

The Obedience That Prepares the Way

by Wesley Duetel

The key to revival is praying and obeying God, and it is essential for us to be willing to obey His voice and take steps of obedience in order to experience a mighty revival.

Duration: 26:48

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:33, Acts 5:29, James 4:10, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of obedience in preparing the way for the Lord. They highlight the power of prayer and obedience in experiencing revival. The speaker shares the story of Mrs. Coalville, who obeyed God by reaching out to young people and leading them to the Lord. This act of obedience eventually led to a powerful revival where hundreds of people were saved, all because of one person's willingness to obey God. The sermon encourages listeners to not hold back and to be open to whatever God wants them to do.

Transcript

This wonderful afternoon has been emphasizing the things which I have felt God put upon my heart for this afternoon. I don't know how successfully I will be able to select the highlights of what I wish to say in the power of the Spirit. Obedience in the preparation of the way of the Lord.

For some weeks, in my mind, many times, over and over, my own recent variety of the good gospel hymn, Trust and Obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. What has been echoing in my heart even this afternoon while sitting here is, pray and obey, for there's no other way to see mighty revival but to pray and obey, and it takes both. You've heard me talking a lot about praying, and I have given some illustrations about obeying.

If I could just pick out and point to you, this afternoon we have been hearing person after person they had to obey God. There was something they had to do in obedience to God. It may be to ask God to wake them up in the middle of the night, accept the challenge to do so.

It may be to invite someone to come. Many other related things that could be told. The passage of scripture is the one that you've already heard this afternoon.

If my people, who are called by my name, if my people, only God can bring revival. He says, if my people. So there's our obedience in this also.

Even prayer is a matter of obedience. If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and go beyond that and really seek my face and turn from their wicked ways. Those are everyone's a point of obedience.

Then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Praise God. In every revival, if you read between the lines, and often it's very visible, there are the occasions of praying and obeying.

There are those occasions, we had one point out to us today, when we have very little record of who was doing the praying. And then other cases where we know a lot about who was doing the praying. And what God did.

Of the illustrations which I have given to you already this week. I'm trying to keep my word, but I watch where I can see it. The 1858-59 revival that swept across America was a revival of prayer and obedience.

Some revivals have been marked unusually by singing. The Welsh revival in Wales was heavily a singing revival. And some revivals have been marked by the preaching of sermons.

And God has raised up people that have often been called revivalists. I don't particularly like that term, but we know what we're talking about. God lays his hand upon someone, makes them, I like to think of them as a person of revival.

That is so endowed by the Spirit of God, summoned by the Spirit of God, overwhelmed by the Spirit of God, that they seem to take revival with them. They seem to take an unusual sense of God's presence. Not to draw attention to them, but God honors their touch place after place after place.

With revival. Thank God for those people. They may preach, they may do other things, but God uses them to bring the touch of revival.

People of revival. But those people have to keep obeying God. And they have to keep sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

And they have to keep praying and fasting. And then, and fasting, by the way, is another area of obedience. We could take a whole service and point out how God has used fasting in revival.

In a sense, that revival broke, opened in two places. Mrs. Colville was a Baptist lady in England, who in 1856, in the spring, summer, and autumn, began obeying God, around Ballymena in Northern Ireland. And among the things that God used her in her obedience, was to lead a young man by the name of James McQuilken to the Lord.

And then God led him to buy a book. It was the life of George Miller. And he read that, and then he began to feel a hunger in his heart.

For a spiritual companion. And he began to pray for a spiritual companion. Someone who would have the same prayer burden.

Someone who would have the same hunger and desire as he. And he found one. And the two prayed.

They said, we ought to have more. And then it became four. And they kept praying, it ought to be more.

And it became more. This began in a place, a village in Northern Ireland, Ulster, called Kells. So the Kells prayer meeting went on.

Every Friday night. The same month that they began obeying God there. In Boston, a man appointed to do certain special Christian work, and co-porter.

He began to obey God, and put a notice up on a door, if anyone wanted to come for a prayer meeting. Two parts of the world, at the same time, the Spirit of God was moving people to do the same thing. That's the hand of God.

You can't organize things like that. And so the prayer meetings began in the United States. And these began in Northern Ireland.

And then in February, 1859, James McQuilkin took two of the original prayer group with him. To a town called Ahoag Hill. And I'm interested, I've never been there.

But I will be there in a few weeks to speak in the Presbyterian church. I don't know what church, or where the revival began. But yes, it was.

They were invited by a Presbyterian minister. And he was opposed by some of his people. Who said, you should not invite a layman.

But he felt led, and he obeyed God. He heard about these revived boys. And he was led, he obeyed God, and invited the layman.

That's February. By March, there were such crowds, they couldn't even meet in the church. And 3,000 people stood outside in the chilling rain.

While these boys obeyed God. And the Holy Spirit came upon the service. And hundreds fell on their knees in the mud.

And revival began. And at least 700 turned to the Lord. And it was said that there, they thought there was not one family in Ahoag Hill.

But what, there was at least one revived person. Who found Christ and caught revival fire at that time. Respected people, moral people, dedicated people.

And drunkards, blasphemers, harlots, thieves, Roman Catholics and Protestants. Older people and children were moved upon by the Spirit. This was starting at the same time the prayer meeting movement started in the States.

And in the States, in a matter of just several months. There were so many revivals in, so many prayer meetings in progress. There was no prayer organization, no committee.

No evangelist, apart from Charles Finney. Who continued his own meetings, which were being made revival meetings. But otherwise, this was a spontaneous thing by the Spirit of God moving people to obey.

And every new place where a revival prayer meeting began. It was someone obeying God. Someone who felt prompted, someone who obeyed God.

In four months time, not only in hundreds of smaller places, towns and villages. But there were noon united prayer meetings in Boston, Baltimore, Washington DC, Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, New Orleans, Vicksburg, Memphis, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago, some of the larger cities. All started by individuals obeying God.

Had no human persons solicitation. Had no periodical suggesting that people ought to do this. But just individual people being moved on by the Spirit to obey God.

And as they stepped out obeying God. Even the President of the United States attended many days. There were actually eight different prayer meetings across Washington DC going on at the same time at noon.

Each one is a case of someone obeying God. The country became blanketed by people obeying God. By February, the Methodists reported 8,000 conversions in one week.

By March, Louisville reported 17,000 Baptist conversions in three weeks. By June, incomplete figures of reports which were already coming in was over 100,000 people who had never been church members before, who were born again. And all of these meetings were led not by the clergy.

But they started by individuals who started to obey God. And without formal structures, they kept on obeying God. And people began coming.

For nearly two months at the height of the revival, they were being converted at the rate of 50,000 people per week. In a revival without a leader, but the Holy Spirit. But in a revival where hundreds of people were obeying God, each in their own area doing their own thing.

For two years, there was an average of 10,000 people every week. Coming to God in this movement of obedience across the United States. No campaigns, no organized movement, no coordination, no structure, no revival evangelism, no revival evangelists.

It was not a move planned by man or guided by man. It was God, the Holy Spirit. One person traveled across the United States, and he said, every place the train stopped, he asked questions.

And they said, oh, yes, there's revival prayer meetings going on here. 150 towns in Massachusetts, 200 in the state of New York, 200 in the state of Ohio, 150 in the state of Indiana, 150 in the state of Illinois. These things were going on.

Each one, that would be 150 people at least who ventured out to obey God. Not waiting to be appointed, but calling for prayer. And the people responded.

The Spirit of God was using obedience. It was a revival of widespread obedience to God. In Columbus, Ohio, someone obeyed God and got up in the prayer meeting and said, I believe we ought to pray for our schools.

Is anybody praying for your schools here in Canada? They began to pray for the schools. And revival came to the schools in Columbus, Ohio. One high school reported that all but two of the students had been born again.

That story got to Toledo, Ohio. Someone said, let's pray for the schools here in Toledo. And the same thing happened in Toledo.

This was a movement of obedience, holy obedience. I've told you how that unseen cloud of the presence of God and the awesomeness of God's influence hung over the eastern part of the United States, even out 150, 200, 250 miles to sea. Ships coming within that area began to feel the presence of God.

And people began to obey God. In Northern Ireland, the Kells prayer meeting had begun. But it really became a national movement of the Spirit when someone suggested in the assembly of the Presbyterian church, we ought to send two men to America to investigate and see if this is genuine.

And so they chose the man they had chosen to be their next moderator. He wasn't moderator yet. He was the moderator elect and one other brother.

And they came to America and they saw and they hurried back and they started obeying God and people began obeying God and revival began spreading across there. This was a revival of holy obedience. There's been lots of prayer.

There's lots of prayer today. I don't know what the next revival is going to be like. We cannot predict and we cannot prescribe.

But we have the same God today. And I want to say today, whatever he says to you, do it. I pray every day for my dear friend, General Paul Rader, the head of the Salvation Army.

And I pray personally every day for God to send revival to sweep through the Salvation Army. We need it. We need it.

We need it in our colleges. I pray God to send that kind of revival here. Thank God, as Brother Bill said, that we're moving to the Spirit in about 30 colleges last year.

Not nearly as many as in 1970, but praise God. How far does that go? It takes somebody obeying God in each college. The revival that began at Asbury, I know the man used of God.

They had a student testimony prayer chapel. And one teacher, faculty member felt impressed. He obeyed God.

He went up to the platform, a student on one side. He said, it may be that some student would like to pray. That's all he said.

Just like that, people began moving forward. No one expected them to have a prayer meeting at that time. It was time to go to classes.

But this dear teacher was led of God and he obeyed God. He said, there may be that some student would want to pray, Dr. Hunter. And people began to come and the Holy Spirit took over for days.

Who will obey God? What will God ask you to do in your church or your community? Or among your friends or to start a small prayer group? Or among your staff? What will God do? Are we going to obey God? It's when we have that hunger for God and that prayer concern and we're holding on to God. And then when the Holy Spirit begins to tap us and give, you know, we can quench the spirit and say, oh, what would people think if I did that? It's not what people think. It's what does God want? You say, oh, God, use somebody else.

Listen, are you available to God? Oh, may God give us a new sense of holy obedience. Holy obedience to dare to obey God. Pray and obey, for there's no other way to have mighty revival, but to pray and obey.

I may not live to see it. I may not live till tomorrow. I would long to see it come.

But I pray that soon, mighty revival, a sweeping revival. Thank God for all the touches of revival. We're not denying that.

But I pray that soon, a mighty revival of more intense, more anointed prayer groups. You don't always have to feel an overwhelming sense of the presence of God. Often, it's very ordinary obeying God.

You might not feel overwhelmed by the spirit of God when you get up in the middle of the night to pray, but you're obeying. You're doing what God wants you to do. God, give us the beginning touches of a revival of holy obedience that will release the presence and power of God in all.

I don't know what the next wave of revival is going to be, but I pray there may be a wave of revival. I pray that God may use the Canadian Revival Fellowship. I pray that he may use a group like the Promise Keepers in the States.

I pray that other organizations and other groups may obey God whatever he tells them to do. I don't know where the spark is going to come. It hasn't come yet, like we wait to see.

But I believe the tinder is being gathered. People are getting ready. And I pray that soon the spirit of God may be poured out and we'll all rejoice.

Let's begin in your organization or mine. Let it begin in your church or mine. Let it begin in your city or mine.

Let it begin any place. Just, Lord, send the fire. Salvation Army have that blessed song they call sometimes the hymn of a general.

Send the fire, send the fire, send the fire. Most people don't know that. Beautiful, beautiful.

Oh, God, send the fire, send the fire, send the fire. And as we come to the latter part of this beautiful Sunday afternoon, I pray that God will send the fire. And I pray that you will be available to receive the fire.

And I pray that you will be ready to run with the fire and obey God whatever he says to you to do. Mrs. Colville obeyed God in going around the town and finding young people. And one of those that she won to the Lord that became the one who got felt led to buy that book on the life of George Mueller.

And as he read that, he saw the role of a prayer partner, a prayer companion, and he prayed for God to give him and God gave him one. And then they prayed for others. Two became four and more.

And then sometime then the invitation came. I in Belfast and one of the meetings, God laid hold of a butcher, 20,000 people stood there and hundreds were one to God as a butcher. No experience in addressing crowds.

No church official of any kind, just obeying God. Oh, God, help us to obey. Help us to not hold back and say, oh, may God do somebody else.

Let's say, Lord, use me anything you want me to do. I don't want prominence. I don't need to be the leader, but I want to obey you.

Who knows the step of obedience that you take may cause someone else to take a step of obedience, which will cause another one. And suddenly the fire is going to be there. God only can give the fire, but we can be obedient.

So we bow our heads. Oh, God. Oh, God.

Mercy. Come upon us all. Give us that spirit of prayer.

Give us the indications of your will that we may begin to obey you. Oh, God, do something above and beyond anything which we have ever seen thus far. In our day, in wrath, remember mercy.

In our day, visit your people again. In our day, make bare your holy arm. In our day, send the holy fire.

In our day, raise the men, the women, the boys, the girls, the pastors, the layman, whoever you want to use to light the fire and carry the fire and keep spreading the fire. We ask you to do it again in your own way. For Calvary's sake, we pray.

Amen. I close. I'm going to read a poem I wrote 41 years ago.

Entitled, I believed it then, I'm believing it more now, Revival Tide is Coming. Now, the illustration is not fire, it's changing to water. I close with this.

Revival tide is coming. See God's waves of grace sweep in from out the boundless oceans where his mighty works begin. His glorious power so limitless, his mercy full and free, his boundless love so vast and deep, far greater than the sea.

Revival tide is coming. See each little wave rise higher, its fullness increasing by each child of God's desire. Your prayer, your hunger, your tears, your obeisance makes a difference.

It swells the tide, it adds to the waves. Revival tide is coming. See each little wave rise higher, its fullness increasing by each child of God's desire.

Each fasting time increases more the mighty ocean flood. Each pleading tear adds volume to incoming waves of God. Oh, weep on night and day, travail with hunger intercede.

Each hour alone with God brings nearer floods for which we plead. The rocks so high and dry you see along yon distant shore will be submerged beneath the waves as you pray more and more. Revival tide is coming.

See God's mighty waves sweep in. Believe to see a new day, God's revival day begin. Each little stream of prayer is adding to the mighty flood.

Oh, listen. Oh, hear the sound of water to the miracle of God. God grant it in our day.

Amen. Amen.

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