



REVIVE US AGAIN

SERMON OUTLINES

BY DR. TONY EVANS

MESSAGE 1:

WHY WE NEED REVIVAL

SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Psalm 85:1-13 (NASB)

○ Lord, You showed favor to Your land;
You restored the captivity of Jacob.
² You forgave the iniquity of Your people;
You covered all their sin. Selah.
³ You withdrew all Your fury;
You turned away from Your burning anger.
⁴ Restore us, O God of our salvation,
And cause Your indignation toward us to cease.
⁵ Will You be angry with us forever?
Will You prolong Your anger to all generations?
⁶ Will You not Yourself revive us again,
That Your people may rejoice in You?
⁷ Show us Your lovingkindness, O Lord,
And grant us Your salvation.
⁸ I will hear what God the Lord will say;
For He will speak peace to His people, to His godly ones;
But let them not turn back to folly.
⁹ Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,
That glory may dwell in our land.
¹⁰ Lovingkindness and truth have met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
¹¹ Truth springs from the earth,
And righteousness looks down from heaven.
¹² Indeed, the Lord will give what is good,
And our land will yield its produce.
¹³ Righteousness will go before Him
And will make His footsteps into a way.

MESSAGE GOAL: The goal of this message in the series *Revive Us Again* is to learn how to recognize and address the root of the problem that leads to spiritual decline, in order that we as believers might truly experience revival—which is the restoration of spiritual life of God's people.

INTRODUCTION: Too often Christians want to enjoy the blessings of God's favor, while overlooking or choosing not to deal with the root problem that is keeping God's blessings from flowing into their lives.

But ignoring the real issue is like taking painkillers when you have an infected tooth—a situation I faced on vacation one time when my wife and I were on a cruise together. I was planning on having a great time, but then I started to experience severe pain in my tooth just as we got settled onboard the ship.

I tried to ignore the pain for a couple days, but it kept getting worse. I finally went to the clinic on the ship, and they gave me pain medications. But they didn't work, and the pain just increased each day. So I called my dentist and described my symptoms to him. He told me that he believed the problem was not just a toothache, but an infection. He also told me that since I was treating the wrong problem, dealing only with the pain, I wasn't going to get any better until I got some antibiotics to treat the infection. I followed his advice, and began to feel better.

My situation illustrates how easy it is for us as Christians to do the same thing spiritually. We know there's a problem because we feel the pain inside, but we only treat the symptoms and leave the real problem unresolved. We want to go to church and pop a few "sermon" or "music" pills and leave feeling all better. These things certainly have their place, but if our real need is for a revival from the Lord, then relying on other things to cure our spiritual pains and defeats will never work. We can't fix this revival need with more good deeds or good church programs.

No, true revival has to be an inner work of the Lord and no one else. We can see that our society is in a state of spiritual decline, but what about the decline in spirituality among followers of Christ? We need to return to the Lord before we can ever hope to effect real change in society. In Psalm 85, the psalmist describes the problem and what it means to return to the Lord, who is faithful to draw us back to Himself. Nothing can replace a reviving and life-refreshing touch of the Lord. Let us proclaim with this psalm, "O Lord, revive us again."

our society's problem
is not solely our *government's* problem.
it is **the church's** problem.
it is *our* problem.



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SERMON POINTS:

1. REVIVAL PRESUPPOSES SPIRITUAL DECLINE:

A spiritual decline necessitates revival

- Christians are divorcing at about the same rate as unbelievers (almost 50%)
- There is much pain and abuse even within churches
- Too many churches display a spirit of lifelessness and decline
- There is an obvious need for a return to the Lord (Psalm 85:8)

Treating symptoms is not enough

- "Popping pills" is a short-term solution to a long-term problem
- The root is changed when the daily life of a believer is changed

Revival motivates us to serve the Lord

- Christians must start relating and thinking better
- There is a difference between church programs and true spiritual revival

2. REVIVAL IS THE RESTORATION OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF GOD'S PEOPLE:

God's people must be reconnected to Him

- Connections can be lost over time and without care
- Revival is the giving back of the life lost (Psalm 85:6)

God's people are the main recipients of revival

- God must bring revival to His people before it can spread to others
- Misunderstanding revival is a very easy thing to do for a Christian

3. REVIVAL IS NOT MERELY REFORMATION:

More than an external change is required

- Politics show us that a reformation won't always change the situation
- Reformation is concerned mostly with outside change

More than religious activity is required

- Going through the motions is missing the point of revival
- Rituals and routines often overshadow the reason behind what we do on a regular basis

4. THE ROOT PROBLEM IS DEALING WITH GOD'S DEMAND FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS:

God is a God of love and also righteousness

- The need for revival always springs from some sort of idolatry
- Revival is needed because the true God has been replaced with a false god
- Our actions will prove our thoughts and allegiances

God's divine demands must be dealt with

- God's wrath against sin is an area of the Christian life that is often overlooked because it can be uncomfortable
- We have a need to be "taken back" to where we should be in our salvation and walk with God

We need to know where we stand with God

- Being on the wrong side or the right side of God makes all the difference
- We all need a rescuing and a deliverance from our sins

5. WE NEED TO BE DELIVERED:

God has told us of His wrath that we need deliverance from

- His wrath is a built-in holy wrath, not a reactionary wrath (Psalm 85:4-5; Romans 1:18)
- We often know when we have displeased or disobeyed Him

The New Testament shows us the covenant of grace

- The covenant of grace is why we don't see God's wrath unleashed among us
- God speaks grace and peace to His people

6. GOD IS PRESENT WHEN MERCY MEETS TRUTH:

God brings together truth and His mercy

- He brings together things that were separate beforehand (Psalm 85:10)

- This occurs when we reconnect with God

Blessings require the very presence of God

- The fruit of a changed life will only come when God is a part of the mix (Psalm 85:11-12)
- God wants to move us closer to Himself

**our mission field is not merely across the sea.
it is across the street.**





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SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

DEFINITION OF REVIVAL:

If someone faints, we give them water, or something to bring them back or revive them. We've all heard of celebrities and athletes who have come back and achieved success, or revived their careers. In many of these cases, the person seemed to be in decline, but their prominence was revived. A revival is new life; this is the very definition and example of revival—new life.

REFORMATION VS. REVIVAL:

Reformation is a change mostly on the outside. Reformation changes your looks, just as some new clothes can change your appearance. If you go shopping at the right place, you can change your appearance; have a reformation. That doesn't mean you've changed who you are, however. It just means that you have changed how you look. A new hairstyle or even new contact lenses or glasses can be a reformation, but that's not a revival because revival comes from within.

BEING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF GOD:

When my wife and I left for vacation, we went east. We arrived in the dark because we were on the dark side. When we returned from vacation, we arrived in the light of daytime because we were on the light side. You know why we stayed in the light? We were coming home where we belonged. It's all about which side you're on, and that is especially true when it comes to God. The issue of His divine fury and His divine love must be addressed.

BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY:

(Psalm 85:1) As we read in the book of Daniel, this was a time of 70 years when God's people lived in a miserable and sinful place called Babylon as a result of their continual idolatry. They were taken captive by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar because they were sinful and disobedient to the Lord. Their idolatry ranked highly amongst their many sins. God appointed a set amount of time for their captivity and restored them to their land after that time and their crying out to Him. He entered the situation after 70 years, not only fulfilling prophecy, but also changing their situation according to His promises to His people.

GOD'S WRATH:

(Psalm 85:3) Paul tells us in Romans 1:16-18 about the wrath of God and what that means to us today. God's wrath is a built-in and automatic response that comes from His perfect and righteous standing. It is not a wrath borne out of reactions or violence. Paul further sheds light on Psalm 85 by talking about the power and glory of God, along with His divine wrath. God's wrath has been revealed to us from heaven and is against all who are ungodly and seek to suppress the truth of the Lord. The New Testament tells us that the final wrath of God is coming against all evil, but the righteous will not be subject to it.

SERMON LINES:

This sermon will help you show how virtually every revival recorded in Scripture was introduced with a crisis on the part of God's people that drove them back to Him.

This sermon will help you explain and illustrate the crucial difference between reformation and true revival; between simply adding more programs or special services to the church calendar and coming to grips with the issue of sin and lack of life among us as Christians.

QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:

"Revival is almost always focused on God's people, not to the world at large."

"We welcome the side of God that we are comfortable with, His grace. We don't want to talk about the side of God we are uncomfortable with, His wrath."

"Some of us need to say 'Revive us again' because we remember a time when we were in love with the Lord."

"The reason we are in this perpetual mode of defeat is the absence of spiritual vitality."

"One of the beautiful things about the New Testament is that because of God's covenant of grace, you don't see fire falling down from heaven."

"Draw a circle around yourself and say 'God, start revival here; revive me again.'"