

# Revive us Again - Revival

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 25 February 2018

[ 0 : 00 ] We need revival. There was one old recipe for rabbit stew that started out with this first direction.! With the first things first.

With the priorities. That's what we must do. To establish the priorities. To get the first place. The first things in the first place. To get things in their proper order.

And we have this desperate need. Our priority, our ultimate and essential priority is to start with the basics of seeking after God.

This is the fundamental starting point. And we know our hearts are inclined not to seek after God.

But there are things that tell you, seek God.

Seek Him. We're commanded to seek Him. As much as naturally we know there's no one who seeks after God. But we are called to seek after God. We are urged to seek after God.

[ 1 : 17 ] We are told against those who do not seek after God. As we see in Psalm 10. First, catch the rabbit.

Seek after God. That's number one. Start with that. Start with seeking after God. The starting point.

The fundamental starting point. We need now more than ever a spiritual biblical revival.

What was the prayer? Wilt thou not revive him? That thy people may rejoice in thee? The psalmist cried out in prayer. He sought after God.

He sought after God. We must seek after God. This must be our priority. He cried out, God! God, revive your people!

Revival. There are many definitions of revival. Here's one. Revival is God at work restoring His church to health. Getting the church where it ought to be.

[ 2 : 18 ] Healthy. Can we check the pulse of our church? Has it even got a pulse? I hope so. Where are we at? Are we spiritually health-couraging?

There's a difference, isn't there? You can give me some edifying, constructive feedback. You can say, Pastor, we think this needs improvement in the church. And I welcome that.

I need that. I need people to be honest with me. I actually really appreciate people who tell me that they can see something that needs sorting out. Because I don't have a monopoly on the truth.

I don't have necessarily... Sometimes, you know, it's been said people have blind spots, you know? And you need others to tell you those things. So I receive that.

But I'm talking about discouragement, where people just go out of their way to just discourage. And that's a problem. There was a story in the Boer War, apparently.

[ 3 : 21 ] There was a famous battle called the Siege of Ladysmith. And there was a civilian who was arrested, court-martialed, and sentenced to one year's imprisonment. What was his crime?

He was a discourager. He would go along the lines of the troops. He would go along the lines and he would say discouraging words to the men on duty. He struck no blow for the enemy.

Not one. He was not disloyal for his country. He was just a discourager. And that, in a critical time, the fortunes of the garrison and of the town hung in the balance.

The court-martial had judged his crime. Was to speak disheartening words in an hour like that. And so it is. The same thing is happening for those who would rather tear down than build up.

We need to be a church that edifies one another. Builds up one another. To be the church God wants us to be. A church rejoicing in the Lord. May we determine to be such a people who will rejoice in our God.

[ 4 : 22 ] Rejoice in Him. Rejoice in Thee. Our God. To joy in God. We can choose to be a lifter or a leaner. We may find at times there's many who are not lifters but are leaners.

Rather let us be lifters and encouragers of one another. Not couch potato critics. But active workers. Active workers. If you see a job that's not being done very well.

Volunteer to do it better. If you see a lack. If you see a fault. If you see a failing in this church. Be one who stands in the gap. And make a difference.

Put your shoulder to the wheel. Find opportunities to bless and encourage. And rejoice in the truth. Friends it's a time of spiritual war.

There's no time for discouragement. It's rather a time to rally the troops. To this great cause. And to answer the conflict. To encourage one another. Surely it is a time of spiritual drought.

[ 5 : 27 ] It's like my backyard was. With that little one tree. Virtually. It's that just dead. Desert. Wilderness. Spiritual drought.

Likewise spiritually speaking. Isn't it? We need rain. I know there's people praying for rain. Because they need rain. For their flock. For their crop.

We need rain. And likewise spiritually. We need God's rain. Don't we? As it were. The rain pictures the work of God's spirit. The latter rain. Streams of living water.

We see many pictures of that. The downpour. As it were. Don't you just love it when that rain just buckets down. On your roof. Hopefully not through the sawing.

You see the blessing come down. God's blessing. The pouring of God. In great blessing and wonder. And we have the wonderful calling of our Lord.

[ 6 : 26 ] From our master's lips. To take his words. To take his message to our generation. Our mission is clear. He's not revised it.

He's not changed it. It's still the same message. Here's the message. We're here to call. Not what church. God's promise is our assurance.

Matthew 16. It says. Our Lord says to Peter. He says. Thou art Peter. And upon this rock I will build my church.

And the gates in hell shall not prevail against it. Sometimes we can get discouraged. We think. I can get discouraged about this church.

You know. It's like. I've heard someone say. Oh it's alright for them. They can leave. That was my wife. No. If you don't like it. Leave.

[ 7 : 23 ] You know. Vote with your feet. But rather. Friends. We see the faults. I see the faults in this church. But I see the promise of God. The promise of Jesus.

Our Lord. He says. The gates in hell shall not prevail against his church. And if we are the church of God. Let's not give way. Much less relay.

Discouragement. We can be truly encouraged. And as the church. We are God's people. He's called us to rise up and stand. I love the picture of the. Of dry bones.

The prophet Ezekiel. He saw this dry dusty. Dry dry valley. And the bleached bones. Of a fallen army. And in his vision. He saw those dry bones. Become a living army.

Marching forward. As God breathed life back into them. And in this time of spiritual drought. In this time of deadness. In this time of dryness. In this.

[ 8 : 20 ] Even in this. Valley of dry bones. He is restoring life. He's putting sinew and flesh back. On the bones. And our Lord will. Revive us again. We can see a true revival.

In each heart. That we'll receive it. That has put away the complaining. And discouraging words. Stop doubting. And start believing. Start rejoicing. The Lord can do a mighty work.

Despite the many challenges. Paul found reason for rejoicing. They see in part. In 2 Corinthians 7. He says. Great is the boldness. Is my boldness of speech toward you.

Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. He says. I am exceeding joyful in. All our tribulation. Paul says. I am exceeding joyful in.

All our tribulation. That's a bit. Strange isn't it. We need to be stranger. We need to be joyful. In tribulation.

[ 9 : 22 ] And then verse 5. When we were coming to Macedonia. Our flesh had no rest. But we were troubled. On every side. Troubled. On every side. Without. We're fighting.

Within. We're fears. Nevertheless. God. That comforted. Those that are cast down. Comforted us. By the coming of Titus. Paul is troubled. On every side. Fighting's without.

Fears within. We see much fighting going on. In different churches. We see. Much trouble. We see fears within. We see our own lack.

And need. Paul. In this time of trouble. Yet. Found comfort. And he found. Rejoicing. As he did not give way. To discouraging.

But rather found joy. And rejoicing. If we were just to look at. Circumstances. We could get very troubled. And discouraged. You know. As a preacher.

[10:16] 19 years. In this church. You know. Maybe it's time for someone else. To come along. Pass the battle on. To someone else. Maybe they can do a better job.

We can get discouraged. We can get discouraged. We can see. We don't see a great response. You know. We'd like to see these empty chairs filled. We invite many.

But few come. We see the evident sins. And failures of many. I'll get to hear about all the horror stories. I could tell you a thing or two. But I can't.

But you know. The pastor gets to hear all the things that are going wrong. In people's lives. The failures. There's many. There's many in me. We see a lack of spiritual growth.

We see a proneness to worldliness. We see a lack of spiritual fervor. We see amongst those who attend. How we'd love to see them grow. But they do not seem to grow.

[11:13] I know. A man was telling me lately. How they went to a church. And it's like. They're in the same place. They're stuck in a rut. Let's not be that church. Let's not be that. Let's be growing.

And going for God. We see the dry bones. We see the dryness. We see the fightings without. We see the fears within. We see churches in discord and grief. We see the hurting and hostility.

We see the barrenness. The loss. The lack of faithfulness. And we could get discouraged. But God comforts the cast down.

He lifts the fallen. I am exceeding joy for him. All our tribulation. God lifts the fallen. God is in the restoration business.

And he allows us. Back to new. Back to new. That's that car place again. Back to new. Now book your car in next week. Back to new. That's where we need to be.

[12:09] Back to new. Back to where we were. Back to the first love. God can revive us again. Despite our human frailties and failings. And thank God. Our God.

Brings revival. Not the preacher. Despite the preacher. Look at Jonah. The revival at Nineveh. Despite Jonah. He was a miserable failure. A miserable preacher.

Jonah. He went to Nineveh. And declared God's word. Finally. He got the message to do that. Mind you. He went the long way around. Didn't he? Because when God told him.

Go there. He went there. He went in the opposite direction. But eventually. God redirected him.

Back to where he sent him. And sometimes. God does that for us. Doesn't he? God's saying.

Go there. And we go there. But God. Has a way of getting us back. To where we're meant to be. Eventually. God redirects us. Jonah preached. Now Jonah. It wasn't a feel good message.

[13:06] It wasn't very seeker sensitive. You know. He hadn't been to the church growth. Seminars. And learned how. The mega churches do it. Jonah's message.

Was not seeker sensitive. It wasn't very relevant. It wasn't very ear tickling. Prepare to meet thy God. Free from the wrath to come.

That was the kind of message. Jonah had. In Jonah 1 verse 2. When the word of the Lord. Came to him the first time. Arise. Go to Nineveh. That great city. And call against it.

For their wickedness. Has come up before me. That's when Jonah detoured. And ended up in a ship. Headed the wrong direction. And ended up in a great fish. And God. Got a hold of him.

He got a hold of his attention. And redirected him back. And God gave him the message. Again. The second time. Take two. Arise.

[14:02] Go unto Nineveh. That great city. And preach unto it. The preaching that I bid thee. Now it was a short sermon. You know. It wasn't very flowering. It didn't have lots of sermon illustrations.

Or lots of storytelling. Or telling of visits to heaven. It was a message of warning. A message of peril. The king of Nineveh. Called his people to repentance.

Chapter 3 verse 4. What did Jonah cry? He cried and said. Yet 40 days. And Nineveh shall be overthrown.

He said. You've got 40 days. Now they would have looked at their calendar. And thought. Well that's not that far off. And we're gone. 40 days is all we've got. 40 days.

And Nineveh shall be overthrown. And we see the king's response. The king of Nineveh. Verse 8 of chapter 3. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth.

[15:00] And cry mightily unto God. They even covered their pet dog. If they had one. Or their pet sheep. Or their flocks. Their beasts.

They covered the beasts. With sackcloth. Let every man and beast. Be covered with sackcloth. A picture of. Of.

Grief. Of. Mourning. Cry mightily unto God. Yea. Let them turn everyone.

From his evil way. From the violence. That is in their hands. So their response was. The people turned wholeheartedly. To God. And the results. A massive. Turning. Of an entire city. God. Wrote a word. It wasn't Jonah. It was despite him. Despite the. Prophet Jonah's reluctance.

[15:55] And we see. As we read through Jonah. That he was even upset. That they repented. He wanted God to hug them out. The heathen pagans. Smash the. Bits. Let them be laid.

Waste. Let them be destroyed. He might have had a certain. Kind of. Delight. In the thought of it. And then he was. Disappointed.

When God. Changed. His. Judgment. In receiving them. And in receiving their repentance. As a preacher.

It's my solemn duty. To deliver a word of warning. I'd much rather preach something. Light and fluffy. And. Something that will make you smile at me.

But. It's a word of warning. Amen. There is a word of warning. Flee from the after come. Prepare to meet thy God. And don't dilly dally. To do the will of God.

[16:52] May our hearts cry out truly. As we seek after God. May this be our prayer. Wilt thou not. Revive us again. That thy people. May rejoice in thee.

Notice here. It's a heart cry. It's a prayer. It's a longing for God. And we can see hearts revived. One by one by one. That must be our prayer.

We can. Seek after God. We can. Go against the grain. Go against the flesh. And we can. Seek after God. God. We've just got to crucify the flesh.

We can. Seek after God. And be endued with power from on high. Receive his divine enablement. Power from on high. And it's for a reason.

We see some. They would think. Oh we get some kind of power. To do this. To do that. To have miracles. And signs. And wonders. No. It's. That we might be his witnesses.

[17:51] That we might be. Witnesses of heaven. Sent forth with his message. And revival is heaven sent. Will thou. Not revive us again.

Not the church. Not the preacher. Not the program. It's God's doing. God. Will you. Not. Revive us again. The psalmist cried out for God.

To do a work. It's a sovereign work. The gracious work of God. God. And I pray this won't be just in theory today. I pray that each heart will be revived.

That is. Receiving this now. That we will seek after God. That we can become a mighty army. Even in the valley of dry bones. God can rebuild us.

To be dynamic. Equipped. For a heavenly purpose. As we cry out. Will thou not revive us again. What is his will? We seek after his will.

[18:50] Surely it is God's will. That he truly wants us to be. Such a people. A spiritually alive people. It takes the work of God's spirit. Now there is a group of American Indians.

American Indians. Who gathered together. To pray for. A revival. They prayed for God. To move. Amongst them. These American Indians. And many weeks later.

After many weeks. A stranger came. And asked the chief. Have you had a revival? And he said. Big wind. Much dust. But no rain.

Big wind. Much dust. But no rain. How like our churches today. There is a lot of dust. But no rain. There is plenty of pet.

But no power. Our churches have beautiful foliage. Like some of my fruit trees. But they are barren in fruit. We need revival. That is what makes the difference.

[19:48] God is reviving. By his spirit. His filling. Mercy drops. As slaps upon dry ground. Isaiah 34. Just another reflection.

That picture again. Of a desert land. Of wilderness. It says. Our Lord says. I will pour water upon him. That is thirsty. And floods upon the dry ground.

And I will pour out my spirit. Upon my seed. And my blessing. Upon my offspring. And they shall spring up. As amongst the grass. As swallows by the water courses. As floods upon the dry ground.

The desert can become a spring. Elizabeth. Can be flooded. Wow. Wouldn't that be good. Floated. The dry bones. Will get shaken up. And the army can stand strong. Marching in unison. Advancing as a mighty army. These pictures are right.

[20:49] True in the word of God. The dry bones. The dry valleys. The flooding rain. The desert shall rejoice. Our Lord can restore the joy.

Of our salvation. Let me share just another. Scripture or two here. Joel 2. God can do a mighty work.

A restoration. A work of restoration. Back to you. Joel 2. 21. It starts. Of the land. It says. Fear not, O land. And be glad.

And rejoice. For the Lord will do great things. It goes on to tell. Of the wilderness. The pastures of the wilderness.

Do spring. The tree bath. Her fruit. The fig tree. And the vine. Do yield their strength. Verse 23. Be glad then. You children of Zion. And rejoice in the Lord.

[ 21 : 46 ] Your God. For he hath given you. The former rain. Moderately. And he will cause it to come down. For you. The rain. The former rain. And the latter rain. In the first month. Again.

A picture of God's reviving. Of sending the rain. To the wilderness. It goes on. Verse 25. Oh. It was so to you the years. That the locusts have eaten. The kangaroo.

The caterpillar. The palm of the worm. What a blessing. What a promise here. Now. Some of you might be aware. I'm having. Some of you.

dwindle and disappear.

And I took a look in the hive and saw some little grass, some little caterpillar type bugs. And my friends told me that these were wax moth that go into a hive and they eat the wax and the honey.

[ 23 : 13 ] They kill the bees off virtually. And they had overwhelmed the hive such that it was destroyed.

And I have to start again. But God says for us too that the worm, the caterpillar, the palmer worm, he says I'll restore to you the years that the locusts have eaten.

And we see in areas where a locust swarm comes and they strip the garden, they strip the leaves and fruit and leave everything bare.

And it's like there's nothing left. But God says I will restore. I will restore. The years that the locust has eaten, the came from the caterpillar, the palmer worm, he will restore.

And I'm looking forward to getting a new colony in the hive. So start again. And God will restore. Amen. He will restore. And that might be for you. You might think, Preacher, look, I've had many wasted years.

[ 24 : 23 ] Many wasted years. Playing church. And I know I've not been really rock solid. I've not really been full on. I've just been, I'm still in first.

Maybe second. You know, Third. Overdrive. Overdrive. Yeah. Let's get back into gear. Amen.

Let's be encouraged. God will restore. You might think, Wasted years. Yes. Leave them behind you. Yeah. Looking ahead.

Forget those things that are behind. Forget the failings. You might say, Oh, I've got so much baggage, Preacher. I've got so much, I've got skeletons in my cupboard.

Well, just do it on hard waste. You know, get rid of the cupboard. You know, Preacher, you can think of many excuses. The years. Wasted years.

[ 25 : 24 ] Let it be a change today. For the years ahead. Amen. Make today the turning point. I'm going to walk with God. And I'm going to walk strong with God. You know, I'm encouraged to hear there's people witnessing in our church.

But not many. There's opportunity to join the witnessing crew. See, Brother Mick, to join the witnessing crew. Knocking on doors around here. Knocking on doors.

Because they care about this message. They've still got the go in them. And ordently to have that. Ordently. He says, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

Of course, we know there's a context here. But we know that God will pour out on dry ground. And friends, let's be encouraged that he can revive us again. There's dryness, yes.

But he will cause the rain. Let's not be discouraged. Let alone be a discourager. Let us rejoice in him. Rejoice in him. Revival brings rejoicing.

[ 26 : 27 ] We see just another scripture. Picking bits and pieces here. But it's just that same theme. Of the desert shall rejoice. Isaiah 35. Read it in full.

Isaiah 35. Read it in full. As the solitary place shall be glad. The desert shall rejoice. And blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly.

And rejoice even with joy and singing. It talks about the glory of Lebanon. It says, Be strong and fear not. Behold, your God will come. He will come and save you.

In the wilderness shall waters break out. That's verse 6 of Isaiah 35. In the wilderness, the waters shall break out. And streams in the desert.

You might say, Preacher, I'm in a desert right now. I'm in a desert. I'm in the wilderness. I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing. He says, In the wilderness shall waters break out.

[ 27 : 23 ] And streams in the desert. It says, Verse 7, That the parched ground shall become a pool. And the thirsty land springs of water. And a highway shall be there.

It tells us. The highway of holiness. Brother, sister, let's be encouraged. We can believe God. We can believe God for showers of blessing. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 35. Very encouraging words. Of course, we know there's a context and an application. But these things were written for our learning. We can take messages to the Israelites and it can still be encouraged by them.

I'm not saying misapply scriptures. I'm saying be encouraged by what means of scripture. And the encouragement of scripture.

Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness. And sorrow and sighing shall flee away. I believe that's true for you, for me, today.

[ 28 : 26 ] Here now. We can believe God. We can believe his promises. We can trust him to rejuvenate, to replenish, to renew, to restore back to new. And as someone has said, many churches are lacking in that they don't grow, glow or go.

And there was a man who said this reminds him of a toy car that a boy received as a birthday gift. You know, the little boy had his little car. It's a little boom, boom.

Driving around. It was all going real fine and dandy. Beep, beep, beep. He was delighted. But one day something went wrong.

You know, it was a wind up one. And he wound it up, but it didn't go. And he ran to his father and said, Dad, the go's broke. The go is broken.

Is the go broken in our church? Have we lost our go? We have to go. We have to go. We're commanded to go. He's given us no option but to go.

[ 29 : 33 ] To go with the gospel. We've got witnessing going on. Very few are doing it. Please, let's not lose our go. You can learn to go.

Go and keep on going. May our prayer be as Habakkuk, O Lord, revive thy work. O Lord, revive thy work. Look back at the history of the church and they didn't have it all easy breezy.

Look at Acts 5. They didn't have it easy breezy in Acts 5. This is... Someone wants me. I stomp on it. You should be in church.

Please, let's get back our go. We've got to go. We've got to go and keep on going. Probably someone's saying the streaming's not working or something. No, we've got to get our go back, don't we?

We don't. We mustn't lose our go. We look back at the history of the church and we see times of great blessing and God moving on his people and we wonder, what are we missing?

[ 30 : 40 ] We believe God can send revival again. We can believe that. Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee? There was an elderly woman once asked by a friend about the spiritual welfare of a friend and she said, well, she's in a very bad state of mind, this person.

She's got just enough Christianity to make her miserable when she's doing wrong. But not enough to make her glad in a prayer meeting.

Sure enough, we get convicted. When I look in the mirror, I see many things wrong. And I can get discouraged and disappointed that things are not better than they are for me, for this church.

I can get overwhelmed. But we can be glad, can't we? Even in times of discouragement, we see that as we trust him, as we follow, as we walk with him, it gets sweeter and sweeter, doesn't it?

As the days go by, oh, what a love between my Lord and I. It is a revival in our hearts. We see in Acts 5, just to wrap up here, just to close here, Acts 5, it says that they, they called the apostles, they beat them, and they commanded them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

[ 32 : 09 ] Here they were, you know, oh, how big's your boots, brother? Oh, my eyes sort of black here and someone tried to rip my beard off and someone stuck their beard in here and stuck their beard in here and they were bruised and bent and blue and black and blue and beaten.

Oh, they probably felt like having a pity party. Woe is me. Oh, this Christian living is just too hard, yaka. You know, let's go back to the, you know, where we were.

You know, Christian living is just too hard. And verse 41, they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing. Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

And daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. They were beaten, but they were not beaten. Amen? You might get bashed up for Jesus.

You might get beaten, but you're not beaten. You're not beaten because you've got the victory that overcomes the world. And do we have this kind of spirit? Rejoice in him.

[ 33 : 25 ] Wilt thou not? Revive us again. That thy people may rejoice in thee. Rejoice in God no matter what. Rejoice when you don't want to rejoice.

Be glad when you don't want to be glad. Rejoice and be glad in him.

May he be your source of joy. Not your circumstance, not your feelings. Maybe you might feel physically ill or emotionally drained or overwhelmed with the circumstances of life.

and in your flesh, you're not glad. But in him. We rejoice in him. Rejoice in God. We rejoice in God. Not in our self.

Not in our circumstance. Not in our feelings. We rejoice in him. In him alone. And even were we to be beaten, we will still rejoice. As Paul and Silas did.

[ 34 : 28 ] Seek the way of Jesus to God at midnight. Friends, how can I how can I draw this to a close now other than prompt you to make this your prayer.

It's a personal prayer. Although we pray for us. Thy people. But make it personal here too.

Lord, will you revive me again? Will you revive me again? That I can rejoice in you. Let us pray.

Our God and King. Master, Lord, unworthy as we are, we come to pledge your grace. Lord, if it be your will.

And Lord, I believe it is that you want a revived people. Will you, Lord, revive us again as a church as a people. Revive us again, Lord, we pray.

[ 35 : 31 ] That's our prayer as we seek you. As we yearn for heaven's touch, Lord, that we might be such a people. Help us even when circumstances make us want to weep that we will joy.

That we, whilst wanting to to be discouraged, can be absolutely encouraged, knowing that our hope is in heaven and our joy is in God.

Lord, we thank you for these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Bless you.