

God's Recipe for Revival

by Bill McLeod

Bill McLeod's sermon emphasizes the dangers of spiritual adultery and the necessity of prioritizing our relationship with God for true revival.

Duration: 41:59

Scripture: Isaiah 55:7, Lamentations 3:57, Hebrews 10:22, James 4:4, James 4:10

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a young man who was struggling with a secret sin. Despite praying and crying out to God, he felt no relief. Eventually, he confided in a friend who asked him about his relationship with his parents. This led to a work of renewal in his heart as he drew near to God. The preacher then goes on to talk about the powerful revival in the Hebrides, where 80 young people were transformed after a moment of conviction and prayer. The revival started with the prayers of two old ladies.

Transcript

In the book of James chapter 4 I want to bring some thoughts beginning at the fourth verse of that book. Now it's not usual for a person to start a sermon in such a blunt way as this fourth verse of James chapter 4, but I think you'll understand as we move along. James is speaking to people in this way.

He says, You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? I do not think the Apostle is talking about adultery in the flesh, but another kind of adultery that the Bible refers to very, very frequently, particularly in the Old Testament. For example, in the book of Hosea, 35 times in that one book, God spoke to the nation of Israel about the fact that they were guilty of spiritual adultery. The land has committed great hoarding, he said, departing from the Lord.

Over in the book of Jeremiah, the third chapter, there are ten references to spiritual adultery in that one chapter. And he accused the nation of committing adultery with stones and stalks of wood, that is, their idols. They were loving their idols rather than their God.

So as far as God was concerned, they were guilty of spiritual hoarding or adultery, because of their idolatry. In the book of Ezekiel, chapter 16, there are 25 references in that one chapter to this kind of spiritual adultery, and in chapter 23, there are 30 such references in that one chapter. It's a very, very common theme or idea in the Old Testament.

God addressed his nation this way, O harlot, he cried, O harlot. He didn't mean that all the people in the nation were committing harlotry, not at all. That is not in the flesh.

By the Spirit they were. He accused the nation through Ezekiel of setting up their idols in their hearts. After the nation of Israel was taken into captivity for 70 years, they never made the mistake again of worshiping idols openly.

But idolatry went underground, and it became something in the heart. And today, like Paul says in Ephesians and Colossians, he says that covetousness is idolatry, and the covetous man is an idolater. And if I have an idol, the idol could be a person, it could be a boat, it could be my work, it could be an education, it could be a person, it could be my family, it could be myself.

If I have an idol, then I am guilty of adultery in the eyes of God, if I am a professing Christian. And this is no doubt in my mind what James has, what he is saying here, because the next verse bears that out, the next thought that is, the friendship of the world. So Israel committed adultery with the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Edomites, the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and all these nations around them, so God had to call it a harlot.

And he said, You are guilty of adultery, because you see, to God the nation of Israel was his wife. Well we are the bride of Christ. If I am a born-again believer, I am part of the bride of Christ.

And if I have more love for something else or someone else than I have for my God, then his heart is grieved. And I to him have become an adulterer, a harlot. Your adulterers and adulteresses know you not.

Don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. So today, adultery is friendship with the world, loving the world. Well, as John said, as God speaking through 1 John 2, he says, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, knowledge, he said it's not of the Father, it's of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust thereof.

But he that does the will of God abides forever. Do I love the world? How deep down are my roots in this world? If you then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ with our life shall appear, then shall you also appear with him in glory. Now what he's saying there in Colossians chapter 3 is, we're to set our love, our affection, our mind on things above, because those things are eternal. Why we look? Not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore in this building this morning that will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God and is guilty in the eyes of God of spiritual harlotry.

Nothing should ever come between our soul and the Savior. Jesus Christ should always be the supreme object of my affections and of yours. We are to love him with all our hearts and to serve him with all our

hearts, and let nothing come between ourselves and our lovely Savior.

Oh, how great is his beauty and how great is his goodness! The Bible says, They traded the Lord for thirty pieces of silver, and God set a goodly price that I was prized of them. Have I traded my God for something like that, in that other things have become more important to me? And I am no longer, if indeed I ever did, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and thus coming under the promise that says that all these things shall be added unto you. If I seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these other things, and the context talks about food and clothing and all this sort of thing, all these other things will be added unto me.

The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not lack, shall not want, any good thing. The ravens cry, and God hears them. The Bible says, The cattle on a thousand hills are his, the silver and the gold is mine.

So if I seek first the kingdom of God, he'll pay all the bills. He's promised that. But sometimes we get so busy making a living, we have no time to make a life to live for God.

All right? Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Then he asks this question. Do you think that the Scripture says in vain? You know, there are times when the Scripture speaks in vain.

It speaks in vain when it's not read. It speaks in vain when it's read and not understood. It speaks in vain when it's read and understood but not believed.

It speaks in vain when it's read and understood and believed but not obeyed. So there are many times when the Scripture speaks in vain. It's talking, God has called of the earth, from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the sea.

God is always calling the world, it says in Psalm 50, oh yes, and in many other places, in the word of God. God has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world. So God is speaking to your heart, even this morning in this service.

Now, do you think the scripture says in vain, this spirit that dwells in us, lusteth to envy? The spirit that we have, he's not talking here about the Holy Spirit, as the context will show us. He's talking about the spirit of man, and our spirit is not straight. The Bible says the Lord made man straight.

He made him upright. The animal's going all forth, but man doesn't. God made him upright physically and upright morally, but they have sought out many inventions, that means many ways of escaping their duty before God.

Do you think the Bible speaks in vain, when it says that the spirit that dwells in man is a lustful, envious thing? Now James is not referring to any one specific scripture, he's not quoting now, he's simply saying this is some teaching of the word of God. Everywhere you turn in scripture, Old Testament, New Testament, the point is labored, that men are wicked, they are sinful. Just like David said in Psalm 51, I was shapen in iniquity, in sin did my mother conceive me.

His parents, as far as we can tell from scripture, were true believers in the Lord. But that did not mean that he was not born with a sinful nature, he was. He was conceived and begotten in sin, and he knew that.

So the Bible says he has set the world in their heart. All that world is set right inside of man's heart, from the time we're very young. We think first about ourselves and the world, not about God.

And the gospel is there to do something about that, and the word of God. All right, so then, we have this kind of nature, we have this kind of spirit, many of us don't really believe it. Do you believe, let me ask this question, do you believe, like the Bible says, that the heart is deceitful about all things, and desperately wicked? Oh yes, you say, I believe that, but not for myself.

I believe it for other people, because I read about how wicked they are, we have a horrible case in Saskatoon, where a man kidnapped two children, he skinned one alive, he butted his cigarettes for two weeks on the body of the other one, a boy, all over his body, till the kid died. Then he kidnapped two more, and because they were making a fuss, he strangled them, and he buried all four of them. When the detectives who were with him, when they dug up the bodies and saw what had happened, the one detective almost went for a surf, and he told the man to run for the bush, he said, I'll give you a chance, but I'm going to shoot.

And the other detectives had to stop him. I see he got twenty years in jail, and then they let him out again. The Bible says, I shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, that's what the Bible teaches.

Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God may he be man. And a man who will dare to take another person's life, will do the same to God if he had the opportunity. His guilt is aggravated, it's much worse than ordinary sin, it's sin, of course, of the worst kind.

And the Word of God says, when blood is shed, it defiles the land before God. And the only way the Bible says that the land can be cleansed before God, is by the blood of the person who shed that blood in the first place. It's not a question of whether it acts as a deterrent to a criminal, I think it does.

That's not the issue. The issue is that the land is defiled by this. In any case, men have this kind of a spirit, lustful, envious, deceitful, desperately wicked.

And don't you ever feel for one moment that you are any better than anybody else, because you're not, you have the same kind of spirit living in you. We're all cut from the same piece of cloth, and one person dare not ever feel that they are better than somebody else, just because I haven't gotten drunk, just because I've never committed adultery or something else. My sins may be worse in the eyes of God, because of the life I have.

God has to take all these things into account. Where do I live? What gospel understanding have I had? Were my parents Christians? Did I go to church? Did I have access to the Bible? Millions don't have it. Two thousand languages in the world today, into which no part of the Bible has yet been translated.

It's different for those people when they stand before God than for you and I. They too are lost, I understand that. But their sin is not so aggravating, because they never knew. In any case, this spirit that dwells in you and I, the Bible says, or does the Bible speak in vain here? Do you feel you're a pretty good person? Feel a little bit of pride because you are better than other people? Jesus Christ said, when a young man came running up and knelt in front of him and said, Good Master, what good things shall I do? Now I may inherit eternal life.

What did Jesus say? He said, Why do you call me good? None is good, except one, and that's God. Now, Jesus knew that young man just thought he was another Jewish teacher, and that's all. That young man

did not know he was kneeling in front of deity, in front of God.

And so Jesus Christ was saying, If I'm good, then I'm God, because no man is good. Men are evil, viciously so. Adulterous and adulterous is in the flesh, in the spirit, over and over again.

Or does the scripture speak in vain when it says these things? Then comes this beautiful statement, But he giveth more grace. And, dear people, if it wasn't for the grace of God, you and I could have done what that man did in Saskatoon. The possibility is in every heart, but he gives more grace.

And there's a verse in Psalm 84. It says, The Lord God is a sudden shield. The Lord will give grace and glory.

No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Surely he scorns the scorers, but gives grace to the lowly.

He gives more grace. Paul says in Romans chapter 5, Moreover, the law entered, that the offense might abound. I have not known sin, Paul says, except by the law.

I wouldn't have known, he said, what sin was, except the law said, Thou shalt not covet. And when I covet something, I see myself as a transgressor. But I wouldn't have known that, he said, but for the law of God.

So the law entered, that the offense might abound. But then he says, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. He gives more grace.

He saw me in my lowest state. He flew to my release. And that's why the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

There are some people, you know, it's like Jesus said to a certain Pharisee, who was sitting in judgment on that woman on the street, that harlot, who was washing the feet of Jesus with the tears from her eyes. And the Pharisee, who feels pretty good, he says to himself, if this man was really a prophet, he'd know who and what manner of woman this is, that touches him, because she is a sinner. Now what the Pharisee was saying was, but I'm not.

I'm a Pharisee. I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess.

And I'm certainly not like that publican over there. I am not unjust, I'm not an extortioner, I'm not an adulterer. What did Jesus say to Simon? He said, Simon, I have something to say to you.

He read his mind, he knew what he was thinking. And Simon said, say on. So Jesus told him a little story.

And it ended this way. To whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. To whom much is forgiven, the same loves much.

Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. Simon, to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. Simon didn't think he was much of a sinner.

There wasn't really much that was wrong there. Yet what is the worst sin of all? The worst sin of all is to not receive Jesus Christ into my heart as my personal Savior. I notice in the book of Revelation it goes like this.

It says, it's a list, a catalog of people that are going to have to be in hell forever. And it says the fearful, right at the top of the list. But the fearful and the unbelieving.

And then he talks about the abominable and the whoremongers and the adulterers and the liars and the idolaters and so on. They're further down the list, but at the top of the list are the fearful. The people that will not receive Jesus Christ as their Savior because of their fear.

The fear of man brings a snare. It's the best trap the devil ever had. But such people at the top of God's list.

And the unbelieving, to not receive Jesus Christ after God at such infinite cost. There's a verse in 2 Peter. It says, the righteous scarcely are saved.

It actually means with great difficulty. It doesn't mean that my salvation is just kind of a narrow squeak and I'm just going to barely make it. Maybe I have to leave a hand or a foot behind.

It doesn't mean that. It means that with extreme difficulty, men are saved and we're all sinners. And there's no difference.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. And if you feel yourself superior to one other person in the world, there's something wrong in your heart. Let each esteem other better than themselves.

Oh, he gives more grace. Wherefore, he says, God resists the proud, but God gives grace to the humble. Isn't that wonderful? I qualify for the grace of God.

If I am willing to humble myself and just become nothing, then the Lord comes because you see, the Lord himself was like this. That's faith. The high and lofty one that inhabits 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 a humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. If I am humble, contrite, that means a combination of repentance and brokenness, then I qualify.

And God will revive or renew my heart. But God resists the proud, and that means God sets himself in array against the proud. If you're walking in a proud path, you're going to run head on into the throne of God.

He hates pride. God resists the proud. God gives grace unto the humble.

The proud God knows far off. He pushes them away. But the cry of the humble is God's delight.

The Bible talks about him that has low eyes. I mean, that's the way it runs in the Hebrew. That's kind of a strange phrase, the low eyes.

God gave you a little sermon about a low beam. Some people are on the high beam. We want to be on the low beam.

Him that has low eyes, God listens to when they pray. There has to be that humility. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me.

It's become a dead thing, because when I look at it, I see it through the eyes of the cross. The cross is in front of me, and I am to the world, so that when they look at me, I'm a dead thing. And the only thing they

see me worth looking at is Jesus Christ.

And he's worth looking at. God resists the proud, but God gives grace to the humble. Therefore, he says, here's what to do.

Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Submit.

Submarine, submara, under the sea, under the water. To submit means to go under to God. And this very same Greek word is used in Ephesians chapter 1, when it says, God has put all things under the feet of Jesus Christ.

So I am to be under the feet of Christ. I am to submit myself to God. And after I submit to God, then I can resist the devil, and he'll run.

Now, sometimes, when we're not submitted to God in some area, the Lord will make us very painfully aware of our weakness by allowing the devil to knock us over time after time. Let me give you one illustration. A young man going to Three Hills Bible School some years ago.

Now, he had been going there for, I think he'd been going a year, second year, I believe it was. And one day, he became aware of the fact that he had homosexual tendencies. He found himself looking at men.

He couldn't understand it. He'd never kept company with this kind of person. He hadn't been exposing himself to this kind of reading or literature.

And there it was. He fought against it. It seemed to get worse and worse.

And the months rolled by. He lived in mortal terror that it was going to erupt beyond his control. The school would find out and kick him out.

This young man prayed and cried to God, and nothing seemed to happen. And a friend of mine ministered at the school. And this young man, in sheer desperation, came and poured out the whole thing and said, What's wrong? Why am I like this? Do you know the first thing my friend asked him? He said, What is your attitude to your father and your mother? That's the first question he asked him.

Well, the young man couldn't see what relevance that had. And my friend said, Never mind. Just answer the question.

Well, he said, I love my mother, but my father's a skunk. So my friend turned over to Ephesians chapter 6, where it says, Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with promise that it may be well with you. And he said, Young man, is it well with you? He said, No, it is horrible with me.

He said, How could it be well with you when you're not honoring your father as well as your mother? It doesn't say honor your father, providing he's not a skunk. I knew a girl, her mother was a prostitute and her father was an alcoholic. But God expects her to honor her parents just the same, because they were the instruments by which God brought her into the world.

Very hard for her. But that's what she had for parents. And this young man saw it.

And he asked God to forgive him. Then he asked his father to forgive him. And God broke the homosexual thing.

It was gone. A year later, there wasn't the slightest trace of it. It was totally gone.

And there are times when because I'm not submitted to God in some area of my life, I find myself totally unable to resist the devil in another area of my life. And I may become frantic over this thing, because I'm afraid it's going to erupt and people are going to find out what I'm really like down inside. But unless my attitude to my parents is right, I'm going to have problems in some other area of the Christian life.

Do you see this word, submit? If I am truly submitted to God, then if I am a Christian wife, I will be submitted to my husband also. Because it says that in the Bible. A Christian woman should be submissive to her husband, even if he's not a Christian.

Read 1 Peter chapter 3. It says so very clearly. Then it says the younger should submit themselves to the elder. Young people, you should submit yourself to older people.

The Bible says so. And if you don't do it, you're not submitted to God. Then it says all of you be subject one to another.

You know, God might want to say something to you through some other humble Christian in the church. Are you willing to listen? I had a deacon in one of my churches one time. He was the assistant to the treasurer.

And one day he did something that just about blew our church wide open. Oh, we had a problem there. My telephone was ringing, so it was almost hot.

Here's what he did. He wrote a letter to all the members of the church, and he said, this is how it went. He'd say, Mr. So-and-so, now I presume you are making approximately this much a year.

One-tenth of what you're making would be this much money. Last year you only gave this much money. What's wrong? You can imagine.

One family phoned me up. They were so hostile, I had to go up and see them. And they said, he's only been tithing himself about two years.

What's he talking us for? He's just a donkey. And I said, well, you know something? The Lord spoke through a donkey once. And they said, well, Pastor, if you'd told us, we could have accepted.

We kind of kept it from him, and they kept on. I said, now listen, listen, listen. Now, God spoke through a donkey, remember? Okay.

Boy, we really had a problem on our hands. I don't know why he did it. We talked about it after, and he said, it never happened again.

I can assure you that. But the Bible says we should submit ourselves one to another. Maybe God has something to say to you through some other humble Christian in the congregation.

Are you willing to accept it? If I'm not willing to accept rebuke from another Christian, a brother or sister in Jesus Christ, I am not submitted to God. All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. Some of us think we know everything.

We're always right. You know that fellow in one of the churches in Ontario? He never had any job in the church. He never took a job in the church for 20 years.

Well, he was a member. He was always there. Do you know why? Nobody knew until after he got renewed.

He said, I reckon myself to be the official opposition in the church. And he did a good job. I mean, for 20 years, all he did was oppose everything that ever came up for business.

Three preachers in a row left the church, shot down in flames. One of them left the ministry, totally disillusioned. Because this one Christian, boy, he knew he had to have his own way, opposed everything.

The Bible says we are to submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God. If I do that, if I don't, I'm not submitted to God, and therefore I cannot resist the devil. There will be some area of my life that's not right, that I'm struggling with because of this, you see.

And then the Word of God says this, and oh, the preacher, he can turn his ears off from him, but people can listen. He didn't ask me to say this, but in Hebrews chapter 13 it says, Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you. Christian people, do you realize the Word of God says you're to follow the leadership of your pastor, you are to obey and submit.

Now, he doesn't want to crack a whip and have you people jump, that's not the idea at all. But you are to be a follower of him, as he's a follower of Christ, that's the way Paul put it. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves to their leadership.

God will give you our pastor wisdom for things to do in the future, ways of expanding the work and so on, swinging behind and following him, praying for him, for his wife. God will bless you for it. If you don't submit to an area like this, you're not submitted to God.

And then the Word of God says that you and I are to be subject to, we are to obey principalities and powers, obey magistrates and so on. We are to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. So if the law says 35 miles an hour, I don't drive at 40.

I drive at 35. If the law says I can take fish a certain size, I don't take fish under that size. I obey the law.

I might think the laws are stupid and need to be reworked, and I could even be right. But the Bible says I'm to submit myself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. A fellow came to me one time and said to me, Is so-and-so a Christian? I said, well, yeah, he claims he is.

Why? I knew it was coming. He said, you know, he shoots deer out of season. I would never do a thing like that.

What am I supposed to say then? We are supposed to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. People glibly say, oh yes, I'm submitted to God, but am I submitted on this practical human level? If I'm not, I'm not submitted to God, not really, and therefore I cannot resist the devil as I want to. And all it takes, in so many cases as we've seen, is just a submitting of myself to the will of God towards some other person or group of people, and all of a sudden the power of God is there in my life, and I can overcome in certain areas where I had no power at all.

It might be a gossiping tongue, it might be an imagination that runs wild on me, I find myself thinking all kinds of evil things, or it could be something else, whatever it is. The victory doesn't come until I submit myself to God, and then it becomes God and me resisting the devil, and that's why I can do it. I can't do it myself anyhow.

Why, the Bible says in the book of Jude that even Michael the archangel went contending with the devil. He disputed about the body of Moses. He did not dare to bring against him a railing accusation, but politely said, And if Michael couldn't, you can't, and I can't.

It has to be God and me. Then he says, draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. I've heard this complaint, I suppose, hundreds of times.

People say, well, I pray, and I read my Bible, and I tithe my income, and I witness for Jesus, and I do all this, but God sees it so far away. There's no reality to God. Maybe you heard the story about the fellow who's driving down the highway in his car, and his wife, she's sitting over here by the door, and all of a sudden she thinks of something.

And she says, you know, honey, we should never have sat this far apart before we were married. And he says, well, that's right, honey, but you'll notice that I haven't moved. I know the Lord is saying the same thing.

He's not far from every one of us. Not far from every one of us. How close is he? Acts chapter 17.

And please remember that Paul said this to a group of heathens. They were not Christians at all. He says, God is not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move and have our very being.

Every breath you and I draw, we draw because of the presence of the Spirit of God. The Bible says in the book of Job, if God should gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again unto dust. The birds would come flopping down out of the air.

The fish would all come belly up to the top of the water. Nothing would live. If God ever took his spirit out of the world, how far away is God? Not far from every one of us.

In him we live and move and have our very existence. So the Bible says, draw near to God, and he'll draw near to you. He's not very far away.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he'll have mercy upon him and to all God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Jeremiah was praising the Lord. Lamentations 3.57, because he said, that God drew near in the day that I called upon him. When I prayed, the Lord drew nearer.

So Hebrews chapter 10 says, let's draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. That's the pure water of the word of God. Draw near to God.

He's not far from any person in this building this morning. He's very, very close. Someone said, as close as hands and feet, as near as my breathing.

And so he is. Draw near to God, and he'll draw near to you. I read a beautiful testimony from Binghamton, New York.

I was there a year ago in the meetings, and there was a man who had his 85th birthday on Friday of the first week. And Friday night, God renewed him. And we heard his testimony a couple of times, and I was back in Binghamton a couple of months ago and heard his testimony again, just as bright as it was a year and a half ago.

This is what he said. He said, my heart was cold, but I didn't know it. I never really loved my wife.

We used to bicker a lot. But he said, Monday night, God began to work in my heart. And Tuesday night, he was working harder.

And Wednesday, it was worse. And Thursday, I thought it was going to explode. And Friday night, I drew near to the Lord, and he forgave me, and he cleansed me.

And he said, he filled me so full of the Holy Spirit, I hardly knew what to do. And he says, you know what? I love my wife. Oh, he said, things are so different at home.

Eighty-five years old, and God did a work of renewal in his heart because he drew near to God. Now, it says, draw near, and the next verse says, cleanse your hands, purify your hearts. You may have heard about the great revival in the Hebrides.

How powerful is that revival? I'll give you one example. There were about 80 young people in the meeting. How to dance, that is.

The band wasn't playing, so the boys were over this side, drinking girls over this side, smoking and drinking and so on. When suddenly one of the men said, fellas, I think we ought to drink all the liquor we can today because I have the strangest feeling that after today we won't be drinking liquor at all. And a few moments later, his bottle fell out of his hands on the floor, and he dropped to his knees and he began to call on God.

And in a matter of five minutes or so, the whole company, 80 young people, were on their knees praying. And then those kids went out from that place as flaming evangelists. Many, many thousands of people were converted to Christ in that revival.

And remember, that's the revival where Duncan Campbell said after 20 years they didn't know five backsliders. Praise God! So how did it begin? Well, it began, first of all, with two old ladies. They were in their 80s.

They were twin sisters, and one of them was totally blind. And they had been praying two nights a week all through the night for revival because the churches were empty. And one night, the blind sister said to her sister, call for the elder.

They were Presbyterian churches there. Call for the elder. God has shown me the churches packed to the doors, full of young people.

God's going to do something. So they called for the elder. And the elder didn't quite go along with it.

He didn't quite see it. Well, we'll pray. And he got some men who said they might try and pray one night a week.

And it went on. But there were three men that God gave a great burden to pray, and they were praying every Thursday night in a bar on the hillside. And they prayed for six or eight months and nothing had happened.

And one night they were praying, two o'clock in the morning, when suddenly the Lord powerfully impressed on one of those men Psalm 24. That goes like this. Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that has clean hands and a pure heart.

And he stopped and said to his brethren, he said, brethren, do we have clean hands? Do we have pure hearts? If we don't have, then our praying is hypocrisy. And so they went to prayer and asked God to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts. And while they were praying this way in the bar on the hillside, the revival began down yonder in the valley.

Lights started clicking on in cottages and homes, as far as the eye could see up and down the valley. And people were tumbling out of bed, falling on their knees, calling on God in prayer. And the revival was on.

And so here in James 4 it says, cleanse your hands, purify your hearts. That's part of revival. You know, sometimes we think far too much of what we might call church revival and far too little of what we would properly call personal or individual revival.

People say, you can't have revival when you want it. You can pray and you can fast. That doesn't mean a revival is going to come.

Now, that may be true in part, if you're thinking in terms of a church revival or revival across a country. But as far as personal revival is concerned, which is the key to the whole thing, that can be had any time. You could be revived this morning.

You could go out of here renewed by the Spirit of God, filled with the Spirit of God. You could, if you wanted to. Proverbs 1.23 says this, God said, you turn at My reproof, behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you.

I will make known My words unto you. What God is saying is, the Bible is going to come alive to your heart and you're going to be filled with the Holy Spirit if you turn. Now, that's a promise of individual revival.

And here in James 4, I didn't give a title to this message, but I call it this, God's recipe for personal revival. Draw near to God. He'll draw near to you.

That's revival. Cleanse your hands. Purify your hearts.

That's revival. Then He says, be afflicted and mourn and weep. You're going to have to break with the funny boys.

Be afflicted and mourn and weep. Isaiah chapter 22, the Lord said, He said, I call the nation to weeping and mourning and baldness and sackcloth. And what do I see? I see joy and gladness, slaying of oxen, killing of sheep, eating of flesh and drinking of wine.

And our philosophy is, let's eat and drink because tomorrow we'll die. And God said, this wicked, wicked iniquity will not be purged from you until you die. When God calls men to weeping and mourning and sackcloth and ashes, it's no time to be indulging the flesh.

And our country has been busy with a revival. It's not ended yet. But what happens to it will depend to a large extent on what you and I as individual believers do with it.

When God looks at your heart and mine, what does He see? Am I really in love with Jesus Christ, the lover of my soul? And because I love Him, do I love other people with all my heart? Seeing you have purified your souls and obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfamed love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently. Have fervent love among yourselves, for love shall cover the multitude of sins. Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God.

And he that loves, he that loves is born of God and knows God. He that loves not knows not God, for God is love. And the God you and I profess to believe in is called love in the Bible.

And if I believe in Him, then I'll be transformed by the love of God and I'll be filled with the love of God. And I'll live for God and other people. And I won't put self first and my own interest in front of the interest of God.

I will try and seek the kingdom of God first and put that first and let other things fall into place in behind. God's recipe for revival, that is for personal revival. And after all, if one person in this building was to experience revival this morning, he is as genuinely revived as if a million people experienced revival.

And if two people, if twenty, if fifty, if a hundred, then we can start talking in terms of a church being revived, which we've seen, where prayer meetings double in attendance. I was in one church and their prayer meeting was running at six. And the preacher said, it's so bad I'm going to close it down.

I said, don't do that, John. I said, six is a lot better than none. And anyway, the prayer meeting jumped from six to thirty-five.

That's almost a six-fold increase. Well, thank God. But we know of churches where the prayer meeting has gone from, as in our church, from seventy-five to a hundred and fifty or more.

Some churches, their prayer meeting has quadrupled. And their finances have shot up. And people have been won to Christ.

I was back in a church for a second visit in Jamestown, New York, about a month or two ago. And he said they had the greatest year in evangelism in their church since God broke in and revived, well, was it sixteen months or something ago? Beautiful time. Praise God.

He wants to do it here. Draw near to God. And he'll draw near to you.

Cleanse your hands. Purify your hearts. Be afflicted and mourn and weep.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up. And this little recipe for revival in James 4, it starts with humility and it ends with humility.

Just like our Savior.

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