

Preparing for a Revival Meeting

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[0 : 00] All right, well, thank you, Russ. Thank you, Linda. Thank you, men. Let's get in our Bibles then to the book of Judges and find Judges chapter 15.

About a year ago, we had Brother Spurgeon come for a meeting, and the meeting started on a Sunday. And so the Wednesday night before that, I brought a challenge about preparing for the revival meeting.

And for the last two weeks, I've been thinking about that and thinking about that and couldn't get away from it and thought, no, maybe in my heart, if it was the Lord, I'm arguing with the Lord saying, no, I can't preach a message again after a year.

And then that little periodical came that said these quotes about Billy Sunday, and it just reminded me that I led that little message with a ton of remarks about Billy Sunday and things that he said about revival and how to bring it about and just things like that.

And so I just felt like the Lord was saying, this is what I want you to do. So I got back into it and tried to beef it up a little bit and decided, okay, I'm going to re-preach a message a year later, and I feel like an idiot, but I just have to swallow that.

[1 : 24] And then the Lord's like, only a few of the people were even there that were there that Wednesday night. And beyond that, you think any of them even remember it? I'm like, this is just me.

I just got to get over my complex and let it go. So that's why I'm saying all these things. It's for my benefit, probably not for yours. But let's take a look here in the Bible at some thoughts about revival, because Lord willing, Sunday or Wednesday night through Sunday, we're going to have an opportunity for a very concentrated effort of God to reach your heart and my heart.

And to hopefully have a green light to preach and to deal and to turn some things over, to awaken us, to open our eyes.

And it's going to depend on you. There's some things that are definitely going to depend on you.

And people say this, well, you can't prepare for a revival meeting because revival is of God.

It's a work of God. And there's nothing you can do. Either he does it or he doesn't do it. And it's kind of a Calvinistic approach to it. And I don't buy that at all. I believe, yes, it's a work of God.

[2 : 30] But I think there's some things that we can do to prepare for this and to have ourselves prepared so that the Lord can work and can deal with us. The word revive shows up in the Bible several times.

The word revival is not in the Bible. It's always as a verb, I believe, always as a verb, as reviving. And it's used in different ways. In one case, Jacob, his spirit was revived.

When, does anybody know what he saw? When he saw something, the Bible says his spirit was revived. And he knew his son was alive in Egypt. When he saw, oh, that's a good one.

What's that? When he saw the wagons. That's what it says. When he saw the wagons. And his spirit revived. He knew his supposed dead son was alive.

Another case, a dead man revived and stood up on his feet when his body touched the bones of Elisha. One time they say this.

[3 : 33] The quote says, Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? They're referring to rebuilding the temple of God. Will they revive the stones out of the heaps?

And so what I see is that reviving happens in different ways. Sometimes it's someone dead.

Sometimes it's someone depressed or something that's destroyed.

It's possible to revive and to bring back to life and back to use. And it leads me to understand that personal revival can also differ.

It can differ from one person to another. And I don't know if I've ever thought of it that way before. You always think of revival. Like revival. The church, we would get revived. We're all swinging from the rafters shouting glory.

That's revival. But it made me realize by looking at these different cases in the Bible that no different people are revived or different things are revived from different circumstances and different situations.

[4 : 34] It led me to believe that your personal revival may not be the same as someone beside you. It could mean that you need to get right with God. Because you're wrong. And God's right.

And you need to get right. Maybe that's what it is in your heart. You need to get right with God. That could be revival for you. It could mean that you need to get stirred up about something. Maybe you're gifted in some way of witnessing.

Or you just have a way of talking to people. Or it's a burden God's put on you just to witness to everybody in the world. And maybe you let that slip. And maybe a meeting could revive you. And God could deal with you about a certain thing in your life.

And stir you up to do that. It could mean that God gives you some energy. Spurs you on to go on for Christ if you're getting weary and well doing. It could be a completely different thing for you or someone else.

A revival. It could be maybe just a recalibrating of your focus to living for God. I remember some years ago my pastor. I want to say about 10 years ago.

[5 : 33] We had a speaker in. And the man said something from the pulpit. That it hit me and I wrote it down. And I had no idea. I didn't even think about it. But it hit the pastor on the front pew as well.

And what he said was he's talking about some things in life and getting distracted. And he said this. He said, I don't have time for that. I have a God to serve. And I was like, oh, that's good.

And I just wrote that down. And it just hit me. It meant something to me with the context and the timing. And about a week later I'm sitting in the pastor's office. We're talking about some things in the ministry and the church.

And making some plans. And he said, you know, just last week I was about to go purchase. And after the service, after that service I had plans to go meet with a guy to consider purchasing these apartment buildings.

Because I was thinking I was going to get into that, some real estate. And I was going to, you know, make some money on some income and so forth. And his dad dabbled in some properties and things. And so it wasn't a foreign thing to him.

[6 : 35] And he was seriously considering it. And when the man said, I don't have time for that. I have a God to serve. He felt like the Lord just told him that is not for you.

That is not for you. You don't have time to be getting busy and worrying about fixing the plumbing and fixing these things and keeping these tenants happy and getting their money and chasing all. He said, you have a ministry and a job and a God to serve here.

And he took that as a sign from God. And so what he needed from that meeting was a recalibrating of his focus in what he's here to do. And that might be what you need as well.

It could be getting ready with God. It could just be tweaking something. But I believe we can prepare for this. And I want to give you some ways that we can prepare for this. There are some things that are necessary in order to see results.

And here's one of them. Let's start in Judges chapter 15 and read a little portion of this account here. We'll start in verse 14 with Samson. Samson in Judges 15 verse 14.

[7 : 35] When he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. And the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with the fire and as bands loose from off his hands.

And he found a new jawbone of an ass and put forth his hand and took it and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said with the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking that he cast away the jawbone out of his hands and called that place Rameth Lehi. And he was sore of thirst and called on the Lord and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant and now shall I die for thirst and fall at the hand of the uncircumcised?

But God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw and there came water thereout. And when he had drunk, his spirit came again and he revived. Samson revived from what was previously a great slaughter, a great deliverance.

And then he was just beat. He was wore out, slapped wore out to where he thinks, I can't defend myself anymore. I'm done. They're going to come back and get me.

[8 : 53] I have no more juice, no more energy. And so what does Samson do? It said in verse number 18, he was sore of thirst. It says he called on the Lord.

He called on the Lord. And let me say number one, that I believe you can prepare for a revival meeting and receive personal reviving from God if number one, you'll call on the Lord.

It takes prayer. Preparing for a revival meeting takes prayer. Do you know what you do when you genuinely want something from God? I mean, when you have a real pressing need in your life, you know what you do?

You pray. When there's nothing else you can do, you can't fix it, you don't see an end, you pray.

You ask God to fix it. You ask God to get involved.

You ask everybody else to pray. You call your family. You spread it on a text message. You want others to pray for you and with you. Please help. I need prayer, we say.

[9 : 56] It takes prayer. When somebody's sick, please pray. When someone needs a job or a house, please pray. When there's anything pressing that you're concerned about, you want prayer.

And I think that this church and you as individuals need reviving. I think every one of us in some way, in some shape or form need reviving.

And we can experience it if we'll prepare for it, and that's going to take some praying. One way we can prepare for God to do a work in our own life or in our church is to pray for it.

You can pray for the lost to be saved. You can invite somebody to come. And you can start praying about that, that God will bring them, that God will deal with them. You can pray for your own heart to be stirred up.

You can pray for the overall temperature of our church to just come up a few degrees if God will allow it. You can pray in a lot of ways. You can pray for yourself and for other believers to be strengthened or to be convicted or to respond to the Lord's leading in their life.

[10 : 59] And you might say to yourself, you know what, that's a good idea. That's probably right. Revival comes after prayer. It follows it. I should pray. I'm going to pray. And I'd say, no, you're not.

Unless you plan on it. Unless you make a decision and a commitment, I'm going to pray. You know when there's an important appointment that you want to keep, you know what you do? You write it down.

You make a note. You put it on your calendar at your house or at your job. You put it in your phone. You set a reminder. If it's important and it's an appointment that you want to make sure you keep, you do ways to keep things from distracting you and pulling you away from getting to that place at that time.

So what's the difference here? I think it's a good idea to pray. I think it's needed to pray if there's going to be any reviving. But I think you're not going to do it unless you appoint to pray.

Unless you decide, I'm going to pray. I'm going to pray every day. I'm going to set a time that I'm going to pray. I'm going to isolate myself and not just set it on my phone, pray for church revival and bing.

[12 : 04] Oh, yeah. Pause the video. God, please. And then I don't think that's quite it. But even if it's the time as the ding comes in, if you'll commit to doing it, is to stop, shut off the video, go find a private place and get on your face and pray.

That's praying. If it's important to you, you'll have an appointment and you'll keep it. And I want to ask you to pray for reviving in your life and in our church.

The Bible says you have not because you ask not. And I think it can't hurt to ask. Look at the Psalms, Psalm 85. I want to point out just a few verses here about Israel in a bad way, calling and asking God to help them and to turn them and to change them and to revive them.

They're praying for it. Look at Psalm 85. If there's going to be any reviving, there needs to be prayer.

Psalm 85 and look at verse number 4. This is a prayer. They're asking God to do this, calling out to him, saying, Turn us, O God, of our salvation and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

[13:18] Turn us. Turn us. Look at verses 6 and 7. Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee? Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.

Those are prayers. Begging God to turn and change them and be merciful to them and to revive them. Go to your left to Psalm 82. I'm sorry, Psalm 80.

Look at Psalm 80 and verse number 3. Similar language. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

Look at verse 7. Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. Come to the end of verse 18 and 19. So will not we go back from thee, quicken us.

There's the reviving. And we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord, God of hosts. Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved. If you need reviving, if you long for reviving, then I recommend it's going to take prayer.

[14:28] On your part, I'll pray. I want to do it, and in my heart, I long to do it. There's something in me that draws me to it. I want it. And I want you to have it too.

And I pray God will give it to you, a desire to pray for it, to seek it. When you start asking for something, asking God for it, and it's not selfish, is it? You're not asking Him for a new car or money or to fix your little issues that you have to deal with every day.

But you're just praying that God would revive you, would give you strength to go on, would turn your heart back to Him if it's gotten away, would change you. It takes prayer.

Now let me take you to two more places. Both of these are in the Kings. Find 2 Kings chapter 4, and then 1 Kings chapter 17.

These are almost identical situations from two very similar prophets. 2 Kings 4, we'll start there, and then we'll go to 1 Kings 17.

[15:43] 2 Kings 4. And this is a case of Elisha. And this great woman of Shunam that made him a chamber for him to stay at when he comes by.

He, or her son, is injured and dies in verse 18. Or verse 17 says that when the woman conceived and bare a son that season, that Elisha had said unto her according to the time of life.

So the prophet tells her she didn't have any children, wasn't able to. Then he tells her she will, and she does. And the child is grown in verse 18. And it fell on the day that we went out to his father, to the reapers.

He said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said unto the lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon and then died. So the son dies.

And she sends, and she goes after the man of God. And Elisha, when he hears word from her that what took place, he, let me find it here, in verse 29, Then he said to Gehazi, this is his servant, he says, Gird up thy loins and take my staff in thy hand and go thy way.

[16:53] And if thou meet any man, salute him not. And if any salute thee, answer him not again. And lay my staff upon the face of the child. And so the mom says, I'm not leaving you to Elisha.

So the servant takes off. He lays it in verse 31 upon the face of the child. But there was neither voice nor hearing. The child's not awakened. The servant says, Didn't do any good. Nothing happened.

And so Elisha comes into the house in verse 32. And behold, the child was dead and laid upon his bed. And he went in therefore and shut the door upon them twain and prayed unto the Lord.

That's a good place to start. And he went up and laid upon the child and put his mouth upon his mouth and his eyes upon his eyes and his hands upon his hands. And he stretched himself upon the child.

And it says, The flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned and walked in the house to and fro and went up and stretched himself upon him. And the child sneezed seven times.

[17:51] And the child opened his eyes. And at the end, she's taken up her son in verse 37. And the kid's alive. Now come back to the next one that we're looking at.

First Kings chapter 17. A very similar situation. This time with the prophet Elijah. And let's compare these two.

Elijah in 1 Kings 17. In verse number 17. And it came to pass after these things that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick.

And the sickness was so sore that there was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance

and to slay my son?

And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom and carried him up into a loft where he abode and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried unto the Lord, Good start.

[18 : 51] And said, O Lord God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourned by slaying her son? And he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came into him again and he revived. And he revived. What I want us to consider here is that one time in both cases wasn't enough.

This time it took three times for him to stretch himself. In the previous case, he went up and laid it, but nothing happened. It just waxed warm. The rod, the staff, didn't do a thing.

Just putting the staff there, he thought it would do it, didn't do a thing. And then he came and stretched himself with his face and took that time and that diligence to lay upon him and his flesh waxed warm, but it wasn't enough.

He did it, went to and fro, then he comes back and does it again. And what I want you to consider here is that the reviving takes commitment. In order for the revival to come, it takes commitment.

[20 : 00] One time's not enough. One service is not enough. You can come to church and sometimes nothing happens. Sometimes all he's doing is just taking the staff and trying to put it on you.

Just trying to smack some things around in you, but nothing happens in you. And it takes another time. Sometimes it takes two times till you actually start warming up.

Sometimes it takes three times or more till you actually experience results that you're looking for, that you're praying for. Do you know that Naaman had to go down to that dirty Jordan River and he had to dip down seven times?

One time, nothing. Two times, nothing. Three, four, five, six times, has leprosy all over him. The seventh time, his flesh is clean.

He received a cleansing. He had to, do you realize that Brother Spurgeon's going to be speaking here seven times? Now, I'm not making a doctrinal point here, but seven times, including the men's meeting.

[21 : 10] That's seven times he's going to speak from this pulpit, Lord willing. And the first time may not do much and the second time may not. What I'm trying to tell you is that if you want some reviving in your life and in this church and you're going to pray for it, then you're going to need to commit to it as well.

Because it may take a few times for you just to start warming up. It may take seven times till you get the cleansing that you need or for the reviving that God can bring. Sometimes you'll come to hear a preacher because he's funny, because he'll tell stories, you'll laugh and you'll just get distracted into his way for the whole sermon and it's over.

It was an hour and a half and it's over already? Wow, that was great. And I've heard preachers, sometimes I've heard preachers that I feel like they didn't say a thing the whole time, but everybody was like, wow, because they just entertain in such a way.

And I feel like sometimes that preaching is okay. It gets people out and there can be something that takes place, but the reward for them is just enjoying the speaker and laughing about the jokes or the stories or whatever is woven into it.

But that's not real commitment is coming back because you liked him. Commitment is coming back because you need to hear from God. Because you need and you long and you want God to do something to you, so I'm going to be there.

[22 : 35] I'm going to be there even if I don't care for what he said about something that Sunday or that Wednesday or even if something he says offense me.

I'm coming back because I need to hear from God. And some people just, you know, you have it your way, so I don't like him, I don't care for him, I'm not coming. He said something 10 years ago that I'm not coming.

And you miss what God can do in your heart and you stay closed to what God can do. I don't, you, Brother Spurgeon isn't coming here because I'm begging him like I have to have you here, we need you so badly, you're the man.

I think this is of the Lord and the connection that's been made over the years or whatever it is and that here he is and here's the time and here's the place and now what's needed is for you to commit

to being here.

And if you want something from God, you can get it. And Dr. Uckman used to say a man will take the truth no matter how it's given to him, no matter how it's presented. It could be pretty, it could be ugly but if it's the truth he'll take it if he wants the truth.

[23 : 36] And I think you're going to get some truth. I think you're going to get some preaching. I think the Lord's going to move and going to have something for you and it may not be the first or the second or it may not be the fifth but somewhere in there God's going to help you if you want it.

I want you to commit. I pray that you'll commit. I'm asking you to commit to being here. My calendar at home has these days blocked off. My son took off work.

He made sure that he wasn't at work between these days so that he could be here. That's something we as a family want to see done. We want us to be here every night. That's something you could do too. I think your God's big enough to handle any issues that come about in life if you believe he wants you here and you feel in your heart that's what I should do.

I think God can handle those things. I want you to commit. Look, I'm not going to turn you to these other places but there's a few verses I want to back up with that. Now I'll move on to Isaiah 57. Isaiah 57. Preparing for a revival. You can prepare by praying and you can prepare by committing to being here. And I don't ask you that.

[24 : 45] I don't try to put that on you in some convicting way so that I can fill the house of God and feel like something. I want you to get something. This is for you. This is for your walk with the Lord.

Isaiah 57. Take a look at verse number 15. For thus saith the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity whose name is Holy. I dwell in the High and Holy Place with Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Do you know who gets the reviving? It's the humble and the contrite. You know the one that doesn't get the reviving and the one that builds the wall up and says I don't need that or I'm fine the way I am.

It's that other person who needs it. But someone who's contrite look at chapter 59 59 someone who's humble they'll get the reviving.

They'll get something they didn't even know they needed and be graciously thankful to God for giving it. Isaiah 59 look at verse number 1 Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save neither is ear heavy that it cannot hear but your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear.

[26 : 16] Your hands are defiled with blood fingers with iniquity lips of spoken lies tongues of muttered perverseness and on. Someone who's lifted up in pride who says I'm fine God is near God is able God can hear your prayer God can help he can stretch his hand out he can revive and fix and repair and uplift you he can give you exactly what you need if you'll humble yourself and seek it that's who he'll minister to look at chapter 66 Isaiah 66 verse number 2 66 2 for all those things hath mine hand made and all those things have been saith the Lord all of those everything in the world but look what this but to this man single one person this man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and tremblet at my word verse 5 says hear the word of the

Lord ye that tremble at his word your brethren that hated you that cast you out for my name sakes said the Lord be glorified but he shall appear to your joy and they shall be ashamed somebody that trembles at his word in verse 5 they're the ones that will hear the word of the Lord the man that's poor and contrite and trembles at his word is going saying God will appear God will reveal himself to you God will reveal his will to you if you're humble if you tremble at his word if you'll fear before him if you'll abhor your pride if you and I would realize this that our pride gets in the way of God working through us and doing something in us pride keeps us from getting honest pride keeps us from getting open pride will keep you from praying search me oh

God and know my heart try me see if there be any wicked way in me your pride will not let you pray that prayer the Bible says let a man examine himself but your filthy pride will say you're fine you don't need to examine anything they need to examine the way they talk to you they need to examine where they were the other Sunday it takes humility church just like Sunday school we read in Ephesians that lowliness that meekness you bow yourself before God and pray for reviving commit to being here humble yourself low that's the one he's going to look to somebody in this place is going to get some help this week somebody is and it's probably going to be the one that prays that comes and it really seeks the

Lord to do something somebody is going to show up and ho hum same old same old nothing happening I asked God to do something there's a difference isn't there remember reviving reviving can apply in different ways it can be one thing for you and something else for someone else it can be the resurrection of the new man that has been pushed aside and the flesh has been run in your life that man could get revived as you get right with God it could be that strength or energy that you need to carry on while you're weary it could be as we might call routine maintenance you take your car in the shop you find out there were some things that were close to going or some things that were wrong you didn't even know that could be what this does for you just a little maintenance just to make sure you keep running your race

I'll ask you this morning church will you join me in praying for God to work in Bible Baptist church from Sunday to Sunday and for fruit to remain after the meeting will you commit to being here will you commit to seeking his will in your life and your walk with him and will you come expecting God to deal with you you prepared to respond with an open and a contrite heart now I'm going to close here I'm not going to give an invitation this morning I've got something I want to talk about after this but I want to add one note to this thought here about reviving and what's potentially coming starting Wednesday that if God is seeking to work and help and do something through this meeting and if it's of him and it's his will to bring that preacher here and us to be here and us to fellowship and gather together under the word of God if he has something for you then undoubtedly there will be opposition to it that it comes with it and excuses to skip will be available to you real ones real excuses real reasons will get in the way and

[31 : 46] I want to caution you and just put it out before it ever comes be prepared so that you can overcome it be prepared say nope I have that appointment and I need to pray nope I'm committed I have that appointment 630 Wednesday night to be in church I'm not letting this get in the way but if you're not committed those little things will crop up and pop up and distract you and keep you from coming and so the message today is that we can prepare for a revival meeting but there's something we have to do we need to pray commit and humble ourselves seeking for God to work through us let's close in a word of prayer