you the condition of the present-day church which furnishes a background for the need of a spiritual awakening as we have never faced before. Then, second, we want to see what is a revival, and third, the results of a revival.

In Habakkuk 3.2, we find these words, O LORD, I have heard Thy speech and was afraid. O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years, make known.

In wrath, remember mercy. What a plea from the heart of this old prophet. The prophet Habakkuk moved with a spirit of fear, was conscious of something unusual in the air around him.

He felt that he was on the eve of some great manifestation of God, and it made him afraid. He tells us in that 16th verse of the 3rd chapter, listen, When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, Rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself. The prophet began to see his own corruptness and vileness and depravity, and he was afraid because he felt that God was drawing near, and he did not wish to fight against God.

My friend, I wish more people were afraid to fight against God. A revival is the Lord God of heaven becoming real to His people. He does that first by turning the searchlight of His presence upon the individual's heart until he begins to see his own rottenness and begins to tremble before a sovereign God.

Then the prophet cries out, O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years, make known in wrath, remember mercy. He did not want to fight God. How many of you are fighting God in rebellion against Him? Let me tell you, friends, you better not be found fighting God.

Then in Psalms 85, 6, we find these words, listen, As the old prophet gave vent to the cry of his soul, Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? You don't like a drought, do you? When you begin to see things burn up in the fields. Neither do I like to see a dirt or drought in the church whenever things become stagnant and stale. There is not the moving of the Spirit of God.

A revival is Jehovah God walking in the midst of His people, showing them mercy. Then in 2 Chronicles 7, 14, we read, It's Jehovah God speaking to His people, listen. All right, listen, listen to God's word.

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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. We have here the call of God to His people to return to Him in repentance, forsaking their sins, that He may heal them, that He save their souls and bless them in mercy. Do you feel the need of revival, my friend? All this week there has been such a burden upon my heart, a crying out unto the throne of God's grace, Lord, give me this people as a trophy of thy grace.

Now, let's first look at the background for the need of a revival. When we look at the present-day church, we find that she has lost the presence of Christ. Now, my friend, I'm not critical.

I'm diagnosing our case. Will you not sit there and listen? Will you not get everything quiet? Don't jump up and say, oh, he's criticizing. My friend, I'm not.

When a doctor comes in and sits down by the bedside of a patient and diagnoses that case, he's not critical. He's not criticizing that individual. He wants to help.

All right, listen. We have lost the presence of Christ today. We have the picture of Christ in Revelation 320, standing at the door of the church, knocking for entrance.

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sit with him and he with me. The church here is represented as not missing his presence.

They're going about their business with their worship. They have all the outward form. They have all the shadows.

But the substance Christ is absent. And the tragical situation is, the church is not conscious that he is absent. The reason I call your attention to this great fact is because you don't hear folks talking about

Christ when they come to worship.

You're talking about the happenings of the week. You're talking about business. You're talking about your fishing trips.

You're talking about a program. You're talking about your pleasure trips, your parties, your clubs. Worship has become just a habit and a form.

The presence of Christ is not there. The missing note in present-day testimony is the person and work of Christ. Yes, we have substituted social life and form for the very presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are very few today in comparison who are enjoying the real presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. A revival is the Lord Jesus living again in the midst of his people. Will you pray for me while I continue this message? Will you pray that God will open my eyes to see the need of revival? We are living in perilous times because the church today has lost the authority of God's Word.

If you ever listen, will you listen now? No longer does the average church member mold his life by the Word of God. I have never witnessed such a rebellion against the Word of God as we have today within and without our church and ministry. Young people revolt against the authority of the Word in shaping their lives.

The weakened sap wheel of the average person is manifested in utter rebellion against the authority of God's Word. In Christ's day, get this, they made much of the Word and crucified Christ. In our present day, we try to make much of Christ and reject the Word of God.

The average church member today is governed not by the Word of God but by his own opinion and has substituted a program. Man today worships his own opinion. When you worship the Word, when you preach the Word of God to him in the power of the Holy Spirit, immediately he will say, Ah, this is my opinion.

I don't believe that. He will not have God's Word. Many of you claim to believe God's Word.

When it comes down to birth tax, you will not have the Word of God to rule over you and shape your lives. Why? Because you are enmity toward God. How do we need men today to go up and down this country under the power of God's Holy Spirit, preaching the Word of God, like maybe John the Baptist or others, until it will echo and re-echo in the hearts of men until they are broken at the feet of Christ, crying for mercy.

Oh God, have mercy upon me, a poor lost sinner like that man out yonder in the armed forces of our country. We've also lost our compassion for the lost. As a result, our tears are dried up.

The old time prayer meetings where men threw their lives in the breach for the souls of men are all but a thing of the past. All through the New Testament it is said that Christ was moved with compassion as he looked upon the multitudes. Paul said, I could wish myself a curse from Christ for my brethren according to flesh.

Where do we find such compassion today? The average church is just a business institution and church membership has been substituted for salvation. And the average person thinks only of getting members into their churches and none of the salvation of the lost. This is a sign that we have lost the prayer

chamber and know nothing of the power of prayer and have substituted banquets, ostrich fries, and suppers instead.

May God pour out the spirit of prayer and supplication upon us today. My, may hearts be moved far and near under the power of God's Holy Spirit for the souls of men. That's the prayer of my own heart.

May I come to know a compassion for the lost that I've never known. Oh, the need of a spiritual awakening, a refreshing from the presence of God in our midst. Our cry is, revive thy work in the midst of years, in wrath, remember mercy.

We do not see lost souls. Get it, friends? We do not see lost souls going down to the vortex of hell without God and without mercy. Seventy-five percent of our present-day ministry according to statistics believe that hell is a myth.

Therefore, to them, sin is a virtue, and God is such a loving God until if there was a hell, He wouldn't send anyone to hell. No such doctrine is taught in God's Word. May God help us in this hour.

Wake up, friends, and see men going down to hell. One night, an old man, a hunter, was walking down a railroad track. There had been a great flood in that section.

He came upon a bridge across the old creek. It had been washed away in the flood. He looked at his watch.

Only a few minutes into that fast express train would be coming around the curve, rolling across that broken trestle. He started running up the railroad track with his lantern in his hand. As minutes went by, faster he ran.

Then all at once he heard the crackling of the steel arrailed on the tires. He knew somewhere around that curve that old train was coming at breakneck speed. He ran on, and when the light of the train flashed in his face, he began to wave that lantern as a fanatic, we'd call him.

But he saw the engineer was not slowing down. And then just before the engine passed him, he leaped off the rails and flung that lantern in the laugh of that engineer crying, My God, engineer, stop that train! The engineer knew then there was danger ahead. He brought his engine just to a stop as he started over into that broken trestle.

My friends, if I could sling my Bible across these waves this morning and let it fall into your lap, warning you of the danger ahead, there is a hell! There is a sin of engine, God! Wake up, sinners! Wake up, Christians! May the mercy of God rest upon us. Then we have lost holy spirit conviction of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Therefore, sinners are dried and unmoved.

There is another absence of old-time Bible holy ghost conviction in our midst. There is the absence of the breaking up of the human heart, the plowing and subsoiling, and making ready the heart of man for the planting of the seed of truth which brings forth eternal life. We have substituted the wisdom of men, training, developing, cultivating the all-human nature which has led to decisions for Christ, for salvation, which has resulted in folks trying to quit their sins, reforming their lives, which is religion without life, profession without possession, church membership without Christ.

So much, so much such stuff cannot even be called religion today. Lord, help us in this hour, having lost holy spirit conviction, the missing note in present day preaching is repentance. No longer does modern day preaching as a whole produce repentance, bringing a sinner down in the dust, opening his heart until he sees himself as he is.

In the absence of repentance, we have only a decision for Christ, which is a mental assent and not a hard acceptance. All of this is Satan's method of trying to make the world religious without Christ. Then we've lost the reality of blood redemption in Christ and substituted religious movies and all other forms of recreation for religious life, and Christ is not known experimentally among our people.

He is not real. He is not a living reality. Our people do not know him experimentally as Lord and Savior.

What a need for revival, for God to move in our midst. And as Acts 3.19 says, Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blooded out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. My friend, this is a dark background.

The dark, but darker the cloud, brighter the rainbow. It is in such hours as this that the grace of God stands out the brightest. Oh, if we could feel and see the need of a refreshing from the presence of the Lord and for Christ to walk anew in the midst of his people.

Our one cry is, Lord, rend the heavens and come down. Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. Oh, Lord, send a revival that thy people may rejoice in thee.

I know, as I've sat here and poured out my heart to you folks in Radio Land, many will say, He doesn't know what he's talking about. As someone said the other day, that preacher doesn't know what he's talking about. Christ is real unto the people who we are in the midst of the greatest worldwide revival we've ever known.

More people are being saved today than ever in the history of the world. Will you listen? My friends, this is not what we are witnessing today. It is not a heartfelt revival.

It's trying to make the world religious without Christ. Christ is not becoming real to our people. And as we have briefly looked at the background which manifests the need of a true, heartfelt, heaven-born, holy spirit revival, now let's see what is a revival.

Well, briefly, a revival is an excitement. It's a religious excitement. It is a great and extraordinary excitement.

It's an excitement produced among men. It's an excitement created and sustained by God the Holy Spirit. It's an excitement promoted by prayer which becomes an intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered.

It is such a refreshing from the presence of God in which souls are quickened or made alive unto God. It's the Lord Jesus Christ walking in the midst of His people until hearts are broken with weeping and brought to the place of repentance, realizing that they are lost and going to hell. It may be limited or widespread.

It may be in the heart of one individual or hundreds at the same time. A revival in which hearts are quickened or made alive in Christ and Christ becomes real to the human heart is particularly needed today in a fallen world. Everywhere you turn, there is deity, betting, gambling, drunkenness, impurity, infidelity,

skepticism, books filled with the darkest and most dangerous doctrines.

On every hand, newspapers, magazines are crying down the verbal inspiration of God's Word, reducing the Bible to mere fiction. Evolution is widespread. Modernism is on the round page.

Movie producers are taking the great old Bible stories and twisting the Word of God and misrepresenting the characters of the Bible to the people who are ignorant of God's Word. The vast majority of our popular novels are Christless and godless and are filled with infidelity. Immorality is rampant everywhere and the Church has lost her spirituality and been conformed to the world.

The Church today, as a whole, is not calling men to repentance. In the midst of this spiritual darkness, we hear the call of God to His people. I wish you would listen to that call.

Listen, friends. 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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their lands. Did you hear that call? You say, it's all right for the other fella, but it's a call to your heart, friends.

God's call to His people is to humble themselves, pride, good before a fall, a holy spirit before destruction. In the midst of this darkness today, they are saying, we are increased with goods, we are rich and have neither nothing. Yet above this, we can hear the call of God if we listen.

Listen, knowest not that thou art wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy me gold tried in the fire. One of the first manifestations of the convicting power of God's holy spirit is to humble man and hide pride from him.

May there come the humbling spirit in our midst. Then we'll follow prayer if my people which are called by my name shall pray. As we listen, we can hear nobody pray.

It's a going and a serving and an eating and a banqueting. As a group said one day, we don't have time for revival. We've got so much church work to do.

What a situation we find ourselves in. In Zechariah 12, 10, we find this great promise. Listen, and I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication.

May that great promise be fulfilled in our midst today when the spirit of grace and supplication fall upon the hearts far and near. May the spirit of the grace of God fall upon our hearts until it will break us down at his feet in prayer. Then it says, if my people shall seek my face in another place, he says, when ye shall seek me with your whole heart, ye shall find me.

People are so satisfied with their church work today until they do not want to seek the face of Christ. They are so satisfied with the additions they are having. Then he says, if my people shall turn from their wicked ways, sin is so rampant in our midst today, but one of the great outward manifestations of a spiritual awakening is the turning of the hearts of men and women from sin and seeking the face of God.

Let the wicked forsake his way, the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. But man does not want to turn from his way.

He does not want to forsake his sins. May the God of all grace and the Father of all mercies pour out His Spirit of grace upon our hearts until we will be willing to turn. Brother, a revival is not folks walking down the aisles and taking a stand for Christ.

A revival is not hundreds or even thousands of people making a so-called decision for Christ. It is the hearts of men turning to God from their sins, from their wicked ways, from their self-will, and finding themselves in the dust of repentance at the feet of Christ crying for mercy. You don't hear any mourning over sin, do you? No, you don't.

Then God says, I will forgive their sin and heal their land. May the Lord God rend the heavens and come down. What are some of the results in the time of a spiritual awakening? Men's minds are clear and they have been quickened, separated from the world and from sinful practices and brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

I know if things be stirred up by the Spirit of God, men are made alive unto Christ. Satan will be stirred up also. The devil will come down having great wrath.

He will put forth every effort in the world to keep the sleeping church from awakening and unconverted souls from fleeing from the wrath to come. I know that the world and so-called worldly church members will sneer and mock and make fun and this will frighten the timid individuals and they will draw back and turn away from Christ and will be more disloyal than they would have been had there been no awakening. In other words, a revival discovers Esau's and Jacob's, the Cain's and the Abel's.

Then there will be some who will come out on profession and do nothing but talk, talk, talk, not about Christ but of critical of others and will lead many astray. In such an awakening the devil will do his best to bring about envy, strife, and will cause individuals to take offense where no offense was intended. But praise God in the midst of such an awakening.

God will be glorified. God will break down all opposition to the progress of his work. I know the greatest opposition to a heaven revival, a heaven-sent revival will come from within the church where the self-righteous elder brother will begin to cast stones and criticize.

For my friend, the only thing is to keep our eye upon the Lord and move forward and one here and one there will come to know Christ, whom to know is life eternal. Now, brother, you're not telling me a thing in the world about the results of an awakening. We've had it here in the first Baptist church out years when all hell would turn loose.

But praise God He's able and out of it some soul will get saved. I believe, I'm hearing, and I'm feeling the moving of the Holy Spirit again in our midst because sinners are beginning to rebel against the Word of God. Saints are beginning to pick up their ears and listen to you to the call of God to repentance.

This brings to the close another broadcast and we want to thank you for your letters and gifts that keep these messages going out over the Voice of Truth program each week. Again, the title was The Need of a Revival and this is number 193 and you may have a pre-printed copy simply by sitting down and writing this. All of these messages preached by the late Pastor L.R. Shelton on this broadcast are also available on cassette tapes for \$3 each.

The cassette tape includes the entire hour, the songs by the radio choir and also the letter reading by Mrs. Wiley. If you're interested in that and you write us, we'll be glad to send it to you \$3 postpaid by the title or

by the number. Today's message is number 193.

Also, I'd like to mention our Bible fund for our prisoners and those who we send those Bibles to overseas, our missionaries over there in foreign countries. If you would help us with that broadcast, let me quickly give you our Book of the Month. It's Demon Possessions by Pastor L.R. Shelton.

It's a 91-page paperback that sells for \$3.40. It's also advertised in our Voice of Truth magazine. If you receive the magazine, you can see more about the Book of the Month there and it's a gracious little book and I believe you'll appreciate it. But it's always good to be with you and I appreciate you letting us hear from you and telling us what station you're hearing us over, bringing you this old time, old-fashioned gospel message the Lord lays on our heart day after day.

And if you will, write us. Would you help us with the broadcast? We could go on some new stations if you would. Remember, our mailing address is Radio Mission's Post Office Box 6250 New Orleans, Louisiana 70174.

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