

Audio ■ True Revival Has a Cost

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the need for genuine revival, highlighting the importance of humility, holiness, and the cost of the cross. It stresses the significance of prayer as the catalyst for revival and the necessity of seeking God with desperation. The speaker shares personal experiences and challenges the audience to embrace a revival that may disrupt comfort and image but is essential for spiritual awakening.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, James 4:8, Matthew 6:16, Acts 1:8, Psalm 51:10, 1 Peter 5:6, Ephesians 6:12, Mark 9:29, Joel 2:12

Topics: "Genuine Revival", "The Cost of Discipleship"

Description

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Transcript

You know, I have to be honest with you this evening that I'm actually a little intimidated. Believe it or not, I used to watch videos of Al Whittingill and Keith Daniel and Glenn Shepherds here many, many years ago, a decade ago. And Al was written a book, I think you're quoted, and you said the church is dying on her feet because she's not living on her knees.

And it changed the course of my prayer life many, many years ago. I put that book down and I wept. And we need the power of God back in our lives.

We need the power of God back in our lives. I will tell you as a living witness that God will take the least likely. If you don't think God can do anything with your life, let me remind you, I was just born right over that hill.

I grew up here, alcoholic, barely graduated high school, no seminary degree. And you can beat yourself up. But I stumbled upon a book.

I actually read a lot of books, old books. And it really brought a lot of comfort because when I was praying about being a pastor and just taking it to the Lord, I read a book and it said this, many years ago, 150 years ago, when they were calling a new pastor, they would not, in many cases of course there are exceptions, they would not ask where he went to seminary. They would not ask what type of degree he

has.

The main question was, has he received his baptism of fire? And that's what I sought with all of my heart, with all of my strength, and all of my soul. The heartbeat of revival. I believe that God is raising up people.

And what I'm going to talk to you tonight is, the topic is, what is genuine revival? What is genuine revival? And the irony of conferences like this, a revival conference, the conference itself, and I think Greg would agree, the conference itself is not necessarily a revival. What you're doing, like a farmer, you're plowing the field. You're preparing the hearts.

You're getting Christians ready for the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And you have to till the soil. I used to run heavy equipment and I would rent a big, large John Deere backhoe or excavator and I would tear up the ground.

I would tear up the soil. In order for something to be built, you have to tear up that soil. And that's what these types of conferences are for.

But what is genuine revival? We need to talk about that for a minute. And it was said many times today, throughout the day. But I want to remind you that revival is God reviving His people.

It's God reviving. I love evangelism. I love people coming to know the Lord.

I love people repenting. But that's not revival, often. That's an outworking of revival.

Revival is, God, wilt thou not revive us again that we may rejoice in you? God is reviving His people. And what happens when He revives His people? There's a revision. Not a revision, I should say.

But a revival of truth, of holiness, of these things we don't want to talk about anymore. But they are pivotal to the Christian faith. There's a revival of truth, a revival of holiness, a revival of brokenness and humility.

So I want to just throw out a few things to you tonight where you can think about. I want you to take this test and be honest with yourself and with God, because He knows. Is worship dry and lifeless to you? Are you just giving God lip service, but there's no heart engagement? Is there restlessness? Is there looking and searching but not finding? And you know there's something wrong, something more, but you can't quite put your finger on it.

The Bible is not living and active. It's dead and boring. So what's the Bible? The Bible is living and active.

It's sharper than any double-edged sword. So the problem is never with the Word of God. The problem is never with God.

The problem is within the human heart. We have to look within. Isaiah 64, I love this verse.

Many of you know it. Oh, that you would rend the heavens, that you would come down. I love that verse because it's talking about would you rend? You know what he's saying is would you rip heaven open? My God, we need to rip heaven open.

There needs to be a desperation. There needs to be a downpour of God's Spirit, and we need to pray like the prophets. Would you rend the heavens? Would you come down? And when God comes down, like the brother just prayed, there is a burning fire.

The prophet said, I have this fire in my heart like a burning fire. I'm weary of holding it back, and I cannot. Why? Because I've been set on fire by the living God, and that fire cannot be contained.

It must go out. It must burn, not physically burn, but spiritually burn in the hearts of others, and you want to see revival. You want to see God being honored again.

That's one thing that I have a concern with the direction of our nation is God is mocked, and that's not a good spot to be. Whatever a man soweth, he will reap. We need revival.

We need renewing. We need restoration. Isaiah 57, 15, for this is what the high and exalted one says, he who lives forever, whose name is holy.

Remember that. God is not his number one attribute throughout the Bible. It's not love.

It's holiness. We should walk in here with fear and trepidation and being in the holy presence of God. Even the angels cry, holy, holy, holy.

Isaiah said, I'm a man of unclean lips. I dwell among a people that are unclean as well, and I saw the train of his robe. It filled the entire temple, and as he spoke, as the angel said, holy, holy, holy, that temple began to shake, and the presence and the power of God will come down in that place.

That is revival, but there has to be a desperation. It says, I live, God says, I live in the high and holy place, but also with those who have a contrite and lowly spirit to revive the spirit of the lowly, to revive the heart of the contrite. I will revive the brokenhearted.

I will restore the humble. Those who humble themselves in my presence, I will lift them up. I will exalt them, but if you exalt yourself, I will abase you.

Be careful, Christian. This can creep in in our lives. Worship team, pastoring, preaching, be careful.

Is it about self-exaltation? Because God's not in any of that. He's in humility and in brokenness. He'll revive that person.

Will thou not revive us again? And I can't imagine going through life without the heavens not opening. Could you imagine? Could you imagine being a Christian and knowing nothing of the presence and power of God? Folks, that's in the majority of our churches. That's why church attendance now on a national level is maybe once or twice a month.

See, I remember when the church prayed. I remember when we weren't in a hurry. I remember when people think, what time are you over? They say, how long are we going? Because that revival fire, when the fire of God is in you, you can't shut up.

You're not in a hurry. You want to be with God, not Netflix. You want to be with God, not Facebook, not social media.

God is that all-consuming fire. And I tell people, and I'll tell you tonight, many of you have heard this who attend here, but the hardest part about pastoring, the hardest job for me, ask my wife, is not memorial services, although they're difficult, not counseling, not seeing families broken up, and it's difficult. But the hardest thing is for me to see people dying spiritually with living water just steps away.

You have the, here's the living water. You can't force it in their mouth. Here's the living water.

Would you take of it and eat, drink? Would you take of it and drink? Here's the living water, all-consuming God will dwell you, and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit will overtake you, and he shall come upon you. Interesting, you scholars know that word upon is epi in the Greek. It's an overwhelming upon.

It's coming upon, like bubbling over. That's what people need, is they need the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. And the downpour nourishes, it restores, it replenishes, it revives, it makes alive.

That's what revival does. It awakens the spiritual, those who are sleeping spiritually. And I don't remember who said it earlier, but that was so true.

I was going to note it, but somebody who came up here said, Dan, I think it was you quoting somebody. You're quoting actually Spurgeon. And they said, what exhausting, what is so exhausting is preaching to a dead church.

Now, let me clarify up front that this church is on fire for God. There are so many people here that are on fire for God, and I love pastoring and leading a church that is like that. But it's sheer exhaustion when you try to preach to a dead church.

You might as well preach to a corpse. And God has to awaken that person. So I'm just going to cover a few things.

What is genuine revival? Well, genuine revival begins with desperation. Here's where it begins. Oh, that you would what? Rend the heavens.

See, desperation changes the way we act, right? When you're desperate, you change the way you act. Many of you know I have a background in health and nutrition, and it's amazing how many people change their diet as soon as they're in desperation. The doctor's report, the phone call.

Oh, now I'll change. Now I'm desperate. How much more for God? To be revived, and that's really what I'm trying to do, I believe is personal revival is where we're going to get national revival or corporate revival.

It starts with us. It starts in the house. Like Dave, you said it perfectly.

If my people, if my people, not the next Supreme Court justice, not the next president, if my people humble themselves, I'll honor them. I'll see their humility. So there has to be a desperation.

And here's what happens. We want numbers, but God wants desperation. We want big, but God wants desperation.

And God's looking at the heart. William Booth, who was quoted earlier, said this, Thou Christ, the burning, cleansing flame, send the fire. Thy blood-bought gift today we claim.

Send the fire. Look down and see this waiting host. Give us the promised Holy Ghost.

There's a desperation. It's soul-searching. It's heart-wrenching.

And desperation doesn't come easy. It's not the mind saying, you know, that's a good point. It's the body acting it out.

God, I am so desperate for you. I want to bring back the old truths of fasting and holiness and prayer. Prayer where you might wear grooves in your hardwood floor like some of the old Methodist circuit riders, that they would just, they would wait on God.

There was a desperation, basically saying, if you don't move, we are lost. If you don't move, we're desperate. God, I'm so desperate for you.

Anybody desperate? Desperate for God to change your children or your grandchildren or your spouse? Desperation changes everything. So to have the revival of the heart, desperation must be first and foremost. How long, oh Lord, needs to be your heart crying? And also genuine revival.

This is a good reminder that genuine revival always brings genuine power. Now, why would I even talk about this? Because there's a lot of phony baloney out there. People think it's how loud you pray.

Oh God, now you hear us. He's, no, I'm looking at your heart. I could care less about your volume.

I don't care how high you jump. I want to see how straight you walk when you come down. Genuine power.

When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall what? Receive power. Dunamis, the word dynamite. There's a power.

There's an anointing. There's an unction. The gates of hell can try to storm us, but it doesn't matter.

Like John Wesley said, give me a hundred men. I don't care if they're clergy or laity and we will storm the gates of hell because there is genuine power. Do you have that power? Do you have that fire? Do you have that peace? Do you have that joy? And let me tell you this, when you have the fire of the spirit, you cannot remain passive.

You cannot remain silent. Another desire I have, and I think God gives us different desires for different reasons instead of judging each other, we should just thank God that he gives us different desires, but I have a passion for our nation. I have a passion for how far America has drifted off course.

Our family tradition, tradition we can't prove it, is with, I'm linked with Pilgrim White, the first baby born on the Mayflower in Cape Cod Bay, and I read the Puritans, I read the Pilgrims, I see how far we've drifted and having that national, that desperate call for revival, that desperate call for repentance, and the culture war is really about this. A culture war that we're seeing, they want to silence the voice of truth. Truth, would you shut up? Pastors, you can talk about everything except the controversial stuff.

Truth gets truth out of the public square, get truth out of the media, truth, and that's why there's a culture war, because truth can't shut up. You might as well stop Niagara Falls and trying to stop the power of the Holy Spirit going through a man or woman filled with the presence and power of God. That can't be stopped.

It wasn't stopped 2,000 years ago, and it's not going to be stopped today. Revival often even comes from persecution. Ask Sister Sarah, why is the church in China growing? Why are they weeping when they receive Bibles? Why are they in all-night prayer meetings? I said, do you see healings there? Oh, all the time.

Well, why don't we see them here? Because we're not desperate. We've got Blue Shield, and Kaiser, and Visa, and antibiotics, probiotics, all the gadgets, all the goodies. So genuine revival, remember, is genuine power, but it's not power to be loud, and weird, and crazy.

It is Holy Spirit. Power is boldness. It's boldness for the gospel.

It's dying for your faith. It's contending for truth in a postmodern culture. That's what we are doing.

That's a logo we had for this church many years ago, contending for truth in a postmodern culture. And truth can't be negotiated with, right? We've talked about that before. Truth can't be bargained with.

It can't be negotiated with. It stands as a lighthouse. It stands as a beacon, reminding us to get back to the absolute truth of God's Word.

Number three, genuine revival cannot be worked up. It must be brought down. We can promote it.

We can push it. We can get the latest gadgets, and the best worship teams, and it's not going to happen. It has to be brought down from heaven.

God's fire falls on a prepared people, on an altar where there's a sacrifice, and God will honor that. Genuine revival cannot be worked up. It must be brought down.

I love reading books on revival. One is entitled Open Windows, and it says this, the sacredness and the glory of the experience of revival is not easy to speak of, especially on this subject, to any group of Christian worker unless they have been prepared by the Spirit to receive the message. You know what shocked me more than anything? Let me just tell you briefly what happened to me.

It was 1999, right over this hill on Avenue M14. I remember the house. I remember the chair.

I remember the floor that I ended up on weeping, and weeping, and God just pouring into me, and pouring into me, and the Holy Spirit. There's no way to explain it. It was just unbelievable, tremendous joy in the midst of pain.

The Bible is alive and living, and everything's changed. Now Christians are calling me Jesus freak, religious, holy roller. Whoa, you're extreme.

No, the problem is you've never received the fire. See, that's normal Christianity. Being filled with the Spirit of God is normal Christianity.

What you see in many churches is not normal Christianity. Paul would be appalled. Peter would have some scathing rebukes.

James would be, what? Wake up. Wake up, church. So it has to be brought down.

You have to rely on that. We have to get to a point to where we say, oh, that you would rend the heavens, that you would come down, that even the mountains would shake at your presence. That's revival saying, God, you have to move.

You have to move. We are so desperate. It doesn't matter what Facebook says.

It doesn't matter if you bring in the best speakers. Unless you move, we will not be built up, and we will not be encouraged. We will not be filled with the fire of God.

Well, why does this matter? It matters because we must stand and hold the expectation, and not try to manufacture anything. I mean, I don't want to rebuke either conservative or charismatic, but one of my concerns with hyper-Pentecostal charismatic churches is there's this thought process that you can manufacture the moving of the Holy Spirit. If you just get a little, you know, and just start loud preaching, and doing things, and oh, he's moving.

Well, be careful. Be careful, because again, it's boldness. It's testimony.

I've noticed the closer I get to God, the more I want to fall on my face. I want to be in his presence. I want to be in his presence in my life, and in my family's life, and in my home.

I've noticed too, often, quiet stillness and waiting upon him loads the chamber. That's why we're waiting sometimes. That's why worship isn't maybe what you're used to.

You have to wait. Why? Because there's a travail taking place. There's a fighting the flesh that's taking place.

You're loading the chamber. Many of you have been around a while. You've probably heard that saying that we can be straight as a gun barrel, theologically, but just as empty.

We can be straight as a gun barrel, theologically, but just as empty. And I asked security here before. They won't let me do it, but I want to bring my shotgun up on stage.

But show you. It's nothing. It's nothing with nothing in the chamber.

But if I pull out that three-inch magnum and put it in the chamber, see, now it's got power. Now every one of you be running out of here, because what's he doing? But what's the difference? Empty gun? Then I load it, and it's got the power. See, that's the power of the Holy Spirit.

You can be theologically correct, and I love theology. I study theology. Theology is the foundation of the church, the study of God, theology, pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit.

But you can be straight as a gun barrel, theologically, and just as empty. And I can spot the modern-day Pharisee just as easy as anyone else, because they love their religiosity. They love their pride, and they love to debate, and they love to just hold their head a little too high, and they haven't been broken by God.

See, it takes broken men to break men. Thank God for brokenness. You should.

Thank God for brokenness. And don't give up on this next generation. Everybody's against the millennials.

Oh my Lord, they just haven't been broken yet. They just have not been broken yet. That's why this matters.

This is so important, because we must stand in holy expectation and not try to manufacture anything. And number four, this is so important, genuine revival. This is a biggie, because here's where the rubber is going to meet the road.

It's easy to sit here, isn't it? Air conditioning, listening to speakers, but genuine arrival. If you truly want God to fill you mightily, have that anointing, that unction of the Holy Spirit terms, I'm not afraid of, because the Bible talks about the unction, the anointing, the empowerment, the endowment. Genuine revival has a cost.

There is a cost. I'll be honest with you. Joel Olsteen's sermons are not going to cut it in these dire times.

I'm just being upfront. I'm not putting anybody down. I'm just telling you the truth.

That's not going to cut it in these dire times. There's a cost. Isn't there a cost to everything? Look at how an athlete trains.

I have friends who've trained for the Olympics, played professional sports. They would embarrass us, training for a crown that perishes. So there's a cost.

We have this idea that Christianity should be comfortable, but there's always a cost. Somebody said, carry your cross and follow me. We know who that was, Jesus bidding us to come and die to self.

And here's what the key is to start this off. It's always, always, always started or fueled by humility. And that's why I'm so glad even talking to the men here and talking to Brother Greg, because if any of us dared, dared to come up here and act as if it's a competition, act of who's going to preach better, who's going to, we've already lost.

I mean, there's a story of a young man. He just got graduated seminary. He was so filled with arrogance.

He had his three points. He actually did an inductive, immediate, and a different approach to his preparation. His sermon was prepared.

It was just polished. You could actually put this in a magazine. It was so wonderful, and he was going to let them have it.

It's my first day on the job. I'm going to let him have it. And he walked up, up the stairs, and he came over.

He didn't really know where to start. His notes were off a little bit, and the scriptures weren't on the screen. And just in utter, utter humiliation and failure, he walked down the steps and went and sat down, utterly humiliated, utterly broken.

And the old elder next to him, he said, young man, if you would have went up the steps the same way you came down, you would have succeeded. If you would have went up in that brokenness and humility and saying, God, if you don't move, I'm lost. I know it sounds funny to people, but I pray that when I preach.

I say, God, you've got to move. Many of you know I've struggled with dyslexia. I can't pronounce words very well.

I hate to read in public. But I see now that it's through that that God gets all the glory and all the credit. The greater the brokenness, often the greater the anointing, because God will break, just like that olive oil.

Where does the oil come from? The olive is being crushed. The person perfume from the flower is being crushed and stomped on. And then from that, the fragrance of the flower that was, that was beat to death, literally.

I think it was Richard Baxter, Puritan. He said, I preach as a dying man to dying men. Most of the pastors know that, especially in this room, you preach, we preach as dying men to dying men.

Humble and broken before him. But just remember, God does the opening, you prepare the soil. So there's a cost, the cost of humility.

Let me just mention why this is so important. Because we come in, we judge worship. We judge the appearance of others.

We look others up and down, looking for any sign of carnality. We're eager to show off our theological persuasions and our debate. Christians struggle for power, for prestige, don't they? They want the prominent positions.

They want to be noticed. They want their name on the PowerPoint. God says, I'm in none of that.

You want revival? Humble yourself. Pastor, you want to grow your church? Empty yourself. Stop worrying about numbers.

And stop worrying about the glory of God. So there's a cost of humility. There's a cost of holiness.

Oh, I could preach a whole sermon on this one. Whatever happened to holiness? It's not a weird thing. Holiness is coming out from among them being separate.

I look different. What I watch is different. How I conduct myself is different.

I want to be filled with the Spirit of God, not filled with the things of the world. So I live differently. I'm holy and set apart for God's glory.

So God says, I see a broken vessel. I see a humble vessel. I see a man set apart for my glory.

I see him working on holiness, not perfection. But I see his heart's in the right direction. He's holy, he's set apart for me.

But people often say, and they tell me this, but I haven't done anything wrong. Well, I can assure you, you have not done everything right. Just saying that statement is full of pride.

I like what Dan, you said yesterday that really impacted me. You said, be careful because an hour or two spent with God can be erased in 10 minutes of watching the wrong thing on TV. It's funny, when I talk about these things, he's radical.

He's radical extreme. I write locally for our paper often, and Victorville paper and articles and Christian Post and Charisma News and Hello Christian. And I wrote one locally a few years ago.

I could not believe the backlash. It was something like, darkness should not entertain the church. And I talked about witchcraft, Harry Potter movies, darkness, casting spells, and all these things that should not entertain the church.

We should not be watching these things and enjoying these things and allowing our kids to watch it. That's dark, that's demonic. Who do you think came after me? Christians.

You're legalistic. No, I just want to feel the spirit of God. That's what I want.

I want the presence of God himself, or I don't want to have anything to do with religion. Was that toes or I don't know. But that's where we were.

It's that desperation. Yes, I'm going to look different. I'm going to be odd because that's what holiness involves.

You look different. That's the point. That's the whole point.

There's a sweet smelling aroma of Christ on you because you look different. There's a difference. There's a distinction.

That's why Paul told the church come out from among them and what be separate, be set apart. Now I can use you. So there's a cost.

There has to holiness has to be a focus. And I use the interesting word here on the cost of holding, holding. Let me explain that for a minute.

I believe in any revival, personal revival, corporate revival, there is a season of testing. Having done all stand, stand, hold. And that's what we're doing in our culture.

God just says, you hold, hold, hold the line, hold it, hold it. I know you don't see me moving and you're weeping in the morning praying. I know, but hold it, hold the fort down.

Leonard Ravenhill said, we want a painless Pentecost. I don't want 10 days in the upper room. I want 10 minutes and let the fire fall.

God says, no, I want to test your heart. Will you wait one day or two days or three days? Even if you don't see me moving, do you trust me? Because having done all stand, therefore, stand, therefore, and fight the good fight of faith. I haven't called you to leave the battle.

I haven't called you to trust your feelings. I've called you to trust in almighty God. That is our only hope.

You have to hold the ground, hold it, hold it, hold it. That's why the pulpits can say gay marriage, not okay. I don't care what the Supreme court says.

You hold the ground. That's what's happening. The churches are not holding the ground.

Not with legalism, not being mean, but to say that is wrong. See, I made a mistake. I read a lot of early American history and it was the pulpit who used to direct the nation.

The pulpit was the conscience of the nation. Here's what's right. Here's what's wrong.

And I stumbled upon, I can't remember his name, Alex de Tocqueville. He came over from France and they said, tell us why America is so great. And he said, I looked in her boundless prairies and her fertile fields.

It wasn't there. I visited her harbors and her gold mines. It wasn't there.

I searched everywhere. It was not until I went to the pulpits of America and I heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness that I understood the secret to her success. America is great because she is good.

And if she ever ceases to be good, she will cease to be great. And a fire lit up inside of me when the pulpits were aflame with righteousness, not political correctness. You've got guys at the largest churches in our nation saying, well, this is okay.

We don't really read that anymore. Do we need the 10 commandments still? My God, do you know anything about the power and presence of God? Do you fear the Lord? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. I just felt bad doing that.

Holy moly. Let me pick this up. Sorry, Glenn, I saw you watching that one.

But it's contagious, isn't it? Revival is contagious. Preachers have got to get back to holiness. I love what E.M. Bounds said.

Have you ever read E.M. Bounds? Read anything on prayer by E.M. Bounds and you'll feel very convicted quickly. He said life-giving, life-giving preaching costs the preacher much. What I'm doing right now, it costs the preacher much.

Death to self, crucifixion to the world. And the travail of his own soul. Crucified preaching can only give life.

Crucified preaching can only come from a crucified man. Life-giving preaching costs the preacher much. But life-giving living costs the Christian much.

We need to tell people the truth. Yeah, it's going to cost you, but it's going to be the best experience you've ever experienced in your life. So on this issue, we quote 2 Chronicles 7.14. Often, of course, many of you know it.

If my people are called by my name and humble themselves and pray and seek my face. It's interesting. The more I read through the Bible, many of you, the older books, I think we're also missing an important element called fasting.

Well, that did not go over very well. Let me tell you why this is the missing jewel. Because fasting is the only thing that will beat up the flesh.

You're starving your flesh. You're saying, no, no more. I'm starving the fuel source to sin.

I'm starving the flesh. It's not legalism. It's biblical.

Jesus said, when you pray, when you fast. Paul fasted. Peter fasted.

It's part of that Christian discipline. It helps to discipline the body, and it affects our spiritual life in a very deep way. But before I get to the end here, I want to just share a word that really leaped out to me many years ago.

It's not on here, but it's tied in. If my people humble themselves and pray, and I guess it is on there. If they seek my face, go back and look up the word seek in Hebrew.

The image you have is of losing your child at the mall. Would you go get lunch and then go look for the child? Well, let's go eat first. Let's go run some errands.

Everything would change. Everything. You're no longer hungry.

You don't have to use the restroom. You're pushing people out of your way. I've got to find that child.

It's to recover. It means to recover, to find what has been lost. So we read, oh yeah, that sounds great.

No, you have no idea what that really means. It means, God, I'm going to go to bed early and turn off the tube and fast and seek your face. I might not feel like it, but the flesh has got to submit.

I'm going to seek you with all of my heart, with all of my strength, and with all of my mind. And please don't beat yourself up. It's not about perfection.

I'm not talking about perfection. I'm talking about the direction of your heart. Is it set on God to seek him? And then number five, pray as if revival depends upon it, because it does.

We have to get back to where prayer was a priority. Gauge a church this way. There's as much time given to prayer as preaching.

My house shall be called a house of preaching. My house shall be called a house of worship. My house shall be called a house of fellowship and social functions.

The house of God is the house of prayer. And actually, if you remember, in context, it's what was happening in the church that upset Christ. He said, you've made this a den of thieves, but this house is a house of prayer.

Getting back to prayer, that's why it is so important. Prayer is communication. You're communicating with God.

It's rebuilding that relationship, as I quoted Al earlier. That the church is dying on her feet because she is not living on her knees. And you know, I know this, when God brings revival, prayer has always been the catalyst.

They waited 10 days in an upper room, then fire fell. I can take you, Dan quoted Robert Murray McShaney, his prayer life. David Brainerd, ministering to the Native American Indians, his prayer life.

Daniel Rowlands, the Welsh revivals of the 1700s, and going up to when Martin Luther prayed. When Martin Luther prayed, the Reformation was sparked. You can go back to Whitecliffe, Tyndale, and Huss, and fire was sparked through the prayer room.

When John Knox prayed, you know what John Knox prayed? He was so bold. He wouldn't just, oh Lord. He would go before God and say, God, give me Scotland for the cause of Christ, or I shall die.

Now that's prayer. Who in this room is saying, God, give me America for the cause of Christ. Heck, give me California.

Just give me LA County, where there's more filth and disgust in this area than most of California, with the child sex trafficking, and the perversion. That should get us on our face before almighty God, crying out for our children, and saying, God, move in this place. Shook, shake the continent.

D.L. Moody shook the continent by his prayers. Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards. Come on, why do we read about them? Because they were men and women of prayer.

Amy Carmichael on the mission field. She said, everything changed when I started to pray, and was filled with the Spirit of God. Pray, pray, pray.

When you're done, pray again. It has to be the heartbeat of prayer. So let me say this in closing.

You may feel dead and buried, but don't give up. Remember, once a farmer plants that seed, he said, God now ran the heavens. God now ran the heavens.

And I believe, there's another revival book. These guys were praying in a room, and he said, God, your word says this. You're a covenant-keeping God, and your honor's at stake.

And revival hit that place, because God's word will not return void. I truly believe if we seek, we will find. If we knock, he will answer.

So if you're dead and buried, and you feel spiritually dead, that can be revitalized tonight, right now. It's just a change of heart that says, God, I was wrong. And I want to just throw this out there.

There's also the cost of the cross. Have you embraced the cross? Have you repented of your sin and believed? We always assume everybody's in the church, and it's saved. No, I found that's not the case.

Many people are playing church, and you might be spiritually dead, because you've never been spiritually alive. You've never been born again. You have to repent and believe in the gospel.

So God, come down, must be the desperate cry of your heart. This is going to be a little humiliating, what I read. I thought I forgot about it.

My wife, you know, you got to love wives, reminded me about it last week. But it was about eight years ago. I actually wrote a book, Desperate for More of God, and this is in the book.

I was praying for revival, like we are now. I was desperate for it, like we are now. And God hit me with a right hook.

I remember sitting in a chair, and I couldn't stop writing. And when I was done, I was done. It was as if he was saying this, Shane, you don't want revival.

It will ruin your schedule, your dignity, your image, and your reputation as a person who is well balanced. Men will weep throughout the congregation. Women will travail because of the, or will wail because of the travail of their own souls.

Young adults will cry like children at the magnitude of their sin. With the strength of, with the strength of my heart, the worship team will not be able to continue. Time will seem to stand still.

You won't be able to preach because of the emotions flooding your own soul. You'll struggle to find words but only find tears. Even the most dignified and reserved among you will be broken and humbled as little children.

The proud and self-righteous will not be able to stand in my presence. The doubter and unbeliever will either run for fear or fall on their knees and worship me. There can be no middle ground.

The church will never be again, will never be the same again. Do you really want revival? And I can honestly say tonight that I do. Because those of us who are conservatives don't like to be too fanatical.

Those who are fanatical don't like to be too conservative, but I'm not, I don't care about my image. I want the glory of God. And I will tell you when real revival breaks out, there's always a word spoken against it.

It's not pretty, it's not clean. My God, God is breaking people. He's revealing sin.

He's showing them their need, their desperate need for Him. You think that's clean and pretty and quiet? God help us. So I believe many times my own theology prevented revival.

I don't want people to see me crying up at the altar. We're getting too carried away. I don't want to be labeled charismatic.

So God says, you can't have it both ways, sir. If you really want revival, prepare yourself, prepare your people, and I will answer. So it begs the question tonight, are you dying spiritually? And the irony is that those who mock revival are the very ones who need it.

And often it's those who have the most theological background. They have theology, but not fire. I don't care if you preach as well as Billy Graham and have a PhD in church history, do you have fire? Do you have this all-consuming passion for God? I mean, God's dealt with me on this so many times.

I used to think men were kind of, kind of, I don't want to use the wrong word, but feminine. Feminine, maybe, because my background is bench pressing, 400 pounds, steroids, my own injections, bodybuilding world. Real men beat up people.

They fight. They drink a lot. And God said, I'll never raise, I'll never raise my hands.

Mm. That's why we need to be careful not to judge people, because sometimes when we're raising our hands, we're saying, God, you delivered me. You set me free.

If it was not for the grace of God, I would be drunk in Lancaster. I would be dead. I'd be buried in that cemetery.

And raising hands is just acknowledging, God, I acknowledge you. I'm dependent upon you. I'm nothing.

It's a step of humility. And I'm not telling you to do that. I'm just saying a personal struggle I've had to go through, because as men, sometimes we think worship is for women.

Have you read David? Have you killed Philistines? And have you? We'll leave it at that. But that was a man's man. These men, Elijah, called down fire from heaven.

These men were worshipers. See, I believe men also start to need to start leading in this area. Men need to be the worshipers.

Men need to, our wives, our children, need to see us on our face before Almighty God, and crying out to God, and saying, laying hands on our children. See, I remember when they used to lay hands and say, Devil, this one's not yours. This one's not yours.

I'm saying all night, I'm turning off Facebook, and I'm going to spend time with you. You're not taking our nation. You're not taking our children.

You're not taking our families. And I truly believe that. Pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to

the obedience of Christ.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. They're prayer. That's how the prodigal son's going to come home.

I talk to parents all the time. Would you fast, and would you pray for your kids? Oh, I don't have time for that. How bad do you want it? My God, where is the church of the New Testament when we are on fire for God? When we knew God was going to answer, He had to answer.

We're desperate for more of God.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/xeURSWv7Sog.mp4>

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