

Our Only Hope - a Mighty Move of God's Spirit

by Shane Idleman

The only hope for revival and spiritual awakening is a mighty move of God's Spirit, which enables believers to hunger and thirst for righteousness and live boldly for Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, John 16:13, Acts 1:8, Acts 3:19, Acts 8:29, Romans 8:26, 2 Corinthians 3:6, Ephesians 5:18, James 4:8

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Revival"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgent need for revival and the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in today's society, as the world drifts further from God. He warns against falling into the traps of dead formality or wild fanaticism, stressing the importance of pursuing scriptural holiness filled with faith, the Holy Spirit, wisdom, and a sound mind. Idleman shares his personal testimony of transformation through repentance and complete trust in Christ, highlighting the power of the Holy Spirit to radically change lives and ignite a hunger for God.

Transcript

The need to address revival and the vital role of the Holy Spirit is as relevant today as it has been throughout church history. As America falls deeper into depravity and further from God, the need to be awakened from our spiritual slumber has never been greater. Our only hope is a mighty move of God's Spirit...a revival of the spiritual condition of His people. But George D. Watson cautions, "The true saints of God, who have clear heads, and pure, warm hearts, have in all generations had to walk between the two extremes of cold formality on the one side, and wild, ranting fanaticism on the other. Dead formality and the false fire of fanaticism are both Satan's counterfeits, and he does not care into which extreme the soul plunges, just so he can prevent it from having that scriptural type of holiness which is 'full of faith,' and 'full of the Holy Spirit,' and 'full of wisdom,' and of a 'sound mind'."

Watson masterfully describes how God's Spirit can be suppressed or misrepresented. To clarify, the Holy Spirit is not some weird, mystical force. He is part of the triune nature of God. The Bible says that the Spirit intercedes, leads, guides, teaches, and so on (cf. Romans 8:26; Acts 8:29; John 16:13). He enables and empowers us to hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to boldly live for Christ. God's Word becomes living and active in the life of the believer who is continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Charles Spurgeon adds, "What can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it, and what can we do without the Spirit of God?"

By age 28, my life was filled with what the world offered, but I was empty inside. I was at a turning point. I could choose to turn to God or continue to reject Him. By God's grace, I repented and put my complete trust in Christ. Although far from perfect, God radically transformed and redirected my life through the power of the Holy Spirit. He can do the same for you. Acts 1:8 identifies this experience: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me...." The power of the Holy Spirit is like dynamite that ignites a hunger for God so intense that every aspect of life is changed--we become bold not passive; stable not fanatical; and committed not wavering.

Within the months that followed this experience my passion and purpose for life became clearer than ever. I then understood Acts 3:19, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing [revival] may come from the presence of the Lord." I truly experienced this infilling of the Spirit that is seen throughout the Scriptures (e.g., a transformed life resulting in a love for God and His Word). From this experience, came books, articles, speaking engagements, and ultimately, a church.

I, like many Christians, tend to be "safely" conservative when considering the power of the Holy Spirit; however, Scripture clearly supports the miraculous work of the Spirit today. I'm open but cautious. We need sound doctrine and the power of the Holy Spirit. As I've said before, it is possible to be "Bible taught," but not "Spirit led"--straight as a gun barrel theologically, but just as empty. The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:6). Don't get me wrong, theological and expositional teachings are essential to Christian living, but how often are we encouraged to fast and pray as well as study? How often are we taught brokenness and repentance in addition to translating the Greek language? How often are we taught the surrendered life? We can sometimes be more concerned about a Master's Degree than a degree from the Master.

The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and empowered Jesus and the Apostles. We are desperately remiss if we fail to recognize His vital role in our lives. I agree with Leonard Ravenhill, "We need to close every church in the land for one Sunday and cease listening to a man so we can hear the groan of the Spirit which we in our lush pews have forgotten." Granted, we have gifted leaders who are led by the Spirit, but we, individually, need to spend serious time searching and listening to God.

Sadly, we often pray on the run and scurry through a 5 minute devotional, yet we devote hours to television, movies, and the Internet, and we wonder why we know little of the power of the Spirit. We must spend much time seeking God if we are to continue in the power of the Holy Spirit. Sadly, the only thing holding many churches together today is social activity, not the activity of the Spirit. Our only hope is a mighty move of God's Spirit...a revival among His people.

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