

Praying for Revial

by Richard Owen Roberts

Revival is a season when God draws near, but it requires humility, repentance, and earnest prayer.

Duration: 8:38

Scripture: Exodus 25:22, Psalm 73:28, Psalm 80:1-4, Psalm 126:5-6, Matthew 6:33, James 4:10

Topics: "Revival Prayer", "Humility And Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the topic of revival and the importance of the manifest presence of God. He reads from Psalm 80, where the people of Israel are pleading with God to restore them and shine His face upon them. The sermon emphasizes the need for humility and repentance as a barrier between God and the people has been created due to their arrogance and sin. The preacher highlights the significance of the nearness of God in revival, stating that it is the greatest source of good on earth.

Transcript

The subject of revival is an incredibly important subject, and at the very heart of the subject is the manifest presence of God. One of the words of scripture that I have delighted in and been immensely encouraged by for a great many years is found at the end of the 73rd Psalm, when the psalmist declares, but as for me, the nearness of God is my good. When we're speaking about revival, that's exactly what we're speaking about, the nearness of God, which is truly our greatest source of good on earth.

And of course, in glory, his nearness will be our greatest good also. So we often, in describing revival, say that earth never comes closer to heaven than in a season of revival, when God draws near. Now, there is a great deal of very vital instruction on the subject of revival in scripture, but I want to read a small portion of Psalm 80 at this time.

Oh, give ear, shepherd of Israel, thou who dost lead Joseph like a flock, thou who art enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up thy power and come to save us. Oh, God, restore us and cause thy face to shine upon us, and we will be saved. Now, in the first two verses, three terribly tragic matters are brought to the fore.

First, it becomes necessary for those who are interceding to plead with God to listen. Second, the one who filled the Holy of Holies with such incredible glorious presence that it was necessary to put in an incense pot in order to obscure the glory, is being pled with in this psalm to shine forth. And indeed, the God of all power is being urged to stir up his power and come and save his people.

Now, you obviously don't ask someone to listen when you know that they are. You don't ask that the glory shines forth when indeed the glory is so great that it is blinding. You don't ask for a stirring up of power when all power is functioning at work, warming the hearts of the people of God, and indeed, subduing the wrathful hearts of the impenitent and bringing them to faith in Jesus Christ.

When we're talking about revival, we're talking about a season such as the psalmist has described. A season when it appears God is not listening, when indeed the glory of God is obscured, when also the power of God is not working as it can and is so desperately needed. And of course, the reason why there is this withdrawal of the manifest presence of God and these graces is because sin has occurred that has not been repented of.

There is a very clear and real way in which sin erects a barrier between the people of God and himself. So, when we're speaking about revival, we're speaking about repentance at the very heart, but not merely of those fruits of sin that appear in the life, but at the very root of sin. And of course, the scriptures do specify certain root sins, including pride and stubbornness, rebellion, and unbelief.

Isaiah expressed the matter in the most powerful fashion in saying, thus saith the high and the lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is glory. I dwell in the high and lofty place with him also who is broken and contrite to revive the heart of the broken one, to revive the spirit of the contrite. So clearly, when the chronicles deal with the subject of revival, and in that section where Solomon is at the forefront, and he's dealing with God after the dedication of the temple, the Lord declares, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves.

You know, there's a sense in which we almost need to stop right there. Prayer does not come first, as vitally important as it is, but humbling ourselves. The problem in the 80th Psalm, which I've read but three verses, is that the arrogance of the people and the sin that followed their arrogance has grown to that point where it has created a barrier between God and themselves.

So much so, in fact, that we read in verse four, O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry with the prayer of thy people? Thou hast fed them with the bread of tears, and thou hast made them to drink tears in large measure. So prayer is not first. It is of great consequence, as already stated.

It is indeed of such considerable consequence that speaking of revival without the earnest birthing kind of prayer that has already been described is just simply foolish. But the people of God must first humble themselves and set aside anything and everything that has grieved our Father in heaven, and then indeed we can pour out our hearts in prayer. What an awesome thing to remember that prayers can so offend God that he sends tears to drink in great measure rather than the desired answers.

But brothers and sisters, at the very heart of revival is the nearness of God. All of the little ones in our world, the ones just born, and all the crawling ones, and all the walking children, and the young people, indeed everyone in the world needs the Lord. Let us turn to prayer now with a spirit of urgency that is appropriate at an hour like this.

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