

The Country in Peril

by Ronald Glass

The sermon emphasizes the importance of biblical revival and the need for a nation to turn back to God in order to avoid deterioration and experience new life and restoration.

Duration: 57:40

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 16:8-15, 2 Chronicles 15:2-16

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the current state of the nation and the recent panic over the swine flu. He suggests that this situation serves as a reminder of God's power and the consequences of a nation's deterioration. However, he also emphasizes that there is a cure for a nation's deterioration, which is seeking God. The speaker highlights the importance of biblical preaching and laments the decline of it in America. He encourages believers to remember God's wonderful deeds and his covenant, and to seek his face continually. The sermon concludes with the assurance that God is a God who revives and has the power to redeem his people.

Transcript

With us this morning and We are coming now to the Word of God. I begin today a new series of sermons I don't know how long this will take us to get through all of this, but I'm excited about this I think this is one of the most important series of sermons I probably will have ever done here And I hope that you will make this a subject of intense interest and prayer as we move through it Biblical Revival I'm asking you to turn this morning to 2nd Chronicles chapter 15 2nd Chronicles chapter 15 and I want to consider the first 15 verses of this chapter today 2nd Chronicles 15 Following your Bible as I read please beginning in the first verse Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded and he went out to meet Asa, and he said to him Listen to me Asa No, Judah and Benjamin. The Lord is with you when you are with him and If you seek him He will let you find him, but if you forsake him he will forsake you For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law But in their distress they turned to the Lord God of Israel and they sought him and he let them find him in Those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in for many disturbances Afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands Nation was crushed by nation city by city for God troubled them with every kind of distress But you be strong and do not lose courage for there is reward for your work Now when Asa heard these words and the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the Prophet spoke He took courage and removed the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities Which he had captured in the hill country of

Ephraim Then he restored the altar of the Lord which was in front of the porch of the Lord He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them for many Defected to him from Israel when they saw that the Lord his God was with him So they assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the 15th year of Asa's reign sacrifice to the Lord that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought They entered into the covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and soul and Whoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death whether small or great man or woman Moreover, they made an oath to the Lord with a loud voice with shouting with trumpets and with horns all Judah rejoiced concerning the oath for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought him earnestly and he let them find him So the Lord gave them rest on Every side I believe that the United States of America is a country in peril We are living in dangerous times.

We are facing an even more dangerous future Under the declaration of national crisis the United States of America is being propelled By an ambitious administration in Washington into progressivism and atheistic socialism These changes are possible because we have lost our foundation as a Christian Nation that is a nation based upon Christian principles and principles upon which our forefathers based their original documents Where these ominous? developments may lead Well, they may seem uncertain but the destination is clear from the annals of Western civilization a Problem today.

However, is that we don't know our own history? And so that's where I want to begin today in Europe in the 18th century in two nations France and England We know it as the age of Enlightenment the search for a perfect social order among the 18th century French intellectuals That search led to a new social order in which Christianity was denounced the traditions of the home and of the church and of government were rejected so was the Bible and so was belief in the deity of Jesus Christ the Philosopher Voltaire declared that reason was the source of all truth Jean-jacques Rousseau another of the philosophers of that day opted for romanticism with its deification of nature Rebellion against the status quo the exaltation of the will of the people Progressive education and environmentalism swirled around a popular uprising an uprising of the common people of France who were protesting against unfair taxation and the privileges of the rich and Eventually it all fell apart 1792 the ruling committee of public safety that was the main government body of that day Headed by the infamous Robespierre declared France to be quote the country in peril unquote the king was executed and France experienced a horrific reign of terror all in the name of Libert  Libert  a galley tay Equality and fraternity brotherhood The French Revolution was firmly grounded in atheism Humanism replaced Christian values and morality the revolutionaries wanted rights without Responsibilities and they wanted liberties without restraints and the result of all of that was anarchy and Tyranny and bloodshed it was a disaster for freedom and human rights the French writer who had come to America Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in his famous book democracy in America, and I quote despotism may govern without faith, but liberty cannot And then he went on to say what can be done with a people who are their own masters?

If they are not submissive to the deity cannot govern Ourselves without first submitting to God now. Let's move to England Conditions there were similar to those in France the king was oppressive and As the nation moved through the 17th century the economy was bad Conflict led to civil war for years the Puritans who upheld biblical Christianity battled the monarchy the monarchy won and England fell into moral decay By 1740 every sixth house in the city of London had an illegal still the Government was pervaded by bribery Gambling was probably the greatest activity Recreational activity the literature of the day was crude and immoral The people had more freedom than they had ever had before, but they were in

bondage to their passions Deism reigned in the churches and the churches were mostly empty the French Enlightenment crossed the English Channel as the age of reason Christianity was all but dead and England was ripe for rebellion But something happened on the way to the revolution Revival it began with a young Oxford University student named George Whitfield and his two friends brothers John and Charles Wesley who began preaching in the fields and the coal mines in the streets of the cities preaching everywhere the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and above all there was the Holy Spirit and God came down on England with power The churches were crowded prayer meetings were packed thousands of Christians got right with God Multiplied thousands of unbelievers were swept into the body of Christ wonderfully converted spiritual life of the churches was restored Biblical morality was embraced by a large part of the English population once again the nation averted a bloodbath Results were amazing they included a sharp decline in drunkenness and in immorality they included prison reform and the abolition of the slave trade and universal education including The initiation of the Sunday school and of course the modern missionary movement was born out of that revival At the same time that God was using Whitfield and the Wesley's and other evangelists and preachers in England Whitfield also had come to the colonies of America and he along with Jonathan Edwards Were used by God as a powerful instrument in the revival that we know is the Great Awakening Here in the American colonies and the revival here in the American colonies shaped the course of American independence now the condition to which both France and England had sunk in this in the 18th century should resonate with us We see those same dynamics today.

We see it in the in the increasing acceptance of atheism the increasing acceptance of humanism and Rationalism reason as supreme in pushing out the Word of God from the public debate The question that we have to ask today is which direction are we going to go are we going to follow France? Are we going to follow England? Today I'm beginning a series of studies on the subject of biblical revival. It's a wonderful subject It's actually a fairly significant subject in God's Word And it's a subject of great urgency in our day And yet one about which many Christians most Christians I dare say no very very little Yet throughout history God has periodically intervened To energize a languishing church a church that is asleep and to reform declining nations At this point in our nation's history. I believe that we are ripe for revival or We may be otherwise destined for repression for unrest and even for revolution What we learn from God's Word? Over the next several months in this study could literally transform this church it could transform this community and Should the Lord be pleased even this nation So today I want to begin by looking back about 2700 years before those revivals in England to another nation that was in peril.

It was the kingdom of Judah They were ruled by Solomon's great-grandson Asa He had proved himself to be a capable military leader and he had proven himself to be a good man a man of God but the people of Judah had fallen into spiritual apostasy and into a national crisis and as a result God sent a prophet to the king with a message and As we begin this study of biblical revival as we begin as we always Must win this subject with a country in peril Now such a country faces three conditions.

Let me share them with you today. First of all a country in peril has a problem with Deterioration I see that here in the first seven verses now Let me just explain something at the beginning What you're going to find in our study of revival is that revival is primarily an Old Testament concept Why is that you say? Well, it's because in the New Testament remember the canon closed that is the last New Testament book was written before the end of the first century and though in these those letters to the Seven churches in the book of Revelation we see the the inroads of apostasy We see that there was beginning to be a need for Revival, we don't record any revival so there are no revivals recorded in the New Testament, but there are

in the Old Testament and the principles that are valid right across the board from the from the Old Testament nation of Israel to the church today are laid down clearly in the Old Testament Now the prophet Azariah reminds Asa of what happened in the past in fact that's the main heart of these first seven verses Israel had a history of Declension and revival by the way, I will use that term a lot Declension what do I mean by that?

That is a state of decline Declension means things are going downhill Israel had a long history of that Declension and revival declension and revival things would deteriorate and then God would bring Awakening and the nation would get back right with God once again Now what Azariah does here is he reminds King Asa of the nation's history? primarily a history that you can read if you go back to the book of Judges and Then into the books of Samuel you will see that pattern of decline and revival Now what I want to say to you today, and I've begun on this on this theme this morning Is that we need to know our history? we need to know the history of the Christian Church and how God has Taken a declining church and revived it over and over again Why do we need to know it for the same reason Asa needed to know it as an incentive to see God do that work? again in our present hour of Crisis now the dynamics of this deterioration can be measured this way first of all there are causes for the nation's Deterioration and Asa points to them here in verses 2 & 3 Especially look for with me at verse 3 for many days Israel was without the true God a nation deteriorates when the when God's people forsake him God is no longer at the center of the nation's life God is pushed out of public life out of government out of justice out of education out of the arts and so on and Though we still pay lip service to the great motto in God we trust That principle has for all practical purpose has been lost since 1962 1963 when the Supreme Court issued two landmark decisions forcing the Bible out of the public schools and prohibiting prayer in the public schools and America has marginalized God and you trace the history of America from 1962 what happened after those two infamous decisions the Kennedy assassination the Vietnam War Martin Luther King assassination riots in the cities the Robert Kennedy assassination It was a it was a time of chaos and the culture went right along with it the Degeneracy of the culture the drug scene the hippie scene and all of that marches and protests in the streets and on the college campuses And I believe you can trace that all back to 1962 and 63 when the Supreme Court said no God in the schools We marginalized God and a generation my generation The first one to go to high school under those Supreme Court decisions My generation and every generation since then has become Progressively less committed to God God has become progressively Irrelevant to our young people till today God Matters nothing at all and our schools have become dens of iniquity.

They become unsafe in many cases unsafe morally unsafe from the standpoint of violence and And unsafe intellectually as well No wonder there is a movement especially among God's people towards Christian private schools and homeschooling God's people have forsaken him secondly we see that God's people neglect his word again verse 3 They also in addition to not having the true God They have been without a teaching priest and without law the people were ignorant of God's Word Why because those who were responsible to teach it and preach it had abandoned their duty that was the? responsibility of the priests under the Old Testament law They had abandoned that responsibility here in America since the 1920s Biblical preaching has been a has been dying a slow death as the Church has absorbed so much of the liberalism that crept in back there and the institutions of theological learning throughout America have drifted into Infidelity and much of this is affecting even evangelical churches to this day evangelical churches today at least whole bearing that name evangelical are Holding to principles and beliefs that were characteristic of liberals a century ago so today you have popular preachers preachers who have earned the respect of of people all across America telling those in ministry and telling students and

Seminaries to dumb down the sermons people can't take more than four or eight sermons in a series People can't listen more than 20 minutes at a time Dumb it down and yet here is a sit being told by the Prophet that the problem with Israel Was they'd been without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law There are causes for a nation's deterioration We have suffered them today God has pushed out of our society God's Word is marginalized and there are Consequences for this and that's the second thing. I want to point out there are consequences for a nation's deterioration These are pointed out by the Prophet in verses 5 and 6 notice in those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in for many disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the land an impasse apostate nation will embrace false Religion, I want you to look for a moment at the 14th chapter beginning of verse 2 ASA Spoken of here the beginning of Asa's reign He did good and right in the sight of God for he removed the foreign altars and the high places Tore down the sacred pillars cut down the Asherim. I was a female deity a goddess and Commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and observe the law and the commandment and he removed the high places and the incense altars from all the cities of Judah And the kingdom was undisturbed under him when Asa first came to the throne of Israel he found there was religious apostasy But the people don't give it up easy Why? Because the absence of Scripture creates a vacuum which is going to be filled by false Religious systems they were without the true God.

They were without a teaching priest and without law They've created a spiritual vacuum that will fill up with false religion And that's why when we come to this chapter we find the same situation exists again Judah still has its idols now. We're seeing this here in America Respectable People in the media in academia and so on are telling us that it's pluralism no, it's a spiritual vacuum that is being filled up by other religions and It's going to get worse You can say well we can take the true God we can take the the God of the Bible the the evangelical the Fundamentalists God out of our schools and out of our society. Yes, but It is in the nature of humanity to replace it with something else they pushed God out in England a long time ago and now the courts in England are Are showing a willingness to adopt Sharia law because of the large number of Muslims there England is moving in a direction of actually instituting Islamic law as part of their judicial system You see there's a vacuum and it will be filled by something the apostate nation will not only embrace false religion But we'll see also that the apostate nation will experience turmoil That's what that's what Azariah tells Asa here in Verses four and five those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in there were many disturbances that afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands internal disturbances national unrest there were International conflicts the language is very vivid here There was much confusion or panic literally nation was shoving against nation pushing each other around internal turmoil international chaos now Israel didn't need to be surprised at this because if you go back to the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy and you read there the passage that contains the Great Covenant the Palestinian Covenant We call it the covenant that God made with Israel in the in the wilderness before they entered into Canaan If you read in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy verses 15 to 68 and I can't read all those verses today but God promises Certain things if Israel disobeys if Israel violates the covenant among those things are famine and Drought and Disease pestilence of all sorts and poverty and Internal chaos and Defeat at the hands of their enemies Those are the things God promised Israel if they disobeyed him if they turned their back on him These are the consequences for a nation's deterioration as We look at our own nation.

You have to wonder I mean we look at our Situation and we see even look at the panic that we have had this past week over this swine flu thing you realize that if God so ordained it that could have been a Vicious fatal flu God's sort of telling us what he can do if he wants to do it It's reason for us to stand up and pay attention to what God is saying There are consequences for a nation's Deterioration, but this is the

good news. There is a cure for a nation's deterioration and Azariah says that here three times in these past in this in this Passage verses 1 to 7 three times. Did you notice it in verse 2 if you seek him? He will let you find him verse 4. They sought him and he let them find him verse 7 again be strong do not lose courage and then if you go down to verse 15 you find it again He sought him and they sought him and he let them find him the cure for this deterioration is revival And what is at the heart of revival by the word the way the word? revival means New life it means life again.

It means the Restoration of life where once was life and now the life has gone out of it. God breathes life back into it again Now how does that happen it happens with repentance Now this repentance is seen in two ways here a a repentant nation turns back to God again verse 2 and verse 4 they sought God and he let them find a nation and declined becomes so tired of their distress so tired of the conditions that in Desperation they turned back to God That's a major concept in the whole teaching of the Word of God with regard to revival It involves God's people turning back to God Revival is always a work that is done among the people of God and it means a turning from the way their apostate ways and A turning back to God again. How is that repentance seen? But we'll have plenty of opportunity in the weeks to come to point out to you that it is seen in the brokenness of confession of sin we will see how time and time again God has broken his people and They have confessed their sins without the confession of sin without Repentance there is no revival.

That's a Given the other thing we see here. Is that Repentant nation is blessed with courageous leaders notice in verse 7 But you says Azariah to Asa you King Asa be strong and do not lose courage for there is reward for your work Men who are resolute in their determination to honor God men who are looking for God's future Blessing who are not driven by the present political Expediency, that's what we see in Washington today. That's not What will bring awakening? So a country in peril has the problem of deterioration now, let me move to the second thing.

I see here this Second condition and that is that a country in peril has the prospect of Reformation has the prospect of Reformation in verses 8 through 11 Revival calls for decisive action on the part of committed men now. We've just seen Asa exhorted to act Now I want you to notice what that means This prospect of Reformation means two things here. First of all reject the culture of false Religion verse 8 Asa heard these words in the prophecy which Azariah the son of Oded the prophet spoke and he took courage and It did take courage and he removed the abominable Idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin from the cities which he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim Then he restored the altar of the Lord which was in front of the porch of the Lord Ladies and gentlemen, he did not look at the Jerusalem Post and decide what polls Indicated as to whether the people wanted those idols removed or not.

He did not look at his own Popularity the prophet said get right with God and he did and that took courage It meant getting rid of all of these graven images that had been set up in his land again and for modern America Including us as Christians. It means a whole variety of false gods have to go Primarily in America today. It is the God of wealth you say well, we're not idolaters listen to the last words of the the First epistle to John which I think were the last words written in the New Testament Little children keep yourself from idols Obviously we Christians can have idols the Lord Jesus was unequivocal.

He said You cannot serve God and wealth you're either going to cling to God and turn away from wealth Are you gonna cling to wealth and turn away from God? But he said very very specifically no man can serve two masters Whether that's money or whether it's some other idol the same principle is true We cannot serve two masters, but we as Americans have become slaves To our wealth we have become

slaves to our possessions We've become slaves to our lifestyle they become our masters our gods Reject the culture of false religion turn away from the apostasy of ideology But there was something else that this courageous leader had to do and that was turn away from the immorality of false Religion now our text doesn't tell us this here in 2nd Chronicles But if you go back to the parallel account in 1st Kings chapter 15 You have it 1st Kings 15 verses 11 and 12 Asa did what was right in the sight of the Lord like David his father He also put away from the land Put away the male cult prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols which his father's had made Part of that idolatry with the male that means homosexual Prostitutes that was part of the worship of these deities Some of the sins associated with the idolatry Were sexual and specifically the sin of homosexual prostitution Asa had to clean up that mess That took courage You see it takes courage as we've seen recently and I don't I don't endorse necessarily endorsed beauty pageants, but you've all heard that The situation that resulted from Miss, California a couple weeks ago We have the courage apparently a Christian a courage to stand up For marriage as being between a man and a woman and has been crucified in the media for this You don't think it takes courage today to stand up against the homosexual lobbying it does and our politicians won't do it Today we have become obsessed with toleration for every form of perversion Now listen, we expect that of the world ladies and gentlemen in The church that should be different and so reject the culture of false religion the apostasy of idolatry and the immorality of Idolatry, but there's a second element to this Reformation that was restored the practice of true religion and here in our text verses 9 through 11 We see how Asa did this he took positive steps to promote the practice of true religion What did he do? He gathered all Judah and Benjamin and those from Ephraim and Manasseh now remember he was king over the two southern tribes That was Judah and Benjamin, but also people from Ephraim Manasseh and Simeon who resided with them many Defected to him from Israel when they saw that the Lord is God was with him. See there were faithful people in that pagan Hopelessly lost pagan northern ten tribes. There were still faithful people There were still people who wanted to worship God and when Asa Restored the worship of the true God they rejoiced.

They said we're going down to Jerusalem. We're going to worship with Asa When Revival comes God's people will respond they respond with their presence over and over again throughout the history of the church When God has revived his people the churches weren't big enough to hold the crowds and we'll see that as we proceed through our study and Then notice what happened in verse 11 They sacrificed to the Lord that day 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep from the spoil they had brought when a man and a woman Get revived Their wallets in their pocketbooks get it revived as well They opened up and offered generously Sacrifices to God Asa Rejected the culture of false religion. He restored the practice of true religion Thus a country in peril has the prospect for reformation if these Criteria are met now that brings me to the third condition and that is that a country in peril has the promise of restoration But that restoration is based on a two-way commitment.

I want you to notice that here in verses 12 through 15 First of all restoration will come when we embrace God's promise That's what happened here in verses 12 and 13. They entered into notice the word here They entered into the covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and soul They entered into the covenant, this is a specific covenant. This isn't a covenant they made what does this mean? It means that they publicly committed themselves to the covenant that God had established the relationship that God had established with his people in fact way back with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob But the patriarchs and what did they say about it? They would they entered into the covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and soul Again, let me go back to the Hebrew concept of heart primarily that of the mind the power of reasoning and thinking This idea of the soul is the life What it is saying they were giving their minds and their whole way of thinking their whole approach to life and then

their lives And everything that had to do with their lives their their family and their possessions and everything in their lives They were going to you they were going to seek God with these things That means putting away sin.

That means living righteously according to God's requirement God had made those covenant that covenant with the patriarchs Then he made the covenant that I mentioned a while ago and in Deuteronomy 28 before they went into Canaan He said I'll bless you. If you obey me, I will curse you if you disobey me They said we're going back to the covenant God has made a promise For a moment come back to 1st Chronicles chapter 16. I want you to hear a Prayer here that was passionate.

This is David had given the task to Asaph to write a hymn of praise and Listen to these words in 1st Chronicles 16 beginning in verse 8. Oh Give thanks to the Lord call upon his name make known his deeds among the people sing to him sing Praises to him speak of all his wonders. That's what God's people ought to be doing glory in his holy name Let the heart of those who seek the Lord be glad seek the Lord and his strength seek his face Continually not just on one day of the week Remember his wonderful deeds which he has done you see that circle that Remember his wonderful deeds, which he has done his marvels and the judgments from his mouth Oh seed of Israel his sermon Sons of Jacob is chosen ones. He is the Lord our God his Judgments are in all the earth.

Here's the word again Remember his covenant forever The word which he commanded to a thousand generations the covenant which he made with Abraham and his oath to Isaac and he confirmed it to Jacob for a statute to Israel as an everlasting covenant That's what Israel said they would do they would remember the covenant that God had made They would remember the works of God and they would seek the Lord and his strength and they would do so continually now listen God's promises never Change and the same God who revived his people in that day The same God who revived his church in the 18th century in England and in the colonies of America That same God who has proven himself over and over again to be a God who revives that God is willing to revive his church again, I believe so Restoration will come when we embrace God's promise secondly Restoration will come when we honor our own promise. You see they did something else Back in our text verse 14 moreover They made an oath to the Lord with a loud voice with shouting with trumpets and with horns and all Judah rejoiced concerning the oath for they had sworn with their whole heart and had sought him earnestly and he let them find them They make a formal and public promise they said we're going to go back and Accept the promise that God had made we are going back to the prop to the provisions of the Covenant But they said we're going to do something else. We're also going to make a promise to God to seek the Lord earnestly and Sincerely and their worship Shouting with trumpets and horns and Judah rejoicing they worshipped God Now notice what happened? verse 15 They had sought him earnestly and He let them find him God is always the ultimate source of Revival now listen to the words of Isaiah 55 Seek the Lord while he may be found Call upon him while he is near let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him return to the Lord and He will have compassion on him and to our God for he will abundantly pardon Seek the Lord while he may be found Now revival is not a matter of using God for selfish reasons.

It's not saying well. We're in a pretty bad shape right now We we need God some of the old evangelists and revivalists have sort of implied that There is a prescription for revival that is like it's like a Mathematical formula if you put in the right numbers it comes out, right? But there really is no formula for revival God never does things the same way twice revival comes when God decides to give it and that's why those revival teachers preachers who have preached on this subject Who really understand it always point out that revival is a sovereign work of a sovereign God But what's the requirement here? God said through the

prophet if you seek him he will let you find him see there's the point He doesn't say if you seek him you will find him No, if you seek him, he will let you find him God's in control in the situation Yes The Bible comes when God decides it's time that God's people must seek him Let me also point out that the Lord blessed them as we see in verse verse 15 as well So the Lord gave them rest on Every side literally all around all around Israel sought God and the Lord responded with blessing that impacted all of society notice verse 19 of the chapter and There was no more war until the 35th year of Asa's reign. This was in the 15th year of his reign They went 20 years with no war.

That was a long time back then To go with no war peace Because Israel had sought Just take your eyes across the column to the 16th chapter verse 9 listen to these words This happened later when Asa forgot some of these principles The Prophet had to tell him for the eyes of the Lord move move to and fro throughout the earth that he may strongly support Those whose heart is completely his What would happen at Wading River Baptist Church if every one of us Could say honestly that our hearts are completely his Rather if God's I were to look on each one of us and say Those people's hearts. Well, you may say pastor. This is all well and good.

Yes, we live in a nation That's forgotten God, but pastor this isn't Israel and this isn't a theocracy What can we do? We don't have any aces today that can go and straighten things out like that Well, first of all, let me say this this is very important We need to pray for our nation Absolutely, and that's why it's so important that so many of you Respond and come and join your hearts and your Words with us as we pray to God on Thursday night In our national day of prayer. It is critical that we be a people who pray for our nation But there's something else. I want you to see here What was Israel's role in the world to be I've said this many times before but let me repeat it to you God Brought Israel into being as a nation in order that Israel might be the Priestly nation to the rest of the world they were to be God's channel of truth to the rest of the nations They were a priestly people who are God's priests today.

There is no Aaronic priesthood. There's no tabernacle There's no altar today. Who are the priests? Well, we have been made Individually Christians we have been constituted as priests of God That's what the whole doctrine of the priesthood of the believer is about we are those priests We are the redeemed people of God Who are to be the channel of God's truth to the nations as we take the message of the gospel to the nations? Now, what do I what am I saying? Well, I'm saying is that We need to focus our prayer for revival and our efforts for revival upon the people of God Don't expect our government leaders to get right with God Until the day the church is revived.

We need to be seeking the awakening of our evangelical churches it's a tragedy today, but Professing Bible-believing churches are soundly asleep in the arms of a perverse world in Peter's words first Peter 4 17 It is time for judgment to begin with the household of God We need to get our acts. But once again is the work that God must do Our responsibility is to seek him What are we to do when times get difficult and evil seems to rain at every point throughout society today? And all you have to do is watch the evening news read your newspaper Whatever you get on your computer. You see it.

You see it. Let the psalmist help us here. I Want to turn for a moment to Psalm 77.

Oh, you don't even have to turn there. Just listen to these words. All right My voice rises to God and I will cry aloud My voice rises to God and he will hear me in the day of my trouble I sought the Lord in the night.

My hand was stretched out without weariness My soul refused to be comforted When I remember God then I am disturbed when I sigh then my spirit grows faint you have held my eyelids open I am so troubled.

I cannot speak. I have considered the days of all the years of long ago See, I thought back to the past.

I Will remember my song in the night I will meditate with my heart and my spirit ponders will the Lord reject forever and Will he never be favorable again? has his loving-kindness ceased forever as His promise come to an end forever Has God forgotten to be gracious or has he in anger withdrawn his compassion? Then I said it is my grief that the right hand of the Most High has changed I Shall remember the deeds of the Lord Surely, I will remember your wonders of old I will meditate on all your work and muse on your deeds your way. Oh God is holy What God is great like our God? You are the God who works wonders you have made known your strength among the peoples You have by your power redeemed your people the sons of Jacob and Joseph In other words the psalmist looked at the world in which he lived and there were corrupting rotting society He was in despair. He said Lord.

Are you gonna forget us forever? Then he even goes so far as to say Lord You've changed and then he thought back to the history of God's people and he realized how God had Revived the heart of this psalm is summarized with those words. I Will when the godly man or the godly woman when the godly church becomes discouraged by the apostate conditions of Christianity or the corruption in society in our nation in our world Then we need to remember Our God is a God Who revives you are the God who works wonders you have made your strength known among the people you have revived your people you have by your power redeemed your God has bared his holy arm in reviving power in the times past He can do it again The question is for you and me today and for us as Americans, are we going to follow the path of France? Are we going to follow the path of England? Are we willing to commit ourselves to the Lord or are we willing to hold back? nothing And to repent of our sins and to seek him with all of our minds and all of our lives That's the response the Lord Demands from us And that's the response that the Lord blesses With revival, let's pray together. We mourn at the conditions of our nation Today Oh Lord Not only do we mourn but in some respects We could also feel fearful For the future of our nation These words of the psalmist resonate with us Fear Discomfort and yet Lord you are encouraging us Through your word today to remember and that's what we want to do Through your word By looking back at the history of your church We want to consider to learn and meditate upon the work that you have done in the past and then to so grasp it and bring it to your throne and Plead your mercy again that you will revive your church in these days.

Oh Lord We confess Evangelicalism in America today is sound asleep and Lord we confess that even here in Our own church many of us are asleep flirting with the idols of our lives In practical ways Eliminating the true God from our families and our lives Filling our minds with the garbage of the world Embracing the idols of this age. Oh Lord, forgive us. We ask in these weeks, please clean us up And prepare us to be vessels of blessing to this community to the surrounding area Father we pray for our leaders We pray for our president and our governor and we pray for those who have administrative and legislative and judicial authority over us We pray for those people But they're not your children most of them More than that we pray for your churches not only ours but churches around this County this island the state This nation, yes, and even around the world The churches might get truly serious about the things of God, especially here in America Revive us Lord.

We pray Revive us breathe new life into us by the power of your spirit cause our spiritual corpses to rise into vigorous fresh life Lord, we're not content to stay where we are Revive us we pray in Jesus name The things look bleak Those sins may be great We know that there is an answer and it's found in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ And we think we can sing about it as we prepare for the Lord's table today him number 201 as Kevin comes Please stand to your feet him number 201 201 grace greater than our sin,

please

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