

Where's the Fire

by Ronald Glass

The sermon emphasizes the importance of revival and the need for God's people to remember their past, regret their apostasy, and return to God with all their hearts and souls.

Duration: 56:04

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Deuteronomy 30:2-3, Revelation 2:2

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of remembering the promises of God and what He has done in the past. He emphasizes the need for repentance and returning to the Lord in order to experience revival. The preacher references Deuteronomy chapter 30, where God promises to restore and have compassion on His people if they turn back to Him with all their heart and soul. The sermon also highlights the significance of loving God supremely and the consequences of failing to do so, as seen in the church of Ephesus.

Transcript

Good morning, I would like to bring you back to the Old Testament, to the book of Deuteronomy, the book of Deuteronomy and to the 30th chapter. Deuteronomy chapter 30, as we come to the second of this series of sermons we started last week on biblical revival. Deuteronomy chapter 30, and I want to read the first three verses.

So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, and you return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity and have compassion on you and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. It's happened several times here. The phone has rung in the middle of the night, and on the other end of the line someone from our church's fire alarm monitoring company informs us that the fire alarm is going off in the church and that the fire department has been called.

Sure enough I hop out of bed, I open the door and I hear the bells on the exterior of the building ringing. I dress hurriedly, I come over to the church, I open the door, I walk in and inside the ear-piercing alarms are screaming. The fire engines arrive, a sea of red and white flashing lights.

Armed with axes, the firefighters enter the building. Now we're all there, the firefighters, the fire trucks are there, I'm here, only one thing's missing, there's no fire. Well obviously I'm relieved, the firefighters are a little annoyed, but then the irony of all of this dawned on me.

At least twice this has happened early on a Lord's Day morning, the Lord's Day, and there was no fire in the church. But then, week after week, sometimes I believe there's no fire in the church. What do I mean? No conviction, no brokenness, no passion, no repentance, no power, no abounding blessing.

I think we can all sense it. We need fire from above. We need revival.

That's why I've begun the series of sermons on revival. It may be the most important series that I have ever preached in this church. Nothing is more urgently needed in our church or in the evangelical churches of our community and throughout the United States of America at this present hour than revival.

We need the Holy Spirit to ignite a revival fire which will burn with purging power, consuming sin and self, and leaving us cleansed and fit to serve the Lord with power like we have never had before. And thus I'm beginning this series by explaining to you what revival is. This concept may be foreign to many of you.

For many people, when you speak of revival, especially down south, that's something that you have twice a year. You have it in the spring, you have it again in the fall, and you bring in a high-powered evangelist and he preaches and that's revival. No, that isn't revival.

Historically, that's not revival. Most importantly, biblically, that's not revival. That's an evangelistic meeting.

We will never experience the awakening power of God if we don't understand what it is. My concern is not primarily that we understand. It is that because our generation does not understand, but it is above all that we respond in life-changing brokenness and repentance.

Now our text today follows the giving of the Palestinian covenant, so-called, in Deuteronomy chapters 28 and 29. The nation of Israel is situated on the east bank of the Jordan River across from Jericho. They are waiting for the day in which they are going to cross that river and enter the land and take possession of the land that God had promised to Israel.

But before Israel enters that land, Moses repeats the law to the new generation of Israelites. The generation that heard it at the foot of Mount Sinai has now passed on. They have died in the desert.

And now the new generation needs to hear the law, and that's what Deuteronomy is. It is the second law, literally, the second giving of the law. At the end of this giving of the law, God attaches a detailed covenant.

A covenant is an agreement. In this case, it is an agreement that is imposed by one party on the other. But it is an agreement nonetheless.

There are requirements, and there are blessings, and there are cursings attached to this covenant. Now, here is the heart of the covenant. It is Deuteronomy chapter 28 verses 1 and 2. Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments, which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.

All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God. Now the other part is summarized in verse 15. But it shall come about, if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe

to do all his commandments and his statutes, with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.

And there follows a lengthy catalog of God's judgments on a disobedient nation. Now of course, I understand, as a dispensationalist, I understand that there is a difference between Israel and the church. Israel was a nation, and Israel was a theocracy.

They had the law of God. God literally was the king of Israel at this point. However, both Israel in that day and the church in ours are God's people in their respective dispensations.

Certain spiritual principles are common to both. God's word and history, which is God's providence, have amply proven this. And thus, I'm teaching you the spiritual principles that still apply to us as the body of Christ and people of God in the world today.

As I pointed out last time, revival is primarily an Old Testament concept because the New Testament ended while the church was still new and in many respects was still flush with the first wave of God's anointing upon that church. At the end of the New Testament, we see some creeping apostasy and some need for revival. But primarily, that revival was something that we see in the Old Testament with the nation of Israel.

But the truths that stand behind this are relevant, and it really is taught frequently in the Old Testament, but it's something that's being ignored today. You will hear some of these truths that I say repeated over and over again. That's intentional.

I want us to get it. God did because it's referred to so many times in Scripture. So I want you to stay with me as I build our understanding of revival on a clear foundation.

I do think these things bear repeating. Moses now turns to the future, and what he does is to lay out two alternatives. What will happen if Israel obeys God, and what will happen if they disobey? It's not at all complicated.

The roots of revival are simple to understand. The difficulty comes in obedience. So I want you to grasp these three simple roots of revival with me today.

Here they are, and this first one is going to sound familiar if you listened last week. We must remember. We must remember.

Let's look at that first verse again. So it shall be when all of these things have come up on you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you. Now, we have seen this already.

We have seen this in our study last time as we read together the 77th Psalm. We recall times of blessing and also times of spiritual decline from which the Lord has rescued his church. By the way, that's one reason that we read church history.

Let me just observe for a moment that one of Satan's master strategies has been to attack history. What is the one course it seems like kids hate when they go through school? They hate history. Why? Well, it's all those dates and those names and all of that.

They hate history, so they don't like to study history. Today, the vast majority of adults in America have a very limited knowledge and understanding of not just American history, but of world history as well. Why does Satan try so hard to get us to not study history, to make us hate history? Because history contains, scattered throughout the whole course of human events, history contains the record of a number of times where God has intervened in the affairs of men in different ways at different times, but where God has supernaturally touched the lives and the hearts of his people and brought them back from a state of lethargy, a state of spiritual decline, and has infused new life into them.

Now, that's happened on a number of occasions, but I dare would say that most people, most Christians today, probably most of you here today could not put your finger on any of those great revivals. You probably know very little about them. Ignorance of history is a major problem.

The other thing, of course, is revisionism. That's going on as well. For example, we all know the most familiar one.

There are those people who say, well, the Holocaust never happened. Well, they say that, of course, because of an underlying anti-Semitism. And there is that same kind of revisionism that often goes on in the church today, even, and in the world with regard to history, rewriting history to make it say what we want it to say.

Well, revival will not come until we remember, until we think back, until we understand what God has done. And what we see in this verse here is that revival will not come until we regret our apostasy and our circumstances. When, says God, these things that I have promised, the blessing and the curse, come upon you in the future, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, that just presupposes that Israel was going to disobey.

And when they, in their exile, in the nations where God had sent them, living among the Gentiles, having lost the authority of God's law in their lives, when they think back to what God promised, that's when revival becomes a possibility. But first there must be that regret of their falling away and their regret of their circumstances. They have to come to a point where they literally hate their circumstances.

Jeremiah chapter 17 verse 9 says, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it? The heart, the mind of man is so wicked, is so evil that we can't even fully appreciate the degree, the depth of that evil, of that wickedness. History has proven that God's people generally don't get serious about our sins until we are forced to feel the consequences of those sins.

One of the marks of true revival is a deep sense of sin on the part of believers. They literally mourn over their transgressions. There is open confession of sin and often there are tears of repentance.

Many years ago, there was something that we refer to as the Great Awakening. It was a great revival in the colonies of America before our nation was actually a nation. There was a great moving of the spirit of God under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards in Massachusetts.

Edwards wrote a couple of, several things, some letters and treatises in order to explain to people who were asking what's going on, what is happening. One of the most famous he wrote was entitled The Narrative of Surprising Conversions. I want you to listen to what he says about this.

This primarily refers to those who were unbelievers who were so impacted. But listen to what he said about what happened when God went to work in Massachusetts in the 1740s. Persons are first awakened

with a sense of their miserable condition by nature, the danger they are in of perishing eternally.

And that it is of great importance to them that they speedily escape and get into a better state. These awakenings when they have first seized on persons have two effects. One was that they have brought them immediately to quit their sinful practices and the looser sort have been brought to forsake and dread their former vices and extravagances.

Persons are sometimes brought to the borders of despair and it looks as black as midnight to them a little before the day dawns in their souls. Some few instances there have been of persons who have had such a sense of God's wrath for sin that they have been overborn and made to cry out under an astonishing sense of guilt wondering that God suffers such guilty wretches to live upon earth and that he does not immediately send them to hell. In fact he goes on to say, as to those in whom awakenings seem to have a saving issue, commonly the first thing that appears after their legal troubles, that is after they are convinced that they have sinned against God, is a conviction of the justice of God in their condemnation, appearing in a sense of their own exceeding sinfulness and the vileness of all their performances.

Some have declared themselves to be in the hands of God that he may dispose of them just as he pleases. Some that God may glorify himself in their damnation and they wonder that God has suffered them to live so long and has not cast them into hell long ago. Some express themselves that they see the glory of God would shine bright in their own condemnation, that they are ready to think that if they are damned they could take part with God against themselves and would glorify his justice therein.

When was the last time you heard sinners talking like that? But that's what happens when God gets a hold of people. In 1904 to 1908 there was a great awakening in the country of Wales, the impact of which was felt literally all over the world. In just five months a hundred thousand people came to Christ.

And in that particular awakening, one of the things that was so powerful, and we'll talk more about this revival in days to come, was the sense of sin that lay upon, now not this time sinners, but upon God's people. God's people got so convicted that in church after church throughout Wales they would literally at times spend the entire night weeping and praying and confessing their sins to each other and to God. Revival doesn't come until we come to a point of regret for our apostasy when we see that we have fallen away from God and the circumstances.

We become spiritually dissatisfied with our circumstances. But on the other hand, revival will not come until we recall God's promises and his warnings as well. Remember, our sins will only lead to despair unless at the same time we recall God's promises.

His promises are sure and dependable. Now if you still open, have your Bibles open, Deuteronomy 30, look down to verse 4. Here's what God says. If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, you're scattered to nations far away, which at that time would have been unthinkable, but not today.

There are Jewish people in every nation on the face of the earth virtually. If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the Lord your God will gather you and from there he will bring you back. The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed and you shall possess it and he will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul so that you may live. The Lord your God will inflict all

these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you and you shall again obey the Lord and observe all his commandments which I command you today. Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body, in the offspring of your cattle, in the produce of your ground for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good just as he rejoiced over your fathers if you obey the Lord your God to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law and if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.

Now my friends, his promises are sure and dependable. The Lord means what he says. He requires obedience from his people and he rewards obedience in his people.

In addition his promises are not only sure and dependable but they are simple and they are accessible. Now look at verse 11. For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you.

See this is the myth. This is Satan's lie to us. All of this that God asks of you and me, that's impossible, Satan whispers in our ears.

You can't live that way. God's demands are too high. They are too hard.

It's beyond human ability. Moses says this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you nor is it out of reach. It is not in heaven that you should say who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us to make us hear it that we may observe it.

You don't have to go to heaven to get it. Nor is it beyond the sea that you should say who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it that we may observe it. But the word is very near you in your mouth and in your heart that you may observe it.

Obtaining God's favor is not some impossible superhuman morality like that of the first century Jews who had the 613 commandments. And as you know from the New Testament, from the Gospels, Jesus constantly rebuking the Pharisees who were trying to require the people to obey all these little rules. Nor is it some inaccessible abstract mystery like Eastern mysticism today.

You sit around and you burn incense and you chant and you hope that somehow God will show favor to you. No. God's promises require one main thing of us.

And when we come to the point of remembering, we will come to the second root of revival which is we must return now to our text verse 2. And you return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons. Conviction of sin is a dead end unless it leads to repentance. The Lord wants us to change.

He wants us to come back to him. Now this return means literally in this verse listening to his voice. That's the word obey here.

It's listening to his voice. With regard to everything he has commanded. Listening with all our hearts.

Remember, all our hearts means all of our minds. The way we think, having as Paul would put it, our minds transformed, renewed and seeking him with all of our souls, our lives. The way we live.

The way we think, the way we live. Now the way back, this way of returning is outlined for us in verse 16. Come down to verse 16 for a moment.

Let me read verse 15 too. See I have set before you today life and prosperity and death and adversity. In that I command you today to love the Lord your God.

To walk in his ways and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments. That you may live and multiply and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. Here are the three secrets of kindling a new fire in the church.

Here's what it means to return. Number one it means loving God. To return means loving God.

Now this takes us back to the foundation of Israel's unique faith. What was that foundation? Come back with me to Deuteronomy chapter 6 for just a moment. Deuteronomy chapter 6, these famous words from Deuteronomy, which is the foundation of all of Israel's religion, of Israel's relationship with God.

Verse 4, Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Failure at this point of loving God supremely was our Lord's indictment against the church at Ephesus you remember.

Now Ephesus as a church was very faithful when it came to being doctrinally sound. Revelation chapter 2 verse 2, I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance. You're a hard working church.

Good for you. And that you cannot tolerate evil men and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles and are not and you found them to be false. You didn't tolerate false teaching.

Good for you. And you have perseverance. You're patient and you hold on.

You don't give up. You don't quit. Good for you.

And you have endured for my namesake and have not grown weary. When you felt like you'd just as soon quit, you realized that you're in this not for yourself but for me and you hung on. Good for you.

But I have this against you that you have left your first love. Well, the temptation might be for the church to say, well, we got all of the rest of this right. I mean, that's just a little appendage on the list.

I mean, you've got to think that God would say, well, four out of five or five out of six or whatever. That's pretty good. No.

Notice verse 5. Therefore remember, there's that word again, remember from where you have fallen and repent and do the deeds you did at first or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent. You've got all of this stuff right, but you need to repent because there's one supreme thing you've gotten wrong. You've left your first love.

That's where the church in America is today, severely departed from our first love. Well, you say, what does it mean to love Jesus? What does it mean to love the Lord Jesus? How do we know that we've left our first love? We feel pretty good about Jesus. Oh, wait a minute.

Loving Christ is not a matter of how you feel about him. Let me remind you of something very important that no less than our Lord himself said. John chapter 14 verse 15, he said to his disciples, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. It's a matter of loving God and a matter of obeying him. So to return to God with all our heart and all our mind, all our soul, all our strength means to love him.

To return means loving God. Secondly, to return means learning God's word. Notice again in this second verse in our text, according to all that I command you today.

Go down to verse 10 for a moment again. If you obey the Lord your God to keep his commandments and his statutes, which are written in this book of the law. Verse 16, again, it says his ways, his commandments, his statutes, and his judgments.

This is why it's so critical that we know God's word. That's why this church and this pastor are committed to the preaching and the teaching of the word of God. It is so critical to know it, to read it, to meditate on it, to study it, to memorize it.

It is so critical because it is on the basis of God's word that we will love him. On the basis of God's word that we will obey him. Let's go back to Deuteronomy 6 again.

Let me pick up where I left off, this time in verse 6. These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead and you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

I don't think God was speaking, through Moses here, was speaking literally. The Jews have taken that literally. They now have their phylacteries and so on.

But that I don't think was the issue. He was saying that you are to be obsessed and preoccupied with my word. You remember the words that God spoke to Joshua when he took over the leadership of Israel.

Joshua, chapter 1, verse 8, this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success. David said, your word I have treasured in my heart that I might not sin again. What are we facing today in American evangelicalism? Let me tell you what we're facing.

There are a lot of churches out there today and there are many big churches, mega churches and just plain old large churches. There are many people going to church on Sunday. But what are they hearing? What are they experiencing there? Here's what God said he would do to Israel if they didn't pay any attention to his word.

It's from the prophet Amos, chapter 8, verse 11. Behold, days are coming, declares the Lord God, when I will send a famine on the land. Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water.

In other words, not a famine for food but rather for hearing the words of the Lord. Here in America today, unfortunately it is a minority of churches where you can go and you can hear God's word taught. A very small minority of professing Christians today open God's word and read it for themselves on a regular basis.

An even smaller minority actually take the time to study it. Why is God's word so important? The answer is because God's word is the revelation of God's will. That's how God tells us what he wants from us, how he wants us to think, what he wants us to do, how he wants us to relate to other people, to the world in which we live and how we are to relate to him.

So, to return means loving God. To return means learning God's word. To return means living God's will.

Obedience, right? That's what, back to our text in chapter 30, verse 2, that's what he says here. If you return to the Lord your God and listen to his voice with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today. This means obedience.

Now again, this was the context for Israel's loving God. Let me go back to that sixth chapter. I read verses 4 and 5, I read verses 6 to 9, but I skipped over verses 1 to 3. Let's go back to those.

Now listen to this. Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgment which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you that you might what? Do them in the land where you are going over to possess it so that you and your sons and your grandson might fear the Lord your God. To do what? To keep all his statutes and his commandments which I command you all the days of your life and that your days may be prolonged.

O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly just as the Lord, the God of your fathers has promised you in a land flowing with milk and honey. Do you get it? The secret according to these verses of a long and fruitful life, the secret of economic prosperity and the secret of security for your children and your grandchildren, these are all things we highly value and the secret of these things is obedience to God. God's will can be summarized in one word, holiness, and that's something we don't value highly.

Did you see the connection? The things that we work for, the things that we worry about, the things in some cases we even pray for, my health, my life, my economic condition, enough money to pay my bills and send my kids to college and all of that. My family's future are tied to our holiness, our obedience to God. Our souls must burn with a passion for holiness.

The writer of Hebrews says this, pursue peace with all men and sanctification or holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Do you get that? So how is it that you think you can go on living however you please, doing whatever you want, being godless in the way you speak and the things that you think and the things that you do and somehow think that God is going to be fooled by that? We multiply that throughout our churches today and let's make it personal, to our church and that passion, that fire is almost entirely missing in our congregation. What do you mean pastor? What I mean is this, sin no longer exists.

It's no longer offends us. Review your life right now while you're sitting here. Look back over this past week or even the last 24 hours.

See how much you have compromised with sin. What did you do last night? Was it honoring to God? Were the things that you were listening to, watching, doing, saying, honoring to God? Think about how many excuses you can come up with to justify your sins. We all do it.

I do it. You do it. And so revival, as I pointed out to you last week, is summarized in this word, return.

Come back. God is extending his hand and saying, my people, come back to me. Come back.

Come back. Return. What happens when we do return to loving God? When we do return to learning God's word? When we do return to living God's will? What happens? Third root of revival.

God will restore. Verse three, then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity and have compassion on you and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. Now, as I said last week and I will continue to say, this is something you need to drill into your minds with regard to revival.

Revival is always God's work. We cannot order revival from heaven. We cannot commit.

We cannot put it on our sign. Revival next week. We have no ability to say when or even if God will send revival.

But there is a promise here. The promise here is first for Israel. It's a promise that God would bring their captivity to an end.

He will judge them for their disobedience, scatter them among the nations of the world and when they repent, he will bring them back. But there is also a sense in which the church today is suffering captivity. Wait a minute.

You say, we're not a nation. How could we be captive? I've grown up here. Nobody's taken me captive.

No, that's not what I'm talking about. You and I, my dear Christian friends of the 21st century, are captive to our culture. We are captive to our cherished sins.

Think about those sins right now. And you know they're sins. But you don't want to let go of them.

And you know what? You may say, yes I do. But the problem is that I can't. You see what I mean? You're in bondage.

You're captive to your sins. We're in bondage to our comfortable lifestyles. We are in bondage to our possessions.

We are in bondage to our bad habits. We're in bondage to our lusts. And we cannot extricate ourselves from these things.

But listen. The Lord promises compassion for conviction. You see what he's saying here in this third verse is that when we grasp the depth of our sin, and when we turn back to him, then we are going to find a compassionate welcome.

The Lord is not like most of us. He's not bitter. You have offended a holy God.

And I will come back to him. I come back repentant. God will not say, don't you come a step closer.

You have offended me. I will have nothing more to do with you. That's not the God we serve.

God holds no grudges. He always answers our prayers. He always answers those who turn and who turn back to him.

He is gracious. He is willing to forgive. Secondly, the Lord also promises restoration for repentance.

Israel would be gathered from all of the nations where they had been scattered. And the Lord would restore them to their land. But think of evangelical Christianity at this time.

There's so much alienation and fragmentation between believers and churches for so many different reasons. Sometimes necessarily so it's doctrinal, but very often it's not. It's pure carnality among God's people.

I believe that this amounts to the church's equivalent of Israel's scattering. Is there any hope for reconciliation between feuding factions and divided denominations and bitter brethren? Yes, it's the restoration of a repentant people. See, this is the grievous error of ecumenism today.

That movement that has been afoot for over a century, formal movement, organizations trying to bring all of the religions of the world together. The World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, evangelicals and Catholics together, many of the parachurch organizations, all trying to pull the people of God together because they're so divided and they're so feuding and angry with each other, trying to get them all pulled together seeking unity, but they're trying to do it without repentance and it doesn't work. The Lord promises to restore His people back to fellowship with Him and with one another when they get right.

And that's why conviction must lead to repentance. It's not enough. And I'm afraid that there are many people who do this, who simply shake their heads and say, I see my sin, but I won't leave it.

You remember what we usually call the rich young ruler, the one to whom Jesus spoke, the young nobleman who was so tied to his material possessions and so proud that he was a law keeper. And Jesus said, there's one thing you lack, sell your possessions, give it to the poor and come follow me. And he went away.

He was under conviction, but he refused to take the step of repentance. And so what we see here are three routes of revival. First of all, we have to remember.

We have to remember the promises of God. We have to remember what God has done in the past. Then we have to return to the Lord, return conviction and repentance.

And then God promises that he will restore. And thus the Lord's covenant with Israel concludes with these powerful words in verses 19 and 20. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse.

So choose life in order that you may live. You and your descendants by loving the Lord, your God, by obeying his voice, by holding fast to him for this is your life and the length of your days that you may live in the land, which the Lord swore to your fathers to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to give. Do you hear those words? Choose life by loving him, by obeying him and holding fast to him.

Now listen my friends, revival is not emotionalism. It's not some sort of Pentecostal exhibitionism. It's not people running around speaking in tongues and getting in a sweat and falling down and rolling around the floors and doing that kind of thing.

That's not revival. And revival is not evangelism either. Evangelism is important but that's not revival.

Revival is God's people getting right with him and much that passes for revival today, you see it on television, you hear about it, much that passes for revival is nothing more than painted. It's an illusion. So we must begin by asking ourselves, do we really care about the spiritual condition of America? Do we really care about the spiritual condition of Long Island? Do we actually have a burden for our church? Sometimes I'm afraid that we've become hard and we've become callous.

Our hearts have grown cold. There's no fire. What's our first order of business? My friends, the Lord will revive us.

And he will do that by revealing our sins to us and causing us to mourn deeply over them. Had there been fire in this church those nights when the alarms went off, everyone in Wading River and the surrounding communities would have known it. And I promise you likewise and history proves it that when revival fire burns among us, the community will know that.

We talk about outreach. You take a revived church and unbelievers will be filling the pews in unprecedented numbers. They will be knocking on the door saying God is doing something.

What's going on here? Jonathan Edwards in some of his writings that I referred to earlier said that more got done in two hours in revival than would normally get done in a year for God. That's how it works. Remember Israel's great prophet Elijah? You remember how he went up on Mount Carmel and he confronted the 400 prophets of Baal and the other 450 prophets, 850 prophets of Queen Jezebel? And he said let's have a contest.

Let's prove who's really God. You build an altar and you call fire down from heaven. I will build an altar to God, to the Lord, to Jehovah of Israel.

And I will call on him to send fire on that sacrifice. First Kings chapter 18 verse 24, Elijah said the God who answers by fire, he is God. And after they had beaten themselves to death and screamed and carried on and cut themselves with knives and nothing happened, Elijah turned and he prayed to God having soaked his sacrifice thoroughly in water.

He then called on God. Then Elijah prayed and the scriptures tell us the fire of the Lord fell. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said the Lord, he is God.

The Lord, he is God. And that's the way revival works. God's people pray, God sends the fire.

And the people say the Lord, he is God. Oh Lord, where is the fire? Oh Lord, set our hearts to it again, oh God. Our Father in heaven, we are a people in many respects who have gone into captivity, into bondage to our sins, to our unbelief, to our filthy habits and lusts and all of the garbage of the world.

Oh Father, begin to convict us. I pray right now for this congregation. I pray that we will begin to pray, to pray for the awakening power of the gospel, the power of the spirit as he breathes among us in a fresh new.

Lord, I pray that we will remember, remember what you have said in your word. Remember what you have done in the past. That as we remember, we will be moved in our souls deeply to return to you.

Lord, some of us are really pretty good at playing church. We dress the part and we speak the part and we show the part and we impress others. When really Father, inside of our homes and inside of our souls, we

are rotten to the core.

Rebels against you Lord. We have refused to obey you and we have lost the power. Oh God, burn among us again.

Revive us here. As we go home today, we pray that we will think carefully through what we have heard, that your spirit might not let go of us until we have repented, until we have said, Lord, I confess my foul sins. Forgive my sin.

Cleanse me and use me in a new way. Use all of us Father, but first bring us back. Enable us to return.

Oh come Holy Spirit and bathe us in new love to you, to our Father in heaven. Bathe us in a new and deep love of the Lord Jesus who gave his life for us. May we sense a new gratitude for grace and a deep and abiding new zeal for holiness, for love, for peace, for joy, for peace, for obedience to you.

And as we do, we'll trust you to pour out upon us showers of blessing. We pray in Jesus' name. Our final hymn today is hymn number 526, number 289.

There shall be showers of blessing. This is the promise of love, seasons refreshing, sent from the Savior above. Notice, second verse, there shall be showers of blessing, precious reviving again over the hills and the valleys, sound of abundance of rain.

Well, I've talked about a fire today. The songwriter talks about revival in terms of rain showers. Taking a cue from Ezekiel chapter 34.

Let's sing this as our closing hymn. Stand with me, won't you? Make this your prayer today. Together.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/19/SID19885.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ronald-glass/wheres-the-fire/>

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