

## Definition of Revival: TO BRING BACK TO LIFE

Are you consumed with passion for Jesus so much so that you are living a "God-intoxicated" life? II Chronicles 16:9 says that, "The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him." God is searching for willing servants not necessarily capable or qualified ones that He might employ in His service. Will you answer his call as Isaiah did when He volunteered, "Here I am. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)?

A deep relationship with the Lord always begins with a humble heart. Paul Billheimer once wrote, "The sands of time are strewn with the wrecks of the broken lives of many who were once mightily used of God, but who suffered shipwreck upon the rocks of spiritual pride." James 4:6 says that "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." If you want God's favor, you need to seek His face. And if you want to be used of the Lord, you need to cease operating on fleshly ability and striving for applause and accolades. Instead, you need to pray that God will reveal Himself to you and fill you with His power so that you "will decrease, and He will increase." (John 3:30)

Faith also must be cultivated in your life if you want to be used by the Lord and to know Him more intimately. In fact, Scripture says that "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). God takes great pleasure in individuals who trust Him wholeheartedly and willingly entrust their lives to Him.

Only two occurrences in Scripture mention that Jesus was amazed. The first incident is in Mark 6:4-6 where it was recorded that Jesus "could not do any miracles [in his hometown], except lay hands on a few sick people and heal them. And he was amazed at their lack of faith." The second is in Luke 7:6-9 when Jesus encounters the centurion who asks him to heal his servant by the power of the spoken word from a distance. After hearing his request the Bible says that Jesus "was amazed at him" and said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Both instances deal with either the presence of great faith or lack thereof. Which category of belief would Jesus be amazed to see in your life?

To develop a greater passion for God we must also repeatedly enter our "prayer closet" earnestly seeking Him. Prayer is vital in the pursuit of the Lord and His holiness. A mighty man or woman of God cannot attain Holy Spirit power other than through the disciplines of prayer and Bible study. Romans 12:12 says that we are to be "faithful in prayer," and Paul writes that we are to "pray about everything" and "without ceasing" (Philippians 4:6 and I Thessalonians 5:17). In other words, your life should be centered around, rooted in, and guided by prayer. If Jesus used prayer as His lifeline to the Father, then so should we.

Smith Wigglesworth said, "I believe God's ministers are to be flames of fire. Nothing less than flames. Nothing less than mighty instruments, with burning messages, with hearts full of love." Deuteronomy 4:24 says that "The Lord your God is a consuming fire." Ask Him today to fill you up with His presence and set you ablaze for Him so that others might see the glory of God through your life.

## **Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, wrote this about the steps to personal revival:**

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unconfessed sin in your life.
2. Seek forgiveness from all whom you have offended, and forgive all who have hurt you. Make restitution where God leads.
3. Examine your motives in every word and deed. Ask the Lord to search and cleanse your heart daily.
4. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard your walk against complacency and mediocrity.
5. Praise and give thanks to God continually in all ways on all days, regardless of your circumstances.

6. Refuse to obey your carnal (worldy) nature (Galatians 5:16,17).
7. Surrender your life to Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. Develop utter dependence on Him with total submission and humility.
8. Study the attributes of God.
9. Hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matthew 5:6).
10. Love God with all of your heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).
11. Appropriately receive the continual fullness and control of the Holy Spirit by faith on the basis of God's command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14,15).
12. Read, study, meditate on, and memorize God's holy, inspired, inerrant Word daily (Colossians 3:16).
13. Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
14. Fast and pray one 24-hour period each week. Prayerfully consider becoming one of the two million Christians who will fast for forty days before the end of the year 2000.
15. Seek to share Christ daily as a way of life.
16. Determine to live a holy, godly life of obedience and faith.
17. Start or join a home or church Bible study group that emphasizes revival and a holy life.

### **Our 2 main objectives at this time are REVIVAL and HARVEST**

The Bible says that we should serve others. Christians should discover ways to serve people like Jesus did (Mark 10:45). In doing so, harvest will come – souls will be saved. As we present the Gospel to people, their lives will be changed and Revival will come about.

**Matthew 19:30 NKJV**

**“But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first.”**

**How do we make God’s Kingdom great? We know we need personal revival, but how is that to play out on the earth? Serving others and making Christ known wherever we go is God’s plan for revival and harvest.**

**QUESTION: WHAT MAKES A PERSON GREAT?**

### **YOU MUST BE A SERVANT**

**Matthew 20:20-28 NIV**

<sup>20</sup>Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him.

<sup>21</sup>"What is it you want?" he asked.

She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom."

<sup>22</sup>"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?"

"We can," they answered.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

<sup>24</sup>When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. <sup>25</sup>Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup>Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup>and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— <sup>28</sup>just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

**It seems ironic that immediately following Christ’s description of his coming suffering in Jerusalem James and John tried to attain their seats of prominence in the kingdom. The mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came**

to Jesus, worshipped him, and said, Note: Did the mother of James and John worship Jesus to get something from him? Do we ever do this?

“We want you to do something for us.” This initial request was made for James and John by their mother. Could they have honestly thought Jesus would grant their request? Do we ever ask God for similar selfish and outlandish things? Jesus asked them, “What do you want me to do for you?” Note: James, John and their mother all joined together in making this request of Jesus. Otherwise, why were the disciples said to have been indignant against James and John, but not against their mother? The mother of James and John replied, “Grant, command that my sons may sit one on your right hand and one on your left hand in your glory, in your kingdom. They did not understand the nature of the coming kingdom. Jesus had foretold his coming death. James and John wanted to carve out a prime place for themselves in view of the coming events. They wanted to be head men in the kingdom. Jesus said, you don’t know what you are asking.

The disciples still had the “me first” complex as regrettably we do also on occasion. Jesus then asked, “Are you able to drink the cup that I drink and to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” The “cup” and “baptism” here mentioned refer to the coming suffering Jesus would endure. F. James and John responded, “We are able.” At this point James and John may not have understood the implications of what they were saying. Jesus responded, “The cup that I drink you will drink and you will be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized. James would soon understand the cup - Acts 12:1-2 “Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.” John would also understand the cup - Revelation 1:9, “I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Jesus further said, “However, the seats, to sit on my right hand or on my left hand is not mine to give (except to those for whom they have been prepared).” It was not in keeping with Jesus’ plan to give these seats to James and John. “These seats are for those for whom they have been prepared by my Father,” Jesus said. Does the Bible say for whom these places are reserved? All such things are in the eternal plan of God. They are not “up for grabs” by the ambitious.

When the other ten apostles heard this, they were moved with indignation and jealousy concerning James and John, their brethren. Human ambition disrupted apostolic harmony. Perhaps the ten wished they had made this request before James and John. Jesus called the ten disciples to him and said to them “The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones exercise authority over them. That is not the way it is to be among you. All of you are brethren.” Secular rank and privilege are not to exist in Christ’s kingdom. Whoever would become great among you will be your minister (servant, not preacher). Whoever would be first among you will be servants of all. He who provides in humility the greatest service is the greatest in Christ’s kingdom. Boasting and exerting of power is not Christ’s way. The fact that these things do exist in today’s church does not make them right.

In ministering you will become like the son of God who came to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to serve, to give his life a ransom for many. Jesus was humble, meek and utterly disregarded all worldly ambition. It is to be this way with all disciples. Satan held souls in his control and on the cross Jesus paid the ransom to free us from the devil’s power and control.

- 1 Timothy 2:6 says, “Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”
- 1 John 2:1-2 says, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”
- 1 Peter 1:19 says, “But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”
- 1 Corinthians 6:20, “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

All the saved have been bought with the price of Jesus' blood. Jesus was to become the ultimate martyr!

- **John 10:17-18:** "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Loving people is the key. In fact, look at 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NIV:

*<sup>1</sup>If I speak in the tongues<sup>l</sup> of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.*

No matter what you do, if you do not love and serve others, true revival has not take place in your heart. You must become "last" and love others if you expect them to come into the Kingdom of God.

## LOVE IS REALLY SEEN IN TWO THINGS

### 1. OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Jesus said in **John 14:15** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." John 2:5 even says, "Whatever He says unto you, do it."

In the New Testament a higher spiritual and moral relation is sustained than in the Old Testament. The importance of obedience is just as greatly emphasized. Christ Himself is its one great illustration of obedience. He "humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). By obedience to Him we are through Him made partakers of His salvation (Hebrews 5:9). This act is a supreme test of faith in Christ. Indeed, it is so vitally related that they are in some cases almost synonymous. "Obedience of faith" is a combination used by Paul to express this idea (Romans 1:5). Peter designates believers in Christ as "children of obedience" (1 Peter 1:14). The bond of union with Christ in the New Testament is obedience through faith, by which they become identified and the believer becomes a disciple.

### 2. HOW YOU TREAT PEOPLE

**John 13:3-5 (NIV)** says, "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him."

Jesus treated his disciples with the utmost love and humility. He served them. Foot-washing was not primarily a ceremonial custom. It was practically important because people walked in sandals through dusty, muddy and manure-filled streets. Your feet got dirty and stinky.

Not surprisingly, washing someone else's feet was regarded as one of the most demeaning tasks anyone could perform. It was reserved for household slaves. But since there was evidently no household slave present at this secret meal, who would perform this task?

Jesus' disciples were not about to do it. Luke says they were in the midst of their favorite argument--"which one of them was regarded to be the greatest" (Lk. 22:24)--and I don't think that means Peter was insisting that John

deserved that honor, etc. Anyone who washed feet in this setting would be admitting he was the low-life of the bunch!

What a picture of fallen humanity! The ego, pride, and vanity; the complete spiritual denseness. As Jesus was getting ready to suffer and die for them, they are jockeying for position in his earthly kingdom. How would you respond to them if you were their teacher? Jesus disrobed, donned the garb of a household slave, washed their feet, and by the time he finished the towel was brown with dirt and manure.

Allow Jesus to wash you.

Read 13:6-11. Good old Peter! He had no resistors between his mind and his mouth. "How can I know what I'm thinking until I hear myself say it." This is Peter at his sanguine finest: "Never to all eternity shall you wash my feet!" and then "Give me the full bath!" This is a difficult passage to understand, but the lesson is clear: We must allow Jesus to wash us.

This is why, instead of leading the way to have everybody wash their own feet (the common practice when there was no household slave), Jesus washed their feet. In doing so, he took their filth onto himself. This is a picture of what he would do on the cross.

This helps us to understand Jesus' insistence in 13:8b. It doesn't mean: "Your feet stink so bad that we won't have dessert until they're clean." It means: "Unless you are willing to let me wash away your moral filth, you may not have fellowship with me." And so it is for all of us. Peter's protest in 13:8a communicates an attitude that is unacceptable if we want to know God and belong to him.

We have been completely and permanently delivered from the penalty of our sin--but we still sin, and we still need to be cleansed from the ongoing defiling effect of sin in our relationships with Christ. God is not an impersonal force; he is a Person with a moral will for our lives. If we want relational closeness with him, we must respond to his moral leadership. When we turn away from him in this way (and we all do), this does not cause us to come under God's judgment--but it does affect the intimacy of our relationship with him. When this happens, what do we need? We need to be cleansed. As the Holy Spirit personally convicts us of wrong attitudes and behaviors, we need to acknowledge them specifically to Christ, in faith apply his forgiveness to this sin, and return to a posture of cooperation with him on this specific issue. When we do this, he cleanses our consciences and restores the intimacy of our communion with him. Read Heb. 10:19,22.

Wash others' feet.

After Jesus washed everyone's feet (including Judas'), he sat down. I bet you could hear a pin drop! Now that he had everyone's undivided attention, he was ready to teach them another lesson they should learn from his actions. Read vs 12b-15. Jesus' action not only had a symbolic message that they would soon understand (above). It also had a plain lesson they could understand right now: Wash others' feet (13:14b). In what sense did he mean this?

Jesus is not instituting foot-washing as a ritual for the church to observe. Unlike baptism and communion, both of which were already Jewish rituals, foot-washing was never a Jewish ritual. Furthermore, Acts never narrates the early church observing such a ritual, while it does so many times with baptism and communion.

Rather, to emulate Jesus' foot-washing is to embrace a lifestyle of serving love toward others. Paul understood it this way in Phil. 2:3,4 (read). It is rooted in God's love for us. Jesus does not say "Since I washed your feet, you should wash my feet" (13:14). This is one of the world's definitions of love--giving in order to get: "I did something for you, now I demand that you do something for me." He didn't need their love to be a whole person because his life was securely rooted in his Father's love and faithfulness. This is why John begins this passage with 13:1,3 (re-read). Because Jesus understood and trusted his Father's perfect loving care, he was able to serve his disciples freely and

sacrificially. And he calls on us to love others in the same way--freely and sacrificially--because we are under the same Father's loving care. Read 1 John 4:16-19.

It is the path to true happiness. Read vs 17. This verse changed my life. The word "blessed" sometimes sounds corny (like something someone says at Thanksgiving dinner or when you sneeze) and off in the distant future. But makarios means "happy" or "fulfilled"--and Jesus uses it to describe what can be ours in the present.

The world says you will be happy when you get other people to treat you the way you want to be treated, but Jesus says you will be fulfilled when you learn to love others the way he loves you. The world's recipe turns you into a slave, in bondage to how other people treat you. God's recipe makes you free, because you can always draw upon his love and choose to serve others.

#### QUOTE

"Be fulfilled where you are - - by WHO YOU ARE IN CHRIST."

Psalm 139:13-18 NLT

Genesis 12:1-3

#### **2 PARTS OF BLESSING**

**1. I WANT TO BE BLESSED**

**2. I WANT TO BE A BLESSING**

**"and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (ESV) -Genesis 12:3**

Just like Noah, Abram (Abraham) comes on the scene out of nowhere. No elaborate details about his life prior to his introduction here in chapter 12. Yet, as soon as we meet him, we find God pouring out a tremendous blessing upon him. In the midst of this tremendous blessing, we come to the climax here in verse 3, that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." What is the referring to? Ultimately, it points to a later descendant of Abraham who will provide blessing and salvation for all who call upon His name – the Lord Jesus Himself. Abraham was blessed to be a blessing.

This runs contrary to the mentality of much of contemporary Christianity. We do not want to be blessed to be a blessing. We want to be blessed in order to be blessed even more. We want to be blessed with more money. We want to be blessed with a nicer car. We want to be blessed with more prestige. Our primary concern is not how we can bless those around us, but how everyone around us can bless us.

We like to think that we are blessed to be blessed, while people like Abraham were blessed in order to be a blessing to others.

Consider your spiritual gifts. What gift has God given to you? Those gifts are not for your enjoyment! First, they are for the glory of God. Second, God has given you those gifts to be used to be a blessing to the Body of Christ – the Church (see Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12, and Romans 12).

When you go to church, do you look to be blessed or do you look to be a blessing? As you face each day, do you look for others to bless you or do you look for ways to be a blessing to others? This is one area where it takes intentional effort to not allow the influences of our culture to infiltrate our life in Christ.

Who can you be a blessing to today?