

(Revival) Revival Preaching and Repentance - Part 1

by Michael L. Brown

Revival preaching is a type of preaching that is filled with divine fire, God shouting aloud with all his might, and is a prophetic cry to repent, revealing sin, demolishing strongholds, and searching out every hiding place.

Duration: 28:39

Topics: "Revival Preaching", "Repentance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the topic of revival preaching and repentance, using Matthew 3 as the starting point. He emphasizes that revival is needed when there is a decline or complacency in the spiritual life. The preacher explains that revival preaching is different from regular teaching and focuses on exposing sin and calling for repentance. He highlights that revival preaching is filled with divine fire and is a prophetic cry to turn away from sin and return to God.

Transcript

Chapter 3, Matthew chapter 3. As we're getting over there, let me just remind you of some of the things that we've laid out so far. We've seen that revival presupposes declension, that revival means that some sort of death or backsliding or complacency or worldliness has set in, that something is substandard. If you look at the ministry of Jesus, there was never a time in his own personal ministry where revival was needed, because he was continually, 100% of the time, walking in the fullness of the Spirit.

He didn't wane, he didn't go up or down and need to be revived. There was no spiritual death that ever set in in his life. But in terms of the history of the body, there are times when the glory fades, there are times when the reality of the Spirit disappears, there are times of complacency and lukewarmness.

And in times like that, even when you begin to experience something real, you share it with other people and they're like, no, no, can't be, I don't believe it. That skepticism is there. You also remember that revival brings a revelation of the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man.

Remember those two things for everything else we're going to talk about from here on in tonight. Remember first that revival presupposes a backslidden, fallen state, that presupposes a subpar state of some kind. We went into that at great length.

And then remember the revelation of God that comes with revival, the fact that revival sets things right. And that's a subject we'll take up at a later time. Matthew 3 is the text we're going to start with, but we're going to talk first tonight about revival preaching and repentance.

Revival preaching and repentance. First Matthew chapter 3. In those days, John the baptizer, the immerser, came preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, repent for the kingdom of heaven is near. Interestingly, this is the same message that Yeshua begins with in Mark's gospel.

The kingdom of God is here. God's power, God's kingdom, God's reign has arrived in the person of the Messiah. Repent and believe the good news.

Now speaking of John, this is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, a voice of one calling in the desert, prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Now, verse five, people went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan confessing their sins. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them, you brood of vipers who warned you to flee from the coming wrath, produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father. I tell you that out of these stones, God can raise up children for Abraham.

The axes are ready at the root of the trees and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance, but after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

His winnowing fork is in his hand and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Revival preaching is different than other preaching and teaching that goes on in the normal life of a body. Revival preaching does not consist of building people up in the area of family life, strengthening them in terms of general godly behavior and their witness at work.

It's not dealing with helping them to develop a regular devotional time and prayer in the word. It's not specifically there to get people to tithe and things. All these things can be touched on, but it's not just your regular teaching, building community, building a vision.

Revival preaching is coming either to bring about revival. God is stirring. God is shaking.

There's been prayer and intercession and travail. There's been a recognition of the people of God that something is wrong and God begins to raise up his messengers to begin to speak and bring forth that word. So the word is being addressed to those who are not in the right state.

And as we saw pretty simply, the whole American body is not in the right state. The messianic movement is not in the right state. The charismatic movement is not in the right state.

There's a shaking, a large wholesale shaking that God is performing and is wanting to bring on in a greater and greater degree of intensity. So revival preaching is addressed to people who are in that particular state or else revival preaching is in the midst of revival. Those people are now being stirred and pushed and challenged until that thing is taken full hold.

This message comes forth. Now John here is preaching to people to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord. Prepare for the Messiah's coming.

Things were not right. Things needed to get right. What do you need? You need a revival preacher.

You need revival preaching. You need a revival message. And I want you to understand some of the aspects of revival preaching.

Why repentance is such a central theme and as you understand these things, number one, it will enable you to let God speak to you personally in these ways without thinking that you're some terrible sinner. It'll enable the Spirit of God to begin to wake you up and preach to you individually. It'll also enable you to receive from people who have this burning revival fire message because otherwise you may get scandalized by it.

Otherwise you might have a problem with it. Otherwise you might judge the messenger or judge the message. But when you recognize it's in the heat of revival flame, all of a sudden you start to think differently.

And lastly, God may put a word in your heart to begin to bring and you can't understand it. Don't know how you have the right to bring it forth. But you realize it's that revival word.

It's that revival fire. God wants you to share it wherever you have the opportunity. Well, let me say some things then about revival preaching.

Revival preaching is filled with divine fire. It is God shouting aloud with all his might. It's a prophetic cry to repent, revealing sin, demolishing strongholds, searching out every hiding place and exposing man's universal guilt in the sight of a holy God.

Listen to that again. Revival preaching is filled with divine fire. It is God shouting aloud with all his might.

God told the prophet Isaiah chapter 58 verse 1 that he should cry aloud literally with his throat, with a full throat, not hold back, lift up his voice like a shofar, like a trumpet blast and declare to Jacob his transgression into Israel, his sin. Micah the third chapter in the eighth verse, almost the identical words. The prophet says that he's filled with the spirit, with power, with the might of the Lord.

Why? To declare to Jacob his transgression into Israel, his sin. That blast, that explosion, that Amos could say the lion has roared, who can but fear the Lord God has spoken, who can but prophesy, that push, that urgency from God. God's shouting out a message that must be heard.

You have to remember when revival comes, it's coming because there is either an urgent need or a great blessing on the horizon and normally a combination of both. If revival doesn't come, a society will deteriorate to the point that it'll be utterly wiped out. If revival doesn't come in a backslidden state of the body, more and more reproach will accrue to the name of the Lord and unbelief and hardness will settle in among God's people.

And if a revival does come, the blessing, eternal blessing that can come to literally millions of people. Blessing is more than we could describe. So there's an urgency, there's an intensity to revival.

Revival preaching is filled with divine fire. It is God's shouting aloud with all his might. Is it? It is a prophetic cry to repent.

Why is it a prophetic cry to repent? Well, I wrote a little question and answer thing for a new part of Sid Roth sharing Yeshua Bible. And the question was, do Jews need to repent? And first thing I dealt with the meaning of the word repent, and I'll talk about that a little bit more later, to turn back, to turn away from sin, to turn back to God. And I said, well, the prophets always told Israel to turn back, to repent, but do Jews need to repent today? And I said, yes, they do for four reasons.

And the reasons basically were Jews are members of the human race, all human beings sin, sin is turning away from God, whoever turns away needs to turn back. So if the state of the body is that it has turned away from its state of glory, turned away from holiness, turned away from devotion to God, turned away from the supremacy of Jesus in the midst of its services, turned away for a pure and wholehearted devotion to souls, turned away from holiness and all its implications, then it needs to turn back. So revival preaching is always going to have that prophetic word, repent, turn back.

It's going to reveal sin. It's going to demolish strongholds. It's going to search out every hiding place and expose man's universal guilt in the sight of a holy God.

Now when Finney was telling people how to preach the gospel, again Finney was someone who understood how to preach the gospel and he got results with it. And bear in mind a lot of the preaching that we hear today under no circumstances will do any of the things I just mentioned. It will not bring people to repent.

It won't reveal sin. It won't demolish strongholds. It won't search out hiding places.

People can come in full of sin, get blessed and leave full of sin and be confirmed by the message too. So Finney says preaching should be direct. In his revival lectures, page 223, the gospel should be preached to men and not about men.

The minister must address us here is he must preach to them about themselves and not leave the impression that he is preaching to them about others. He will never do them any good further than he succeeds in convincing each individual that he is the person in question. Another very important thing to be regarded in preaching is that the minister should hunt after sinners and Christians wherever they may have entrenched themselves in inaction.

It is not the design of preaching to make men easy and quiet but to make them act. One revival preacher last century would never close his meetings with a hymn because he felt that it took the cutting edge of the word off. And how many times has there been the divine sword? I mean as if the hand of God reached down and took that sword and pierced into your heart and you knew you had to go out of there and you couldn't eat lunch and you couldn't eat dinner and you had to fast and pray or you knew you had to go out of there and you had to make things right with your brother who you hadn't talked to in ten years or you knew that you had to go out of there and confront your boss at work and tell him to take down the porno stuff from off the wall.

You knew I mean there was conviction and that sword was right in there and then someone either came along with a comforting assuring word about the goodness of God and how blessed he is just where we are or else closed with a song that just lifted all convictions so everybody could leave happy. Well we always leave happy we do we leave most all of our meetings happy unless you're my wife she leaves almost every meeting on the verge of total breakdown and tears because of being grieved for how much more God wants to do and never seems to get to do so many times. But I mean most time we leave happy

we leave up we leave cheered we leave encouraged well where is the conviction that was supposed to drive us to our knees well we had to lift the people so we can have the same big crowd back next time and have someone to keep ministering to.

Let me just give you another word from Finney here he says it is of great importance that the sinner he's talking about the unsaved person primarily here that the sinner should be made to feel his guilt and not left to the impression that he is unfortunate. I think this is a very prevalent fault particularly in books on the subject they are calculated to make the sinner think more of his sorrows than of his sins and feel that his state is rather unfortunate than criminal a prime object which with the preacher must be to make present obligation felt the impression is not commonly made by ministers in their preaching that sinners are expected to repent now does the Holy Spirit when striving with the sinner make the impression upon his mind that he is not expected to obey now. Of course not.

Sinners ought to be made to feel that they have something to do and that is to repent that it is something which no other being can do for them either God or man and something which they can do and do now ministers should never rest satisfied until they have annihilated every excuse of sinners make the sinner see that all please an excuse for not submitting to God are acts of rebellion against him. Tear away the last lie which he grasped in his hand and make him feel that he is absolutely condemned before God. Sinners should be made to feel that if they now grieve away the spirit of God it is very probable they will be lost forever.

There is infinite danger of this. Well you understand how some of these revivals tens of thousands of people got saved a week because they knew they had to be saved now and if they didn't get saved now they'd be lost forever because he confronted them. That's a very definite aspect of revival preaching.

Revival preaching is not skin deep. A lot of times we like things superficial as long as they don't affect our lives. When's the last time that God challenged your whole overall orientation in God? Something he's been bringing to my attention recently.

When I was first saved it was absolute total complete upheaval of everything from outward appearance to habits to inward attitudes to speech. Everything had to be turned topsy-turvy upside down right side out inside whatever was you know just turn around I didn't know what was going on it was just so massive one thing after another after another. Then we're saved for a period of time and we just kind of bottom out.

Now listen the challenge to change to conform to grow to repent to get right to be holy should be just as intense now as when we were first saved and I can't believe that most children of God have been moving so aggressively so persistently so doggedly forward in God that God does not have to challenge them and shake them periodically. In other words I don't believe that people have been running their fastest their hardest all along that all God's saying is keep it up keep it up. Whitfield who was known to be a ceaseless laborer he preached 40 to 60 hours a week for something like 30 straight years.

I mean phenomenal types of figures. The fact is that Whitfield wrote to his friends and said please don't write me and say slow down. He says don't write to a vile sluggard like me and say slow down he says write to me and say wake up for your soul's sake man wake up and get on with the work.

What I'm saying is when's the last time you were challenged by God your whole orientation in God. When's the last time you were challenged to put the flesh down. When's the last time you were challenged I mean consistently and called into something.

See we've gotten at ease in Zion we've become at home and serving God. Something's wrong something's off something's funny they're serving God's never convenient. Revival preaching comes and it stirs the heart.

It challenges people what are you doing with all your finances while people are dying. When's the last time we thought of that. What are you doing eating every day.

You know what are you doing watching television. You can be on your face praying. What are you doing with neighbors next to you that haven't heard the gospel yet and you're going out to play golf.

I mean that's the type of challenge that we'd be hearing as God's revival fires burn. Revival preaching is not skin deep rather it pierces to the heart leaving man nowhere to go but to his knees. I had an experience several years ago in intercession where I was confronted with what I thought was such a horrible horrible burden that I tried to just back out of it because I felt that this couldn't be the leading of the spirit.

The thing that was going on was too intense too overwhelming. I thought it couldn't be the leading of the spirit and the whole scenario that God laid out why I had to pray like this. I couldn't believe that it was God.

So what exactly do you mean. There was a man that God had me praying for and God told me that this man was sinning for this and such reasons and because of that I had to take on this burden of intercession that was just overwhelming and frightening and I was trying to argue it out with God at two or three in the morning.

This long ordeal in prayer trying to argue it out and say but it can't be Lord this can't be you it can't be right because thus and such because of this because I tried to argue with God the only time in my life ever did that and every argument I would bring to God there was just an overwhelming shoot a door shut in my face the answer of God came whatever whatever I finally standing by my bookcases about 315 in the morning I finally had my ultimate flaw and what God was saying I finally found where what he said was wrong and I said this man is not a disobedience because you're the one that told them that he was supposed to be moving in this direction it was my last way out and I remember when the Spirit just said so clearly I never told him to leave he wanted out I said you want to go go

but it wasn't my will and I was just confronted I mean there was nowhere to go it was it was a it was an overwhelming experience there was no way out I was arguing against God you know the kind of way that Job felt with everything he came there was an answer there was an answer there was an answer and you see most of the time we have a way out somewhere in our theology there's a loophole when conviction really gets hot and heavy when it feels like the way it didn't we were first saved by all man I blew it or all I've got to change that radically Lord yes somehow we've made a little theological loophole that can just get us out the back door before the conviction gets too overwhelming you follow what I'm saying if you like what I'm saying see when that word comes in the midst of the flames

of revival people either have to repent or disobey but there's no way out anymore revival preaching hurts before it heals quote I had read a couple of classes back but I want to read it again winky Pratt and he refers to the words of James Burns says revival is not the easy and glorious thing many think it to be who imagine it fills the pews and reinstates the church in power and authority it comes to scorch before it heals it comes to condemn ministers and people for their unfaithful witness for their selfish living for their neglect of the cross and to call them to daily renunciation to an evangelical poverty into a deep and daily

consecration then on the heels of that you see the glory of God Jeremiah wept cried was burdened was overwhelmed because he said in Jeremiah 6:14 and then

repeated it in the eighth chapter that the false prophets superficially treated the fracture of his people the most literal way to translate it they superficially treated the fracture of his people saying all is well all is well when nothing was well revival preaching says you're going to die without major surgery you're going to die without a heart transplant but you see if the people will put themselves under God's knife they'll live if they'll put themselves under God's life they'll be healed and they'll live for years they'll live for decades and the work will live for centuries and the reason we don't see a deeper lasting change in people is because they aren't willing to totally submit to the divine knife that's what happens in revival God gets deeper the sword pierces harder the

conviction gets more intense you get cornered there's no way out and real true lasting repentance comes as a result of that so the preaching will hurt before it heals but the results will last a lifetime people who have been changed have been changed to the core they have been changed to the gut there is something so deep that is shaken in them that it's very difficult to get them off course for the rest of their lives now let me say this on the flip side revival preaching is not merely bringing a hard or negative message there are plenty of people that love to preach a hard message and it's just because they're hard people or they preach hard messages because they think it's more anointed or they do it because they have a chip on their shoulder just preaching a hard message or a negative

message does not necessarily have anything to do with the Spirit of God nor anything at all to do with revival there was a fellow one time that I was talking to and he he had spoken at some women's meeting and a couple of my friends had heard him and they were saying to me boy he just really seems like a prophet and I just got the sense I just think he's negative maybe there's some prophetic call on him but the real sense I have is he's just primarily negative well when he came over to talk to me we started sharing some things and you know he said that his message was not being heard in the churches as he told people to throw out their televisions and things like that and I said well does God's life come with your message what happens as a result of your preaching well not much was

happening as a result of it God's power was not changing people's lives well for good reason his message wasn't being accepted even if it was a good thing for a lot of the people to throw out their televisions that wasn't the issue the issue was it was just a negative message I mean anybody could get up any time and have an altar full of condemned people I mean it's easy just show how off course we are just show what it means just show how Paul lived and compare our lives to it it's easy to point out people's sins and false doing that is not in and of itself revival preaching or helpful or good or of the Spirit anymore than telling people how great they are as of the Spirit so it's not merely bringing a hard or negative message there are some qualifications for it in fact let me

give you four qualifications I said it's not merely bringing a hard and negative message but it must have four specific qualities first it must be divinely empowered it must be divinely empowered there must be an anointing on the word there's a tremendous difference between getting up I take your notes the Spirit of God's on you but I get up and I take your notes and I preach them verbatim with your same articulation and with your same body motions and with your same emphasis and everything else and nothing happens and then you get up and preach that same message and everyone's on their faces crying and weeping because the anointing was on you there must be a divine empowering if it's really revival preaching it means it's heaven-sent it means it's in dude with the life of God it means

it's God's Word soaring on to meet God's destiny it's being brought to a powerful fulfillment in the Spirit there must be a divine empowerment there's no logical way to explain why some revival preaching had such stirring shaking overwhelming effects on the ears of the hearers on the hearts of the hearers there's no logical explanation you read some of the messages and I'd get up and preaching some of them are you have the whole thing written out and there's just no explanation why did it bring people to their knees sure it was a good word sure it was a direct word sure it was a clear word but what was it it was the power of God upon that message there's something different yes there's a general quality of revival preaching Finney walked in that general quality all his life because he was

a revivalist he had that anointing others may have that anointing to bring that stirring shaking word on fire but it's when it's in the midst of revival or or coming to the birthing of a real revival there's that added intensity and that added urgency because the person has heard that blast from heaven and it's it's raging in their ears and all they can do is proclaim the word and it's been bathed in hours and hours of prayer and weeping before God there must be a divine empowering and second the message must be motivated by passion for the glory of God and compassion for a hurting world the message must be motivated by passion for the glory of God and compassion for a hurting world a lot of times things are just harsh I don't mean the tone of voice because tone of voices that's a

subjective thing there are some people I've heard on tape and it's like oh you cringe and then you see him in person and when the voice is put with the with the vessel it's like oh it's fine and you remember boy they said it's so harsh and here they're just like a friendly little guy or sweet woman so tone of voice you can't really tell and mannerisms but sometimes it's just a harshness it just doesn't ring true because the heart is not really desperate for the glory of God because the heart is is not crying out for the lostness of this race so there's got to be that heart passion for the Lord and that that heart filled with compassion for hurting world and three that'll produce a condition in someone which is a broken heart the message must come out of a broken heart I said the heart has

to be filled for the glory of God filled for the lost and died but what that's going to produce in someone is brokenness brokenness brokenness because you'll just see how far off course we are because you'll just see that we're not getting the job done we'll just see that people are being born and living their lives and dying without God and that thing will overwhelm us and we'll see how God's name is being blasphemed and how much reproach is coming to him and it'll produce a broken heart so there must be divine empowering the message must be motivated by passion for the glory of God and compassion for hurting world and it must come out of a broken heart and then for it must be experiential it must be experiential in other words you can't give what you don't have you can't call people to

enter into an experience that you yourself have not experienced that's why I'm skeptical of people prophesying all wonderful things over other people that they themselves have never experienced you're going to raise the dead you're going to preach to 50,000 at one time you're going to meet with presidents and kings and on and on you say well have you ever done any of those things no well maybe you can't prophesy over somebody something you don't have yourself or experience your touch or glimpse or interact with you can call you can call the whole world to repent nothing's going to happen if you haven't experienced it

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