

Great Revivals in Bible Times Prove We Can Have Revival Now

by John R. Rice

John R. Rice's sermon asserts that historical revivals demonstrate God's ability to bring revival in today's challenging circumstances.

Topics: "Revival Now", "Spirit Filled"

Description

John R. Rice preaches about the possibility of revival in the midst of wickedness and apostasy, using examples from Bible times to show that God can bring revival even in the hardest and most unlikely circumstances. He emphasizes the need for Spirit-filled, empowered workers who are willing to pay God's price for revival through obedient faith, prevailing prayer, and a deep compassion for soul-winning.

Transcript

FAINT-HEARTED Christians who watch the clouds so much they do not sow, and observe the wind until they do not reap, are defeated by the manifest wickedness on every side, and do not believe that God can give revival now. Many people cite the coldness of the people of God, the modernism and infidelity in many of the pulpits and in many places of denominational leadership, the widespread appeal of pleasure, the outrageous wickedness on every hand, as evidence that God cannot now give great revivals, or will not give great revivals as He once did. But such faint-hearted Christians should make a study of the great revivals in Bible times and they would find that these revivals came in most cases in the midst of wickedness as great and apostasy and false religions as prevalent as those we face today. It is a most heartening study to observe some of the great revivals in the Bible and see how, against amazing odds, God used one person or a few, in each case, to turn a whole nation back to God, or a strategic city back to God.

There are innumerable examples. I could show how, among captive Israelites in far-off Babylon, Nehemiah had his heart warmed and stirred, and was used in a revival that took a remnant back to Jerusalem and reestablished the nation Israel in Palestine, with walls and gates rebuilt, and eventually the temple, so that Christ the Saviour could be born in a Jewish Bethlehem and preach in Jerusalem, and there be crucified according to prophecy. Or I could cite the revival under the mighty preaching of John the Baptist when for four hundred years the heavens had been shut up, without a prophet, without a divine revelation; and when unregenerate, formal Pharisees on the one hand, and rationalistic, unbelieving

Sadducees on the other hand had made of the Jewish religion a powerless thing of dead letter and no heart, no contact with God. That was a mighty revival, under the most unlikely circumstances, when all Jerusalem and Judaea went out to hear John, preaching by the Jordan, and were baptized, confessing their sins. But I pass these and other great examples over, to mention four great Bible revivals. These include the great revival led by Elijah on Mount Carmel, the revival at Nineveh led by Jonah, both in the Old Testament; the revival at Sychar in Samaria where the Saviour won the woman at the well, and the revival at Pentecost, both in the New Testament. I think these show beyond any shadow of doubt that the God of the Bible can give revivals in the most distressing situations of declension and apostasy and idolatry and sin, provided only that He has one or a few people who can lay hold on God's mighty power by obedient faith and prevailing prayer, and will give God's witness to sinners.

I. God Could Have a Revival in Decadent, Idolatrous Israel at Mount Carmel

One of the most remarkable revivals this world ever saw was that led by the prophet Elijah at Mount Carmel, among the Northern tribes, Israel, when Ahab was king, as described in I Kings, chapter 18. That revival seemed to save the nation from utter and immediate ruin. At least it helped to postpone the captivity and destruction of Israel, and it must have resulted in multitudes truly turning in their hearts to God.

Consider first how wicked were the times, how apostate the people, when this revival occurred. Ahab, the son of Omri, was king. Read how wicked was Ahab.

"And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." I Kings 16:29-33.

Later it was said of Ahab, "But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (I Kings 21:25).

Notice that Ahab walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, he "went and served Baal and worshipped him," he built an altar to Baal in a temple of Baal which he built in Samaria, the capital city. He made a grove for idolatrous and lewd ceremonies unspeakable. He married Jezebel, a wicked heathen woman, a murderess and idolater. And "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." What a blight upon the nation! How difficult, it would appear, to have a revival in Israel under such conditions.

Later we are told that Jezebel killed all the prophets of the Lord, except one hundred hid by Obadiah (I Kings 18:13).

The whole nation seems to have turned to Baal worship, and, as far as we know, no prophets were active nor anyone else outspoken for God in the whole nation, except only Elijah.

Obadiah, the governor of the palace, was a man of God, but he was a secret disciple, a timorous soul who dared not speak out for the right, and who would not risk his place and income by plainly coming out for God. Secretly he hid prophets of God and fed them on bread and water in a cave, but he had no power with God and no influence with men for God. The whole nation would have gone to Hell for all that Obadiah could do about it, without paying a new price for power.

So great was the sin in the land that God had turned His face away. And He had revealed to Elijah that there would be no rain, nor even dew, for years, as a curse of God. So Elijah told Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (I Kings 17:1).

After three and one-half years of drought, Elijah came to show himself to Ahab. He urged Ahab to call the people of Israel to Mount Carmel, with all the prophets of Baal, four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves, four hundred, all of which ate at Jezebel's table. These eight hundred and fifty wicked, idolatrous prophets came, and the multitudes of people to Mount Carmel, and there the one man of God challenged Baal and the prophets of Baal, and insisted that they ask for a miraculous manifestation from God or from Baal. "And the God that answereth by fire, let him be God," said Elijah.

The people were unmoved by Elijah's exhortation. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." The people answered him not a word. It is a time when preaching falls on deaf ears. It is a time when the rulership of the nation is idolatrous and murderous. It is a time when society is sold out to false cults and evil religions. It is a time when God has turned His face away. It is a time when what few believers there are in the whole nation keep themselves hidden. Now, if God can give a revival in those circumstances, He can give one today!

You know the thrilling story as told in I Kings 18. Elijah asked that the prophets of Baal put a bullock on their altar, with wood under it but no fire. He asked them to pray for their god to answer by fire. Throughout the day, until the time for the evening sacrifice, the prophets of Baal prayed, "O Baal, hear us." Nobody answered! Nobody ever did answer the heart that depended on any god but our God. No heathen religion ever did show a single example of answered prayer, such as is commonplace with Christians. Demons show themselves, but the hand of a great God has never appeared when men called on any god but the true God, the Lord God. These prophets leaped on the altar. They cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out. But there was no answer. Perhaps they did not expect one. At least they put on as good a show as would anybody, they must have thought.

Then Elijah called the people to come near. It was time for the Lord God of Israel to show His power. Elijah rebuilt the altar that was broken down, using twelve stones. He put wood upon the altar, but no fire. They killed the bullock and placed the sacrifice on the wood. Then Elijah asked for four barrels of water. It was poured over the sacrifice. The wood was now soaking wet. Then four barrels more, then four barrels more; then Elijah had them fill a trench round about the altar with water. Let everybody know that when the fire of God falls now, it is a miracle. It is not human and natural, but it is supernatural and extraordinary. A God who cannot have a revival in hard times is no good. A God who cannot start a fire with wet wood would not be sufficient for this wicked world.

Then Elijah prayed. "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back

again" (I Kings 18:36,37).

And then, marvel of marvels, God answered! "Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" (I Kings 18:38,39).

Oh, to see multitudes of people on their faces convinced and surrendered to the Lord God! Oh, to see the idolaters, the unbelievers, the atheists, the drunkards, the harlots, the worldlings on their faces bowing to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, like Elijah saw them that day trusting our God and bowing before Him and confessing Him! Well, the God who brought revival to Mount Carmel can do it again!

Our own nation is no further gone into sin than was Israel under the leadership of Ahab and murderous Jezebel. The modern infidels in the pulpit, the false cults, the atheists in our colleges, are not more arrogant nor more powerful than the prophets of Baal and the lewd prophets of the groves in Elijah's time. Preachers who stand true to the Bible and to God these days have far more company than did Elijah who stood alone.

In your community, in your own heart, in your own meager talents, in your own sin-cursed nation, do you have only wet wood with which God may build a revival fire? Are the circumstances all apparently against God, against revival? If so, then remember that the God of Elijah can set a fire to wet wood. He can give a revival in the face of Ahab and Jezebel and four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and four hundred prophets of the groves, and an arrogant, thoughtless, rebellious, apostate people. A God who could give a revival at Mount Carmel can give one now! How wicked, how unbelieving we are when we do not depend on such a God for revival!

II. God Could Have a Revival Even in Violent, Heathen, Fish-Worshipping Nineveh

A second example I call to your attention is that of the revival in Nineveh under Jonah. However unwilling was the evangelist until God worked him over, the revival at Nineveh was one of the greatest in the history of the world. And it is a good example to prove to us that in any circumstance of wickedness, of idolatry, of false religion, of the impending doom and wrath of God, revivals are possible if only God can have workers who will pay God's price for revival.

Nineveh was not a city of the Jews, but a heathen city. We suppose that it was one which had never heard the gospel. We suppose that the only worship there was idolatry. We read that they worshipped the fish god, and this may be one reason why God prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and then to vomit him out on dry land. Be that as it may, here is a city so idolatrous, so violent, so wicked, that God said to Jonah, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me" (Jonah 1:2). And the message that God had for Nineveh was, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).

The city was large, mighty. "Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (Jonah 3:3). And Jonah went one days' journey into it before he began preaching. We understand from archeologists that Nineveh included several settlements and all under one king, and one outer wall, perhaps. The population was so great that it contained "sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle," as God told Jonah (Jonah 4:11). The cattle indicates that the city contained pasture land and suburbs, besides settlements. The suburbs were included, and

that makes reasonable the size indicated by three days' journey. If there were one hundred and twenty thousand children and babes who did not know their right hand from their left, there may have been six hundred thousand population in the city. The king, the nobles, the people were wicked. God's wrath was aroused against the city. God had determined to destroy it, and sent Jonah to announce its destruction. The city seemed almost past hope of redemption. Yet when God got one man ready to preach to the city, the king, the nobles and the people repented in sackcloth and ashes and pleaded for God's mercy, until the dear Lord repented of His plan to destroy it and would not destroy it.

It is significant here that Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh and preach. I dare say that this is simply an illustration of the thing the Saviour so often said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Matt. 9:37), and, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few" (Luke 10:2), and, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal" (John 4:35, 36). The trouble is not with the harvest, it is with the labourers! God's trouble about revival is not with the world, but with the church. And His trouble is not with the sinners, but with the saints. Anywhere God can get Christians who will pay God's price, God can have a revival. And so God could have and did have a mighty revival in Nineveh, as soon as He could get Jonah ready for it.

Will you consider the message of Jonah? It was what modernists and many weaklings would today call "a negative sermon." He preached, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." It was a message that appealed to fear, a message of judgment. It proclaimed the wrath of God, not His mercy. Yet God used that message to bring revival. That ought to remind us that if men are willing to preach as God tells them to preach, preaching His righteousness, His hatred of sin, His solemn warning, His judgments, the certain eternal destruction of Christ-rejecting sinners, God can use that kind of preaching to bring a revival in the most distressing and wicked and unpromising situations.

If God could give a mighty revival in Nineveh with no better worker than Jonah and with no more gospel than he preached, God can have a revival in any wicked city in America with proper prayer and power and testimony and preaching of the Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit. And we can have revival now, surely, since God could have a revival in Nineveh.

III. Christ Could Have a Revival in Half-Breed, Prejudiced Samaria

Another good example of revival under difficulties is that in the little Samaritan town of Sychar. John, chapter 4, tells how Jesus departed into Galilee, "And he must needs go through Samaria" (John 4:4). At Sychar He sat on the curbing of Jacob's well, tired after a half day's walk. At noon a woman came to draw water. She was a woman of shabby character, a woman often married and now living with a man to whom she was not married. Despite her own hostility, the indifference of the disciples, and the enormous prejudice that separated Jews and Samaritans, Jesus led her to see what a sinner she was and how she needed a Saviour, and then revealed Himself. She was wonderfully saved and ran to the city, leaving her waterpot, to say to the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Then the multitude came out to see Jesus. Many were saved at the woman's testimony before they ever saw Him. Others believed when they saw Him and heard Him speak, and said to the woman, "now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42).

The difficulties which would seem to prevent a revival were almost insuperable in this case. The Samaritans hated the Jews, and with some reason. In Luke 9:51-54 we read how the Samaritans in one village would not even give Jesus a room and bed when they learned that He was going to Jerusalem. Read those verses and sense the hostility.

"And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?"

Jesus rebuked His disciples. He came to save, not to destroy. But one would think that the same Jesus and the same disciples would have difficulty bringing a Heaven-sent revival to a city of such prejudices and ignorance and hate.

And the woman to whom Jesus talked as He sat on the well at the noon hour was full of suspicion. When He asked for a drink, she said, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." As the talk proceeded she insisted that Samaritans had the well that their father Jacob had given. They did not need any new-fangled help from any Jew!

There was also the difficulty of the woman's sad, sad past, and her sinful present. She had been married five times. Now she lived with a man to whom she was not married. Would she confess her sins? Would she renounce her present wicked alliance? Gently, Jesus pressed the matter of her sin and told her that He knew all about it. When she saw her need of the Messiah, Jesus said, "I that speak unto thee am he." And the woman was won.

But consider also the hostility or indifference of the disciples which was nearly as bad as the prejudice of the woman! They had been into the city to buy food and said not a word to those they met of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world who sat on the curbing of the well outside the city! They marvelled that Jesus talked to the woman. Why should He waste time on a Samaritan, and particularly on a shabby, castaway woman such as this one appeared to be? When Jesus was dealing with her soul, they thought only of their stomachs! They could hardly see the point when Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Here are twelve disciples to whom Jesus will give the Great Commission to take the gospel to every creature, and a poor, sinful woman whom they ignore and despise! And when Jesus wins her to repentance and faith and salvation joy under their very noses, they take no notice of what goes on and are absorbed with food for their bodies.

If any pastor today feels that a revival is hindered by the indifference in his own church, let him remember that a part of the work of revival is to revive the saints, to give them a burden for sinners, to get them on a praying basis, and to arouse in them a burden for souls! Part of the work of every revival effort is to get Christians ready for revival. There would be little credit to an evangelist who could have people converted only when the church was just right to start with, and when all the Christians were on fire and burdened and praying and working.

Note that in this revival effort there was no building. There was no advertising but the glad testimony of a converted soul! There were none of the outward conveniences that we often think necessary to revival. Yet in the midst of this suspicion and hate, despite the indifference, even the callousness and prejudice of

His disciples, Jesus got the woman saved; then she helped to bring the whole town to Jesus!

Does some earnest soul winner face the fact that the people with whom he would labor are self-satisfied religionists? Are they well content because they were christened when babies and confirmed in the church when they learned the catechism? Are they jealous of the forms of their own cult and satisfied with the externals of religion? Well, their case is not so bad as these Samaritans who said, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship" (John 4:20). They had their own well, dug by their ancestor Jacob. They knew the true religion as well as anybody. Weren't they descended from Abraham and Isaac and Jacob? And for many, many years their fathers had worshipped in this mountain, and here came some narrow-minded Jews who thought you should worship in Jerusalem! That was about their attitude. But God could give revival there, then, and God can give revival now, anywhere, if God finds some people to pay His price.

Deep in the heart of this sinful woman there was a need, a longing. She may have been a sinner, but she had a conscience, as does every other sinful woman, every other depraved man! She was a sinner, and she had lived in outrageous sin, but she feared death. Something in her heart cried out for forgiveness and cleansing and peace, which she could not find, how ever many men she lived with. That hunger was not immediately apparent, but it was there. The harvest really was white.

And the people in the city were probably as prejudiced and as unlikely as she to be friendly toward a Jewish preacher.

Yet when they saw a woman really transformed, a shabby, sinful woman forgiven and cleansed and happy, and found that the Lord Jesus knew all about her heart and therefore about their hearts and their sins, they were glad to turn to Him. Some were so eager to be saved that they trusted in the Saviour on the woman's word at once. Others went to see Him and hear Him first, then were gladly saved.

The Saviour was right when He said, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together" (John 4:35, 36). The harvest was ripe then; it is ripe now. It did not appear to be ripe to the eye of unbelieving and indifferent disciples. To the cold in heart, the backslidden, the worldly-minded, the self-satisfied, the harvest does not appear to be ripe now. The harvest does not appear to be ripe now to preachers who have no passion, who do not have the mighty moving of the Spirit of God upon them. But, oh, if you who hear and you who read will be filled with the Spirit of God, you will find that God has hungry hearts everywhere, and the revival will come when you pay God's price for it.

Isn't it blessed how God can use the most unlikely instruments in revival? That poor Samaritan would seem to be a very unlikely instrument in revival. But her glad testimony had this to recommend it: she really meant business! She had no time to carry water now, so she left her waterpot at the well. She had a message to tell. Her heart overflowed with it! She ran, she did not walk! And she exaggerated the matter a little, as a woman might be forgiven for doing under the circumstances, when she said, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did." Jesus did not really tell her everything that she ever did. But He gave her enough as a sample that she knew that He knew everything that she ever did. Oh, God can use anybody as a soul winner, provided only that he is thoroughly, with all his heart, committed to the soul-winning business and sets out to work at it with all his heart. The Holy Spirit can come upon such weak Christians and give mighty power to what they say and what they do. You see, there is no complaint

about the harvest. The harvest is white. There are many people who could be won. God's trouble is with the laborer! He had to by-pass Peter, James, John, Bartholomew, Andrew, Matthew, James the less, and others, and had to save this poor Samaritan woman before He could get anybody to win souls in Sychar. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Anywhere God can get some Christians ready to pay His price, He can have a revival. He had a revival at Sychar; He can have one in your city, or in any city, where a few people will pay God's price to be used in soul-winning.

IV. God Could Give a Revival in the Hardest City in the World, Jerusalem, Fifty Days After the Crucifixion!

If ever there was a gospel-hardened city, it was Jerusalem after the crucifixion of Christ. Here John the Baptist had preached like a flaming fire! Spirit-filled John, mighty in the Scriptures, had called men to repentance and had baptized multitudes in the river Jordan. Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees had rejected John's preaching, but they had felt the impact of it.

Then the Saviour Himself was announced and began His public ministry. He had preached and baptized (through His disciples) more disciples than John. He had worked mighty miracles. He had raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany just outside Jerusalem, and everybody in the city knew it. He had opened blind eyes, cleansed the lepers, stilled storms, saved a maniac, wrought all kinds of miracles. He had ridden into Jerusalem according to the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, "upon a colt the foal of an ass," and the multitudes had thrown their garments before Him and littered the road with palm branches as He made His triumphal entry. He had boldly claimed to be the Messiah. He had driven the moneychangers from the Temple. He had warned of the coming destruction of the city of Jerusalem. Many were saved, but the Jewish leaders were not. They hated Jesus with an unreasoning hatred. They set out to kill Him. And at last they had their way. At the Passover season the high priest and the Sanhedrin, with Scribes and Pharisees, planned to take Jesus. They bribed one of His followers, Judas, the only unsaved one of the twelve, to lead them to Jesus in the night. He was tried in an illegal session of the Sanhedrin at night, and then condemned in Pilate's judgment hall, but only by political pressure on the governor. Then with suborned witnesses, and with an incited mob, the people were moved to deny their King, to choose for release Barabbas instead of Jesus. And Jesus, despised and officially rejected by His nation, was scourged with a Roman scourge, was mocked, blindfolded and crowned with thorns, then made to bear His cross out to Golgotha. And there, amid the jeers of the multitudes, Jesus hung six hours and died. Was there ever a city so steeped in religion of a formal kind, a Christ-rejecting kind? They knew more about Passover lambs and atoning blood in Jerusalem than any city in the world now knows. They knew more about tithes and offerings and public prayers and forms and ceremonies of religion, than any group in the world did. They were insanely proud of their circumcision, of their descent from Abraham, of their prophets and their Mosaic law. They had hated John the Baptist, and John had gotten his head cut off. They hated the Lord Jesus Himself and killed Him, murdered the Son of God! What chance would there be here in Jerusalem for a revival now?

And consider the shameful state of His disciples. When Jesus was arrested, the disciples all deserted Him and fled (Matt. 26:56). Judas had betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a common slave. Then this treasurer of the little band had hanged himself and the frayed rope later broke, and his body fell and burst open, and his bowels gushed out, and it was a scandalous bit of gossip all over Jerusalem! And worse still, the main spokesman for His disciples, Simon Peter, at the trial had consorted with the soldiers who were to crucify Jesus, and then had openly denied that he was a disciple of Jesus, even cursed and swore that he did not know Jesus! So betrayed, denied and deserted by His friends, the Lord Jesus came to trial. And He died with only three or four Christians near the cross; Mary, the mother of Jesus; Mary

Magdalene, John, and perhaps one or two more.

Let that defeated, unreliable, immature bunch of disciples reassemble and try to have a revival now in Jerusalem! Let Peter, who cursed so loudly a few weeks ago and denied that he even knew Jesus, now try to preach Christ to these multitudes! What chance have they for a revival in Jerusalem?

But they had it nevertheless! They waited in an upper room for ten days. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren" (Acts 1:14). And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, the power of God came upon them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit as John had been filled, as Jesus had been filled at His baptism. They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness and power. God stretched out His hand to give miraculous confirmation of their message. Sinners were cut to the heart, there was a great repenting, and three thousand people were saved in one day and added to the church! Then multitudes of others were saved day after day, in the mighty initial revival, the sample revival which God gave early in the age for all of us to know what He could do and wanted to do in revivals.

If God could give a revival in Jerusalem at Pentecost, He can give one anywhere. Never a city, never a country in the world where people have hated Christ more than they hated Him at Jerusalem. Never a city or country in the world where they have rejected more pure gospel, and have despised more the manifestation of God's grace, than at Jerusalem. Nowhere in the world is there a place where God's disciples have failed Him so signally as that little band of disciples seemed to have failed Christ in the hours of His arrest, trial and death. They did not even believe that He had risen from the dead. They had thrown away all their hopes. Peter had quit the ministry and had gone back to fishing. Thomas would not believe in His resurrection for a week after others had been convinced of it. But the Lord Jesus met and empowered those disciples and used them in a mighty, mighty revival! Oh, then, weak, discouraged Christians, Christians who have made a shabby failure of your lives, take heart! The Lord Jesus can empower you and use you mightily if you will but wait upon Him with holy abandon, and seek and find the fullness of the Spirit for soul-winning power!

We know God can give us a revival now because He gave one at Jerusalem, at Pentecost. How foolish to suppose that times are getting too hard for God, or hearts are getting too hard for God, or the circumstances are too difficult for God to deal with! Oh, rather how we ought to say that our great God, with the power of the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God and in answer to the prayers of His believing people, can give a revival anywhere, when we meet His requirements and pay His price!

If we are willing to wait upon God and plead His promises and stay before Him in humility and seek until we find the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, we too can have Pentecostal revivals.

We have taken these four examples of revivals in Bible times to show us that God can give revivals in the most difficult times. We could have taken many other examples. All of them prove the same thing; that the mighty God has grace that is greater than all the sin in the world; that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation; that the Holy Spirit can reach the hardest and most wicked hearts. And I have shown that all the way through God has one great need--a need for Spirit-filled, empowered workers, workers with a holy abandon and a deep, moving compassion that puts soul-winning above everything else in the world!

It took God longer to get Jonah ready to preach the gospel than it took to get all Nineveh on their faces repenting. It took the Lord Jesus longer to get one shabby Samaritan woman saved and ready to witness than it took to get many others saved. At Mount Carmel, God could turn the hearts of all the people back to

Him; He could put them on their faces crying out, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God!" just as soon as He had one man who could pray down the fire of God from Heaven! And at Pentecost God could change hard hearts, could save multitudes, as soon as He had a group of people who were willing to wait before Him long enough and with singleness of mind enough to be mightily filled with the Spirit of God. You see, it is the old, old story that Jesus often told: "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few" (Luke 10:2). And again, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Matt. 9:37). And, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). God's great lack is not power enough to save sinners, not sinners enough who can be saved, not circumstances that are favorable. No, God suffers for lack of workers, and He earnestly pleads with us, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2, Matt. 9:37). The trouble is not with the world, but with the church. The trouble is not with the sinners, but with the saints. The revival problem is a Christian problem. We can have revival now if we want it enough to do God's will about it.

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