

(Revival) What Is Revival - Part 2

by Michael L. Brown

Revival is a supernatural, God-glorifying movement of the Holy Spirit that brings a life-transforming effect on individuals and a life-giving effect on society.

Duration: 22:23

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1, James 4:7, Revelation 21:27

Topics: "Revival", "Salvation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher describes the experience of revival and its impact on individuals and society. He emphasizes the reality of God and the human condition, stating that revival brings a revelation of both. Revival is described as a powerful and emotional experience, where people are confronted with God and find salvation. The preacher also highlights the overwhelming revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man that occurs during revival, tearing away the veil of hardness and blindness that often covers believers.

Transcript

...of God that they experienced, and that was all. But God reminded me that there are still these areas in my life where I'd say, well, it can happen, but not over there. Or it can happen, but not through that person.

And there's a little of that in all of us. Oh, Lord, I'll believe for revival, but as long as it doesn't come through that individual there. You know, I'll believe for it, as long as it comes in a way that's religiously acceptable to me.

Then it'll never come. Then it'll never come. It comes beyond our control.

It comes beyond our power. We cannot put our name on top of it and claim it for ourselves. It's a movement of the Holy Spirit.

So the first major characteristic of revival is its absolutely supernatural God-glorifying quality. No flesh glories in its presence. It is sudden and spontaneous.

It is uncontrollable and uncontainable. That was number one. Number two, major characteristic of revival is its overwhelming revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man.

Overwhelming revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. We think we have a revelation of how holy God is. We sing about Him.

We say that He's holy. We say that we're in awe of Him. We call Him a holy and wonderful God.

And we think we recognize how fallen human nature is. And we think we recognize as believers how short we often fall of God's standards. But you see what revival does is it rips the veil off.

There's an incredible veil of hardness over us that we don't even recognize. There's a thickness. There's a blindness that we don't appreciate.

And every so often when we come into an experience in the Lord and something deep and significant happens on the inside of us, then we just weep before the Lord. And then we recognize who He is. Or then we humble ourselves before Him because we recognize how little we are.

When real revival comes, it brings that revelation, Oh my God! That's exactly how people would feel. They're stricken. They're shaken.

One man visiting the Welsh revival gave this description. Someone said to him, You speak as if you dreaded the revival coming your way. He was a famous newspaper editor in England.

He'd gone over to Wales to observe things in 1904. He said, No, that is not so. Dread is not the right word.

Awe expresses my sentiment better. For you are in the presence of the unknown. You have read ghost stories and can imagine what you would feel if you were alone at midnight in the haunted chamber of some old castle and you heard the slow and stealthy steps stealing along the corridor where the visitor from another world was said to walk.

If you go to South Wales and watch the revival, you will feel pretty much like that. There is something there from the other world. You cannot say whence it came or whither it is going, but it moves and lives and reaches for you all the time.

You see men and women go down in sobbing agony before your eyes as the invisible hand clutches at their heart and you shudder. It's pretty grim, I'll tell you. If you're afraid of strong emotions, you'd better give the revival a wide berth.

And then when they say, well, your impression is favorable, he says, how could they be otherwise? Did I not feel the pull of that unseen hand? Have I not heard the glad outburst of melody that hailed the confession of some who in very truth had found salvation? The fact is there is a revelation of the reality of God and the reality of the human state. Something happens, something snaps, something clicks and the veil drops and people are confronted with God. Would we live the way we live and do the things we do if we had a 24-hour revelation of the holiness of God? Would we ever set our eyes on something we ought not to or let our ears hear something we shouldn't? Would we ever utter words out of our mouths that were displeasing to us? Would we ever give ourselves over to the lusts and desires of the flesh? No, not for a split second.

If heaven was filled with every potential temptation, it wouldn't be heaven if it was, but even if it was, and if the devil was there raging, just the fact that we could see God would keep us perfectly free. So another characteristic of revival is its overwhelming revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. I

remember when God's Spirit fell on the church where I was attending and working at the end of 1982.

November 21st was the precise date until March 27th of 1983. I remember people weeping and wailing before God. I remember people suddenly seeing their own state and humbling themselves before God.

I remember people choking on their tears and not even knowing why. Just caught up with the presence of God. Coming to the end of themselves, crying out they couldn't take it another second.

They lived like that all their lives, but they couldn't take it another second. There had to be a break. There had to be a stop because they saw God and had a revelation.

When revival comes, it's not a doctrine. It's not an action. It's not a work.

It is God coming in a tidal wave power Himself. And then another characteristic of revival is its life-transforming effect on those who are touched. Its life-transforming effect on those who are touched.

We basically have to admit that in all of our assemblies there are people who are chronic messes. There may even be some sitting here tonight that say, that's me. They're counseled for years.

They're prayed for for years. They have hands laid on them. They're put into Bible studies.

They're given tapes and they never seem to change. And every one of us would have to look at areas in our own lives and say, you know, it's been years and these things are still plaguing me. Years.

I remember 10 years ago saying, there's no way 10 years from now I'll be struggling with this and I'm still struggling 10 years later. When revival comes in a moment of time, God does such a work, just like when He saved us, a supernatural working of God taking us out of the devil's kingdom and putting us in God's kingdom, God's family. When revival comes, it's such a working of God's power and God's life and God's majesty that people are transformed for good.

You have to fight. You have to resist. You have to do all in your power to get out and to go back to the way you were before.

I've seen people change during an outpouring of the Spirit that struggled with certain sins for years and I've seen them change and never go back to the way they were, even though they wrestled with those things for years and years. I've seen God come in a moment of time and set that person free as they got hungry for Him. And in that moment of time they were so transformed that it meant more to them than all the previous years of ministry because they're getting a pure and real dose of the real thing.

Again, you've got to hear that, that a lot of what we're ministering is not the pure and full dose. You know, if you take some medicine and you dilute it by 80 or 90 percent, it'll have almost no effect on the sickness. So much of what we're giving out is so diluted because it's coming through diluted and unconsecrated vessels.

So much is coming through a diluted understanding that is compromised with the world that we don't really have the medicine that's going to cure the sickness of our society. They're getting it in diluted, watered down form. Real revival, you get a real dose of the real thing and that's one of the reasons why other religious people get so upset because you're telling them that they're diluted, that they've mixed with the world.

You're telling them that this is the real thing. Even if you don't open your mouth, when you start to get the results of God, when you start to see the real thing unfolding in front of you and it's happening in your life, it's happening in your family, it's happening in your community, the community next to you where it's not happening has two choices. They can either say, hey, we want what you have.

Even though we've judged you in the past and put you down, we recognize you have something we don't and we want it. Or you guys are wrong. What you have is not really God.

What you have is just the flesh or it's just the devil. Whenever someone succeeds in something that you've been working at and you can't succeed, you have two choices. One is to say, hey, you got something I don't have.

Tell me how. And the other is to judge that person and say it's not real, it's not genuine. When real revival comes, you'll see people change that you've given up hope for.

You'll see people that you prayed for and nothing happened. The breakthrough will take place and there it is, they're transformed. You'll see areas where the gospel's been preached and preached and preached and preached with no effect and revival comes and suddenly thousands are coming, swarming, flocking to hear the good news and to be born again.

I remember during the outpouring in that church in 8283, that one man, the first week after he was immersed in the Spirit and set free from various sins, he said he prayed more in that first week than in all his previous five years as a believer put together. Now that's negative and positive. The negative is, can you imagine how little he prayed those five years? If you could add it all up and it didn't even add up to what you could do in a week.

The positive is, look at what God did. Look at the depth of that change. Look at the effects in his life.

So revival is absolutely supernatural and God glorifying no flesh glories in its presence. Revival brings an overwhelming revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Revival has life-transforming effects on those who are touched and there are life-giving effects.

This is the fourth major characteristic that I'm giving you. It has life-giving effects on society as a whole. I said that before but I need to say it again.

There are two main reasons why it affects the society as a whole. One reason is people get saved. If you had 500 people sinning yesterday and 300 got saved, you only have 200 left sinning the next day.

Recently in the D.C. area with all of the murder acceleration taking place and all the bloodshed, primarily drug wars, one of the big drug kingpins was arrested and the murder rate dropped a little bit because he was a key guy. He was either instigating it or people were after him, whatever the case was. But when you got him out of the way, it cut it down.

When you break the force of a spiritual strong man, a spiritual kingpin, a satanic agent, that also lessens crime in an area. But I just say common sense would tell you that if you had all these people buying drugs from somebody and now the person is no longer there, the connection isn't there and half the people buying drugs aren't there anymore, the crime rate's going to drop. It just would tell you naturally that there's going to be less rape and there's going to be less murder and there's going to be less stealing and everything else.

Various revivals in the past, the effect on society was so great that, for example, judges wore white gloves because they had no more cases to try. You could just see the whole society, drunkenness, goes way down because the people are getting saved. Now you say, well, I've seen people get saved and it doesn't seem to affect the community as a whole.

Well, that's because so few have gotten saved. You haven't had whole towns coming, whole cities coming. And a second reason is that they haven't been saved to the bone, they haven't been saved to the core.

Sure, they'll make it into heaven, but they're not impacting anyone with their lives. They're not challenging anyone with their lives. But revival will transform the society as a whole.

You had policemen starting quartets, gospel quartets, because there was so little crime to fight on the streets. You have one of the most famous examples in the Welsh revival at the beginning of this century. It largely began among coal miners.

The central vehicle that God used was a former coal miner named Evan Roberts, who had a so-called scorched Bible. He always had his Bible by his side. It was always in the Word whenever he had an opportunity.

But what happened was there was an explosion in the mine. Several of the miners were killed and his Bible had a few pages scorched and he kept that. That was his special Bible.

But what happened was that the coal mining industry almost shut down for a while. It came to a real standstill because they had to retrain the horses. Because the coal miners would give orders to the horses with total profanity.

They'd curse. They'd use every kind of expression known to man that was ungodly. Now they got saved and they were speaking to the horses properly and the horses didn't know how to respond.

You have to realize that for a horse the command, Go, you know if you said it in Hebrew, Lech, or you said, Go, or you could say to the horse, Stop, when you wanted it to go, it doesn't understand words. It's just commands. You could say, Hello, and that could mean go.

So just because you're telling the horse to go and do this and that, if it doesn't understand the commands, it's not going to act. So they had to retrain the horses. You're talking in effect on the society as a whole.

And the other reason that revival will have an impact on the society as a whole is that the fear of God in general will return to the society because of the godly standards of the people of God. The greatest indictment, it's been said, and it's true, the greatest indictment on the body, on the church, in the United States, in our generation, is not that we have been attacked or argued with, but that we have been ignored. I mean, picture you're standing there trying to defend somebody.

There's somebody behind you and you're saying, If you want to touch them, you've got to get to me first. And they just walk past you and ignore you. What an insult to your strength.

There is no fear of God in our society. There is no sense of law-breaking. Let me explain this.

When we were in Israel, we were just watching on our first trip over there on the plane, and we got a sense of rebellion from many of the people, that they were law-breakers. When we went over to Italy, the sense we had was of lawlessness. A lot of the sins come out the same, the flesh comes out the same, but

there was a difference.

One was lawless, the other was law-breaking. One was saying, We're doing it this way. We're doing it this way.

I don't care what standards you put up. We're doing it this way. You see, in Israel, even if people don't like it, they still have a biblical heritage that they've learned.

They still understand basic principles of God's law. They were taught those things in school just growing up, just using the Bible. And then you've got the Orthodox Jews arguing for righteousness, righteousness according to rabbinic tradition, and saying, You can't do this on the Sabbath.

You can't do this, and this is wrong, and that's wrong, and they're a loud and vocal voice. So people are saying, We're doing what we're doing anyhow. We don't accept that stuff.

When we were in Italy, it was just a different sense. Actually, I know less about Italy than Israel, but there was a sense of lawlessness, just a society that hadn't been confronted with the righteousness of God, hadn't been confronted with the Word. Well, it's understandable.

With the Roman Catholic Church being pervasive in the society, and everybody's a Catholic, but they can do whatever they want to do, there's no realization of the truth of God or the Word of God or the fear of God. So it says in Romans 4, where there's no law, there's no transgression. Where there's no law, Romans 4, 15, there's no breaking of the law.

Well, people go around in our society doing whatever in the world they want, killing each other, performing all kinds of abominable acts on men and women and children, the abortion rate and everything else without any conviction. Why? Because there's no law. There's no standard of righteousness.

Why is there no standard of righteousness? Because the believers have compromised with the world. Because we've retreated. You see, when you have people out, for example, picketing abortion clinics and saying, you're going to have to put me in jail before you can get in here and kill your baby.

All of a sudden, people are confronted with something. See, there's a standard of righteousness that's being espoused. When believers across the country stop watching smart and garbage on their televisions, then people are... they're confronted with righteousness.

When people that you work with are clearly living in sin and you look them in the eye in love and say, you need to stop that. It's going to kill you. Jesus died to set you free.

You're hurting yourself. People are all of a sudden confronted with reality. What do we do? We just blend.

We just blend. We're indistinguishable from the rest of the world. We're having almost no impact on the society around us.

We are supposed to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. God's light is going to shine through us. The light is shining very dimly in our country with all these believers that we bring so little conviction.

You have to say the light of God is shining very dimly. When revival comes everywhere, all over, when I say everywhere, I mean everywhere you go. People are talking.

People are here. Do you hear about this? Do you know about this? They're being confronted. They're being shaken.

Their religious excuses are falling by the wayside and they're wrestling with the fear of God and the conviction of God. So revival will have an effect on society as a whole. If it doesn't get out of the church walls, so to say, it isn't revival.

And if you think of true revival contrasted with recent superficial revivals, there was a great revival of God's healing power in 1947 to 58 in the years often given for that. But what happened to the vessels? Adultery, alcoholism, grief, corruption, gluttony, disunity. Where was the reality of God? Well, His power to heal was there, but the healing revival ended with a whole lot of reproach and many of the great and famous names never made it out of it.

Or they made it out scarred, wounded. We talk about the great revival of faith teaching. Thank God for it.

Thank God for the truth of it. But the fact of the matter is you hear about more quote faith pastors falling into adultery than any other denomination or group I've ever heard of. Why? Because the character was bypassed.

Because people were like given a gun. A little child was given a gun. Look at all the power you have.

Then they thought there was somebody because they were shooting this gun. But the heart was never changed. The character was never changed.

That's not real revival. It's a revival of a specific truth or a certain aspect. It's not real revival.

One man said if you want revival you must teach on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Well, I can accept that only if that means teach on the gifts of the Holy Spirit capital H, capital O, capital L, capital Y and emphasize the person of the Holy Spirit because he'll come and clean house before he starts manifesting gifts. The fellow who said it said it meaning no, you just teach about the gifts and the manifestations and that'll break out the power.

We don't need the power. We need to change your heart first. We've seen what the power has done without the heart change.

So we've had these quote revivals and people all stirred up and excited and blessed but it hasn't changed society. It hasn't increased the fear of God in the eyes of the American people. It hasn't had a deep lasting effect on the people involved.

Man has been able to get glory and praise and honor for it. It hasn't confronted people with a holy God. Because of that we have to say we need revival and we haven't seen revival.

Just this last point. I don't know if it's just me or if it's everywhere but the last few months in particular the last few weeks I've just felt something totally different in the air. It's as if more and more people are recognizing something is drastically wrong.

I mean things that you went on doing for years and you felt okay doing going to services and that you just say wait, wait, wait something is drastically wrong. And you look at all the man centered stuff and our great gospel enterprise and it's just the more I look the more I just start to get glimpses of what God wants to do I say man I mean we are almost all wrong with very little right mixed in between it. I'm not indicting any

person I'm saying us, we.

I mean you look around. You hear about movings of God in other parts of the world or some of the outpouring of the spirit in China that's produced millions and millions and millions of spiritual believers most of whom are willing to suffer persecution for the cross. Produced that over there and you think man how would they react to our shows our gospel shows how would they react to our to our big presentations and the great man or the great woman and the exalted person it would probably boggle their mind.

I don't say they're walking in judgment towards us their hearts may be purer than doing that. But I'm saying we can look at ourselves and do what 1 Corinthians 11 says judge ourselves that we won't come under judgment. We have to look around and say OK it's clear we need revival we haven't had the real thing.

God what's it going to take for us to see true and real revival in our days. Let's just stop and pray for a minute. Lord God our father our savior and our king we ask you Lord God with the seeds that have been planted here to stir us and provoke us and take hold of us and move us higher into the realm that you are speaking about.

In the name of Yeshua your son Amen. What time is it? We're just going to take a five minute break.

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