

Ministering Life

by Mark Partin

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Duration: 59:31

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Transcript

My love is to Him, He plunged me to victory, Beneath the cleansing flood. I heard about a story, How the Savior came from glory, How He gave His life on Calvary, To save a wretch like me. I heard about His groanings, Of His precious blood's atoning, Then I repented of my sins, And won the victory.

O victory in Jesus, My Savior forever! He sought me and bought me, With His redeeming blood. He loved me ere I knew Him, And all my love is to Him. He plunged me to victory, Beneath the cleansing flood.

I'm learning to lean, Learning to lean, I'm learning to lean on Jesus. Finding more power than I'd ever dreamed, I'm learning to lean on Jesus. Learning to lean, Learning to lean, I'm learning to lean on Jesus.

Finding more power than I'd ever dreamed, I'm learning to lean on Jesus. Descend, holy fire, on me. Descend, holy fire, on me.

O purge me, yes, cleanse me, In flame my soul. Descend, holy fire, on me. Ascend, holy fire, from me.

Ascend, holy fire, from me. A fragrance so pure for Thy glory. Ascend, holy fire, from me.

Please send, holy fire, through me. Please send, holy fire, through me. To a world that's lost in the darkness of sin.

Please send, holy fire, through me. This is a song that's blessed me over the years. And I want to share it with you.

I first heard an untitled message of a great preacher of the last century. He's passed on. I was once far off from the Savior.

And as vile as a sinner could be, I wondered if Christ, the Redeemer, Could save a lost sinner like me. I wandered on in the darkness. Not a ray of light could I see.

And my heart was filled with sadness. There's no hope for a sinner like me. And then, in that dark, lonely hour, A voice whispered sweetly to me, Saying, Christ on earth have power To save a poor sinner like me.

I then quickly trusted in Jesus. And, oh, what a joy came to me. And my heart was filled with praises.

For saving a sinner like me. And when life's journey is over, And I, the dear Savior, shall see, I'll praise Him forever and ever For saving a sinner like me. Most high God, we come to You humbly this afternoon.

And Lord, we don't want to hear from a man today, But we want to hear from You. So, God, speak through our brother Mark. Use him for Your glory, God.

And be honored and praised in this place. We pray it in Jesus' name. Father, we will not go through the pretense of thinking We need to beg You to do what You long to do.

You long to reveal Yourself. That's why You've given Your Spirit, So that He can guide my brother. So, may Your will be done.

May Christ Jesus, in Your own name, And Your Word be glorified. For Your name's sake. Fill my brother with Your Holy Spirit.

And empower him to be a faithful witness and messenger for You. According to Your will, in Jesus' name. Amen.

If you have your Bibles, turn to the book of Ezekiel. Ezekiel chapter 37. A very familiar passage.

Ezekiel 37, beginning with verse 1. The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, And set me down in the midst of the valley, And it was full of bones. And He caused me to pass by them all around, And behold, there were very many in the open valley, And indeed, they were very dry. And He said to me, Son of man, can these bones live? And so I answered, O Lord God, You know.

And again He said to me, Prophecy to these bones, And say to them, O dry bones, Hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones, And surely I will cause breath to enter you, And you shall live. And I will put sinews on you, And bring flesh up on you, Cover you with skin, And put breath in you, And you shall live.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord. And so I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a noise, And suddenly a rattling, And bones came together, Bone to bone.

Indeed, as I looked, The sinews and the flesh came upon them, And the skin covered them over, But there was no breath in them. Also He said to me, Prophecy to the breath, Prophecy, Son of man. And He said to

the breath, Thus says the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breathe and breath, Breath and breathe on these slain, That they may live.

And so I prophesied as He commanded me, And breath came unto them, And they lived and stood upon their feet, An exceeding great army. And then He said to me, Son of man, These bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, Our bones are dry, Our hope is lost, And we ourself are cut off, And therefore prophesy and say to them, Thus says the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, And cause you to come up from the graves, And bring you into the land of Israel.

Then you shall know, I am the Lord, When I have opened your graves, O my people, And brought you up from your graves, And I will put my spirit in you, And you shall live. I read this chapter, It amazes me to think what God did. And so many times, I open to this text, And I jump right at chapter 37, And yet, God began to say, Before there was chapter 37, There was chapter 1. And as I look at this, I say, Well God, What are you trying to explain? And he was saying, What did it take for me to get Ezekiel to the place I used him? And is that not a valid question that each of us need to know? And say, God, what does it take for you to get me to the place you can use me? Because Ezekiel, He was not like Elijah who just showed up out of nowhere.

You go back to chapter 1. You see, Judah has been in captivity. They've been in bondage. And for 70 years, They're in captivity.

And I don't know when Ezekiel's ministry started, But he may have been 30, He may have been 50. I don't know his age. I've not looked therein.

But for some time, Ezekiel, He himself has been in captivity and bondage. Maybe that's all he knew. Like Nehemiah.

Nehemiah, All he knew was the bondage. He never knew the glory of Jerusalem. And so when they came back from that holy city, And they said, It's lying in reproach.

It broke his heart. But he had never even been there. But you look here in chapter 1. It says, Now it came to pass in the 30th year, In the fourth month, On the fifth day of the month, As I was among the captives by the river Kabar, That the heavens were opened, And I saw visions of God.

And on the fifth day of the month, Which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiathon's captivity, The word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, The son of Buzzi, In the land of the Chaldeans by the river Kabar. And the hand of the Lord was upon him there. Go to verse 28.

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And so when I saw it, I fell on my face, And I heard a voice of one speaking. And he said to me, Son of man, stand on your feet, And I will speak to you.

And the spirit entered me when he spoke to me, And he set me on my feet. And I heard him who spoke to me. Look at verse 9. And now when I looked there was a hand stretched out to me, And behold a scroll of a book was in it, And he spread it before me.

And there was writing on the inside and on the outside, And written on it were lamentations and mournings and woes. Moreover he said to me, Son of man, eat what you find, Eat this scroll, And go and speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, And he caused me to eat that scroll.

And he said to me, Son of man, feed your belly, And fill your stomach with this scroll, For I give you that I give you. So I ate, And it was in my mouth like honey and sweetness. And then he said, Son of man, go to the house of Israel, And speak my words to them.

You see that's what happened before Ezekiel ever got to chapter 37. Ezekiel was prepared. How was Ezekiel prepared? Well, the first thing you see is this.

Ezekiel had to acknowledge his captivity. You see it in verse 1. He says, As I was among the captives. You see, I don't know how long Ezekiel had been in captivity.

It may have been the majority of his life, If not all of his life. But he had to acknowledge his need. And see, sometimes our problem is this.

We don't want to admit where we are. We grow so accustomed to where we are, We think it's normal. And yet it's not normal.

Ezekiel was in captivity. And before God ever called him, Before God ever placed his hand upon him, Before God ever used him, Ezekiel had to acknowledge where he was. And so it is today.

Before God will ever use any of us, We have to acknowledge where we are. What we're in bondage to. What besetting sin we may have.

And once Ezekiel acknowledged he was among the captives, He was one of them. It says in the heavens open. And he had visions of God.

See, that's the second thing. He acknowledged his need, And the second thing was this. He had an encounter with a living God.

And guys, for God to use us, It takes an encounter with a living God. See, revival, oh we pray, God, sweep across this land, Sweep across this country. But revival has to start personally.

As Gypsy Smith said, Lord, I take this chalk and I draw a circle around it. Revive everything inside the circle. See, there's personal revival.

There's corporate revival. There's great awakenings. But before I'll ever experience a great awakening or a corporate revival, I must know a personal revival.

I must encounter God and so must you. And look what it says in verse 3. And the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel. That's faith.

You see, he's acknowledged where he is. He's encountered the living God. And then the word of the God comes expressly.

The Bible says, does it not? Faith comes by hearing. Hearing by the word of God. So here is Ezekiel's demonstration of faith.

Because it is a God given gift. Just as repentance, just as salvation. So he receives the word.

He receives faith. The capacity of faith. And then go on.

And the hand of the Lord was upon him there. Oh my goodness. What does that mean? For the hand of the Lord to be upon your life.

As her brother shared the other day, when Whitfield stood to preach, he stood in silence waiting for the hand of God to be upon him. Oh, that we would know the silence till the hand of God rest on our lives. The hand of the Lord.

It means he was captured by God. It means he had the power of Almighty God. He had the authority of Almighty God.

He was captured. You read this book. You read the whole book of Ezekiel.

And it talks about the hands of the Assyrians. It talks about the hands of Ephraim. It talks about the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.

It talks about the hands of your lover. It talks about the hands of your slayer. It talks about the hand of your enemies.

Whose hand is upon your life? Whose captured your life? Because if you were not captured by Almighty God, oh, there would be no power. There would be no authority. Oh, and he captured Ezekiel.

Ezekiel. God began to birth in him his burden. You go back to Nehemiah chapter 2 verse 18.

Nehemiah, he's been in anguish over the condition of God's people of the holy city. He goes back. He says, here am I, send me.

He goes back. He comes with his entourage of people and materials. And in chapter 2, they've all shown up.

And he never tells anybody what he's doing. And he slips out into the night. And he observes what's taking place.

He observes the destruction. He observes the reproach. And finally, he speaks and everybody's listening now.

And he said, let me tell you of the good hand of my God that is on me. Oh, my friends. Can you tell anybody the testimony of the good hand of your God that is upon your life? You see, when Nehemiah told him the good hand of the God that was on him, do you know what the people said? They said, let us rise and build.

And they did in 52 days what they could not and did not do for years. The hand of God was upon him. When the hand of God comes upon your life, God begins to share his burden with you.

And when God begins to share his burden with you, for the first time in your life, you'll possibly start seeing through the eyes of God. You see, we understand what it means to be burdened. Oh, we're burdened about our family.

We're burdened about our children. We're burdened for our spouse. We're burdened for our church.

We're burdened for our job. We're burdened for our country. But those are just natural burdens.

But to get the burden, to get under the burden of God. Oh, my friends, that's what it takes. Malachi chapter 1, he says, and the burden of the word of the Lord for Malachi.

So what's the burden of God for you? You see, Ezekiel was burdened. When you go to chapter 37, he was burdened for the deadness of his own people. It says there in verse 12, the graves that they were in.

He was burdened for the deadness of God's people. You see, the burden of God comes by revelation. It comes in no other fashion.

God has to show it to you. You cannot get it on your own. We are desperately dependent upon God.

And when he gives you revelation, and it impacts your life, and you understand, and you see through God's eyes, and you feel through God's heart, you are burdened. And then it drives you to your knees in anguish, and it drives you to the Father in intercession, and you pray as you've never prayed. That's the burden of God.

And you see with Ezekiel, the hand of the Lord was upon him. I find it amazing. 46 times in this book it says, The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel.

122 times it says, Thus saith the Lord. So there's 148 references to God speaking to Ezekiel. How many times did Ezekiel speak to God? Now I may have missed it.

Because I've been birthing this since I've been here. And I'm just reading. This is all I've got.

I don't have my set of commentaries. There's only one time Ezekiel talked to God. And that's in the chapter 37 when God says, Can these bones live? And Ezekiel says, Lord, only you know.

Isn't it amazing that we don't understand prayer? And the prayer of silence. I don't even tell you I begin to understand how to pray. But guys, as God births you with that burden.

There's going to be times where you just lay before the Father. And there's nothing coming out of your mouth. And he's going to quicken you by his spirit.

And he's going to show you his grandeur and his glory. And he's going to empower you as you know nothing that's going on. But it's not going to just be a running off of our mouth.

And speaking. So the hand of God was upon him. Whose hand is on your life? Whose captured you? Then you go over there to number 2, verse chapter 2. There it says, and the spirit entered me.

Guys, we're completely, utterly dependent upon the Holy Spirit. Now as I've read this book. It says the spirit entered me.

In chapter 3 it says the spirit lifted me. In chapter 11 it says the spirit fell on me. And in chapter 37 it says the spirit brought me.

Now I don't know about you. But I see the continuous work of the Holy Spirit of God. I see the progressive sanctification of the Holy Spirit of God.

In a man and woman's life. When the hand of God is upon his life. And when the word of God is being spoken to his life.

We're so dependent upon the Holy Spirit. And we've heard it articulated already. The first work of the Holy Spirit.

He brings conviction. Conviction. Conviction of what? Of sin.

Do you remember what it was like? Sitting in a church. And a word being set forth with power and unction. The miserableness of your life.

And you left that place. But the miserableness did not stop. It did not go away.

The conviction. Oh, hear me. Conviction's a gift.

Because apart from God convicting my heart. I have not enough sense to know my lostness. And my need.

And so the Holy Spirit entered his life. The Holy Spirit filled his life. He brings conviction of sin.

He brings conviction of righteousness. He brings conviction of judgment. The Bible says in Luke 11.

Ask. How much more will I give the Holy Spirit to those who ask? We act like, well, I got saved. I got the Holy Spirit.

I don't have to ask anymore. See, the problem is we know the Bible so well. But the Bible doesn't seem to know us.

And so you see Ezekiel. He receives the filling of the Holy Spirit. And then you go over there and he says.

Take this book. In verse 2. I open my mouth and he calls me to eat that scroll. What's he doing? Okay.

He's digesting the word of God. I've been trying to digest. Brother Allen's message.

For 24 hours. I'm like a cow. With several stomachs.

I chew on it a while. Take it down. Bring it back up.

I'm sorry. I'm just a country boy from East Tennessee. But you keep chewing on it.

Because there's truth. Guys, he fishes deep. Listen to me.

He said. You've got to digest my word. Before you can preach my word.

Your word has got to get real. His word has got to get real inside of you. Before you can share it.

It's not like Jeremiah. Isn't it brother? It starts burning inside you. And it's got to be released out.

So you see what's going on here with Ezekiel. Before that great resurrection chapter happens. He says.

Digest my word. And he says. Go to the house of Israel.

And speak with my words to them. That's why you've got to digest truth. Because you've got to speak to the people of God.

Digesting truth is simply processing the word of God. Mark chapter 6. Jesus. He feeds the 5,000.

The multitudes. He takes his disciples. He says.

You go to the other side. They get in a boat. And they head to the other side.

Jesus goes into a mountain to pray. The disciples are on the sea. And a storm comes.

And here's what it says. Mark chapter 6. Verse 52. They fail to consider the miracle of the loaves and the fishes.

And their hearts grew hard. If you and I fail to process the truth of God's word. The end result is a hard heart.

And the thing about a hard heart. Is you don't even know it when you got it. But the Bible says.

If you don't digest truth. Your heart gets hard. And every Sunday we preach in churches across this land.

That as soon as people leave. The devil steals away the seed of the truth of God. And it does not impact them.

He said. Digest the truth. Process the truth.

For you are not sent to a people of unfamiliar speech. And of hard languages. But to the house of Israel.

And then look at this. Verse 7. But the house of Israel will not listen to you. How long did it take you preachers to figure that one out? Right? Right? He said.

Preach. But they don't listen. You be faithful to the call.

You be faithful to my hand upon you. It doesn't matter if they listen. You still preach.

He says. Because they will not listen to me. For all the house of Israel are impotent.

And hard hearted. Behold I have made your face strong against their face. And your forehead strong against their forehead.

Why do you think so many preachers are hard headed? Go on over to chapter 3 verse 70. Then he gives us the responsibility. Son of man I have made you a watchman.

For my people. Therefore hear a word from my mouth. And give them warning from me.

He says. Here's your responsibility. You're a watchman.

You're to warn them. I've got a good brother in my church. He's about 25.

He's been preaching about a year or two. He's been to Haiti two or three times. He came to my office a couple of months ago.

He just got back from a trip. And he said. I blew it.

He was with me in South Africa. In an AIDS ward. And everybody in the hospital had AIDS.

And you could tell it. He said. We were dealing with a person.

They said he had the flu. And I knew he had AIDS. Because I'd been there with you.

He said. We carried this guy out to the back of our jeep. And we put him in the jeep.

And we drove him for 45 minutes to an hour. We held our hand over the sun of his eyes. To give him some shade and some comfort.

We were trying to get him to the hospital. That maybe they could give him help. And we got him there.

And we unloaded. And we said. Oh boy.

That's good. The next day we quickly asked. How's the brother? And he said.

He died. He said. Mark.

Not a one of us ask him about his soul. He said. We get so caught up in.

This other that we. He said. How do I deal with that? When it says in the book of Isaiah.

Or the book of Ezekiel. All his blood is on my hands. I said.

Brother. You process truth. You seek forgiveness from almighty God.

And one day you tell somebody else. See. There's a responsibility.

As a watchman. See. I would.

I wouldn't either. I think I'd like sometimes to be a sweet preacher. But it just ain't there.

I mean. It just ain't there. Because God's called me to be a watchman.

And to give a warning. And in the rest of this book. You find Ezekiel.

Obeying God. He says. Woe to the elders.

Of the church. Woe to the shepherds. Woe to the holy city Jerusalem.

Woe to the prophet. All the rest of the chapter 37. Ezekiel obeys.

God. And he gives a heart message. And then you get to chapter 37.

And you go. Ministering life. You see guys.

He says. The hand of the Lord. Came upon me.

And he brought me out. And he set me down in the midst of a valley. And it was full of bones.

Dry. Sun bleached. Bones.

And God said. Ezekiel. Can they live? And every Sunday.

And every week. As you stand before your congregation. And your group of people.

God asks you the same thing. Does he not? Can they live again? Can life come into these bones? Now be careful. Because how you answer that.

Tells what you believe about God. And Ezekiel took the safe answer. Lord only you know.

Only you know. You see. If you are to have a ministry.

That is life giving. If you are to have a life giving ministry. You have got to have God's burden.

Not yours. If you want to be popular. Successful.

If you want people to know your name. You will never have a life giving ministry. Because God says Ezekiel.

Can they live? And he said. Lord only you know. If you want to have a life giving ministry.

You have got to stay in tune to the Father. He says. Prophecy.

Preach Ezekiel. Preach to these dead people. Preach to these bones guys.

And Ezekiel begins to preach. Guys that is power. In the word of God.

But you know. As well as I do. It is not enough by itself.

If you could bring revival. By preaching. We would have had it as it has been said.

But Ezekiel was preaching. Because God called him. Bid him preach.

And he preached. And all of a sudden. There was something starting to shake.

Anybody shaking in your ministry. And bone began to rattle. Back to bone.

And all of a sudden. Muscles began to form. And tendons began to come.

And flesh began to cover. See there is power in the word of God. Now he has got this mighty.

Massive number. Of dead corpses. They look better.

But they are still dead. Preaching alone is never enough. They look good.

And you and I may preach to them. Every Sunday. But they are still dead.

And he says. Ezekiel. There is no breath.

Prophecy. To the breath. You know the word breath.

In the Hebrew. It is the word wind. It is the word Ruach.

In the book of Genesis. When God came down in the cool of the evening. With Adam and Eve.

That word cool means Ruach. That is the spirit. He said.

Prophecy to the spirit. Prophecy to the breath. Prophecy to the wind.

Breathe oh breath of God. Breathe oh breath of God. Breathe.

And breath came. And they stood up. Mighty.

Army. Mobile. Capable.

There was a revival. Would you not say? There was no advertisement. You see all God has to do is whisper.

And everybody in Oklahoma will show up. Do you know what it takes to have a life giving ministry? There is a cost. You not only have to have the burden of God.

There is a cost you have got to pay. There is a price for spiritual power. The hand of God must be upon you.

He captured him who has captured you. What does it mean to have the hand of God upon you? Captured by God. It cost you daily purity of life.

It cost you daily transparency. It cost you daily honesty and truth. It cost you daily abandonment of yourself.

Under Jesus Christ. It cost us to have a spiritual ministry. You have got to be willing to rub shoulders with dead people.

You have got to be willing to go down into the valley. God showed me this truth 25 years ago. My first church had 10 people.

And you still preach. There is a cost. You have got to be willing to rub shoulders with dead people.

And there is a course. It is the way of prayer. Do you remember when the disciples came to Jesus? They said Jesus had been the place of prayer.

There is a place guys. Oh there is a secret place. Jesus says go into your prayer closet.

There is a place of solitude. You see when Jesus said in John 14. He says I go to prepare a place.

Man that is not a funeral message. He said I go to prepare a place for you. When Abraham was taking his son Isaac.

Up Mount Moriah to sacrifice him on the mountain. It says he saw the place afar off. There is a place for you guys.

When Joshua was there in the promised land. And he came and encountered with the captain of the Lord of hosts. Of army.

He said remove the shoes from off your foot. Because the place you stand is holy. When Moses was there.

Encountering the burning bush. God says remove the shoes off your feet. Because the place is holy.

There is a place of prayer. That is holy. There is a place that God has prepared for us.

There is a place you and I. Have to steal away to. In solitude. And seek the face of God.
And lie before the father. And allow him to impart the burden into our lives. There is a place.
That is the price. The place of prayer. And you pray.
And he said there is a place of preaching. You preach. I have been told.
I have never researched it. But I have been told there is over 50 different words in the Greek New Testament. For the word means preach.
And when you stand and share your testimony. Of what God has done for you. And how you encountered God.
You are preaching. He said preach. He said come oh breath of God.
And the place shook. Stephen so shook the Sanhedrin. They snuffed out his life with stones.
Paul so shook the Roman world. They cut his head off. Jesus so shook the world.
They crucified him. The church. The New Testament church.
Prayed. And the place shook. Is there anybody shaking in your ministry? In October of 2006.
God shook our church. And for 40 days. We met every day.
In revival. But the atmosphere lasted 11 months. We had planned a regular meeting of revival.
The man showed up to preach. And Saturday night. We were at the church praying.
And he got a phone call. He was from Florida. Saturday night.
The phone call said. The sheriff of your county is a member of your church. He's just been killed in the line of duty.
You have to come home. And so I did what any good preacher would do. I postponed a revival.
Pretty silly right? He preached Sunday morning. Sunday night. Went back to Florida.
Our church met. Prayed all week long on their face. Came back the next Saturday night.
We're at the altar again praying. See something's changed this week now. We just built a new building.
And we were moving in. And we were having the revival the week before. Because we've not checked the sound.
We've not checked the light. The air conditioning. The heat seats.
We've not tweaked out the building. So we're meeting in a brand new place. With all new stuff.
And we don't know if it's going to work. And so we begin our revival service. On Sunday morning.
And he preaches. And one 20 year old girl comes to the altar. She kneels.

She prays. She gets up. She goes back to her seat.

That's it. And I'm going hmm. But Sunday night.

We come and we start the preliminaries. And in the second song. We're singing.

And people start coming out of the pews. And nobody's asking them to come. And they're coming out of the pews.

And they're weeping with brokenness. And they're crying out for God. You've got to forgive me.

And for two weeks. That's how our services went. People start streaming out.

Just during the song. They're saying I've got to confess my sin. I said we've not asked you to confess your sin.

If I want to be right and clean with God. I've got to confess my sin. They cry out over here.

This young man. Brandon just got saved. And this young lady just received Jesus.

And we've not even preached. And for two solid weeks. It's like a dam broke in the water.

The cleansing of the Holy Spirit. Floods in us. People said I've got to confess.

Now we preached every night. After. People have been on the altar.

We never gave an invitation with appeal. We preached. We shut up.

We sat down. And in dead silence. It's a hardwood floor.

You'd hear the clicking of shoes coming. People confess terrible sin. Sin you don't want anybody to know about.

I had ladies in their 40's saying. I gave my virginity away when I was 15, 16, 17 years old. To a young boy.

And then he cast me aside. And I've been an emotional wreck ever since. I need the forgiveness and cleansing of almighty God.

That happened several times. People confessing of sin. Children conceived.

When you're not married. I had men standing. Confess abortions for 30 years ago.

And for 40 days. God blew his breath in that place. I had a man standing on a Sunday morning.

Singing in a praise group over here. And he retired principal. And he started confessing.

And said. Oh God don't kill me. He said.

God called me to preach when I was 19 years old. And I've never obeyed him. And for 40 days.

God blew his breath. The preacher had to leave after 2 weeks. He'd been on a 4 month sabbatical.

He had to go back. So I took it from there. You see.

I've experienced 2 revivals in my life. Both in local churches. Nothing regional.

And the first one we mishandled. And I didn't want to mishandle this one. The first one was brought to a conclusion.

Before it should have. And I've asked. Men.

After men. Who study revival. And they all told me the same thing.

Without counseling with one another. And they said. You keep showing up as long as God shows up.

That's pretty good advice. And so for 40 days. How did I know to bring it to an end? It was one of the hardest decisions I ever had.

If you've ever been on an extended fast. You'll understand how hard it is. To end a fast.

Because you feel like. You're quitting. But you can only know.

That God has told you. It's okay. And so we brought the continuous services.

To an end. But man. For the next 10.

9-10 months. The presence. The power of God.

Filled that place. People would come. During the 40 days.

At 8 o'clock in the morning. At lunch time. And they'd be spread out across the altar.

Praying. Seeking God. Testifying.

How did it happen? It was God's plan. Revival of the sovereign work of God. But God does prepare people.

We've had a solemn assembly. We've dealt with corporate pride. Personal sins.

But God moved. It says in the book of Isaiah 64. Oh that you would ring the heavens.

And that you would come down. And that the mountains might shake. At your presence.

That the nations may tremble. At your presence. Ezekiel started and it says.

And the heavens opened. Oh. I pray for an open heaven.

You see in Genesis chapter 28. Jacob had an open heaven. And it says angels were.

Ascending and descending. And Jacob caught the purpose. Of almighty God.

In Malachi chapter 3. It says there's an open heaven. When you bring all the tithe to the storehouse. He's talking about the stewardship of your life.

Ezekiel. He saw visions of God. When he had an open heaven.

Matthew at the baptism of Jesus Christ. He heard the Father speak. And there was the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Acts chapter 7. Stephen he was being stoned. He saw the glory of God. He had an open heaven.

Revelation chapter 4. John the revelator it says. Come on up. He had an open heaven.

Do you want a life giving ministry? Man I do. But there's a price it cost us. And there's a course we got to follow.

And there's an encounter we got to have. And that's personal revival. And we've got to know God's hand upon our lives.

Bow your heads and close your eyes. Have you come to the place where you took a piece of chalk. And you've drawn a circle around yourself.

And you've said. Oh God send revival. To everything in this circle.

Oh God send revival. To my life. Oh God I want a ministry that gives life.

Not the snitch of death. Father God you are holy. You are righteous.

You are glorious. And we stand in awe of you. Oh breathe.

Oh breath of God. Oh breathe. And come fresh in this place.

Father God I pray. You reach down. And you call out.

And you touch. And let us be honest. If we are captive to any besetting sin.

Let us be honest to whose hand is on us. And God let us position ourselves. For you to pass by.

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