

# What Spiritual Awakening Means to the Local Church

by Richard Siple

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*Richard Siple's sermon emphasizes the transformative impact of spiritual awakening on the local church, calling for total commitment, necessary changes, and readiness for conflict.*

**Duration:** 1:09:37

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 18:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Awakening"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a man who had robbed a house but later became a Christian. The man felt convicted and decided to return to the house to make things right. The homeowners were shocked but showed kindness and forgiveness towards him. The preacher emphasizes the importance of surrendering our lives to God and being ready for the second coming of Christ. He also highlights the power of prayer and the potential for miracles in revival and spiritual awakening.

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## Transcript

Thank you so much for that song. It is a very important question tonight in relation to this message. My subject for tonight, as you see in your program, is what spiritual awakening means to the local church.

I'd like to have you turn in your Bibles to 1 Kings chapter 18. 1 Kings chapter 18. I am going to read verses 1 and 2, then verses 17 to 24, 29 to 30, 33 to 39.

1 Kings 18, beginning with verses 1 and 2. And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth. And Elijah went to show himself unto Ahab, and there was a sore famine in Samaria. And you know why there was a famine in Samaria? Because Elijah was a man of like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain.

And it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months, and he prayed again. And then the rain came, and I believe it's coming. Can you hear it? Verse 17.

And it came to pass when Ahab saw Elijah that Ahab sent unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but thou, my father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Balaam. Now therefore send and gather to me all

Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel.

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. I hate those kind of meetings.

Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under. And I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.

And call ye in the name of your gods your new house, your new car, your new clothes, your new game, your new bank account, your new friends, your new programs, and see if they'll answer by fire. Will they? No. There'll be none that regards, no voice, no answer.

Nothing. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And then go over to verse 29.

The prophets of Baal that have done their best, or their worst. And it came to pass, when midday was passed, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any dancer, nor any that regarded. That is one of the most awful things I can imagine, Christians and churches going along without any answer from God, without any voice, without any sign of his blessing, without any power.

That is a terrible, terrible thing. And Elijah said, And all the people come near unto me, and all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel, it shall be thy name. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and put it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. Now, we make things just as easy for ourselves and for God as we possibly can.

But he made it just as hard for God as he knew how to make it. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time.

And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

And when all the people saw it, there was a spiritual awakening. I mean, this is a whole nation. And when all the people saw it, they said, The Lord, Jehovah, he is the God.

Jehovah, he is the God. Last Friday night I sat in a visiting room in a prison and visited with a man that I have known for many years, who is a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ, an evangelical Christian Church leader, who has been given a sentence of two and a half years for sexual assault on his daughter. And that is just one experience among many in this day.

You and I have watched evangelical leaders of tremendous stature and with millions of followers fall into desperate and tragic sin, and then try to cover it with self-justification and refuse to deal with it in the proper way, one after the other. And as we have watched that happen, maybe we have had a tendency to condemn them, maybe we have had a tendency to criticize them or to think that somehow they are more sinful than others. But I think that our hearts need to be broken and that we need to be greatly saddened, but that we need to be wise men and women who understand our times.

Not only have we seen men who were high in the evangelical Church one after the other, and I'm not just talking about television evangelists. A book I highly recommend to you is a new book by Gordon MacDonald, *Rebuilding Your Broken World*. Another evangelical minister of the cross who fell into sin and totally repented and did it in the proper way, with a disciplined direction of the people of God and has fully recovered and has written one of the most helpful books that I have read in ten years.

But what I am saying to you now is that all around the evangelical world, people of great stature and great leadership and greatly admired by men, people looked up to and almost worshiped as some kind of an unusual and divine person, have fallen into sin, have fallen from their positions, the money has been taken away, the television stations have been cut off, and this whole great big structure is collapsing. And then we turn to the political world and we see men who have been admired on every side, men on whom we set our hopes, men of whom it was said they are going to be Christians in the White House or Christians in the places of government, and they are going to bring about reform and they are going to turn the hearts of the Western world back to God. And many Christians have become involved.

I know one of my friends that I greatly admire and who has been a friend of mine for many years. The last time I visited him in the eastern United States, he told me that he was spending almost all of his time and pouring thousands of dollars into supporting a Christian minister of the gospel as a candidate for president. And I said, I can't believe you're doing this.

This is not the way God wants to do this. And of course, that man did not get the nomination and that man did not get elected president. And I know many thousands of Christians were greatly disappointed.

But what I want to say to you now, and I want to say it very earnestly tonight, I am not disappointed. I am disappointed in the sin. I'm disappointed in the failure of men.

I'm disappointed in their immorality. Yes, but I'm disappointed about my own sin too. What about you? But do you know what I believe God is doing? I believe that God is taking the eyes of the church of Jesus Christ off from man because he wants to get our eyes back on God where it belongs.

And I believe that he is doing that because he wants to bring about a great revival in the church of Jesus Christ, and he wants it to flow over into the world, and he wants to bring a spiritual awakening. And when that spiritual awakening comes, what will it mean to the church? What will it mean to the local church? What will it mean to the people that are in the church? I think often about people praying for revival and talking about revival and preaching about revival. I wonder what they would do if a spiritual awakening came in their city and suddenly the population of that city rushed into the churches and packed into the

doors and sat there every night waiting for somebody to do something.

I just don't think we have any idea what we're talking about when we're talking about a spiritual awakening of the kind that's happened in the past, but it is what's coming, and brethren and sisters, we better get ready for it, because it is coming. And God is whispering this in some of our hearts, and the voice is getting louder and louder, and he's pushing us, and he's pressing us, and he's refusing to allow us to get away from it, and he won't let us have a good time, and he won't let us play, and he won't let us rest or anything else. It isn't nice.

It isn't comfortable. Now, what will this mean? What will this awakening mean in the local church? Let me give it to you quickly tonight. First of all, it will mean decisions.

How long halts you between two opinions? If the Lord be God, serve him. But if they'll be God, serve him. One of the things that happens in both revival and the spiritual awakening is that the Holy Spirit of God presses, like we have never known before, for complete and total decisions.

I don't mean just little decisions. I don't mean decisions about small things. I don't mean just a decision to stop smoking, or just a decision to give up this, or just a decision to do that.

But God presses us for major decisions. If the Lord be God, then serve him totally, but if you're not going to serve him totally, then go and save the world. See, one of the reasons that people really don't mean business when they pray about revival, and really don't mean business when they start talking about a great spiritual awakening, is because down deep in their hearts, behind all their praying and talking, and outward appears, there is a nagging suspicion that if it really happened, that the Holy Ghost would come sweeping in upon them, and would sweep away all of the things of this world that are clinging to their life, and that are holding them in bondage, and that are keeping them busy, and keeping them from serving God totally.

And that suddenly God would wash it all away, and he would come in with great power, and he would insist that they live totally for him, and be completely given to the Lord Jesus Christ. If the Lord be God, serve him. And I believe that's the challenge that God is bringing to us here in this place tonight.

I believe in this conference this weekend that God is bringing us the challenge. If we are going to pray for not only revival, but believe in for a spiritual awakening, are we ready to pay the price, and are we ready to make the kind of decisions that God is going to require of us? I tell you frankly that I've just been going through another time of decision. If you think that somewhere you made a decision that's going to finish them all, as one of the men said here, don't think that.

Because God will take you to some very complete decisions, and of course you don't know all that means. And then after a while God will take you to some more, and after that he'll take you to some more. And recently God has really been on my trail.

And I tell you, I don't remember any time in my life when God has been so insistent with me, and so determined that he was going to get my attention, and that I was going to do exactly what he wanted me to do. And you know, I didn't realize, I just tell you frankly, I didn't realize that over a period of time as a pastor of a wonderful church that's growing and all the good things are happening, I suppose if you were there you would say, I mean that's a tremendous church, and it is. And wonderful things are happening all the time.

And I didn't realize in the midst of all that, and all of my busyness, and the work that I'm doing, that I could allow myself to slowly start to get involved in doing some things just to please myself, and just to kind of take it easy, and to kind of relax, and and put my feet up. And it brought me to start to tell me that I was 62, and that I really probably should start thinking about slowing down. Now there isn't any reason at all in the world to slow down when you're 62, unless you just can't go anymore.

And you say, I don't feel like going anymore. That hasn't got anything to do with it. I see teenagers that don't feel like going either.

Sleep till noon unless you kick them out of bed. No, that doesn't have anything to do with it. Amen.

I say, if I had time to preach two sermons tonight, I'd preach the one I preached last Sunday morning on Caleb. He did his greatest work when he was 85, and I said, I'm only 62. I got 23 years to go before I do my greatest work.

He's 85, and he started out to do the greatest work he'd ever done in his life. You see, we need to start making some new decisions. Let me speak very strongly to those of middle age and older here tonight, because this is very, very important.

I don't know if you've read the book *Age Wave* or not, the secular book, but I'll tell you what is happening in North America. What is happening in North America is that very shortly, people from middle age on up are going to be the predominant number of people in North America. And it isn't going to be the young people that are going to have to carry the burden of this tremendous revival and awakening.

It's going to have to be the people of middle and upper years. And the young people are going to come along with the energy of youth and put a lot of spark in it. But people who think that it's time to slow down, and they think it's time to slow down as far as God is concerned, and to kind of lean back and take it easy and put their feet up and start having a good time and take long holidays and be gone for the winter.

Boy, people in Canada love that. Now I've gone to middling. The snowbirds? And just take it easy all winter and then come back and wonder why they're not on the board in the summer? Not in my church.

You say, I sort of enjoyed you the other night, but I'm getting a little mad at you now. You see, God is pressing us for decisions as to whether we're going to serve the Lord totally, give him everything, our time, our energy, our strength, our passion, our love, give him our lives and give it to him unreservedly and unconditionally and completely and right down to the end of our life or not. Which is it going to be? Which is it going to be? When I get home from this conference, I'll be starting a series of Sunday night sermons entitled, *Be Also Ready*.

Three Sunday night sermons. The first one will be, *The Way to Be Ready for the Coming of Christ is to Let Go of the World Now*. Do you know that there's lots of Christians who talk about the coming of Jesus Christ and like to go hear prophecy sermons, but if they really thought that Jesus Christ were going to come tomorrow morning, they would be very upset because their fingers are so entangled in the world that they wouldn't know how in the world they could let go so they could go up.

Huh? Let go of the world when? When you think it's getting close to the time for Jesus to come? Want to be ready for him to come? Let go of the world now. The second one is going to be, *Start Building for Eternity Now*. Lay up treasures in heaven.

Huh? Not on this. Lay up treasures in heaven. Let's get our money in heaven.

Let's get our bank accounts in heaven. Let's get our time and our energy and our strength in heaven. It doesn't say lay up treasure for your kids so they'll be lazy and won't have to work when they get to your age.

It'll ruin them. Give it to God. Amen? Hey, I'm even getting some amen on the money.

How do you like that? We've almost started! And then learn to love Jesus now. Learn to love him now. Some people that profess to be Christians really don't enjoy the presence of God now.

I wonder how they're going to enjoy it when they're with him. I wonder how. How long halt you between two opinions? How long do you try to ride the fence, to try to stay in the middle? No.

Either serve the Lord or serve the world, one or the other. What will happen? Well, it not only will mean decisions, it will mean change. And I believe that when revival comes and when spiritual awakening comes, and I'm going to say something I hope you'll understand, but I believe that all programs in the Church that don't minister to the growth of God's people or the salvation of souls go out the window.

And our churches are cluttered, absolutely cluttered. And we need to be ready for change. We don't like change.

We have all these sacred cows and all these things we've always done. We don't like change. But revival and spiritual awakening bring change.

Somebody says, how is it that people are saved in your church all the time? Well, we have seven pastors in our church, but we will not have a pastor in our church that is not a soul winner. It's no good to stand in the pulpit and say, you go out and win souls. It won't work.

See, we need some changes. Somebody says, well, what about your minister of music? He has to be a soul winner. You say, well, what about your administrator? He has to be a soul winner.

You say, well, what about the man who's in Christian Ed? He has to be a soul winner. Well, what about your minister of personal care that goes and calls when the people are sick and the old people and the people in the hospitals and councils and all, he does Christian counseling. He has to be a soul winner.

And he comes out of his office grinning and says, is the pastor in his office? And I say, yeah. And he comes to the door and he says, hey, a couple just received Christ in my office. See, there's changes that need to, we need to make some changes.

So it will mean decisions change. What's the second thing it will mean? It will mean conflict. And I don't like conflict.

See, I'm not naturally honest. I'm not. That's not the way I, I don't know.

I don't know if I was born that way or grew up that way or what. I know I was born a sinner, but I'm not naturally honest. Fortunately, I married a woman who's naturally honest.

Too honest. She's something. I don't believe she ever told a lie in her life.

And sometimes she makes it very uncomfortable for me, but it's very good for me. So I, see, I don't like conflict. I'd rather dodge the conflict.

I'd rather not rock the boat. I'd rather go around. I'd rather lie a little bit and cover up a little bit and make it look better than it is and smooth it over.

And I mean, that's the way I'm made. That's my nature. I don't like conflict.

But you know, when revival comes and spiritual awakening comes and the Holy Ghost begins to move with great power, there is absolutely no way that you can avoid some kinds of conflict. You see, there's no way you can avoid conflict. It's a place where two kingdoms clash.

It's a place where the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness come together. And there's blood and there's agony and there's tears and there's pain and there is death. And Elijah said, get the prophets of Baal and get the prophets of the grove, 850 in all, and get them out here and let's have a contest and let's see who is really God and let's see where the power really is.

And we try to solve our conflicts with man's methods, but man's methods will not do it. It takes the power of God to do it. And he said, now you go ahead and do your best.

And they did their best. And when it was all over and the fire had come down and the people had cried out and fallen on their faces and said, the Lord, he is God, the Lord, he is God. Then Elijah said, now let's go all the way to the cross and let's not stop short with a little prayer meeting and let's not stop short with a little emotionalism and with an altar call, but let's go all the way and let's go to death.

And he said, get the prophets of Baal, all 850, and kill them all. They all have to die. Not one can be left.

Do you know it's a whole lot easier to just go ahead and die right up front and get it over with than it is to die by inches all your life? You know, if you're a Christian and you just don't go ahead and get it over with, you're just, it's like cutting a dog's tail off by inches. Well, I wouldn't want to really hurt the little thing and cut it off all at once. So he said, you cut a little off.

Somebody says, now this whole revival business is too drastic, it's too harsh. And you talk about Calvary and you talk about going there and being nailed to that bloody cross with Jesus and really dying. I mean, that's extreme.

That's fanatical. Don't you think we can just kind of go along and die a little bit as we go? Well, I'll tell you, if it's me, I'd rather they just get me up there and nail me up and get it over with. I mean, it took Jesus six hours to die on that cross and normally it took men longer than that.

That's slow enough. Why do some of us drag out the agony? He said, well, I was just kind of hoping that we wouldn't have to go all the way through with it. Somewhere along the way, somebody would pull out the nails and stop the process, but God won't let us get away with that.

He says, well, go ahead and die slow if you like, it's just going to be harder on you, but I'm going to stand right here and wait till it's done. And there are folks here tonight who've been playing around with this whole business and yet tonight, you know, like some of these people, they came, they didn't want to make any decisions. People come to Revival means they've already decided before they ever came out the front door that they weren't going to make any decisions.

They say to themselves, well, I'm going over there, but I'll tell you what, I'm not going to that prayer room. I found out some new people in our church got scared. They wondered what was in that prayer room.

I mean, really, they asked what was in there. They wondered about people going in there and coming out again. We said, there's nothing but a rug and some chairs, just go in there.

But I'll tell you what else is in there. The cross is in there. And there are folks here tonight that need to just go ahead and get it over with and make that full decision and let all the bales be slain.

Let all of the world be put to death as far as you know it. Now you don't know it all, neither do I, but as far as you know, let's do a complete job. How about it? Some of you could go home tonight so happy, so free, if you just make it a complete and a total job tonight.

But there will be conflicts, conflicts between God and Satan, conflicts between the church and the world, conflicts between the spirit and the flesh, sometimes conflicts between husband and wife and boyfriend and girlfriend and parents and children, and we can't avoid it. But you know, God can bring blessing out of it. There was Jezebel, and she said to Elijah, so you want a revival, do you? But I'll tell you what, by this time tomorrow, God do the same thing to me if I don't make you like one of those prophets by this time tomorrow.

She said, I'm going to kill you. Do you call that conflict? Somebody says, how can you have apostasy and revival all together in the last days before Jesus Christ comes? I'll tell you, we could have a world-shaking revival and a tremendous spiritual awakening that would gather millions into the kingdom of God and still have the world rise up and resist it in anger, and there could be the worst persecution this world has ever seen since it began. And the two could go hand in hand.

I don't know that that will happen, I'm just saying that there is nothing the Bible says it couldn't happen. And just recently again, God brought me to the place where I said to him, Lord, I know what you want to do, and with your help I'm going to obey you and I'm going to be part of it no matter what, no matter what. And that's the kind of a decision God is calling us to tonight.

The third thing that it will mean in the church and the people of the church, a spiritual awakening will mean a repairing of broken altars. Now, these prophets of Baal had made their altar and they had run on the altar, they had cried out, they had covered it with blood from their own bodies and their tears and prayers, and they had made a mess of the altar, they had broken some of it down by running on it. And then it says that Elijah built up again the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

And it will mean the repairing of broken altars in our lives. You say, what does that mean? Such as our personal devotions, such as family devotion. Do you know what I find over and over again when people come to me for counseling as a pastor? They will come in and they'll have some kind of a spiritual problem.

And I'm talking about Christians. They have some kind of a spiritual problem. And I'll say to them, do you have a regular time every day when you get with God and read your Bible and pray and seek his face? And I would say very close to 100 percent of the time they do not.

See, it's very simple, really, the means of grace, the things that God has instituted in the Christian life to give us grace and to give us victory and to help us to live for him. And one of the things that happens in revival and spiritual awakening is that the altars of the Lord that have been broken down by our

indifference and by our coldness and by our worldliness and our busyness and our carelessness, the altars of the Lord, such as our prayer time and our Bible reading and our Bible study and our family devotions. Dad, has your child ever heard you pray for that child and for the rest of the family by name? I've talked to children and young people brought up in Christian homes and I've asked them that question and they have looked at me with tears in their eyes and said, Pastor, I have never heard my dad ever pray for me by name, ever.

There are a lot of altars that have broken down in the lives of Christians. Things that used to be sacred altars in the lives of God's people. Family devotions.

I tell you what, we had family devotions in our home when I was growing up every morning and every night. Every morning before we went off to school, my father and mother gathered us together right after breakfast and my dad read the Bible and we all got down on our knees, father, mother and four children, and we prayed together. And one morning, it was my birthday, I was eight years old, and we got down to pray and it was my mother's turn to pray and she had no idea why she did it, but in her prayer she said, Lord, please don't let, and my middle name is Malcolm by the way, that's what they called me then, she said, Lord, please don't let Malcolm get killed today.

That's a strange prayer for a mother to pray just for one out of four kids. And it was my birthday. Not a good way to start your birthday.

And I ran out the door to school and on the way to school some of the kids discovered it was my birthday and they started chasing me to give me a birthday spanking on the way to school. And I could run fast in those days and I was out running them very nicely until I ran across the main thoroughfare and got run over by an automobile. Next thing I knew I was crawling out from under that car, tried to stand up and fell down on the pavement and blood all over me and the man who was driving the car had stopped and the farmer came running up and grabbed me up in his arms and got in the car and we took off for the hospital.

You say, did you live? He said, well, I've always would if I was married to you. Well, now you know. But you know all I had was just a place in my ankle where I tore my sneaker off and tore a piece of skin about that size off my ankle.

And that's all I had. Do you think these old altars that were in the Christian home have any point? I grew up with that. I grew up with that.

I heard my father pray for me every day of my life from the time I was old enough to remember hearing anything. Even when I was a teenager and I was out with the young people and I wasn't even doing anything wicked or sinful or drugs or alcohol or sex or anything, I was out with the kids in the church, in church meetings, having a date with my girlfriend and behaving myself. And I'd come home late at night and the family had gone to bed and I would tippy-toe in the door because it was a little too late.

And I'd hear a voice and look in the living room and there was my dear mother on her knees praying. Many times I heard her praying, Dear Lord, by then all the kids had changed my name and she's called me Dick and said, Dear Lord, bring Dick home safe tonight and keep him from sin. What happened to the altars in the Christian life? What about church attendance? Oh well, you say, some of us go to church too much.

Yes, that's true, but I know people who just go on Sunday morning. I tell you, I like to be every time the doors open and I like to get up front. Do you know why? I want to be under the spout where the glory comes out.

I mean, if anything is going to happen, I want to see it. Be right there. And then tithing.

Yeah, who said amen? Some preacher. Tithing, giving to God. Well, you can say a lot about that.

Witnessing, sharing our faith, on and on it goes. Family altars. I don't know what the altars are in your life that are broken down, but I do know that revival and spiritual awakening will be that great moving of God in our hearts, which will bring us to rebuild the family altars in our lives.

All of these Christian altars, these sacred means of grace that God has instituted in our lives, they will be there. It's interesting about working on Sunday. See, now I am going to meddle.

You say, now wait a minute, Pastor, don't you know that Sunday is not the Sabbath? I know that. Do you know that? Yes, I know that. The Bible does not teach that Sunday is the Sabbath.

But you know what? It is a day, it's interesting, it's a day that's been set aside in North America for many years to gather together with God's people and to seek his face. When I was a young man and going out trying to make a living and save my money to go to college and these kinds of things, I remember I had a job with the State Highway Department, or I went to get a job with them in the Engineering Department. The man that interviewed me said, you know, the job you're applying for in the Engineering Department is a seven-day-a-week job, 24 hours a day, you're on call any time, seven days a week.

I said, well, that's very nice, but I won't be there on Sunday. Oh, I said, you can't leave Sunday out. He said, if we need you on Sunday and you're building a highway and you need to be out there with the Engineering Department, that's where you have to be.

I said, I'll tell you what, I'll make a deal with you. This is a good one. I love these kind of deals.

I said, listen, I'll make a deal with you. I'll tell you what, if you give me this job, and I won't take it any other way, if you give me this job, and you need me on Sunday, I'll be out there on Sunday on one condition, that once I get out there, and all the highway crew is out there, and all the Engineering Department crew is out there, and all the workers are out there, that you'll shut down all the machines and give me one hour to preach, and then I'll work the rest of the day. That just scared the devil almost to death.

I could hear him swallow his teeth. You know what, the devil made sure they never called on me on Sunday, ever. I worked with him for three years.

You know, he hired me that way. That guy actually hired me that way. And the devil made sure they never called me on Sunday.

I didn't have to worry about it. The devil took care of that. The Lord didn't have to do a thing.

It didn't even do the devil any good, though. We got out there, and every time it would rain, and none of the highway crews could work, and the Engineering Department couldn't work either, and they'd all go and sit in the station wagon while it poured down rain and covered everything with mud, and then we'd have a two- or three-hour Bible study and got paid by the Highway Department. I'll tell you what, if you'll take a stand for God and you will put the authors of God in your life where they belong, and if you will have some

conviction and really take a stand for God, God will do marvelous things for you, and he will get a hold of the hearts of sinful men, and he will turn them to serve you and to serve Christ.

Absolutely. We just don't believe it. We compromise all over the place.

Number four will mean setting things in order. He took the stones and he built the altar exactly the way it was supposed to be. Then he put the wood in order, it says, and then he cut the sacrifice and laid it in order the way it was supposed to be.

Everything had to be a certain way, and it was all put in order to get ready for the fire to fall. Now, one of the things that happens in revival and spiritual awakening is that we put things in order. We get things back in order.

That means repentance and restitution. And you've been hearing about restitution already this weekend. And there are guidelines for restitution, there are very fine guidelines put out by the Soterios so that we go at it in the right way.

But I tell you what, I really believe with all my heart that one of the reasons that we do not have the kind of victory that we ought to have in our Christian lives and one of the reasons that we do not see the moving of the Spirit of God in our churches is because we only go halfway with our repentance and we take the altar just the way it is, all messed up and everything out of order and the wood all in disarray and the pieces of the sacrifice scattered and we pray and hope the fire will fall upon it, but God says no, we have to get things in order. And there is restitution that has to be made. A young man in our church who was Sunday school superintendent when the revival came, and he was doing just fine.

He had surrendered to the Lord, he was having a wonderful time singing and praising and filled with the Spirit, he was just having a great time. Then all of a sudden God reminded him that many years ago he had borrowed a pickup truck and he had smashed the fender and then took the truck back and just parked it in the man's yard and left it and he had never talked to him, never done anything about it. And boy, that fender got big.

And God said you have to put that in order. Well, he had quite a time even finding the man because it had been years ago. And he said to himself, I wonder what that cost, about \$200 I guess, but he forgot about inflation.

He told me later if he had realized what it was going to cost, he probably wouldn't have done it. And he went and found the man and said he had just gotten right with the Lord and God had met his heart, he wanted everything cleaned up in his life, and he wanted to pay the man whatever it cost him to get it fixed. And the man said, I'm glad to hear it, it cost me \$800.

But he paid it. A man in our church who was a leader of one of our evangelism teams and a soul winner, when God began to meet him, and this was since I've been in Regina, and it was after a Souterra crusade there, and God had met many of our new Christians. This man was a new Christian, had been an alcoholic.

And he came into my office one day and he said, Pastor, I have to make some restitution and I'm scared to death. I said, well, what is it? He said, well, years ago when I was living in sin, another man and myself went to another city and we broke into a house and we robbed a house and we stole a lot of things out of that house. And he said, that's been a long time ago.

And God says I have to do something about it. What can I do? And I said, well, the only thing I know is you can go back to that city and try to find that house and try to find out if the people that owned it then still own it and if they're living in it. And he said, what am I going to tell them? I said, well, don't tell them about the other man, that's his business.

But you just tell them there were two men and you were one of them and that you're ready to make total restitution for the other man too, because you can't remember who took what. He said that I don't know what we took. And I said, well, you ask God to help you and the Holy Spirit will remind you of a lot of things.

And so he sat down with a piece of paper and I know it was in the Holy Spirit because it didn't take him long. And we trusted God together and he went and did it. It was late in the afternoon when he found the house.

He went up and rang the doorbell and a lady came to the door and he said, now you don't know me, but I'm so-and-so. And he told her his name. He said, I live in Regina.

And he said, were you living in this house back in, and he told her the year, when it was robbed? And she said, yes, it's our home. We were there then. We were here.

He said, well, I'm one of the men that robbed your house and the Lord has saved me. And he said, he has just met my heart and I've given everything to him and been filled with his spirit and I have to make this right. And she was thunderstruck.

And she said, she hollered for her husband and she said, come in, come in. And her husband came running to the door and she said, honey, this man is one of the men that robbed our house and he's come back to make it right. And he grabbed him and shook his hand like a long lost brother.

And these weren't even Christians, he found out. They're just poor sinners. And they were so kind, they went in and sat down and they said, tell us all about it.

And he told them the whole story. And they were nodding their heads and saying, yeah, that's right. Yeah, that's right.

Hey, we didn't remember all that stuff was gone. He had the list. Oh yeah, I said, we remember about the TV.

Yeah, we remember. They cleaned the place out pretty good. And she said, wait, wait a minute, let me go make, do you like coffee? Sure.

So she, she made some coffee and got some cake out. I mean, these people never saw anything like this in their life. All they did was listen to the old dull stuff on TV.

Didn't know anything really exciting. I mean, this is real life. Real criminals sitting there drinking coffee and eating cake.

Fantastic. Teenagers came home and said, honey, come here and meet Mr., almost told you his name. He's the man that robbed our house.

It's hilarious. So after a while they said, well, no, what is this thing that happened to you? No, he was just hoping they'd ask. Of course he had those two little questions on his coat because he had been trained in evangelism explosion by them.

And so he went through the whole plan of salvation, got to preach the gospel to these people. They sat there with tears in their eyes. They didn't receive Christ that night, but they were deeply moved.

And he said, now, will you help me figure up what I owe you? Because I want to pay you for this. Oh, no. I said, oh, that's been, that was 10 years ago.

We forgot all about that stuff. This is wonderful. No, no, no.

We never heard anything like this. Oh, no. He said, no, you don't.

He said, you help me with this because if you don't, I'm just going to have to do it myself, but I'm going to pay you. I'm not going to let the devil trick me on this. And so they sat down with him, tried to help him figure out best he could.

And he wrote a check and paid them. You know, I really think we'll see those people in heaven because I don't see how they could get away from a thing like that. I mean, they never forget that.

I wouldn't be surprised if they kissed the check and framed it instead of putting it in the bank. Restitution. Restitution.

And do you know what? It doesn't end with the revival. It goes on and on because we don't live perfect lives after the revival, do we? We don't live perfect lives. And we still, I hope we don't still go around robbing houses.

But we still have need to make restitution, don't we? I have never pastored a church in which I didn't find it necessary every so often to go and make restitution with someone in my church as a pastor and say, brother, sister, I have sinned against you. I'm sorry. Do you know, I find there are even times in a board meeting.

I know you won't believe this because I'm so sweet, but there are even times in a board meeting when once in a while I get a little ruffled. You know, spiritual leaders don't ever pout. They just are spiritually concerned, you know.

But, you know, it's wonderful to live in a place where you can, where you know how good it feels to make things right. And maybe you flare up a little bit in the board meeting and you say something pretty strong. And all those men sit there and get real quiet.

Nobody says anything because it was their pastor. And then after a minute the Holy Spirit says, uh-uh, no, no you don't. And then you reach over and nudge the chairman of the board and say, wait a minute, wait a minute, David, I got to say something.

You say, gentlemen, I'm sorry. That was wrong. My spirit was wrong.

My attitude was wrong. Will you gentlemen please forgive me? Yeah, it goes on. It goes on.

And your wife, of course, you ask your wife all the time, don't you? I said, don't you? You don't. And you're in trouble. Restitution.

Well, the next thing is, it will mean prayers and commitment. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, but he prayed earnestly. He prayed earnestly.

Do you know, I have never come to the place in my life yet where I have had the nerve to do a thing like he did. Can you imagine going up to the king of the land and saying to him right to his face, I have been in prayer for months now, and I want to tell you something. It is not going to rain in this country from now on unless I say so.

I tell you what, you better be prayed up when you say that. You better not say little prayers. You better not be playing games about your prayer life.

But he knew what he was talking about because it didn't rain for three years and six months. And then God said, now it's time for you to go show yourself to Ahab. And of course, Ahab had been searching for him, not only all over his own country, but he had sent ambassadors to other countries.

And he had had the governments in those other countries swear oaths and sign them and threaten them with war if they cheated to see if Elijah was there. And he was after Elijah. Well, I think he would be after me too if I went to Mulroney.

And I said, Mr. Mulroney, this country is a sinful mess. And I've been praying, and God has told me that it's not going to rain anymore in this country at all unless I say so. Now, he'd just laugh at first and say, get this lunatic out of here.

But if it didn't rain anywhere in Canada for a year, they'd be looking for me. And if it didn't rain for two years, they'd have the United States looking for me and the FBI also. And by the time they came to the end of the third year, even the secret police in Russia would be looking for me.

See, we don't really understand prayer, do we? And then he went to Ahab, and he said, now, now we're going to find out who's God, and then the rain's going to come. And so after the fire had fallen and the people had repented, he went up on the mountain. And you know the story, how he prayed, and he said to his servant, go and look and see if you see anything.

He went and looked back, said, I don't see a thing. So they prayed again. And he said, go look again.

Still didn't see anything, so they prayed again. And then that kept up. And you know how he went seven times.

And he did what is old-fashioned and what you never hear now. He prayed through. He prayed through.

You say, what do you mean by praying through? I mean he prayed until he got an answer and knew he had gotten an answer. I mean, he didn't just pray until he got tired. Or he didn't pray until he got ashamed.

Or he didn't pray until people thought he was being fanatical. Or he didn't pray until he decided that maybe that wasn't a theological thing to do. He prayed until he got an answer.

He prayed through until he knew he had an answer. And the servant came back after the seventh time. I don't know how many times he'd have if that cloud hadn't appeared.

Maybe he'd still be praying. I don't know. He came back and he said, there's a little cloud the size of a man's hand.

And he said, that's it. It's coming. It's coming.

And he said to the king, gird up your loins and ride. He said, you better hurry because there's a rain coming. And then he lied to gird up his loins and he tied his cloak around him and he outran the cherry horses.

And the rain came. See, what revival and a spiritual awakening will do, it will turn God's people back to real praying. Real praying.

Where they mean to get answers. Where they believe God is up there. Where they believe he's alive.

Where they believe that he's a God that answers prayer. Where they believe that he really wants to do what we want him to do. And they keep praying until they get an answer.

And then the fire falls and then the rain comes. I don't know if you have read the book, This Present Darkness. How many of you have read This Present Darkness? I'd just like to see your hand.

Well, it's fiction. I don't read much fiction, but I tell you what, I read it and I don't necessarily agree with everything in it. But if what's going on in the world is anywhere near like that book pictures it, and maybe it is, then the balance of power between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil will be tipped by the people that pray.

You say, do you really believe that our prayers make a difference in the battle that's going on between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan? Yes, I do believe it, because you remember when Daniel prayed for 21 days? And at the end of the 21 days, there was an angel that appeared and he said, O Daniel, greatly beloved. He said, I want to tell you the very first thing, that the first day that you began to pray, that your prayer was heard. It wasn't that God didn't hear your prayer.

He said, the very first day that you began to pray, God heard your prayer. And he said, that very day I was sent to answer your prayer. You say, well, my goodness, is it that far to heaven? 21 days? No, I believe an angel could get from heaven to me in no time at all.

I mean, I don't understand all that, but I don't believe time has anything to do with it. But you know what he said? He said, the Prince of Persia, he was talking about a great angelic prince in the kingdom of darkness under Satan that ruled over the vast kingdom of Persia, that whatever that great dark prince was under Satan and his kingdom that ruled over the whole kingdom of Persia, which was a great dictatorship, a vast world empire, he said, that prince withstood me for 21 days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes from heaven, came and helped me.

I mean, we're talking about a hand-to-hand battle between angels that lasted for 21 days. An angel of the kingdom of darkness and an angel of the kingdom of light and the one from the kingdom of heaven had the answer to Daniel's prayer in his hand. And Satan didn't want it to get through.

And finally, Daniel tipped the scale because he prayed through. I don't know how many days he would have prayed. He had already prayed 21 days.

He was not about to stop. He meant business. He believed that God answers prayer and he believed that if you kept praying that you could get your heart right and you could get the ear of God and you could get in the place where you could believe God and that somehow God would answer you.

And he was determined to get an answer and he wasn't going to stop until he got an answer. And he kept praying and his prayers tipped the scale. And God sent another great, one of the greatest angels of all the universe from heaven to help the one that came.

And the answer came through. And that's the kind of praying that takes place in revival and spiritual awakening. Well, I have to close.

My last two points I'll just give you quickly. It will mean miracles. It will mean miracles.

Then the fire of the Lord fell and it burned up the sacrifice and burned up the wood and burned up the stones and burned up the water and the dust and everything in the place. Miracles, miracles. Somebody asked me today, they said, how come here in this conference, we haven't heard anybody say anything about in revival, about people getting healed.

How come somebody didn't preach on healing or didn't preach on something like that? Well, I'll tell you what. When revival comes, miracles happen easily. Really, they do.

They always have. I mean, I don't care. You study the history of any revival.

I don't care what revival it was. You go back and read the history. And when there are revivals, there are miracles.

I don't just mean miracles of healing, but all kinds of miracles. Because God is there in such power and people's lives are right and they're cleansed and washed in the blood and their wills are surrendered and the Holy Spirit is moving and blowing across the people with tremendous force and there are no hindrances in the way. And there are all kinds of miracles that happen.

I've seen it happen. I could just, you know, I could just stand here and tell you one after the other. When the revival happened in Akron, before it even broke out, the week when God was bringing us right up to the climax, where it was going to break out on Sunday morning without a crusader, an evangelist, or anything, when God was just going to walk into our church and we were going to experience revival for three weeks without anyone leaving it but God.

And when God was bringing us up to that, I sat in my office on a Wednesday afternoon and somebody knocked on the door. My secretary had gone home and I said, come in. And the lady walked in and sat down and burst into tears.

And she said at five o'clock this morning, down in, I forget, it was Virginia or North Carolina. And she said, God woke me up at five o'clock and said, get your son to drive the car. He was 16 and start for Akron, Ohio and go see Pastor Sibley and get right with God.

And they had been driving all day long and she was ready to get right with God, ready to be saved. And to have her home restored, she had run away from her husband. I saw a man under such conviction for sin that his wife had to bring him over to the office.

And he came walking into my office, bent over double. I wondered why he couldn't drive himself over. And she said, he can't drive over because his stomach hurts so bad that he's bent over double and he can't straighten up.

And I said, we better take him to the doctor. She said, no, I don't think he needs the doctor. He wants to see you.

And he came in, bent over double with conviction for sin. I'm talking about miracles. I saw a man that had arthritis in every joint in his body stand up in the meeting.

He had met God the first Sunday of the revival and the next Sunday he stood up in a communion service. And God's power went down through him from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet and healed every joint in his body. God called him to preach.

He sold his home and went back to Bible college and he's a minister of the gospel today and has been in good health ever since. I mean, we, we, we wrestle and struggle around about miracles. And we say, why don't we see miracles today? We saw them in the New Testament.

Why don't we see miracles today? We don't see miracles because there's so many hindrances to the working of God. But when revival comes and when the spiritual awakening comes, you'll see plenty of miracles. You'll see all kinds of miracles.

It will mean conversion. It will mean church growth. It will mean foreign missions.

And I'm going to close with this. I want to give you the seven step order of what I believe is coming. I haven't been saying this very long, friends, and I didn't say it quickly.

God is pushing me to this. So I'm going out on a limb. Here they are.

Number one, church revival. We've already had some taste of it, but we haven't seen anything yet. I mean, sweeping church revival is coming.

Number two, spiritual awakening. This time, this time it's going to spill over into the world and we're going to see a spiritual awakening in the world. God's been getting us ready since the seventies.

Now we're going to see a spiritual awakening in the world. Number three, we're going to see thousands upon thousands upon thousands of sinners converted. They're going to pack our churches.

We better get ready. We better get ready. Number four, when that happens, we're going to see probably what is the last great missionary thrust before Jesus comes.

Because when thousands, when the church is revived and thousands are converted, then the young people and the prayer and the money is there and every technical aid is there today like it's never been in all history of mankind. And we're going to see a missionary thrust. It's going to make everything we've ever done in missions look absolutely like nothing.

It's coming. And when that happens, what Jesus said is going to happen. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached as a witness among all nations.

And then shall the end come. You want to bring Jesus back? You say, well, if you do, you're busy with a missionary task. Yes, do that.

And our church is totally into missions from our church in Canada. Our church has more people from our church on the foreign mission field than any other Alliance church in Canada. And we give the missions.

I won't tell you how much it's going to scare you. But that isn't the final answer, because what we're doing is a drop in the bucket. And then I go over there and I see what's happening.

How many people are being saved by the thousands? There's no doubt about it, but it's still a drop in the bucket. And even in this generation, we're not going to get to that last tribe that way. We must have a revival and a spiritual awakening where there are literally hundreds of thousands of people saved and called by God as always happens in revival.

Always. I was sitting on an ordaining council one day and we were going to examine during that day, 13 young men for the ministry. And we'd been going all morning and we had gone through five young men.

We'd given two hours each of oral examination along with everything else. And we had finished with five young men and we went out to lunch. And I said to the fellows on the ordaining council, did you notice anything interesting this morning about those five young men? And they said, no, what was it? And I said four out of five met God in the 71 revival.

That's what always happens. And so when this great revival comes and this great spiritual awakening comes and there are literally millions of people saved, there are going to be hundreds of thousands of young people that God's going to put his hand on in the midst of a burning hot church. And they're going to answer the call of God and the people of God are going to be ready to put out their money and their prayers behind them.

And we're going to have every technical aid we need. And we're going to thrust them out to the ends of the earth in a missionary task like you have never seen. And suddenly one day, the Lord will look down from heaven and say, that's it.

That was the last tribe right there. And then Jesus will come. Isn't that what he said? I said, isn't that what he said? I don't know.

I believe what he said. I think that's the order. And then you say, wait a minute, you got two more.

Yes. Then the millennium. I mean, you believe that Jesus is going to reign on the earth, don't you? Oh, well, I do anyway.

You say, why do you believe that? Because the Bible says it. And so then there'll be the millennium with Christ sitting on the throne and the church reigning with him on the earth. And then we'll finally see the greatest revival, the greatest in gathering of human souls that the world has seen in all of its history put together.

Because the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. And the word of God says that then when Christ returns, the residue of the Gentiles will seek him. I think that's the program.

Now let me ask you, where are you? Where are you in what has been said tonight? We're talking about what this will mean to the church, this spiritual awakening. It will mean decisions. It will mean conflict.

It will mean a new life of prayer. It will mean so many things. Where are you in that tonight? Are there decisions that God is calling you to make? Are there commitments? Is there surrender? Is there repentance? Is there restitution that God is calling you to make? Are there altars that need to be rebuilt in your life? The fire of the Lord is about to fall.

Are you ready? Let's bow in prayer. Our heads bowed and our eyes closed. Let's just be looking to God quietly in prayer, no one looking around.

Know that you are here with us tonight. We can sense your presence all around us. We know that you are calling us to very deep commitment.

We thank you for those who are moving to a place of prayer because they are determined to do business with you tonight. Lord, we pray that many who are even sitting in their seats now and inside in their hearts are longing for that release and cleansing and victory. Release them, Lord, in Jesus' name from fear and from Satan's whisperings.

Give them the courage to meet you now. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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