

Definitions of Revival

by Ron Noble

Revival is a work of God that changes our lives and leads us to a deeper relationship with Him.

Duration: 1:19:54

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Colossians 4:17, 1 Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:22

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal experience of being called by God at a young age. He recounts how he felt a strong burden to attend a camp and followed that calling, which transformed his life. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not loving the world and its desires, as it can hinder our relationship with God. He also highlights the significance of each individual's ministry within the church, stating that God has given every believer a specific role to fulfill. The speaker encourages listeners to find and fulfill their God-given purpose, which brings fulfillment and prevents discouragement.

Transcript

You know, I think one of the things that changes my view of a lot of things is that I live in a rural community. A small rural community. How many of you have moved somewhere in your lifetime? Where you moved? I haven't.

For the 54 years, the apple fell under the tree and it's still there. And it's growing some new sprouts. But you know, my perspective today comes from the perspective of somebody who's lived in a community for all your life.

And so your life is like an open book. And it's under the scrutiny of people who've known you from the time you were a baby. And they knew your dad and your granddad.

And that really changes your perspective on your life and on your faith, doesn't it? You're an open book. And so if I was to go somewhere and come back and claim to my community that God had touched me in revival, it would be the people in my community who would say whether or not he had. And we want to take that perspective today as to what do other people see? And how do they see revival that has changed your life? Both the believing and the unbelieving community has something to say.

In other words, if we claim to have had some experience with God, there better be some evidence to back it up. Didn't Jesus say, bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance? Repentance is great. But he said, I

want to see what happens afterwards.

I want to see what it leads to, what it develops. And so the way we do our business and the way our relationships work out, our marriage and that of the ones with our family and our parents at varying stages of their life, your relationship with your local church, when it's what it should be and when it's what it shouldn't, all those things tie into how God has changed and impacted our life. Our world view is something that's going to change, like our view of money, our view of time, our view of people, our view of ourselves, our self-esteem, our priorities.

And all those things will be affected. And the communities that we live in will be affected. I want to take about five scriptures here to start, to give you what I would see as definitions of revival.

A lot of times we narrow our vision of what revival is. We have our preconceived ideas. And I think it's a number of things that come together.

Psalm 119 verse 23, we read, Revive me according to thy word. So it seems that revival is going to be something that is related and linked very closely to God's word. Exaltation of God's word, a high view of scripture.

And I've seen revival in both movements. It can't be really justified by scripture. But when I assess revival, I know that the scripture will tell us what the definition of it is.

Second one is in Psalm 71. Psalm 119 verse 23. Sorry, I'll find that for you after.

Get the reference later. Psalm 71 20. Psalm 71 20.

Thou who has shown me many troubles and distresses will revive me again. So from this one I realize that although the psalmist admits to having had a relationship with God and intimacy with Him and being taught by Him and praising Him, nonetheless there's been troubles in his life. And now he says, you who have shown me troubles will revive me.

And I think revival is something that after we've had troubles in our lives, after we've been old enough to experience difficulty, God does a work of revival in us. That's why I think revival amongst the youth often is something that takes a few years to develop. It took me a few years to find out I wasn't as smart as I thought I was.

It took me a few years to be able to do enough things to fail at. To say, boy, I've had all these troubles and stresses. God will eventually revive me.

And if you really look at life, you'll see that the sanctifying work goes on in each of our lives through trouble, through stress. Through times when we can't do it on our own. When we run out of gas and we call out to God.

Okay, one out of two is pretty good. Psalm 80 verses 18 and 19. Revive us and we will call upon thy name, O Lord.

Restore us. Cause thy face to shine upon us and we will be saved. There seems to be a call to return to prayer.

And when we do, the manifest presence of God and his face shines upon us. And we can see God at work in the midst. The call to restore seems to indicate that we are run down or that we are off track.

And we need to get back for a moment. So there's a restoration involved in that. Psalm 85 verse 6. Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? Here is a picture of returning to the joy and experience of the Christian life.

When my son was baptized, and he said, Dad, would you bring the talents that we often do in our church? It was a wonderful privilege. But at the end of that address, I said, Joel, my advice to you is serve God with your life and have fun. And that kid had already been on his motorcycle with Dad through the Rocky Mountains.

And I believe that when we get into a state where God has done a revival and worked out, you have joy in your life. In fact, when I wasn't in that state, that's what was missing was joy. And so when we claim that God has done work in our lives, we really can't do it with a long face.

And joy is something that isn't always fun. You can have joy in sorrow. You can have joy in mourning.

You can have joy in bereavement. You can have joy in suffering. But it's that deep-seated presence of God.

There's a pattern in Scripture, and I first found it in the book of Judges when I was teaching at our Sunday school. And there's six S words because of where I went to Bible college and who taught me. I always use this alliteration process.

Sin. And when we fall into sin, or when the people are in sin because they haven't found Christ and been saved, they soon find out it's not just something you do on a Friday night. But it becomes a servitude.

It becomes an addiction. It becomes a habit. It becomes entrenched.

So we get people. We were all there in sin. We've served our sin.

And we get tired of that. Eventually we call out in supplication to God. And we say, God, I've got to get out of this.

I've got to, in my case, I've got to get off of this treadmill. I'm not getting anywhere. And God brings us salvation, whether it be saving grace or whether it be salvation from ourselves at some later point in our Christian life.

Sin brings the servitude of that sin. Eventually we call out to God in supplication. We say, God save us.

And He brings salvation. But after that, we know that there's always slippage. So there's always a need to be bringing back correction.

And if we don't correct the slippage, we go into a spiral. And we're in doubt. So in times like this, it's good for us just to take spiritual inventory.

And messages like what we've been hearing are exactly meant for that. Where am I? Am I hearing from God? Is there something interfering with that? So my experience was that in 1971, it wasn't a high-profile preacher that came out to my community. It was a barber from Regina who worked all week and on

weekends would go out and share his testimony with people.

And it was his message that changed my life. And the thing that I can remember him... Actually, that's his TRF in its original days was developed because lay people had no umbrella organizations to go under and publish their schedules and their itineraries and handle their finances. And so this was put together to handle for the lay teams, which is what Sandy and I are.

And we're now 36, 38 years later. So it was a layman's organization in its original days. And I know when I came back to the board, I said to the board, we've got to get that back to its focus.

We're not about high-profile Dr. So-and-so who has a national television program. We're little potatoes. But we have a testimony.

And I used to underrate the testimony. I would say, well, I want to hear him preaching the Word. And that's good.

And I want to see the testimony in line with the Word. But I noticed that in Revelation chapter 12, verse 11, that Jesus said, when they overcame him because of John, they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and the Word and the testimony. I said, he's putting that right up there on par with the blood of the Lamb.

And so the testimony has a powerful place. And you can preach whatever you want to people, but if it isn't your testimony, you don't have the power. You can give them all the theory, but if it's your experience, then that backs up the theory.

And so that's who came to my place. And the thing that really got hold of my life, the message that transformed my life, was that the first John chapter 2, verse 15. And I can remember very clearly God showed me this.

He says, do not love the world, the things of the world, because all it's in is the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the boastful pride of life. He says, if the love of the world is in our lives, the love of God isn't. Now that doesn't mean it will mean a lot to you, but the Lord took that verse and just burned it into my soul, and he brought conviction to me, because at 16 years old I was already in love with the car.

That's most of us young guys were. Anything with four wheels. I've got grandchildren that are two years old that love the car.

The older we get, the deeper that love gets and the more expensive it gets. You can tell a man from the boys by the price of his toys. God started on my life with that little thing, but it was a problem for me.

And the issue, I didn't know anything about the second trip to the cross or anything. I know that when God began to do work in my life, he began to make a separation there which eliminated the love of God from my life. Material things.

The social, the cultural, the political ambition and aspirations that I had for myself. And just quietly and without fanfare, I relinquished those things to the Lord. And I placed myself in a position to love God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength.

And seeing what these things are that are getting between us, I'll give up. And let him add to us, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and let God add to us the things that men flamber after and

spend their whole life in pursuit of. That's how Sandy and I started our marriage.

We're going to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And whatever we do with our life will be because God adds those things to us. I didn't know anything about the second trip to the cross.

It wasn't the teaching that we had that night. The issue before me that night was whether I knew it or not, was the one Jesus talked about in Matthew chapter 16, verses 24 and 26. When he said, if any man is going to come after me, follow me.

Let him deny himself. And daily, take up his own cross. Deny himself.

For whosoever wishes to save his life and keep control of it will lose it, but whosoever it is that loses his life for my sake and for the gospel's will find it. And whether I knew the theology or not, that man knew the voice of God. And so I voluntarily surrendered the control of my life that night.

And it wasn't any more going to be done by me or by the world around me. He said, God is yours. Just a simple thing.

But oh, how God has blessed us from having had the teaching of that layman that night in my little church. 2 Corinthians 5, verses 14 and 15 has become important to me. It says, the love of Christ controls us, not the love of the world or self-love, I've added.

I haven't concluded this, that one died for all and therefore all died. And he died for all, and he who lives should no longer live for himself, but for him. And God changes things to where our life isn't about us.

I live it for us. But it's for him and for others. We no longer live for ourself.

And that makes you a better child, makes you a better husband, wife, parent, friend, parent. Because we're no longer living for ourself, but for other people. Just one of the things that as life went on, I found out what God had been doing.

Galatians 6, verse 14 says, May it never be that I should boast except in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. There was a severance made in my life, and I didn't even know it. I just found all of a sudden I wasn't driven by these things that others were.

I've been to the cross. And if I take scripture by faith, he says, there's something that takes place in our lives when we do that, and there's a severance, and we're crucified to that world, and it to us, and it doesn't have the same power over us or attracting us. Man, if we can get this as teenagers, what a blessing.

When you know what's just ahead of you in life in your teenage years in college, and having to choose a spouse, and all those important decisions. I didn't know all those teachings, but I know that that's the work that God was doing. If you want to give up the control of your life, 1 John 2.15 says, Don't love the world, but love Christ God in you.

And the next verse says, Because all that's in it is the boastful pride of life. The biggest thing in life is the control. I have met people who haven't done well in their lives.

They know it, the whole world knows it. They've lost everything. They've been in big business, higher orders, lost it all.

Lost their marriage, lost their integrity, lost their reputation. I've met them in jail. They have one thing left.

It's my life. And we all struggle. That's the deepest thing for us to give up.

It's my life. And I'm going to run it as I see fit. And Sammy's brother is a drug addict and has been that way for years and years and years.

And his life has been an absolute disaster. One of his wives committed suicide. And he won't give his life to Christ.

He says, It's my life. I'm going to run it as I see fit. And when God gets to us in that boastful pride of the fact that this is my life, it's broken.

Boy, are we ever blessed. That's why in Galatians 3.21 it says, I've been crucified with Christ. No longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.

I'm a new creature. I've seen it in people's faces. In the life which I now live, in this life in the flesh, I live by faith.

And the Son of God who helped me, gave himself for me. And this abundant life that comes after death is what we're really all about. I hear people talking about death to self and death to self and death to self.

You know, when we talk to ministry teams and they're impressed with that. They say, You've got to impress the life after death. Who wants to just simply die? I shot my dog because we got too badly in the porcupine quilt.

But that dog has no further impact on my life. I know where I buried him. But wouldn't it be nice if we had another life after that in which you could really bring blessing to people? So we don't just talk death.

We talk death as a means to get to the new life. I want to know my mom is living on the other side of glory. When the cross began to work in your life, I found the work of the Holy Spirit in my life that I never knew.

Philippians 3.10 tells us that to identify him with his suffering and his death, is to identify with him in resurrection power. Just what I said. When we understand the crucified life, we understand it's just simply a means to get to the abundant life, which Jesus said, I will give you, and out of your innermost beings will flow rivers of living water.

And he spoke of the Spirit, because we hadn't yet received what we're about to. And he said, When the Spirit of God lives where you used to live, and when he controls what you used to control, out of you will just gush living water. Abundant life.

My wife was at a bike rally this summer. A lady came up to her and she said, You must be a very blessed woman. How did she know? I don't know.

I just watched her. And Sandy could go around and say, I'm a blessed woman, I'm a blessed woman. But when somebody else comes to you and says, I see it, I don't know what it is, it's all the Holy Spirit in there.

My wife was filled with the Spirit. And that is the real beautiful joy. John the Big Chapter 10 tells us that that resurrection power is the Spirit of God.

The Spirit that raised Christ from the dead, it says in John the Big Chapter. And so from that time on I noticed an increased work of the Spirit, who would help me live the commandments, the commitments that I made. And I'm thankful that through high school years, I was able to have the Holy Spirit living in Canada, just out there somewhere.

And I found the more I let Him make decisions, the better decisions we made. And it was in a time when economic growth and opportunity were unparalleled. And when God put in my heart to go to Bible school, not university, and study in ministry, not in business.

He still has it all. We've been doing some things. And because my interest was more in ministering to people than serving the Lord, at 17 years old, for the first time, God spoke to me.

And I don't mean to sound sensational, but I remember on a Sunday after church, my parents were gone and I was home. I got this incredible burden to go to a camp. And I was asking the Lord, what's going on? Why am I doing this? And it wouldn't leave.

It wouldn't leave. So I packed all my stuff on the motorcycle, and I wrote a note on the table for my parents that said, I've gone up to Glad Tidings Bible Camp. If they need counselors, I'm prepared to stay.

They might be gone in a week. If they don't, I'll be home by midnight. I rode my bike in there and I parked.

It was like the rapture had taken place. Nobody around. And then the door opened and a guy came out of the cabin.

And he said, there, you've come here to counsel. I said, well, I have my stuff. Praise God.

He said, we've been all afternoon in that cabin praying to God to send us another male counselor. One of ours got sick. And you don't begin to see that when we walk with spirit, we get into this whole process of His.

And I hadn't experienced that before. No, there wasn't a lot of a voice. But there was this burden.

And you know what it's about when God is starting to lead you to do something. People are praying and God is using you in that process. I never forgot that.

And so, you know, in much the same way, there was a camp where I met my wife, and God just blessed me one thing after the other as we had walked with Him. We were married in 1977. Raised three kids.

And that has been the ministry. Don't ever underestimate that, moms and dads. I see people wanting to run all over and have a ministry when they've got three or four or five of them right at home.

That kept us busy for a lot of years. But as we were running our business, there was times when I would suddenly let the world influence me. And God would have to intervene to take back my commitment to Him.

He never said, leave your farming, leave your business. He always said, do your farming and do your business my way. And all too often, I began to do it my way.

And slip back into that thing, it's my life. And I'm so thankful that God would never let it work for us. When I began to run my business that way, it began to fail.

I began to fail. Health began to fail. Energies were gone.

And so we found ourselves midlife crisis. Heavily in debt. Hadn't done as much as I thought I could do in flesh.

And God was beginning to work to break me and put me into a place where He needed me to be. I think there's three things that God does when we have ambitions for ourselves that aren't in His will. Number one, sometimes God just won't let us succeed.

No matter what we do, we just cannot get what it is we think we want. Number two, sometimes He lets us succeed and we get so much of it that we get sick of what it was we wanted. We got it, but I don't want it now.

And number three, sometimes we get what we want, but we're just completely dissatisfied by it. And I've experienced some of this when I did business my way. Either I couldn't get it, or I got so much of it that it made me sick and tired, or I got it, but it didn't bring me the fulfillment I thought was in it.

So we've tried and failed, and feeling like a failure, God brought us to the end of ourselves and broken us. And I can remember in just an ordinary church service, my pastor didn't know what was happening. I don't think he preached at this thought or anything, but at the end of the service, we stood there and wept, the two of us, and just said, Lord, we haven't done very good.

There's not much of us here to be proud of. And then for the second go-around, we happened to try on our own. We came to the end of ourselves.

We just said, Lord, we're empty. I'm a Christian. Your Spirit dwells within me.

And I experience emptiness. And I can't get, again, sentimental or whatever. I didn't understand the feeling of the Spirit.

When I've spoken in churches, they've had lots of different opinions on the subject. I just say this one thing. I know He can't fill me when I'm filled with myself.

And all I know is that when I get out of the way, He can fill me. And that's where we really started to see change in our Christian life. He wasn't only resident in my life anymore, but president.

And God has never let us succeed or allowed us to experience the emptiness of self-effort or failure. And if you as a Christian haven't had that chance to fail, you've got an inferior Christian experience as far as I'm concerned. Because those who have are way better Christians.

More depth. God's people were in Egypt and the world. He said, I want to take them out.

And He took them to a place of the wilderness. And they had to spend a few years in that wilderness before they got into the promised land. And I think in the Christian life, God's taken us out of the world.

We spend a few years in that wilderness. We make our mistakes. We complain about the leadership in our life.

We wrestle with God over stuff. When we finally get so sick and tired of that, we move on into the Spirit-filled life, the promised life that God has promised for us. It comes with some suffering.

It comes with some loss, some failure. I've met pastors who said when they heard this message, they said, this is what's missing. We've jumped over the cross to get to Pentecost.

We should get people saved and get them filled with the Spirit. But we've never taught them to go to the cross and deny self and die. You empty yourself of self when you're filled with the Spirit.

What a relief it is when finally we find out Philippians 2, verse 13, and it's God who's at work in us, both to will and to do His good pleasure. One night over here at the Rejoining Correctional Center, we were having a service. And some guy stood up and told me he was going to take over the service and start preaching from this passage.

And he says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Finally, when I got the hell up, got the service back, I said, read the rest of it. Because it's God who works in you to do His good pleasure.

What a blessing when we come to say it's not me doing things, it's me letting God work in me. So much of our ambition is to try and please God. We can rest from Him, rest in His work.

Only in the section on brokenness, what happened in our own lives, was this verse from Job 39, verses 9 to 12. Maybe you've suffered, maybe you've had some stuff go on in your life that you're not very impressed with. God may have had a hand in letting that happen in your life.

In Job 39, 9 to 12, after his friends came to tell Job why they thought that he was being persecuted because he had sinned, because he hadn't been what God's audience should be, God speaks. And this is worth noting. God speaks.

Whenever God speaks in the Bible, I want to know what He says. God says, Donald Job, and He says, Will the unbroken ass consent to serve you? Can you bind a wild ox in a furrow with a rope? Will He herald the valleys for you? Will you trust Him because His strength is great, and leave your labor to Him? Will you have faith in Him that He will return the grain and gather your harvest? Do what He said. I'm not going to send out some animal into the workforce in my harvest without knowing that that's a broke horse, and I can trust Him.

Okay, in our own life, after some of these experiences with the Holy Spirit having a place in my life, one of the things about giving up the right of self-determination is the inability to say no to God. That's scary, eh? This yes, Lord, every time God says something, yes, Lord. You and I always like to have a decision.

It's either going to be yes or no. Somebody asked me to do something. Bird asked us to go up to northern Manitoba for ten days, one of the busiest times of my life.

Ministry. I have to say yes or no to Bird again. But if the Lord says go, I can't say no.

So one of the rights of giving up self-determination is the inability then to say no to God. Ken McClay, Isaiah 45 and 9, says, Ken McClay said to the potter, What are you doing? No, God is molding us, and we just have to say yes, Lord. Hebrews 4.12 and 13 says the Word of God.

And we talked about the place of the Word of God right at the start in the Bible. Couldn't find the verse for you, but that's the gist of it. The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword.

Piercing as far as the division of what is of the soul and what is of the spirit. Isn't that interesting? So much stuff today is soulish stuff. Write down what's involved in spirit and walk in spirit.

No matter how I feel, how I remember things, all that stuff that's involved with our soul, our memory, our thoughts, our feelings, our emotions, I'm stuck in that. The Word of God will tell us what's soulish. And then to get on a higher level, what's of the spirit.

It pierces as far as the joints in the marrow and is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there's no creature hidden from His sight. All things are open and laid bare before the eyes of Him.

That's what we have to do. And as the Spirit of God works in our lives, the first thing Jesus taught about the work of the Holy Spirit when He started to teach in John 14, that He was going to follow Him, He said, He will glorify Me. He will convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment.

And you know, God started with me and was convicting me of sin. I said, I thought you were a Christian. I was.

And as God began to show us areas, show me things that I needed to deal with, much like what we did last night in the service, the Spirit of God speaks to you and shows you. And when we respond, that conviction turns to comfort. He's the comforter.

And I know we go around trying to comfort people sometimes when the spirit of God is trying to convict them. But over the joy of knowing His conviction and responding to Him, we talked about this the other night in the ice cream shop, didn't we? How to tell the difference between condemnation of the devil and conviction of the Holy Spirit. If you're under condemnation, you feel guilty, you feel vile, you feel dirty, you feel depressed.

You have no idea how to deal with it. It's just there to keep you down. But when the Holy Spirit brings conviction, then they're twins.

They've got to check to see which one is the good one. It's pointing to a specific thing, the same deal with this. And you say, yes, Lord, the man who prayed for me last night went to do the very things that God convicted him of last night.

And then he finds total freedom. Because God said, do this, and you'll feel no more conviction with respect to that. Always ask yourself, am I being condemned by the devil or convicted by the Holy Spirit? There's a way to tell.

2 Timothy 3.16, when I went to Bible school, I left a crest on their jackets. It said, all scripture, no, I'm going to jump out. All scripture is profitable for four things.

Teaching, reproof, correction, instruction, righteousness. That a man may be adequate, the men of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3.16-17 Notice the progression of Paul's thoughts.

He starts with reproof. No biblical teaching will show us areas in which we need reproof. Last night, as the Spirit of God searches the heart because of biblical teaching, there's things that surface.

And we feel as twins of reproof in our life. God has spoken to us in His Word. Scripture is profitable for teaching.

It exposes areas in which we need reproof. Only when we make correction, thirdly, can we be useful in the Master's hands and go on to be trained in righteousness and put to use. The crest on their jackets.

2 Timothy 2.15 Study to show yourself approved unto God. A workman doesn't need to be ashamed to break the hand of the Lord of truth. We were assured in Bible school that if we would understand Scripture and properly use Scripture, we'd have powerful ministry.

But 25 years later, I read seven verses further and it says, If a man will sanctify, cleanse himself of these things, he will be a vessel fit for honor, sanctified and useful to the Master for every good work. And I've seen far too many servants of the Lord come through Bible school with all that academic learning and knowledge. Like I have.

Preaching the Word and yet not seeing the results of it. Until all of a sudden, after some of the stuff we had to deal with, I said, deal with your own life and then watch me use you in your use of the Word. It's an ultimate service of the Lord, begging for God to use them effectively in the service for a vessel and with God on this matter.

But He's already pointed out from His Word and brought the proof into our lives and correction can take 15 minutes or 15 years. Isn't that right? God speaks to me. You need to fix it there last night and pray with some people and then we'll do what He's asked you.

And we can wrestle with it and come back here 15 years later and you still got to respond to that invitation. 15 minutes or 15 years. The choice is up to us.

And my life as a searchlight went on I saw lots of things that were unlike the character of God and I still do as He shines His light. Good definition of sin always unlike the character of God. Or as John Piper defines sin in his book, Future Grace, sin is what you do when you're not fully satisfied in God.

Sin is what you do when you're not fully satisfied in God. That's an interesting definition. When you seek God and repent of whatever it is He shows us and seek cleansing and prove our repentance by our deeds.

We do different things after that. Acts 26 20 Repentance shown by the deeds. Oh, I can tell you at times that God has done things and I've gotten to go to a neighbor, go to a brother, a sister, a mother, a dad, a son, a daughter, a wife, seek forgiveness for things that I've done and started to wreck the relationship.

I can remember before I could teach a science school class one time I had to go phone a brother in Christ in a different community and acknowledge to him that in the week previous I had told him something that wasn't true. Now I'm going to go stand in front of people and teach God's Word to them. I want God's Word to affect people's lives.

First thing God says, phone Dwight. I told my class when I got there, I'm kind of unprepared academically because God is preparing me spiritually. I didn't get enough time to do the lesson that I wanted to do because God had me on the phone with a brother dealing with my sin from this week.

And this isn't so neat how God would send us back after a business deal where I owed a company some money and I've been about it for a lot of years until God does lots of things in my life. It was more than 15 minutes that he was working on me but it didn't take 15 years. I think it was more than 7 years.

So I finally went to a company with an insurance settlement and said, listen, I know I've got more money here and I knew it then but I didn't report it. And I don't know how you want to handle it but here's the deal. Do you know what they did? I totally expected it.

I don't know how I'm ever going to pay this money but God said, you report it. I went to this company and I waited and waited and I got my mail every day to see what was going to come back in the mail. Finally got a letter back from this insurance company.

He said, we don't get letters like yours very often. He said, the adjuster that did your job wasn't Toral. He was our employee.

He didn't do the job that we would have liked to have done. He's no longer with us. We don't have his files.

We have no idea how to remedy this situation. It hasn't broke us yet. Have a good sleep.

You don't know what to say. They don't have to prepare to make restitution. And I thought, why didn't they do that 7 years ago? Because I struggled with God in this thing.

And that's what God was beginning to do in our life. One time as a Christian leader, this was a hard one. A board of elders made a decision that was wrong and I tried my best.

Richard's here today too. He was an elder in our church at the same time. He knows all about this.

Two of us saw that this thing was wrong. Four guys were convinced it was the way to go. And as a board this decision was made and as a part of the board you either got to get off of it or go with it.

You're all voted. Eventually we had to apologize to the congregation as a board of elders. Do you know how hard it is to apologize for a decision that you tried so hard to avoid? Again, as one of those board members, you were there and it's him, not you.

You have to apologize to the church for the decision you made that was wrong. You don't want to try to stop. The Old MacLeod always says you can spend your life chasing sins but they're manufactured in the factory of self-life.

So he says, bomb the factory. And that's the beauty of this teaching of dying self. It really reduces this business of running around trying to find all these things.

He says, bomb the source of them. The last thing I noticed in our testimony before I gave you the six things that I think the church can do and what we can do in times when we don't find revival appropriately, I want to talk about faithfulness to the ministry that God has called you to. I think some of you forget about the admonition of Paul in Colossians 4, 17 where he says, take heed to the ministry to which you were called that you may fulfill it.

Pay attention. He says, take heed to the ministry that God gave to you to which you were called that you may fulfill it. Sometimes we forget that God has called each one of us to a ministry.

And when we faithfully fulfill that, we are fulfilled. You say, well, I'm not a preacher. What do you mean? Me and ministry.

Second Corinthians 4.1 says, since therefore we have this ministry, we don't lose heart. God has given every person who has accepted Christ to the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit gets people in different ways.

He puts us into the body and He says, I want you to do this or that. Sometimes it takes us quite a while to find out what that is. Often our giftedness is pointed out to us by other people.

But you have a ministry. Not just your pastor. And when you do the thing that God asks you to do, what's the result? You are fulfilled.

You don't lose heart. You don't give up hope. You don't get discouraged at the state of what everybody else is doing in the world and the church.

Because you know you're doing what God asks you to do. He's given you something in here that no man can wrestle out of you. Because there's this deep-seated fulfillment in knowing that God gave me a job to do.

And I've done it. What do we reek? Want to be heard and understand before God that day after our life is done? Well done. How good and faithful servant.

Enter into the joy of my rest. Well done. Faithful servant.

I gave you a job. And you did it. The next 30 years for our life was in the local church where we raised our children and adults and grandchildren continued to farm.

I was an elder and a Bible teacher in a church just like you guys. Just normal, small-town, home, church life. And yet God was doing the work progressively of revival as He is in your life.

Four generations of our family in the same church. And we talked about faithfulness as what God has called you to do to stay where He's called you to be. And I noticed that when God gifts people, Paul teaches us in Ephesians 4.11 that God's gracious gifting to His church includes five-fold ministry.

Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. And I don't want to offend any pastors here and I'm glad to have them. But I want you to notice where the pastor's role comes in the gift of the church.

Where is it? Five? Fourth. And if I could speak a word to pastors, and I see the seminaries today and the autocratic people that are coming out taking their CEOs. If you look at Scripture, God says that long before the pastor ever came, there were some apostles who started the church.

And God spoke to the heart of some prophets. And they knew where God, the direction that God was leading them. And there were some people who wanted somebody to Christ or there wouldn't be a church.

And they needed to be shepherded and so he brought pastors in. And he commanded us to disciples so he's got teachers all around him that can teach in various ways. And I think that's really important that we learn that the pastor's ministry is one of the fivefold gifted ministries of the church.

You leave it all to your pastor, he'll be discouraged and the work won't get done. If he's autocratic and a one-man band and he wants to do it all, it isn't going to get done. And I asked Bert one time when I was a kid, why do you think this verse is in the Bible, Bert? He said, because when I pastored, I knew I wasn't all of the above.

Are you sleeping, Bert? I thought that would wake you up. Alright, so as pastors, when you go into a church, realize that you didn't start this church, there were apostles and evangelists there before you. Now it's your job to find out who are those gifted people and work with them and let them implement their giftedness in your church.

I think that's a model we need to revisit in this day and age. Just talking with Howard and Jenny at dinner about our loss of this concept in Timothy, he says, Neglect not the gift that lies in you, which was conferred, I forget how it's put, by the laying on of hands of the presbytery by the elders. I said, how often is it anymore that we as leaders lay hands on people, see what God is doing in their life, help them find their giftedness and plug them into the church and commission them and lay hands on them and don't just send them off to Africa and say, we need to work right here in our church.

And so when we're faithful to do what God has called us to do and find out what that is, partner together in this five-fold group, but you know what usually happens? When things get difficult, somebody moves away from the thing that God has called us to do. We run away. And I guess one thing I noticed is that we couldn't do that.

In the ministry we were called in because there was times when we couldn't have sold the farm to get enough to pay for it. We had to stay. That's why the apple never fell far from the tree.

And then for 12 years, my parents were going through stuff where they needed attention, you know, different levels of care and trying to get nursing homes and my unsaved uncle tells me, he says, you won't find a better ministry than looking after your parents. Funny how the world looks at you. And so there was times we couldn't run.

Every four or five years, it looked like it seemed like we were hunting for a new pastor. And yet all these people had been in this church for 70 years since the church was founded. Faithful to the ministry.

I have a word here from pastors from the book Holiness by Henry Blackaby. You know, when our accomplishment isn't what we think it should be, we always want to go on and try somewhere else and we want to start over and run from our failures or whatever. Henry Blackaby says to pastors, the people in the church are a product of your walk with God.

You ought not to have been in with the people for five years or more and the holiness of God not so absolutely come over the people. Oh Lord, if your people can walk in sin and listen to me preach week after week, then there's something wrong with this preacher. Not with him, but with me.

What is it that's missing in my life? What is it in my life that God is not honoring? Henry Blackaby's words to pastors. But the tendency is to go start over somewhere else. And I think in pastors' lives, just as much as in my life as a layman, God's got a stone on us.

And he's saying, let's fix this. And some of us that can't run because we have roots in the ground have had the blessing of having to stay and be faithful to what it is that God has called us to do that we might fulfill it. So if you're here and you're thinking of running, recognize what God had to say.

What would have happened? Pray for your pastor, really. Because they tend to leave probably lots of times before God would dismiss them. While I was writing this chapter, I received a phone call from a community in northern B.C. where we had lots of ministers.

And I inquired about a certain minister that we had met there who was really quite cool himself. I said, where'd he at? Oh, he left after one year. He said, if the Holy Spirit wasn't going to use his ministry, then we'd just waste his time.

So he put in one year and left. I said, this guy, have you ever wondered where Moses was? What would have happened if after one year or five years or something, Moses said, I'm out of here? God gave me a calling and Moses was to do it. It was 80 years in preparation.

40 years trying to get the thing to come to happen. But he could have moved on with a more fulfilling job, but he couldn't either. He was stuck in the dead of the day.

What would have happened to Statham when God called him to leave, but he was replaced by the will of the people by a more culturally relevant style of government? Who wants a prophet? We want a king like every other country. So they threw him out. He had to be part of that process.

What did Samuel do? Go find something else that was more fulfilling? Move away? No, he stayed. And he lived with or without the laws. Remember God's term, Samuel, it wasn't Samuel who rejected him, it was God who rejected him and then came over.

And Samuel said, May I never sin by ceasing to pray for you. So Samuel stayed and prayed until he was needed again to go in and pronounce an end to Saul's reign and finish the job that Saul hadn't done, kill King Negev, and actually had to go out and then choose a new leader and anoint him. Have you ever been replaced in your church by a more culturally relevant leader or leadership style? Well, I'm out of here.

Well, my message today would be to stay. Part of the reviving process, at least what we've had to walk through, was to say I have the grace to stay and pray and may I never sin against the church and against this people by leaving before God left, told me to. What about Joshua and Caleb? People who had followed God fully, I read, and had even entered in and seen all the tastes of the storms for all that God had prepared ahead of them.

They were miles ahead of the people. They came back and they were outvoted by a board of eight others. Ten? How many men went to spy on Canaan? I don't think so.

Eight would have to, but that's what the Psalms say. Maybe you've been somewhere with God and have made great strides and God's been working your life, but He hasn't been working everybody's life in your board or in your church. He didn't.

Joshua and Caleb had tasted the food. They had seen the land. And they said, God will give it to us.

Let's go. And they couldn't go. And they had to wander a little while, at least some time, with the piers that weren't ready to move yet.

The leaders listened to the people, listened to their own people. And spiritual progress was put on hold until the scripture makes it very clear that an old generation died off. And the next generation went in.

Here's my point. While we wait on God to invest your life in the next generation, it may well be that what God does is worthless. And you're not just simply waiting to get on your wheels if you're investing your life in the next generation.

We stayed in our situation because our children finished their school in the community that was good. My son loved the farm. And I always thought, how do you tell your kids someday I wasn't enjoying it anymore? So I sold it just before you wanted it.

And so when you're into the cross, you can't just live for yourself. There's other people you need to take into consideration even when you move, even when you run, from fulfilling the calling that God gave you. As I said, the parents, the wives, are like a room for twine.

I don't think it's an optional command that God gave you. He said, honor your parents. That your days may be long on the earth.

The only command I gave them was the promise attached. And I think it's significant. And I remember a minister one time I used to go into the nursing home in B.C. but he's wandering in this nursing home in my town because Saskatchewan nursing homes are cheaper than B.C. And maybe he came once a year to visit his mom and telling all these people in his church what God wants them to do.

And way back in the Ten Commandments 10% of them said honor your mother. Honor your father. So that your days may be long on the earth and that your ministry and your effectiveness may have some longevity to it as well.

So just some food for thought. I remember a pastor telling me one time that he hadn't spoken to his parents for five years. Raising three grandchildren and the parents don't even know them.

It's a rift between him and his parents. They weren't believers. They'd give him a hard time when he was saved and went to Bible school.

But Moses didn't say all that on the rock that he brought down the mountain. He just said honor your parents. And there's a difference between honoring them and liking them.

There's a difference between honoring them and believing in everything they're doing. Isn't it interesting how practical we can be while we're waiting on a big move of God? And even as a pastor wondering why doesn't God move in my midst? Well, why don't you get right with your parents? So these are just some things we learned having stayed out on the land. Can't move.

There was times I would like to have left. I remember the go around with the false prophets in the church and the unbiblical and ungodly manifestations and the rebellious coup d'etat that went double the leadership and Pastor Christie decided he had to leave because he didn't even hardly have the keys to the building anymore. I've seen some wild stuff.

But God has spoken to this one guy. They're supposed to have meetings and they're supposed to run seven nights consecutively. The pastor didn't know about it and wonder why the lights were on in the church.

And to make a long story short I had to stay and fight false fire because the pastor left. And I can remember I may be a little bit cut out of rough cloth and maybe a little politically incorrect but I can remember during those seven nights of meetings finding my realize this is not about. First of all because I know this guy is prophet and prophetic ministry isn't from the Lord because Hebrews 13 says we'll bring you your elders and your rulers and your pastors and your authorities.

Romans 13 says there's no authority but that's what's given from God. Submit yourself to it. Not run roughshod over it.

But God didn't speak to this guy. So I had to get up from my seat and take the man's mic away from him and we had a little bit of a discussion at the front and finally he said I said give me the mic. The pastor wasn't there.

He was back. I said I need to exercise my gift. I said we haven't heard a word of scripture in this three and a half nights of meetings.

Tonight that's going to change. We're going to hear from the word of God. And as we know it cuts doesn't it between that which is of the soul and that which is of the spirit.

So he stood there for a while and I said well I'm supposed to sit down and that's what I'm going to be here about. You know the feminization of the church that we've been watching for a long time I'm afraid would make way for some of those guys. Be politically correct.

Be nice. I want you to read Isaiah 11 when you get home. Chapter 1 verses 1 and 2. There's some spiritual gifts that we don't often look at.

In Isaiah chapter 11 we read it's coming from I'm going to look it up and read it. It's from the life of predicting the life of David and Christ. The shoot will spring forth from the stem of Jesse.

The branch will bear fruit. The spirit of the Lord will rest on him. He's the spirit of wisdom, of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and strength.

The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And then he reiterates and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. And I see there's a spirit of counsel and strength that we seek against.

And there's times when you have to be a person of some strength in your church. I remember sitting with the pastor who had left town in the middle of all that in Niagara Falls one time we were traveling through there and eating a meal and we were talking about John 10 where it says the shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Hire him please when the wolf comes because he's there for the pig.

The shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He said to me former pastor I couldn't leave but I wasn't on salary. Just faithful to the call of God to put in your life.

It's interesting in Acts chapter 20 Peter says to the church I told you for three years warning you with dears about these savage wolves that would come in. Come inside and attack the sheep. Come right inside and he said be shepherds shepherd to flock guard to flock and I got cattle that's how I make my living and I get so sick and tired as people say love, love, love and here you've got a wolf stealing the sheep are you supposed to love the wolf? We need to understand that when the sheep are at risk if you're a shepherd there's a rifle in the gun case in my office and it gets used for wolves and tigers.

I don't pet them.

And if you're here and you're in leadership we've got to know the fact Acts 13 will tell you spirit filled Peter Paul sorry Acts 13 verse 1 and 2 Spirit Jesus the false prophet and his people were seeking to disrupt what Paul was trying to teach and Paul being called Saul filled with the spirit lest there be any doubt fixed his gaze on him and said you son of the devil how long will you continue to pervert the right straight way of

the Lord and struck him with blindness called him an SOB that's not politically correct that's not nice but it tells me that he was spirit filled and I am so sick of the way the church is dealing with false prophets and false teaching today I almost have to run down the bathroom hurdle because a spirit filled leadership will put their eyes on them and say you

SOB and if you read Paul's writings to Timothy he says charge them not to teach command them not to teach and what that is that's the spirit of wisdom and understanding and strength Isaiah chapter 11 you don't find those gifts of the spirit listed often with them but they're there doctrinal integrity one of the things the church really needs to do when it's time and it's waiting on God to move he can't move after we've lost it and I'll draw more attention to that later then I can tell you what happens that movement wasn't hard to tip over a lot of it was demonic and if you begin to take that on in the name of Jesus in his blood with the authority that he gives I've seen grown men run out of the building off the parking lot and stand on the public street because they could not stand on the

building property when you knew this was demonic they ran and fled from the fear of God but you know after that comes the spirit of man and people get so turned off by the left wing as opposed to the right wing theology that they say who needs this holy spirit stuff it's just safer to do it yourself and for years after that you get this do it yourself mentality afraid of the spirit of God well that wasn't the spirit of God but it sure inoculated us and the spirit of man does not run from God he has no fear of God in your eyes even in scripture he can't be cast out the spirit of man has to be failed out or repented out you can walk up you can try and cast the spirit out of a person who is full of himself it doesn't work he hasn't failed he hasn't repented Paul says to Timothy in chapter 17

in chapter 2, 25 pray for them that are opposing you that God would grant them the spirit of repentance and they would be set free from Satan having been held captive to do his will they're doing his will it's not Satan doing it it's man doing it and you can't cast them out they need to be failed out I've had trouble convincing sometimes a young pastor that revival is a good thing I said well there's a solution to it it's called death if you don't have revival you don't die and it's sad to watch your church of a hundred of a hundred people diminish to fifteen and seeing God giving gifts to people sent elsewhere by God and watching the fruit of their ministry elsewhere God gave them ministry they couldn't be faithful to it because they couldn't serve and so if your message is to keep your

life and all of it's cost is not popular amongst a shallow or a crowd often those people get marginalized or removed from their service in the church God sends them elsewhere you see that in Acts where the persecution came against the message God says then go there and do it then go there and do it and God moved his people and I think there are pastors who are frustrated sometimes they've stood in the way of revival they don't believe in it a lot of our younger pastors and then they get frustrated when they see God sending their gift to people elsewhere and they see the work of God going on here and there Pastor Patrick Morley writes in his book pastoring men says if you don't give your gift to men someone else will so if you're here and you're responsible for those kinds of people

recognize God has given the gift to people he's ready to mend so he says if you don't use your gift to men God will use something elsewhere somebody else will and those who sense God's call in their lives and get stripped of the opportunity to be faithful to it might have to wait from the failure of an inferior program until God sends you an opportunity there or sends you elsewhere for encouragement and for training and for what God has planned for you for the future maybe some of you are here today and that's exactly where you're coming from my view of the church's ministry has shifted to the long term alright my

message in my preaching Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:4 without persuasion of words but by the demonstration of the Spirit and of power and faith should rest not on the words of

men but on the power of God and I'll tell you that the message that God is going to use to get anywhere in this day and age won't be words it won't be academic it will be the power of God in the two people alright I'm going to just go to these six things at the end as it goes what is it that the church needs to be concentrating on number one personal example leadership needs to have that out of the room experience with the fullness of God and Christ himself be filled with the Spirit which is to be empty of self John chapter 20 Jesus took his leaders to the out of the room and said the Holy Spirit he breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit he had them given to the church till later at Pentecost but the leaders in John 20 had their experience with the Holy Spirit first then they

went back and they knew what to do when he ascended on the church in Acts 2 the cross needs to be an instrument of death the cross needs to be an instrument of the resurrection This applies to more than just the preacher and teacher, it's the responsibility of every person put in stewardship of the flock.

And I'm amazed sometimes at the lack of Biblical understanding of some of our graduates from seminary school.

I can give you some shocking examples, but I don't have time. And some of the stuff I've run into when young guys have no concept of what the Bible says and how to deal with it. So it just happens in the church, and it goes spiraling further and further down because of our slippage.

Many leaders are opting to use other books instead of the book in teaching. I remember when that happened in my church, we had a book that was studying grace. And the one lesson I got in on, or on what, was encouraging us to extend grace to and see the place of ministry for practicing homosexuals.

I am rude. I stood up and I read from my Bible, 1 Corinthians chapter 6, 9, the writing is that God says no homosexual will inherit the kingdom of God unless he's washed and justified in Christ and sanctified. Father Amos said there's going to be a famine for the word God.

And I think we might be there. But people are so hungry for the Bible, for the reality and the truth of it. He says things regularly.

Number three, Homer Price wrote a book once. How many of you read Homer Price's stuff? If you were my age and you were in high school in the 70s, it was there. He said the birds sat on the hands of the clock in town square.

So when they went down, they went real fast. And when they went up, they went slow. And he said everybody set the clock on town square.

He said eventually he got out of sync and he said they were working all day and sleeping all night. No, working all night and sleeping all day. And nobody thought anything of it.

Shut the blinds and go to bed. Take the flashlight to work. So somebody went and visited the neighbor's town.

Hey, you're half a day out over there. Or are we half a day out? And you know, I think as we assess our churches and our place in it all, sometimes we need to get out and we need to go and we need to see

something else. Sometimes we come home and say praise God.

I'm sure like what we are opposed to what I just saw. And sometimes we come home and say we've done a lot of work, don't we? But don't stick your head in the sand. Is the Lord blessing our church? If not, why not? Number four, review leadership.

We talked a little bit about that in my testimony. Leaders can either invite or retire every while. Teachers need to be biblical.

Elders need to adhere to the patterns of Paul's letter to Timothy of Tice. Moses even said, God said to Moses, choose elders who are elders indeed, men on whom I can pour my spirit. Numbers 11, 16 and 17.

Pastors need to recognize the fivefold ministry of the church and continue the age-old practice of inviting other ministers in and always saying, I want God to work in my people more than I want him to work. And all leaders need to be assessed in light of the activity of God during and through their leadership. Number five, expect resistance.

Moses met with it. From the people, from the worldly powers, who had saved his work, and he met it from his own family. Peter was very interested in being given the opportunity in Matthew 16, 13, 26, to bind and loose and build the church, even the gates of hell can't oppose it until Jesus said, and it starts at the cross, Peter.

I'm going to go and die. Not so, Lord, he said. Peter, get behind me.

You're not speaking the will of God, but of Satan. Peter became an up offense to the work that Christ wanted to do. When he preached the cross and the death to self-life, it would be a breath of fresh air to some and an offense to others.

1 Corinthians 1, 18 says it's always an offense to the cross. And in 2 Corinthians 2, 16 he says it's the smell of death to some and the sweet aroma of life to others, depending where you're at, whether you're in love with or sick of yourself. In one case it stinks, in the other case it smells so good.

You're going to have to wait sometimes. The leaders who leave in the flesh and run out of gas. Number six, pray.

It's amazing how many coincidences we see when we pray. Scripture is clear, we don't have because we don't ask, James 4, 2. And if we can satisfy ourselves with the works of man, we won't pray, but if Christ just disrupts that and things fail, to satisfy us in the light of what God's doing somewhere else, we may return to prayer. It's a call on me.

God begs and yearns, Acts 33, 3. I'll show you great and mighty things which you don't know or can't do. Prayer of a righteous man avails much to him, he said. It's just ordinary men like us, says the prophet Elijah.

He says it was the prophet Elijah. The prophet Elijah would hunt and call for a showdown and send down the fire to show who's true. One story I want to tell.

When we were without a pastor, we were getting speakers to come in. I've been asked to speak in places and they want to know what you can talk on and even had a forum saying I won't speak about this and this and this and this. This guy came and I said, Lord, I've got a sense that they're going to get something this

morning that isn't right.

So I said, Lord, if this isn't biblical, shut it down. So he had a computer warming up and I could see this thing on the screen while he talked and he said, I'm going to show you a movie this morning and then we're going to see how this pertains to what God would have us to think about. So he went to his computer and I said, Lord, if this isn't biblical, shut it down.

Just when he got to the thing, the screen went off. You guys know what I think of computers, any of you that know me. I hate these things anyway.

So right on, the computer went dead. So he worked with it. Now you have to understand, he was a computer technician by trade.

Couldn't get it to go. He said, I guess we won't have the movie. They didn't want to tell us what the movie was about.

So there was a man in heaven, went to see his wife who was in hell. Couldn't get her to come with him, so he decided I'll move in with her. Aww, what sacrificial love.

Except as I reminded him after the service over dinner, my Bible says that between you and me there's a great gulf fish that you can't cross over. And if you can get somebody to come from hell to heaven after they're dead, why shouldn't you be saved? Do you see how subtle? Doctrinal errors and this lack of discernment is there, so all I can do is pray to God to shut the thing off. Do that.

In your churches. It's disruptive, I'll have to agree. I can tell you, it would be a more disruptive thing in my church, but I don't have time.

Alright, I know that the church doesn't always welcome this point of view, but I'm going to say one last one. We break in. And in our travels, we break in.

In our travels the last year, we've found little clusters of people all over who would have nothing less than God's best, but they don't have a voice in their church. And they're both seeking to hold their work on biblical grounds and praying for the work of the Spirit, and they're targeted when there's persecution action against them from their church. They're marginalized, disqualified from service in this modern church.

They feel they have little form of influence in their church. Almost all of them, though, have a home, a workplace, and a community. And a priest from the life of David in verse Samuel 22, where in anointing Saul was removed because he was disobedient, and yet he occupied the throne, and he was in the way of what God wanted to do.

And David, although he knew he was anointed for that position, refused to touch Saul. He said, when God's ready to remove him, He'll remove him. And I went on in that story, this was out of Dallas Valley two years ago, how Saul just went out and he took his elderly parents, concerned for them and his life because of Saul's wrath, and he hit them and looked after his parents.

And that story goes on to say that 400 men gathered themselves to David. He didn't go gather them. He just looked after his parents and got himself protected from the wrath of the one who would kill him.

And it said there were men in debt who were in distress, and there were men who were discontent, and they gathered themselves to David. And they said he had an army, and he didn't even want to fight. And

David was leading from some cave.

And I think you will find when you're persecuted for doing the right thing, there's a place for you. And those like-minded people will gather to you, and we've seen them in communities everywhere we go. And that's the beauty of traveling that we've done, is that we can see that God has got clusters in every church and all over the world.

And if he brings revival, it will be because he's got remnants of people in pockets all over who he's been training to do it. And whatever's on the throne gets out. And he is preparing people to step in.

I've seen God remove men and women from ministry, sometimes in very gracious ways and sometimes in fearsome ways. Remember the first act of God in the church following the Pentecost is found in Acts 5, and it's not some warm, fuzzy thing, but it was a divine execution. The man dies in Sapphira.

And it says right after that, and because of these things, great fear fell upon all the people. And if I was in leadership today and I wasn't taking some of these things seriously, I would tremble in my boots. Pray.

Hebrews 13, 7 reminds us. I want to be very careful in this as it goes. I've always said don't undermine your leadership, support your churches, don't leave your churches.

Hebrews 13, 7 tells us to obey your leaders and submit to them and keep watch over your souls, because they won't even account, and that should put the fear of God into us. Pray for your leaders and speak to them with concerns that you have. And if you must withdraw from thoughts and seeks and activities and invest your leadership in your family, there will need to be another generation of young people who will move the kingdom of God ahead.

David writes in Psalm 107 at the end of what John was reading here today. He ends with this. He makes his families like a flock.

The upright see it and are glad. All unrighteousness shuts its mouth. Who is wise? Let him give heed to these things and consider the love and kindness of God.

When God can give in your family, then your fear of influence can totally overthrow any criticism that you're on the wrong track. I want to give you one more powerful verse. Isaiah 29, 23.

God says, But when he sees his children, the work of my hands in his midst, they will sanctify my name. They will sanctify the Holy One, Jacob, and stand in awe of the God of Israel. And those who err in mind will know the truth, and those who criticize will accept destruction when they see his children.

I've been at work in this person's family because we ministered in their family. He says, That will shut up the mouth of ungodly criticism, and those who err in judgment. And then I have to say something very harsh that I didn't say two years ago.

But I understand the persecution that some Christians are under in their church for believing in the revival truths. Just in the last couple of years since I had that message, I've realized that the focus in our communities have changed greatly. The church is losing its senses quickly.

And I realize that there is an emergency measure Jesus gives in Matthew 15, verse 14, when speaking about blind guides to Pharisees. He says to the people, leave them. Now, I say this very carefully, but I want to tell you something.

My parents left that church in 1942 because they had been born again. Dad said we had no intention of leaving that church. There were four papas that got saved when the evangelist was there.

He said we had no intention of leaving, but they made it convenient for us to be elsewhere. And I look at that church, which is four blocks down the street from the one that was started today, where we go. And they made some serious mistakes.

They started ordaining women, which is anti-scriptural. Ten years later, they had gone to homosexuality, because if you don't follow scripture on this one, why would you on this one? And they abandoned scripture totally, took the miracles out of the Bible. A bunch of the left came to our church because of the curriculum change.

And I look back and I say, where would we be today if my parents had stayed there? Where would my children be today? I can thank God that today there are three children and walking with the Lord and married and raised more than once by His grace. Where would we be if the words of Jesus to people stuck in the church head for apostasy didn't say to leave them? I see this very carefully. I would ask you to really carefully and prayerfully consider this before you ever go that route.

I want you to know that there is a place for that. Time is gone. John's here.

I leave this where I started it. If the seminaries turn on graduates that haven't been taught, don't call them. Those who live in the community all their lives will watch the life of a Christian over all those years, complaining that having an encounter with God had better be backed up with some evidence.

If you're going to, what do you do between periods of revival? Well, you do what individuals totally sold out to God do. You live it. You live it.

The fact that you live these truths in front of an unbelieving church community is the most powerful thing you can do. Don't be discouraged if your desire for a deeper life isn't always appreciated. The writer of Hebrews reminds us to remember, this is why you've been persecuted, and then urges us to not throw away your confidence, which has great ability.

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what is promised. We are not those who shrink back to destruction, but those who have faith to the preserving of the soul. We're the resistor.

Hang in there. Hold on.

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