

Our Need of Personal Revival

by Denny Kenaston

To experience revival, we must first come to grips with our personal responsibility before a holy God and be thoroughly right with Him.

Duration: 47:24

Scripture: Psalm 81:10, Isaiah 40:5-6, Hosea 5:15 - 6:2

Topics: "Personal Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of pacing oneself in the Christian journey, comparing it to running a marathon rather than a short sprint. He highlights the need for believers to be willing to serve and submit to authority in order to experience true revival. The speaker also discusses the conditions of revival, urging listeners to deal with every area of their lives and make necessary changes. He concludes by emphasizing the continuation of revival, reminding listeners that all flesh is like grass and will wither, but the spirit of the Lord brings life.

Transcript

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We bow in reverence to your holy word and the power of your words, Father. Thank you for them. Thank you for that precious gift of those words breathed out of the heart of the eternal God and given to us as food for our souls.

Thank you, Father. Lord, we just want to commit this meeting into your care. We draw near to you, Lord.

Oh, fulfill your promise, Father, and draw near unto us, God. More than anything else, God, that's what we want. We don't need any more messages, Lord.

We need you. We need you, Father. I pray that you will hover near unto us and teach us from your word today.

God, I pray, deal with us today, Father. In mercy, deal with us. In Jesus Christ's name I pray.

Amen. You may be seated. Thank you.

There's something very powerful about that song. I don't know if you notice it or if you study songs enough to notice it, but the words of that song and the spirit of that song and the spirit of the tune of that song are one. That makes one powerful song.

Amen? That's the way music ought to be. As I left the meeting yesterday, God was dealing with me, or maybe reproofing me a bit as I was praying and pondering the meeting. I left here realizing how easily you young people can be influenced and what an awesome responsibility it is for those who have the opportunity to influence you.

And I don't want to send you out of here full of zeal with no wisdom. Though it is my desire to inspire you, to stir you up, and to send you home different than what you were when you came, I do not have any desire to send a bunch of zealous young people with no wisdom or understanding back to their churches and their homes to make havoc from what they learned. So I felt to say a few things here.

I feel like God just sat me down and talked to me a bit. And so I want to share it with you just to give a little balance to the words I gave yesterday. This is not a one-mile run, young people, that we are setting you on.

This is a marathon, 26 miles long. And as you well know, there's a lot of difference between running a 26-mile marathon and a one-mile run. When you go to run one mile, you run.

You run with everything you've got. But if you're going to run 26 miles, you better not run with everything you've got from the beginning. You will not make it to the end.

No man has ever been able to do that. So you must be willing to pace yourself, discipline yourself, and get ready for the long haul of your Christian life. You must be willing to be a servant and to abide under authority, or it will not come out right.

One of the signs of true revival is youth under authority. There are so many things that I could bring out to you as I've been studying in the history of revivals, but one thing that I noted continually in my readings, and that was this, whenever God visited young people, one of the clear marks that it was God who was visiting them was they were under authority. Some of those beautiful accounts that I gave you yesterday, I want to tell you today that every one of them was being overseen by godly men.

And they were receiving direction from those godly men, but those were godly men who were watching on with joy as the young people sought God with all of their hearts. Those beautiful scenes were all happening under the watchful care of seasoned ministers. This was not a youth thing, young people.

It was youth entering in with the adults into kingdom building. There's a difference, you know. Jonathan Edwards, writing about the revival that took place in his area in Massachusetts in 1734, he said these words, Before the revival, the young people were not interested in listening to what God had to say to them through their parents or their ministers.

But when the Spirit of God came in revival fires, the youth were easily convinced and willingly complied with the counsel of their parents and their ministers, and that was universal among them all. That was one of the marks of the revival that stood out to Jonathan Edwards. All of a sudden, I have a church full of young people who listen to what I have to say and do it.

No more questions asked. Just go! There is a dangerous side of listening to sessions like these. It is very easy for the young or the carnal to become critical and judgmental toward those around them and go home and tell your elders, We need revival! You need revival! What are you going to do about it? I just want to encourage you young people, Don't do that.

You will hurt God's cause if you go home with those kind of attitudes. It is the humble that God revives. It is the humble.

So the Lord laid those things on my heart and I feel like He sat me down and reproved me a bit and encouraged me to just give a little balance to the things that I said yesterday. Can you receive that from the Lord? Well, let's get into the message then today. The title of the message today is, Our Need of Personal Revival.

Our Need of Personal Revival. All those who are burdened for revival must first come to grips with their personal responsibility before a holy God. One man said it very well like this, You want revival? Draw a circle on the floor.

Fall down on your knees in the middle of that circle and pray, Lord, send revival right here to this spot. That's probably the greatest thing that you can do, young people, to further God's kingdom and to see a move of God in the community where you live is to first of all and foremost draw a circle on the floor, an imaginary circle and get in the middle of it and fall on your face there and say, God, send revival and let it start with me. Are you willing to do that? Hosea, if you want to turn there, Hosea chapter 5. We find some beautiful words about revival and personal revival, God's heart concerning revival in Hosea chapter 5. And we're going to read verse 15, that's the last verse in chapter 5 and then go into chapter 6 through verse 3. But I want to give you just a little bit of history here.

God is speaking through Hosea. He is sharing with Hosea, and Hosea is sharing God's heart with the people and God is saying through Hosea, I'm burdened about you, I'm concerned about the way you're living, I don't like the way you're living, what are you doing? I married you, you played the harlot, you went and committed adultery, speaking to Israel, all these things, you are grieving me, God says. And then God's response to that burden was this in verse 15.

God says, I will go and return to my place. I will go and return to my place. I have reached out to them in another place, God said, all day long I have stretched out my hands unto them, but they would not.

So, I will go and return to my place, says God. I'm just going to go there and stay there and wait and wait and wait until they acknowledge their sin. Until they acknowledge their offense and seek my face.

It may be that's how you feel a bit today. You know God, you know about God, you know there is a God, but it seems like He is way over there. But the Bible says, He knoweth the proud afar off.

Maybe God's way over there in His place. And you say, where is He? And why not me? And why everybody else, but why not me? Well, maybe God is over there waiting for you to acknowledge your offense. And it's interesting that God doesn't say here, sin.

He doesn't say transgression. He says offense. You see, God was offended with the children of Israel because of all the life that they had and the way that they were living.

It's kind of that way with young people, you know. You young people are a blessed group of young people. So much light has shined upon your lives.

God goes on to say, in their affliction, they will seek Me early. So it's like God said, I'm just going to go over there and let them to themselves. When they get sick and tired of all of their troubles, then they will seek Me.

They will seek Me. And then in chapter 6 and verse 1, we see man's response to this whole thing. And this is what our response should be.

And I believe this is what many of your responses is this week. Come, let us return unto the Lord, for He has torn, and He will heal us. He has smitten, and He will bind us up.

After two days will He revive us. In the third day, He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. What a beautiful picture.

And we shall live in His sight. Isn't that what you want? And then this last verse is beautiful. Then shall we know.

It's like as if God's people know. And God's people do usually know. Then shall we know.

But look at that little if in there. If we follow on to know the Lord. And dear young people, I'll say more about this on Friday, but it's beautiful what God is doing in your hearts and your lives.

But the test will come when you leave here to see whether you follow on to know the Lord. But if you do follow on to know the Lord, if you do keep that which God is doing in your heart, and you walk in the light of it after you leave this place, this is what you're going to find out. You will know His going forth, His prepared as the morning, and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

Isn't that a beautiful picture? Dear young people, that is a picture of revival. God likens the outpouring of His Spirit upon people as rain. Former rain, latter rain.

You know the difference between those rains? The former rains are the spring rains, you know? They're the light rains that just come down in the spring. You just put all the little seeds in the ground. There's no crops growing up there yet.

And if you had a big gully washer, it'd wash all their seeds away and wash all the dirt away. So God just sends those nice little spring rains. That's the former rain.

But then in the end of the season, at harvest time, when all the crops are growing up there, and there's all kinds of fruit hanging on those crops out there, then God sends a latter rain. That's a heavy rain because the plants are big now and they need lots of water in order to fill out all that fruit. God sends latter rain in the end.

That's a picture of revival, young people. Then we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord, that God will manifest Himself upon His people just like rain that falls upon the earth. Are you willing for that, young

people? And then the next verse, part of the verse, you just hear God's heart.

He says, O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? What do I need to do unto you, Ephraim, to get you to come back to Me? That's a good question for me to ask you today. Whoever you are, I don't know. What must God do to bring you to that place of total brokenness and yieldedness to God? What must God do? I mentioned earlier that revival is God's people getting thoroughly right with God.

And it is. But getting thoroughly right with God is facing the honest facts of who we are. And sometimes that's not very pleasant to do.

I remember a young man who came to a prayer room in a real poor condition, needing revival. And his life had been miserable for a long time. And probably the biggest reason why his life was so miserable was because he wasn't willing to let anybody know how miserable he was.

Did you get that? I'm so miserable because I won't tell anybody how miserable I am. But he came to the end of himself that evening, and he came to the prayer room, and he opened up his heart, and he said, I'm so tired of being a fake. I'm ready to get honest.

Revival is God's people getting thoroughly right with God. Opening up their heart. Being honest with their heart.

Being honest before God. As you sit here today, young people, there are actually three of you. There is who you think you are.

There is who others think you are. And there is who you really are. I wonder what would happen if we asked you all, will the real you please stand up and declare yourself for who you really are? I wonder what a shock it would be to everyone here.

Well, God is saying to you, will the real you please stand up. Many live in delusion or denial of who they really are. It's like you know it, you know, and the Spirit of God is telling you, and you know it, but you're just kind of over there with it.

You know, kind of like a drunk, you know, an alcoholic. Most alcoholics, if you walk up to them and say, are you an alcoholic? They'll say, no, no, I'm not an alcoholic. Oh, I have a little problem with drink, but I'm not an alcoholic.

You know what they're doing? They're living in denial. They're living a delusion, young people. And that alcoholic will never get help until he says what he is.

And you know what? Neither will you. We often present ourselves to others way different than who we really are. The word delusion means false impression or misconception, but in Bible language it simply means being deceived.

James chapter 1 says that we can deceive our own selves. Remember those verses in James 1? He who looks into the perfect law of liberty, he looks into the Word of God as a mirror, he sees his need, he goes away and doesn't change anything. He is deceiving his own self.

I don't have a spot on my face. I know I just looked in the mirror and saw the spot on my face, but I don't have a spot on my face. What do you mean I have a spot on my face? I don't have a spot on my face.

You're deceiving your own self. You do have a spot on your face. Go look in the mirror again and get honest.

We need to get honest and bring our salvation experience up to date to a present tense testimony. And that will cost you, but the rewards are far better. Turn with me to Isaiah chapter 40.

We can see here so beautifully what God is saying to His people. Isaiah chapter 40 verse 3. This is the message of John the Baptist, which by the way was a message of repentance. His words shook Israel in his day.

They did not know what to do with that man, with the words that he said, with the way that he lived, with the anointing that was upon him, with the fiery preaching that he gave to them. They did not know what to do with that man. Here are his words.

The voice of him that trieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Now what was John the Baptist meaning by that? Was he telling the people to go out there and make a highway in the desert? Was he telling them, the Messiah is coming, make a nice highway, make a road that's higher than the rest around it, make a nice road because Messiah is coming? Is that what he was saying? We all know by now that's not at all what he was saying.

What he was talking about was a highway in your heart. Make a highway, make straight in the desert of your heart a highway for God. That's what he was saying.

He was saying to the children of Israel, God is coming. God in the flesh is coming. You are going to be face to face with God Almighty in the flesh.

Make straight in the desert a highway for God so that when you see Him, you will know it's Him. That's what he was saying. He goes on with that illustration.

And by the way, that's the challenge of revival, isn't it? Prepare ye the way of the Lord. But he goes on to say how this is done. And this is the conditions of revival.

Every valley shall be exalted. Every mountain and hill shall be made low. And the crooked shall be made straight.

And the rough places shall be made a plain. That's the conditions of revival. That can be applied many, many different ways.

But all God is saying in those verses is this. Deal with every area of your life. Don't leave anything left undone.

Do you have high places in your life? Tear them down. Do you have low places in your life? Bring them up where they should be. Are there crooked places? Make them straight.

Rough? Make them smooth. That's the conditions of revival. Then we have the glorious consolation of revival.

This is what happens when God's people do that. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed. Remember that word glory? The glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

And all flesh shall see it together. The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. This is the consolation of revival.

The glory of God. The manifest presence of God in the midst of His people. And the people out there shall see the salvation of God.

Do you know young people, that the people out there need to see the salvation of God and God has left that responsibility to you and I? And probably the biggest reason why we don't do anything about it is because we don't stay clear long enough to be empowered strong enough to go out and do it. That's the facts. And then lastly we see the continuation of revival.

The voice said, Cry. And he said, the prophet said, What shall I cry? And the voice said, All flesh is grass. Quite a message.

My, that would not go over very well in popular Christianity today, would it? I mean, you know, feel good about yourself. That would not go over with popular Christianity. All flesh is grass.

And the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth. The flower fadeth.

Why? Because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely the people is grass. And all God is saying there in the continuation of revival is, You must stay in a posture of humility if you want to walk with God in clarity.

That's all. Turn to Psalm 81. Our need of personal revival.

In Psalm 81 we have some beautiful words. Beautiful words in Psalm 81. Psalm 81 is a revival psalm.

So is Psalm 80. So is Psalm 85. So is Psalm 86.

So is Psalm 107. So is Psalm 126. So is Psalm 137.

There are many, many psalms that speak about this glorious open heaven over God's people. In Psalm 81, we're going to break into the middle here because we don't have time to read these chapters. But in Psalm 81 and verse 10, hear God's heart crying to Israel and also crying to us as His people in this New Testament day.

God says, I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt. I have delivered you says God. And look at the next phrase.

Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. How many of you think He's talking about a piece of bread? Not one taker. Not one.

God is not talking about a piece of bread in this verse. When He said to His people, open your mouth wide and I will fill it. No, He's talking about feasting on manna from heaven.

Amen? And God says to us, His people, I brought you out of Egypt. I delivered you. I saved you.

I sanctified you. I delivered you. So, open your spiritual mouth wide and I will fill it.

In other words, long from your heart for Me and I will satisfy your longing. But listen to the next verse. But My people would not hearken to My voice and Israel would none of Me.

That's sad, isn't it? Imagine that. Sitting in the riches of eternal glories and not wanting it. Can you imagine? So, this is God's response.

A rather frightful, terrifying response, if you ask Me. But this is God's response. So, I gave them up unto their own heart's lust and they walked in their own counsels.

Now, I don't have a lot of time here this afternoon, but I just want you to use your own imagination and think about that for a moment. What happens to an individual when God gives them up to their own heart's lust and allows them to walk in their own counsels? I'll tell you what, it's a sad story at the end of it. Every time.

And it happens, young people. It happens. It happens with young people that sit in this room right here.

It happens with young people that were here last year that are not here this year. Do you believe that? It does. They sat here last year.

They sat in the atmosphere. They sensed God's presence. They saw the joy of the Lord upon others.

But they sat like this. They were not here for that. They were here for something else.

They were here for fun. They were here for the girls. They were here to disrespect the principal.

Who knows what they were here for? And they sat like this. Well, they're not here today. And some of them messed their lives up in the last year.

My people would not hearken unto my voice. So, I gave them up. Listen to God's cry.

Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me. He's looking back now, knowing all the riches that He wants to give to us. Not money, by the way.

Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me. And Israel had walked in my ways, says God, in my ways. I should soon have subdued their enemies.

Think about that. I would have subdued their enemies. Do you have some enemies? God is well able to subdue your enemies, young people.

He's well ever. Give Him a chance. I should have soon have subdued their enemies and turned my hand against their adversaries.

He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee. That's an awesome thought, isn't it? God is giving them a glorious opportunity, but they would not. We could like in Bible school to this, couldn't we? Have you ever seen people eat garbage, young people? Hmm? I've seen people eat garbage.

Some of us have, haven't we? Yeah. It is disgusting. It turns my stomach.

God is saying, open thy mouth. Open the mouth of your heart and I will fill it with the finest of food, but you choose garbage instead. You choose garbage instead.

Right? You sit in the midst of the finest of wheat and honey out of the rock. Like this. And go out the doors and go home and turn on that music and go to that place and go to those activities and return to your

vomit and eat it.

God would have given you the finest of wheat. That's an awesome thought, isn't it? It's a scary place to be in. It really is.

There are two churches mentioned in the book of Revelation that I'd like to focus on just a few minutes here in closing this message. One is an active Orthodox church. That's what I'm going to call it.

The other is a self-sufficient lukewarm church. One is the church at Ephesus and the other is the church at Laodicea. The active Orthodox church had it all together.

They had their theology right. They were busy. They were doing this.

They were doing that. They were standing for the truth. They were reaching out to the poor around them.

Oh, they were doing many good things and they were good things and God wasn't cursing them for those good things. He even blessed them and said, I know your works. I see what you're doing and it's beautiful that you're over there doing that.

And it's beautiful that you're concerned about that soul. And I'm pleased that you're over there working with those little children. God blessed them for those things which they did.

He blessed them for their right theology. It's right to have right theology. And it's right to be busy about the Master's business.

And it's right to do good works. But God said, nevertheless, I have someone against thee. In other words, there's one thing a bit more important than that.

And God said to them, to the church at Ephesus, thou hast left thy first love. And I want you to notice, young people, that it doesn't say you lost your first love. We don't lose our first love.

We leave it. It is a conscious choice. We don't just all of a sudden, unknowingly get lost out in the middle of a wilderness.

No, we make choices. We make another choice. We make another choice.

We choose to go where we go. Every one of us do. And if we are ever going to come to grips with God, in reality, we're going to have to acknowledge that we have chosen to go where we are.

Even though you may have come here in a bit of a fog, and you're not sure what happened, but you know something happened. When you open your heart with steadfast honesty, you will have to acknowledge, I chose, I chose, I chose, and I chose, and now here I am. Have you lost your first love? Have you left your first love, young people? You know what God said? You know what Jesus said to the church at Ephesus? He said, remember.

He said, remember. Remember how it was. Remember how it was? Remember the zeal.

Remember the love. Remember how much you loved the Bible. Remember how you wanted to get up in the morning.

Remember how you thrilled to go to church. Remember that overflowing gratitude that was in your heart. Remember.

God never wanted you to lose that. God never wanted that to change in your heart, in your life. So, with the church at Ephesus, He said, I want you to remember from whence you are fallen.

And if you study in the book of Acts, chapter 19, it's easy to see why God had such a controversy with them. That was a beautiful church. It had a beautiful beginning.

They were a powerful people. They loved God fervently. But God said, You've left your first love.

The fires of love do not burn in your heart anymore. The desire to be with Me is not there. You're too busy-gooey going here and doing this and doing that.

But what about Me, says God? Then He says, After you remember, I want you to repent. I want you to repent. Oh, we've been hearing about that this week.

I want you to repent. And then after that, He said, Then I want you to do the first works. The first works.

Do what you did back there when you came to Me. Like Paul said to the church at Colossae, As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, Or in the same manner that you have received Him, So walk ye in Him, rooted and grounded in love. That's what God was saying to the church at Ephesus.

Remember? Repent? And repeat the first works. Remember? When you came to the Lord? Remember? Remember? Maybe you fell on your face and you wept and you wept over your sins. Do the first works, dear young people.

Do the first works. Remember how desperate you were for God? Do the first works. The other one is the self-sufficient lukewarm church of Laodicea.

They were a mixture. They were not hot. And they were not cold.

Have you ever drank warm water? How many ever drank warm water? Not hot water. Warm water. How many drank a quart of it? Pretty hard to drink a quart of warm water, isn't it? Yeah.

I've drank warm water before. In Africa. When it was hot.

And I had to have boiled water. And the boiled water just got off the stove two hours ago. And it's warm.

And I'm thirsty. And I took that cup and I tried to drink that warm water. Well, I didn't spit it out on the ground because I needed the liquid and I knew it.

But I guarantee you, I didn't chug, chug, chug that water down. It was a discipline to drink it. Where are you at today, young people? Are you hot? Are you cold? I remember so clearly it's years ago, many years ago, that I heard Bill Gothard share a little experience he had with a youth group.

Got them all together. They didn't know what he was doing or where he was going. He stood up there before those young people and he described to them what a hot Christian was.

Then he turned around and he described this cold, you know, a no caring, don't want to go to church and all of that stuff. He described that to them. And then he said to them, how many of you are over here on

this side? Nobody raised their hand.

Well, how many are over here on this side? The cold ones over here. Nobody raised their hand. And he said, how many of you are in the middle? Everybody raised their hands.

Then he had them. Then he opened up to this chapter in the book of Revelation and told them what lukewarmness was. Dear young people, you are living in a dangerous place if you are lukewarm.

You are in a dangerous place. Self-sufficient. I don't need anything.

I don't need to go to the altar. I've got it all together. You're in a dangerous place.

Where are you at today? Jesus is knocking at the door of your heart. And I want you to notice in that scripture there. He says, I stand at the door and knock.

I'm standing outside the door of your heart and I'm knocking. If any man hear my voice. Notice the change he made there.

It's no longer. It's this sound. My child, open your heart.

Let me back. Let me have my place in your life. It went from a knock to a voice.

And that's the way it is with all of us here today. It's not a knock. It's a voice.

It's the voice of God. And he says, if any man hear my voice. If any woman hear my voice.

And open the door. I will come in to him. That's his very presence.

And I will sup with him and he with me. That's that finest of wheat. I will feed you again.

I will satisfy you with honey out of the rock again as God. Where are we at today, young people? Our need of personal revival is the greatest need that we have. And that applies to every one of us in this room.

And it never changes. I'm 30 years old in the Lord now. I have a need of personal revival in my life and it never goes away.

May God help us. Let's pray. Father, we just commit these young people into your care again.

We know you'll take care of them. We know you'll carry them through. You are a loving Father and you want them.

God, I commit them into your care. These words, Lord, take them and bury them deep in their hearts, Lord. Send arrows of conviction where arrows are needed.

And words of direction where direction is needed. In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

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