

# Steps To Revival

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[0:00] Let us know. You've got your Bibles there.

We're starting in Isaiah 57 for verse 15. Isaiah 57 verse 15 it says, So I'd like to put it tonight, three steps to revival.

Three steps to having God's life, that reviving power, that reviving touch of God, that new awakening, that new change, that reawakening that God puts into our hearts and lives.

Someone has said that revival is like CPR. I know I was at a fight lately and they had some St. John's ambulance people there and they were showing people some of this sort of thing to do with first aid and how we know with CPR people get the breath back into them.

And they get that heart pumping again through the support of the first aider. And revival is like CPR. It's like God bringing his life back, his breath back.

[1:32] And that's what we need as God's people. We always need his reviving power. We always need his reviving touch. And this verse here really captures a lot of what revival means for individuals and for us as a body of God's people.

So the first step is the holy God. The holy God. It says there, God's name is holy. God's name is holy. And revival is about a sense of who God is, of how amazing he is, of how awesome he is, of his holiness, of his majesty.

And in contrast to that, as we think about how holy God is, what do we think about ourselves? We think about our sinfulness in contrast, don't we, of our lack, of our, in contrast to God's great holiness, we see our great sinfulness and the sinfulness of sin.

And revival means that sense of how holy God is and marvellous and perfect and awesome he is. And this holy God, he is the one who's called us to be holy as he is holy.

And here's the one, it says there, here's the one who inhabits eternity. And this one who inhabits eternity, eternity is his dwelling place.

[2:48] It's the only place that this word appears in the Bible, this word eternity. That one whose place, his dwelling place is eternity. He wants to come and to dwell with us.

That's awesome, isn't it? That's amazing that God would want to do that. This one, the eternal one, the one who's been from everlasting and will be to everlasting. He wants to come and reside with us to make his dwelling place with us and to live in us and with us and through us.

And the question is, have we got that sense of the holiness, the wonder of who he is, the wonderful one, the one that we should have that sense of his full, of our wonder, of our wonderment, of our amazement.

And the early church, it's been said, had its greatest impact upon the world when it lived least like the world. When we live least like the world, we'll have the greatest impact for our saviour.

And yet now, it's been said that some churches want Christian discos. Christian discos. It's like they've gravitated so much to the world that they almost want to copy and mimic the way the world is and the things of the world to that extent that there's nothing really Christian left to it.

[4:07] And yet, what about holy things? Holy things. There's a missionary called David Brainerd, one of the greatest missionaries. And yet, he only lived, he didn't even live to the age of 30.

He lived quite a young girl. He died quite young. But he spent his brief life, the brief life that he did have, made an amazing impact. And David Brainerd went and ministered to the American Indians.

The American Indians, to the very heathen of the Indians in the most remote and the most untouched kind of tribes of the American Indians. And he wrote this in his journal one day.

He said, I never got away from Jesus and him crucified. When my people were gripped by this great evangelical doctrine of Christ and him crucified, I had no need to give them instructions about

morality.

I found that one followed as the sure and inevitable fruit of the other. When the people grasped the truth of Christ and him crucified, of our Saviour, he's bleeding and dying for us.

[5:15] They didn't need to be told about morals, about how to live, about what is sin and what is not sin. Because they had that awe, that wonder of who God is, of Christ's crucifixion.

And the living of the life followed on from the faith that they had in Christ. He wrote further, he said, I find my Indians begin to put on the garments of holiness and their common life begins to be sanctified or made holy, even in small matters, when they are possessed by the doctrine of Christ and him crucified.

That's what made the difference for these savages, these people in heathen darkness. When they got that vision, when they got that sight of Christ and him crucified, then they were changed.

They were changed. When he was saying this, he was saying that when a Christian realises who Christ is and what he has done for us, so graciously it makes an impact on our lives, a dramatic impact, not only in salvation but in holiness.

And it's been said that holy has the same root word as holy with a W, meaning complete. It means complete. A man is not complete, someone wrote in spiritual stature, so you're not complete as a Christian if all your heart, mind, soul and strength is not given to God.

[6:47] Give him your whole. Give him your all. That's what holiness means, the whole of you, the whole of you, as the word W-H-O-L-E-Y, their ally, the word holy and holy with a H, separate from the world, forsaking all forms of idolatry.

It's a change that happens as you get that realisation of who Christ is and what he has done for you. Another preacher said, saying yes to God means saying no to things that offend his holiness. So when we realise this holy one who inhabits eternity, who wants to come and dwell with us, he comes and lives in our hearts by faith, when we realise that, we'll realise what offends him, what offends his holiness, and we won't want to mess with that.

Leonard Ravenhill, a well-known minister, said this. He said the greatest miracle that God can do today is to take an unholy man out of an unholy world and make that man holy and put him back into that unholy world and keep him holy in it.

It's a wonder, isn't it? The holy one, he saves us and he makes us holy. It's his grace and his working as we just yield to that. Oswald Chambers, another man of God, said, the holiest person is one who is most conscious of what sin is.

[8:14] It's when we realise what would offend our most holy God. We don't want to toy with that. God wants a clean heart from his people. So number one, when we think of revival, we think of the holy God, the holiness of God, the holy one who is our God, and that encounter with the holy God.

Number two is the work of humility. It goes on there that this God, this holy one who inhabits eternity, he wants to dwell with those who have a humble spirit. So number two, as we think of the holy God, secondly we think of the humble spirit.

He wants to revive the spirit of the humble. And revival happens when we're humbled, when we're brought low. I mean, when we pray, we humble ourselves, don't we?

We acknowledge that we need a power beyond our own. We need an enabling, an empowerment that is beyond our own flesh. And he wants to revive the spirit of the humble.

When we come to bow before him, when we're humbled and brought low before him, it's a time when we get rid. We get rid of all our flesh. As was talked about earlier today, we get rid of all our leaven, of all our things that are of the flesh, are of the world, are of Egypt, are of ourselves, of that vain effort of man.

[9:31] There'll be less emphasis on things like titles, on hoopla, on show, and we'll all want to be bowed down before our Saviour, to abandon our pride, our self-centred ways, to get rid of our arrogance, all naturally inclined to be selfish, and self-centred as human nature.

We can all be inclined to be stuck-up snobs. It can all be because we might look down on others who might have less in life than us, or might be less advantaged.

And that's a shameful thing, because really we're all equal in his sight, aren't we? Every one of us, whether red and yellow, black and white, every one of us are equal, in the sight of Christ, and equally as sinful, equally as undeserving.

And we have that kind of stuck-up attitude. Let's be real, let's be down to earth, let's be like the one who says to us to be humble, in spirit. And he revives the spirit of the humble.

And prayer really is that, isn't it? It's the attitude of surrender, of dependence on God. And a preacher said this about prayer, prayer is the backbone of a revival.

[10:40] Instead of substituting new ideas, such as religious films or social entertainments, why not really try the God-given method for revivals, pray without ceasing?

That's what the Word says, isn't it? Why pray? Because we need God. We need God. We need to depend upon God. And every one of us, in our personal lives, in our personal times, find that time, make that time.

I know I need to make more of that time, to pray, to seek His face, to ask Him to help and guide, to lead, to direct, not depending on our own strength, because we'll just fall and fail.

Like it's not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit, isn't it? The Spirit of God, not our own programs or inventions or ideas, so much as His leading.

We need God. Revival is when we acknowledge that. It's when we put everything into that perspective. So we look at it through that lens that we're absolutely, absolutely lost and without strength before this Holy One.

[11:42] We need Him to empower and to use us. And it's recorded that Corrie ten Boom was asked one day, Corrie ten Boom, a famous Christian writer, how difficult it was for her to be humble, to remain humble, because she was well known.

And, you know, if you're writing lots of books and your name's in print or in movies or in the media like hers was, you maybe might think, well, she might get a bit proud, you know, a bit sort of puffed up and vain.

She said this, she said, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, he was on the back of a donkey and everyone was waving palm branches and throwing garments on the road and singing his praises.

Do you think that for one moment it ever entered the head of the donkey, that any of that was, it wasn't about the donkey, was it? It wasn't about the donkey, it was about the one riding on the donkey, our Saviour.

And she continued, if I can be that donkey on which Jesus Christ rides to his glory, I give him all the praise and all the honour. That should be our attitude, isn't it?

[12:51] For any of us that do anything for the Saviour, there's nothing about us getting acknowledgement or recognition. We're just privileged to be the donkey. We're privileged to be the vehicle, the vessel that he uses for his praise and glory.

And that's what Corrie Ten Boom's attitude was. And that's the humility of the Spirit of Christ.

Someone said this, it's a good idea to start at the bottom in everything except in learning to swim.

When you learn to swim, you've got to keep floating, don't you? But in everything else, it's about learning, isn't it? Learning step by step. And for younger people, young men, young women, if you feel that God has a place in your life, if you're saved, or when you get saved, if you start wanting to serve him, start at the bottom.

Start finding little things that you can do, little ways that you can serve. Young people tonight, I was blessed to see you joining in that little quiet time. That's something that takes a little bit of courage. It takes a little bit of willingness just to maybe step outside the comfort zone, isn't it? And all of us can learn from that, young and old, to be willing to sing for the Lord, be willing to stand and do something for the Lord like you did tonight.

[14:12] That's well done. And we can all learn from that. How can we serve? By little things. Start at the bottom and keep learning. It's being a disciple, isn't it? It's being a Christian. It means being a learner.

And it's starting to take that humble place. Sometimes it might be, I know some youngsters and older people help putting chairs away and doing various practical things. That's all important and helpful. And it's about learning to serve. And God wants us to take away the pride that we can all vainly have. Pride and rebellion and just wanting to do things our own way. And to kneel at the cross, to find Christ's will for our lives. As it says in 1 Peter 5, verse 6, Humble yourselves, therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. And James 4.10 says similarly, Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and He shall lift you up. If you want to be lifted up, if you want to be encouraged, if you want to be blessed, humble yourself in His sight and He'll lift you up.

[15:15] He'll lift you and encourage you and help you. Younger people, older people, we all can have times when we're feeling a bit flagged and they're sorry for ourselves.

Things may not be quite how we like. At school, at work, we might have challenges. We all do. Lots of difficulties. Life's full of it. And so a challenge for all of us.

And yet, if we just humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord, if we'll just ask the Lord day by day, moment by moment, ask the Lord just a little prayer, just a few words.

Ask God to help you, to help you live your life, to help you live in practical ways at home and work. And God will direct your steps as you do that. And it's been said, stay humble or stumble.

That's based on, wherefore, let him that thinketh he stand that take heed lest he fall. Sometimes we can think, oh, I don't need to stop and take time to pray. I don't need to stop and take time to think about God today.

[16:17] I've got too much else going on. But if you think like that, watch out that you don't fall. Watch out that you're not trying to do things in your own strength and that we've failed to rely on his strength.

Because as it says, pride goeth before destruction and a haughty or an arrogant spirit before a fall. None of us can afford to be arrogant. And I can be guilty of that, where I can think of myself more highly than another and to put another down.

We all can make that mistake, but really, we're all just as needful of the Saviour and of His grace. And those that don't know the Saviour, they especially need Him.

So yeah, people that you would regard as they're your enemies, they're the ones that we should love. We should love them to Christ. We should bring them to Christ. We should care about everyone, every lost soul.

You know, some people that have done me wrong, I bumped into one of them yesterday at the fete and said g'day and gave them a wave and a chat, a guy that's ripping me off over a thousand dollars.

[17:20] And, you know, you think, well, we still need to love these people with the love of Christ. We still need to love these people and be Christ to them. They need Christ, these lost people, people who have got no morals or ethics or regard for what's right and wrong.

We need still to show Christ to them and be an open book. We don't need to hold grudges or be hateful or scornful or nasty. People might do you wrong, but you need to still be Christ to them. Show Christ's love to them, even though they don't deserve it, just like Christ does to us. Amen? That's what we need. It's humility. It's realising that God is at work through you. It's not from you. It's his power, his working.

Not bragging about what you have done for God. God might use you in wonderful ways. Don't brag about it or think yourself any better for that. Let God get the glory because it's what God has done for you.

So we see, the holy God is the holy one. He's the one that revival starts and ends with. And he's the one we need to rely upon. The holy work, the holy God who's behind us all.

[18:25] The humility work, the work of humility, the work of a humble spirit. Ask God to give you a humble spirit. Ask God to help you to be humble, not to be arrogant, to be proud, to be brash, to be puffed up and vain.

That's just not going to achieve anything. None of us can afford to be like that, to be selfish, but to be selfless like Christ, to have humility of heart. And lastly, the work of the heart. It's the work of the heart, of heart repentance. God revives the heart of who? The heart of the contrite. The heart of the contrite. What does contrite mean? Contrite means that you repent. Contrite means that you ask him for forgiveness. Contrite means that you're broken up. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says that it's literally a heart broken to pieces. A heart broken to pieces. Maybe your heart has been broken. You know the phrase of heart broken. Maybe we have heart break through life, whether rejection or broken relationships or terrible times of suffering and tragedy and loss.

[19:31] We can have that heart break, great loss and tragedy. But more so, it's talking of the heart broken, about its sinfulness. The heart broken of its sinful state.

The heart broken because of its pride and of its arrogance, of its guilt and that consciousness of our great vacuum inside without Christ. Our great lack of his saving grace without calling for it. And people tonight, ask Christ to break your heart. Ask him to break it up. To break it. And then he can make it anew.

Ask him to deal with that sin that only he can take. That we can be a pure church and we can be a pure bride. That we can be pure individuals.

Purified. As I talked about briefly this morning, Puritans are pure in doctrine, in life. In conduct. In faith. Have you got that purity? That purity?

[20:33] People today, we need to have, don't we? And I need to challenge. And sometimes it's hard for me, but I need to come down heavy on some people. I need to get stronger with people about sin, about righteousness, about judgment.

As the Holy Spirit would convict and challenge and stir. There's times when people need a very strong rebuke and an exhortation. And it's incumbent on me to do that.

It's been said, it's the duty of the pastor or the preacher, whoever, or any one of us as we exhort, not only to comfort the distressed, but to distress the comfortable.

To distress the comfortable. We can get comfortable. Talk some word about people who are at ease in Zion, complacent, and just having an easy ride. Any one of us, we need to be careful we don't get slack and casual.

Don't get like that. Ask God to revive your heart, the heart of the contrite ones. Ask God to convict you in your heart, to move your heart, to change it, to break up the fallow ground as it talks in elsewhere.

[21:39] And God is interested in the heart of a man. That heart deep repentance. And really it's salvation, isn't it? As we realise we've broken up over our sin.

We realise how absolutely vain life is without Christ. How absolutely purposeless we are without His saving grace. How guilty and vile we are without His forgiving power.

And revival, Vance Havner says, is the church falling in love with Jesus all over again. He wants us to have those tears of repentance and to find His grace.

And do you have Christ in your heart? I know it's a glib phrase sometimes used quite carelessly, but it's faith. It's when Christ creates faith within your life.

It's when you trust Him. There was one day a young girl came to her mum and said, Mum, I know that Jesus lives inside my heart, but how do I tell Him I love Him?

[22:44] It's a good question, isn't it? I know that Jesus lives in my heart, how do I tell Him I love Him? She said, she said this, Mum, do you think if I write I love you on a piece of paper and eat it, He'll get the note?

Now of course that's a pretty novel way of telling Jesus that you love Him, but of course that's not the way, is it? It's when we realise that He is the Holy One. It's when we realise He's the one who created heaven and earth.

It's like we've been talking about the Darwin film coming up about creation, all things bright and beautiful. The Lord God made them all. We realise who He is. He's created everything. He's created you, me, every one of us here tonight.

He's created this planet for us to live in, our families and folk we know. And He's behind everything. All things are created by Him. And in Him we live and move and have our being. And it's when we come to that realisation that this Holy One He wants to come and reside in our heart by faith. The One who inhabits eternity. He dwells in the eternity. He dwells outside of time and space.

[23:50] And He is the One who wants to dwell in our lives, in our heart by faith. And we want to serve Him because we love Him. We want to serve Him because we love Him. Not out of dread or not out of victory, not out of trying to earn it.

We can't earn any bits of it. And it's been said one day, Spurgeon told this story he told about a couple of different armies and he said about the Spartans. The Spartans, they marched into battle and when they marched into battle they advanced with cheerful songs willing to fight.

They were just one cohort of unified soldiers that just were cheerful in their willingness to fight.

But when the Persians came, the other army, the Persian generals and officers would crack the whips on the cowards. They'd crack the whips.

They didn't have joyful songs and cheerful mind. It's like some religion, isn't it, today? It's like some religions in our world today where you've got to, you know, I'm told, as I understand it, like the Jehovah's Witnesses, they've got to knock on a certain number of doors and get their quota of certain things and certain works that they have to do in order to merit their, somehow, their blessing from their God.

[25:14] Our God's not like that. He'll bless us and reward us for our works but it doesn't, it's not about our salvation. It's not about working for our salvation.

We work because we're saved. It's because of our salvation. And is your heart in it today? Is your heart in Christ? Is Christ in your heart? Is your heart right with God?

That's the ultimate question. And I know we're talking to a mixture of people here tonight but simply put, do you know Him? Is He your Saviour? That's what matters and that's where revival begins.

In the Welsh revival, years ago, there was a great revival. The land of Wales was mightily moved on by God. People were saved all over the place.

There was great conversions. The whole community was coming to Christ in different places and people were coming from afar to hear about these wonderful revivals, these wonderful meetings with people getting saved and people would come up and ask the policeman there because, you know, as He would ask directions of a policeman, where's the revival?

[26:17] Where's the revival? And snapping to attention with a glow in their faces, the policemen would say, they would reply and point to their hearts, ah, the revival is here.

The revival is here. That is where the revival must start because these policemen had got saved. They got radically saved, gloriously saved by the grace of God.

They had trusted Christ and Christ saved them. And the revival wasn't a place or a meeting or a preacher. It was revival that happened in individuals' hearts by faith.

And it goes on here, that is where revival must start, where revival is needed in your heart and in my heart, not until God's children sincerely pray, create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit in me.

Will we have that sleepless concern for the lost and perishing ones about us? Draw a circle, place yourself in it, stand there with sorrow of heart and pray this prayer, oh God, send a revival and let it start within this circle.

[27:30] Then the revival will be on. It's true, isn't it? Make that your prayer tonight. We're closing now. Think about whether you've got revival. Is your heart right with God? Do you know the Holy One?

Do you know the One who inhabits eternity? Do you know that humility of heart and realise your brokenness over your sin and of your great need of Him, that you need Christ and Him crucified and realise that wonderful place of the working of the heart.

It says that He revives the heart of the contrite, those that are repenting. We need to have that renewal, that reviving, that refreshing of that first love, to have a heart for God, to have the heart of God.

And we consider when, as it says, that the love of Christ constrains us, when we are saved, we'll want to tell others, we have to, we must, and Lord, revive the church beginning with me. Someone pray, revive the church, that's our prayer, we want this church to be revived, revive the church beginning with me, make it personal. It says, one by one, of us get revived, there'll be revival in the church and in the locality.

[28:45] As it's been said, God has two dwellings, one in heaven and the other in a meek and thankful heart. Do you have that kind of heart? Is God in you?

Are you in God? Are you saved tonight? It's a big question. And yet, it's so simple. What He did for us is so simple that He paid, the price for us to be saved.

And that's the most wonderful thing. I wish I could express it and explain it as clearly and as simply so that everyone here could understand that simple truth. Because it's so essential.

And we can learn it, we can know that, we can experience that, whether you're five years old tonight or whether you're 95. It's just coming to that place, isn't it? Where you ask Him to save, where you realise you need and you trust His Word.

The Holy Word. Have you encountered the Holy God, the One who inhabits eternity? Have you had that humble spirit, that work of humility as you bow your heart? Have you had that working in your heart, that contrite heart that He wants to work in?

[29:49] It's been said when God measures a man, He puts a tape around his heart, not his head. You know, there's a lot of religions, there's lots of beliefs and theories and philosophies.

It's not about what's in your head. God doesn't measure your head, what you know. It's not what you know, it's who you know, isn't it? Do you know Him? He measures our heart. Is your heart right with God? Do you know Him?

Are you saved? Is your heart still full of guilt and sin? Has it not been cleansed yet by His blood? Now's the time, make peace with God. Please trust Him, I pray, I urge you tonight, to come to that place of a contrite heart, a broken spirit and a contrite heart.

He will not refuse that. He will hear. And when your heart's broken, that's when He can enter in. Amen? When your heart's broken up about your sin, that's when that hard shell that is our heart is broken.

That is when His Holy Spirit can soothe and enter in as you trust Him. He will not refuse any sin.

[31:03] He will not refuse He will not refuse He will not refuse any sin.  
He will not refuse Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[33:40] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.