

What
it
Means
to
Be In...

Revival

Bible Studies on Revival
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What it Means to be in...

RENEWAL

Revival of Conviction

II Chronicles 29

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INTRODUCTION

II Chron. 29-30 records one of the greatest revivals ever to take place in Judah. Perhaps, the only other revival which reached similar magnitude was that of Josiah which would occur several decades later.

The nation of Judah had fluctuated between religious reform and backsliding. The Lord had been faithful to His people by redeeming and delivering them when they would be repentant before Him. However, the nation would either make incomplete reforms or refuse to completely respond to the requirements of the Lord. The result was the repeated backsliding of the nation.

The Northern Kingdom never fully repented from the corrupted and self-made form of religion instituted by Jeroboam. They continued to mix the religion of their neighbors with the worship of the Lord. A great and effective reformer never arose in the Northern Kingdom like the reformers in Judah.

Among the reformers in Judah, Hezekiah stands out. He made a thorough cleansing of the paganism that had become entrenched in the nation. The things of the Lord had been desecrated, destroyed or used for pagan purposes. Even the brasen serpent which Moses had in the

wilderness was used for a pagan deity, with sacrifices being given to it. In his reform Hezekiah said it had been desecrated to a "mere piece of brass" ("Nehushtan") and he destroyed it (II Kings 18:4). This along with other acts of cleansing were necessary for the revival of the nation.

Hezekiah's revival occurred at a pivotal time in the nation. They were wanting in the eyes of God's judgment. Even though the Lord had been merciful, the Northern Kingdom had been destroyed during the earlier reign of Hezekiah's father, Ahaz. Now the Southern Kingdom was in need of mercy for they were following after the pattern of the Northern Kingdom. The revival during the reign of Hezekiah brought the nation to the Lord. As a result, Judah continued as a nation for another 125 years.

Times of revival and cleansing are important. In the case of Hezekiah, it turned an entire nation around. The elements of Hezekiah's reform can instruct us about the nature of revival. God desires revival today.

I. Call to Holiness II Chron. 29:3-11

A. Opening and Repairing the Doors II Chron. 29:3

The doors of the temple had been sealed and the temple had not been used. The things of the temple were in disarray. Their condition is addressed in the following verses. Hezekiah was ready for revival. He began his reform in the first month of his reign.

He opened the sealed doors making worship at the temple possible once again. He then "repaired" the doors, indicating that he anticipated the continuance of worship. The doors would be used and the place of worship would once again become the focus of the nation.

The revival of Hezekiah began with an immediate change in the nation that placed a central focus upon worship. The same principle applies to revival today. Changes which make the worship of the Lord central in the life of the believer form the foundation of revival. There was a strong determination and definite commitment by Hezekiah to this principle. It was perhaps the very first thing he did as king.

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B. Call to Holiness II Chron. 29:4-5

The next act of Hezekiah was cleansing. The Levites could not bring sacrifices and intercede in behalf of the people because they needed personal cleansing. Hezekiah declared that they needed to "sanctify" themselves."

"Sanctify" came from the Hebrew word "qadash." It's fundamental meaning was "devotion." Godly devotion was the center of the sanctifying work in a person's life. The focus of the word was upon the manner in which a person would give his heart and actions to God. The Levites had evidently compromised their holy devotion unto the Lord. The call for revival demanded that they renew their heart and actions in sincere devotion once again.

The command of Hezekiah was also to sanctify the temple. It had been misused and the things of the temple had been neglected. The temple had been turned away from it's purpose of being a place devoted to the service of worship unto the Lord. The devotion and holiness of the Levites was to be directed toward the devotion and dedication of the temple.

Specifically, Hezekiah instructed the Levites to "carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place." This was at the very heart of the need for the consecration of temple. The "holy place" was a reference to the inner section of the temple, including the holy of holies. This was the place where the Spirit of the Lord would inhabit the temple. Hezekiah realized the importance of providing for the presence of the Lord in the temple. Fostering the presence of the Lord was a central part of Hezekiah's revival.

"Filthiness" came from the Hebrew word, "nidah." It meant "that which needs to be removed or put away." Hezekiah was referring to things which did not belong to the holy place. They were not devoted to the Lord or His presence. These things were in the holy place because of the neglect of devotion to the presence of the Lord.

The presence of the Lord is important for revival. In His presence there is comfort and power. At the very center of the worship of Judah was the representation of the presence of the Lord through the holy of holies and the Ark of the Covenant. In similar fashion, the promise

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of Christ to be with the believer should be precious to the Christian. Steps inviting and providing for the presence of the Lord form a central part of revival.

C. Trespassing and Negligence II Chron. 29:6-11

Verses 6-11 give a specific account of what Hezekiah told the Levites. It had been a five-part exhortation. He first specified in verse 6 the transgressions of their fathers which brought about the need for revival. They had violated the commands of the Lord, forsaken the Lord, and been rebellious. Second, Hezekiah specified the manner in which the holy place and Temple had become "filthy" (cf. v. 5). They had shut the doors, not kept the lamps burning, not burned incense, and failed to burn offerings to the Lord.

The third thing Hezekiah did in verses 8 and 9 was review the manner in which God had responded with His wrath. The nation had been given over to great catastrophe, peril and captivity. The fourth admonishment of Hezekiah in verse 10 was the appeal of his heart. He said that in his own heart he had made a covenant with the Lord, appealing for His mercy. Finally, in verse 11 Hezekiah gave them a summary exhortation to not be "negligent" toward the calling of the Lord to worship and minister before Him.

The Hebrew word used by Hezekiah in verse 11 for "negligence" carried the essential idea of "wandering." The revival of Hezekiah called the people to guard against wandering priorities and the failure to see the importance of the revival. This is an important element for revival today. Without a fervent covenant of the heart as Hezekiah had, the potential for revival is low or nonexistent. This had been the sin of the nation up to this time. They had wandered and neglected their heartfelt commitment to the Lord. It was revealed in the "filthiness" (v. 5) of the Temple.

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II. Renewed Worship II Chron. 29:28-36

A. Total Devotion II Chron. 29:28-29

In verses 12-26 the preparation which the nation made for revival and worship is described. Later their worship is more fully described in verses 28-29. However, the foundation for their worship is described in verses 12-26. The first part of their preparation was to cleanse the temple (vs. 12-19). The next thing they did was repent of their sin and offer sacrifices for atonement. Finally, they prepared the instruments for worship according to the commandments regarding worship given through David and Nathan (vs. 25-27).

The foundation included cleansing, repentance and obedient preparation. This was important to the revival of Hezekiah. The description of the actual worship and praise does not begin until the the record of the foundation is given. The foundation of revival may not be in vibrant or great external expressions. The foundation of Hezekiah's revival was marked by repentance, cleansing, devotion and obedience. These were the first essential elements of Hezekiah's reform and they apply to revival today.

The description of the time of worship and praise in verse 28-29 depicts a time of great worship and adoration before the Lord. There was a spirit of unanimity as "all the congregation worshipped." This is similar to the falling of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It came in the midst of unity. As the people gathered, willing to come together and worship the Lord, the time of revival came to the nation.

The singing and playing of the instruments came while the burnt offering was being given unto the Lord. The burnt offering was begun in v. 27 and it ended in v. 28. The burnt offering was the most significant offering of the worship of the people. The word "burnt" literally meant "to ascend." The emphasis of the word and the offering was not on "burning." The purpose of the offering was that the sacrifice be totally consumed and "ascend" up to the Lord. The offering meant a complete dedication of all of the offering unto the Lord. It was a very

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significant offering because the sacrifice would be completely given to the Lord as all of it would "ascend" to the Lord.

The praise and rejoicing of revival comes in the context of total dedication. The nation was rejoicing as they were renewing their total dedication unto the Lord through the burnt offering. It is important to see the nature of the burnt offering given in this revival. Total dedication was at the center of Hezekiah's revival.

B. Praises With Gladness II Chron. 29:30

The Psalms formed a primary part of the revival. The reference to "the words of David, and of Asaph the seer" was a reference to the psalms. There are a number of psalms which may have been used. Psalms of repentance, thanksgiving and national reformation could have been used. The particular psalms used are not mentioned.

The emphasis of the verse was captured in the word "gladness." This was the result of cleansing and dedication. The word "gladness" in the Hebrew text emphasized the outward expression of the joy felt by the congregation. They were expressing the gladness created in their heart through total dedication unto the Lord.

C. Sacrifices and Thanksgiving II Chron. 29:31-36

After the central burnt offering, Hezekiah exhorted the people to personal acts of devotion and thanksgiving. Even though there had been a burnt offering expressing the devotion of the entire congregation, individual commitment and thanksgiving were necessary. The purpose of Hezekiah's exhortation in verse 31 was to bring the people to individual worship.

The time of the burnt offering had focused upon "consecration" and devotion. The focus was especially upon sacrifices of personal thanksgiving. The "thank offerings" mentioned by Hezekiah were offerings which were smaller and more individualized. They were still administered by the priests but the animals and elements for sacrifice were presented by individuals.

Revival must not only reflect the unity and corporate

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strength of a congregation, it must also touch each individual heart. Each person must apply the cleansing, offering and praise of revival to his own heart. Without personal application, the effects of revival will not be effectively applied in a person's life. A revival may fall greatly upon the gathering of a congregation. However, each person is responsible for his individual responsiveness to the Lord.

The expression "free heart" in the Hebrew text emphasized a person's willingness and personal motivation. In other words, the people were not forced or coerced in thanksgiving and offerings. Personal motivation and willingness is essential for revival. Hezekiah knew that the revival would not be genuine if he had forced the people to worship. They had to come to the Lord of their own will and personal motivation.

Verse 36 summarized the great time of revival. The Lord had "prepared" them. This term indicated in the Hebrew text that the Lord had enabled them to do all that He had required of them. It had been a revival which came "suddenly." The term "suddenly" emphasized that only the Lord could have brought such a powerful change in the nation.

This last emphasis in verse 36 is important. Throughout the description of chapter 29 the commands of Hezekiah and the responses of the Levites and congregation are emphasized. However, revival was not merely the result of Hezekiah's leadership or the response of the people. Hezekiah's leadership and their faithfulness was only possible because of the Lord. God had prepared them and made their responses possible. The revival was unto the Lord but it was also made possible by Him.

III. Cleansed for Service II Chron. 30:13-20

A. Cleansing by the Laity II Chron. 30:13-16

The events of II Chron. 29 describe the cleansing and worship which took place at the initial opening and cleansing of the Temple. The events of II Chron. 30 describe the events which concerned the revival of the Passover. Hezekiah wanted to just as quickly reestablish

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the important times required of the Lord for feasting and sacrifice. The most important of these was the Passover. Even though it was not the time of the Passover but the time of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (II Chron. 30:3, 13), Hezekiah saw the great importance of the Passover. As a result he brought both of these feasts together.

Verse 13 indicates that a very large congregation of people had gathered. Whereas the revival of the Temple affected Jerusalem, the effects of the revival had spread. The revival had grown so that at the time of these feasts the congregation had become "very great."

In preparation for this time of feasting Hezekiah began in the same way that he approached the Temple. He called for cleansing and sanctification. The Temple had been cleansed but there were many pagan places of worship in the city of Jerusalem. Cleansing had to now reach beyond the Temple. The indication of the text is that the people themselves took the pagan altars in the city and "cast them into the brook Kidron."

It is important to note that the revival went beyond the place of worship at the Temple. The revival went into the entire city. It no doubt affected families and homes. The places of paganism which had been preserved were now being thoroughly purged.

The impact of revival must go beyond the walls of the church. When revival can go into the personal lives of individuals the impact of revival is greatly increased. The city of Jerusalem was revived, not just the temple. The revival was marked by cleansing, removing the paganism which had been practiced. Worship and the joy of praise must be translated into the cleansing of individual lives.

Whereas the revival of the temple was led by Hezekiah, the revival in Jerusalem was led by the congregation that purified the city. When the priests came to sacrifice the burnt offerings, they were made "ashamed" in verse 15. This was no doubt because of the example of the people in verse 14. The priests and Levites cleansed themselves. The revival of Hezekiah reflected not just the leadership of the king but also the leadership of the people. In the context of an empowered laity, God continued to reform a nation.

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B. Cleansing in the Congregation II Chron. 30:17-18a

The revival had spread to such proportions that there were many who came who had not been cleansed by the sacrifices of cleansing. Hezekiah had invited many from even the territory of the old Northern Kingdom to come to the Passover in Jerusalem (vs. 5 ff.). No doubt there were many others who had just felt the impact of the revival.

The significance of this section of the text is twofold. First, God honored the revival and it spread in an amazing way. Secondly, Hezekiah maintained the sincerity of the revival by keeping the concern for cleansing as a central part of the growth. One of the ways he did this was to have the Levites continue the requirements of the commandments of the Lord. The Levites continued "to sanctify them unto the Lord."

Cleansing was an important element in the beginning of the revival. It was the foundation for rejoicing. When the laity led in the revival, cleansing was the focus. Now, in the midst of profound growth, Hezekiah and the Levites did not forsake the very thing which was at the beginning of the revival.

In contemporary revivals the temptation has sometimes been to minimize the importance of cleansing. One aspect of modern day revivalism has been to over-emphasize growth at the expense of cleansing. Rejoicing, lay leadership, growth and other aspects must work in the context of cleansing and not exclude it. The maintenance of the decisive role of cleansing was a strong aspect of Hezekiah's revival.

C. Prayer for Cleansing II Chron. 30:18b-20

Hezekiah's effort to maintain cleansing required the grace of the Lord. Hezekiah realized that it was the Lord Himself who changed and cleansed a life. It was not the result of mere ritual or human efforts to change a life. He knew that the change was an act of God.

Even though the Levites exercised the rites and sacrifices of cleansing for the multitudes who still needed cleansing, Hezekiah appealed to the Lord to "pardon" the people. The word "pardon" was the same Hebrew word

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for "covering." It referred to the atonement for sins and reconciliation unto the Lord.

The preface of Hezekiah's prayer was that the atonement be applied to those that had prepared their hearts to seek and serve the Lord. This preface highlighted the priority of the heart. Hezekiah wanted to be assured that these individuals that were flooding into Jerusalem were motivated sincerely from their heart. Here Hezekiah is to be admired for not only emphasizing cleansing but cleansing which first comes from the heart.

Cleansing must begin in the heart. The heart must be purified and motivated to seek the Lord. Then, the genuine fruits of inner cleansing are manifested by outer cleansing. Hezekiah maintained both aspects in the revival of the nation.

The term "healed" in verse 20 described the manner in which God applied His "pardon" to the people. Not only did He pardon them but he healed the damage that had been done by sin and transgression. Reconciliation was part of the healing. The restoration of their worship was part of the healing. Cleansing the nation was part of the healing. Being able to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise unto the Lord was part of the healing.

God responds to those who sincerely seek Him with pardon and healing. Even though a life or even a nation may have been fractured and separated from God, God will respond to a heartfelt cry unto Him. The revival during the time of Hezekiah is an example of this kind of revival.

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Revival of Victory

Isaiah 59

Notes

Outline

- I. The Reach of Revival v. 1
- II. Reaping Sin and Defeat vs. 2-3
- III. Reality of Sin and Defeat vs. 4-8
- IV. Result of Sin and Defeat vs. 9-11
- V. Realm of Sin and Defeat vs. 12-14
- VI. Revival of Victory vs. 15-17
 - A. God's Eye v. 15a
 - B. God's Displeasure v. 15b
 - C. God's Warfare v. 16-18
 - D. God's Response v. 19
- VII. Revival by the Spirit vs. 20-1

Introduction

Revival is victory over sin and the power of sin. Isaiah 59 presents one of the most graphic descriptions of sin and one of the most glorious accounts of victory over sin in all of Scripture. Sin is described in awful detail. The power of sin would appear at one point almost overwhelming. However, the passage describes the tremendous victory available to the believer, especially through the power of the outpouring of the Spirit.

Revival comes in situations that seem almost impossible. Certainly in this passage, the power of sin appears as strong as ever. The deception, scope and tragic consequences of sin are detailed. Sin has affected the reader, the nation and even the people of God. Truth has been reversed and those who would stand for righteousness are placed in harms way because of their commitment.

The revival that comes in Isaiah 59 is a revival of victory over sin. Though sin had all but won over the nation, the Lord intervenes as the Saviour of the people and the Spirit of the Lord is given to maintain the victory won by the Intercessor. In the same way, revival today means that the believer has the victory that comes over sin.

I. The Reach of Revival v. 1

Praise the Lord, His hand is not shortened! The theme rings out throughout the passage. God never fails. The lesson that revival teaches the believer and the truth that the people experience in revival is that no matter what happens, God is still working by His almighty hand. Two enduring works of the Lord are listed:

*His arm is always able to save

*His ear is always able to hear.

The first work of salvation means that no matter what the situation, God is always able to deliver His people. There are many situations that threaten the believer but perhaps the greatest threat is sin. The believer will not miss heaven because of external threats but because of personal, inner conflicts. Those inner conflicts test the faithfulness of the believer to the Lord. Especially in the war over willfulness before God, God's arm is not short, He can reach into our hearts.

The reference to God's hearing us emphasizes the sensitivity and accuracy of God's work. God does not work mechanically but meaningfully. His work is in response to what He has come to know and feel for us. He is acquainted with our struggle and responds to our desperation. He intervenes with exactly what we need.

II. Reaping Sin and Defeat vs. 2-3

Verses 2-3 begin to describe the terrible grip of sin. Sin affects the personal purity of those who give in to temptation. Sin is not just separation but something that puts an almost irremovable stain upon the sinner. The sinner is marked by sin. The mark is revealed with the words of the sinner. In other words, though the sinner thinks others are being deceived, the folly of sin is obviously marked upon them and laid upon their words.

III. Reality of Sin and Defeat vs. 4-8

Verses 4-8 describe the reality of sin. Sin is not a facade or mere "alternative life-style." The reality of sin is revealed in the consequences of sin. Others are greatly affected by sin. No one can sin by oneself and others not

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be affected. Others are always affected. Sin always bears consequences, in every case, if not now, later.

Verses 4-8 illustrate the definiteness of the consequences of sin:

- *rejection of truth and justice v. 4
- *create evil v. 5
- *entrap others v. 6
- *eager and insensitive to the innocent v. 7
- *no true peace v. 8

IV. Result of Sin and Defeat vs. 9-11

The consequences of sin are illustrated in verses 9-11 in the way that the people of God are affected. The author begins to say, "we." Not only are the sinner, the generations of the sinner and the innocent affected, the people of God are affected as well. The people of God:

- *experience the lack of justice v. 9
- *struggle for true guidance v. 10
- *lack true strength v. 11

V. Realm of Sin and Defeat vs. 12-14

The realm of sin is directly opposed to the kingdom of God. Verses 12-14 describe the way sin attempts to assault the things of God. The assault of sin:

- *testifies against the people of God v. 12
- *births transgressions from the heart v. 13
- *makes right look wrong and wrong right v. 14
- *removes moral discernment v. 14
- *tries to publicly destroy truth v. 14

The description of sin in Isaiah 59 has been building in intensity. The description started with personal sin (v. 2) and ends with public disgrace (v. 14). Sin, by its very nature constantly escalates. As long as a person continues in sin, the consequences and extent of sin will only continue to grow worse.

The devil has one mission, the complete destruction of the child of God. The goal is not to wound but to wrangle. The purpose is not to mame but to mutilate. The end is not to distract but to destroy. The object is not just failures but families. The place is not just a fortress but the world. The devil's goal is complete destruction.

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VI. Revival of Victory vs. 15-17

A. God's Eye v. 15a

Verse 15 is the climax of the description of the power of sin. The climax occurs when a person is made a "prey" for doing what is right. The person that turns from sin in order to turn toward God, leaves himself vulnerable to the power and entrapment of sin.

Revival begins at the time of vulnerability. When we are the most defenseless against the attack of Satan, God raises His greatest defenses. God's protection is sure because His vision is never blurred. He sees every device the enemy wages against us.

The enemy lays a trap for the righteous, but God sees the work of the enemy. Many times the enemy comes against us, but the Lord is aware of everything the enemy brings against us. The enemy's power is never out of the range of God's watchful care.

B. God's Displeasure v. 15b

God's care, God's life giving revival, rescues the saint of God before the snare of the enemy can surround us. God responds with strong displeasure at the work of the enemy against the child of God. "Displeased" came from a word which meant "noise." In this context, with the grammatical construction given the word, the term means, "thunderous sound." When the devil thinks that he has created an environment without judgment, the judgment of God thunders back.

C. God's Warfare v. 16-18

God goes to war for His own. When the devil thinks he has the child of God defeated, the Captain of our salvation steps in. God's response, His thunder, is the sound of His clamoring armor. The devil thinks he has entrapped the believer with no way out. The believer may in discouragement feel there is no way out. Yet, with life giving revival, God, our mighty Warrior steps in with reviving victory. The power of sin may surround us, but God does not fight according to the devil's rules.

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Ephesians 6 describes the armor of the believer for defense against the attacks of the enemy, but Isaiah 59 describes the armor of God for our deliverance and victory. God has a helmet and a breastplate that can never be penetrated. Therefore, He is unconquerable. He is fighting with vengeance (literally, "breathing hard") and zeal (literally, "red faced") for He is interceding for one of His own. Revival is as certain as God's determination to remove the evil one and rescue His precious ones.

D. God's Response v. 19

God wars so that no one else receives the glory. The devil has not only been attacking the child of God but also God Himself. God calls the enemy "His" (v. 18) enemy. The fear of the Lord is the respect due unto Him. Revival is not just about the integrity of the saints. Revival is the reaffirmation the intensity of godly fear. God reasserts that He alone is God.

The onslaught of sin is described as a "flood." The context is still war and the description depicts the waves of sin and blasphemy that attempt to confuse, surround and overwhelm the child of God. The devil uses tragedy, disease and the threat of death to say to the child of God that there is no way out.

Rather than defeat, the response of God is the reverse. The "standard" is a battle standard. A battle standard is raised in the midst of battle not to surrender, identify oneself or merely call for a "time out." The standard is raised to say, "charge," and come against the enemy. The revival response of God is to charge against the works of sin and the enemy. Revival is reversing the claims of the enemy. Revival is to move against the maneuvers of the evil one. Revival is to tackle the tide of Satan's accusations, discouragements and attacks.

VII. Revival by the Spirit vs. 20-21

The phrase, "shall lift up a standard," is simply one word in the Hebrew text. The word is literally, "raises" or "lifts up." The single word makes "Spirit" the subject. The literal understanding of the entire reference is that the Spirit of God raises Himself up as a battle standard in

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response to the enemy. The work of warfare just described with God putting on His warfare and battling in behalf of the child of God is accomplished through the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of God is the heart of revival, especially when it comes to victory over the work of the enemy. The work of the Spirit is not just a shout and a praise. His work includes the praise and the rejoicing. The manifestations of the Spirit are part of His work. Yet, what the Spirit is accomplishing during times of praise and power is a work of warfare. The warfare is waged against temptation, discouragement and the effects of sin. The snare of the enemy is broken by the Spirit of God.

The work of the Spirit is not done apart from the believer. His work is done through the believer. The revival victory of the Spirit is a victory won in and through us.

Verse 21 describes Pentecost. The Spirit of God is laid upon the "mouth" of the believer. On the day of Pentecost, the singular description of the baptizing of the Spirit was speaking in unknown tongues (Acts 2:4). Isaiah 59:21 is not about the Word of God, as in Scripture. The description is of the work of the Spirit upon the mouth of all those that would receive that work. The Spirit puts God's own words, "my words," on the mouth of the believer. I Corinthians 14:2 describes a Spirit-filled language that is known only to God. When the Spirit baptized believer through the Spirit of God speaks in a tongue unknown to him, God is waging warfare against the works of the enemy and the consequences of sin.

The work of the Spirit in revival is not just for our edification but our empowerment. The empowerment comes because God is waging warfare against sin. The consequences of the power of sin is the crushing of the entrapment of the enemy.

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Revival of Witness

Acts 4/Luke 11-12

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Outline

- I. Ruled by Religion Lk. 11:37-52
 - A. Reprimanded by Religion 11:37-38
 - B. Reprimanded by Christ 11:39-52
(Nine signs of the lack of revival)
- II. Ruled by God Lk. 11-12:12
 - A. Wrath of the World 11:52-12:1a
 - B. Revelation of Hypocrisy 12:1b-3
 - C. Godly Fear Turns Religion Into Revival 12:4-5
 - D. Godly Fear Turns Revival Into Rescue 12:6-10
 - E. Holy Spirit Reveals the Fear of God 12:11-12
- III. Revival of Witness Acts 4/Living Luke 11-12
 - A. When Power Questions Power 4:1-7
 - B. Spirit Revives Witness to the World 4:8-20
 - C. Spirit Revives Witness In the Church 4:21-30
 - D. Spirit Revives Witness of Power 4:31-37

Introduction

Revival is both for the Church and the world. For the Church, revival is new life. For the world, revival is new witness of the demonstration of God's power. The power received within the Church through revival becomes the power to witness outside of the Church.

The power of the world threatens the witness revival works to bring. The power of religion threatens the genuineness of the power of the witness of the Church. Revival both purifies witness within the church and propagates witness outside of the Church.

Luke 11-12 and Acts 4 are a prophetic set of New Testament scriptures in which Christ demonstrated, foretold and then through the Spirit brought to pass a revival over religion. The religiosity of the Pharisees had corrupted the witness of the people of God. The response of Christ was to reveal their hypocrisy and empower His disciples for true witness to the world. In Acts 4, the religiosity of Judah once again threatened the power and

purity of the witness of Christ. Through the reviving work of the Spirit, the disciples were renewed with power and thereby became even greater witnesses.

Revival comes to purify and empower the church for witness. The witness of the church is not just what the body of Christ proclaims. Witness is the response of the believer to the threats of religiosity from within the church and the threats of power from outside the church.

I. Ruled by Religion Lk. 11:37-52

A. Reprimanded by Religion 11:37-38

When Jesus responded to a request from a certain Pharisee to dine with him, the Pharisees severely criticized Jesus for His lack of religious ritual. Jesus did not go through the ritualistic hand cleansing that the Pharisees practiced before meals. The religious reprimand of the Pharisees would be met by the righteousness of Christ.

B. Reprimanded by Christ 11:39-52 (Nine signs of the lack of revival)

Jesus proceeded to declare to the Pharisees that in religion, what is on the outside is thought to determine what is on the inside of someone. Jesus declared that the opposite was true. The inner spiritual condition of a person is what really shows on the outside. The inner condition controls the outward condition.

Revival is the setting right of the priority of inward purity. Revival is the realignment of inner holiness as the controlling factor in a person's life. Revival removes the external facade and reinstates the inner barometer of the Spirit as the true guide of a person's life.

Living just an external religion, while fostering a corrupt heart is revealed in nine signs of the lack of revival:

1. Thinking Outward Purity Guarantees Inward Holiness 11:39

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2. Forgetting God is Our Creator and Source 11:40
3. Trying to Buy Holiness 11:41
4. Majoring in Minors and Missing the Majors 11:42
5. Elitism 11:43
6. Spiritually Dead and Not Knowing It 11:44
7. Burden Makers and Not Burden Bearers 11:45-6
8. Not Being Able to Hear from God 11:47-51
9. "In the Way" Rather than On the Way 11:52

II. Ruled by God Lk. 11-12:12

A. Wrath of the World 11:52-12:1a

The Pharisees became very upset at Jesus. They sought to assault him verbally and physically. He had revealed the true nature of their hearts. He had uncovered the true nature of their deeds. He had begun a process in which they had to be revived or return to religion. The same is true today. Revival is the challenge to live by the work of God in our hearts as our first priority and reject the attempts of external religiousness to control our spiritual lives.

B. Revelation of Hypocrisy 12:1b-3

Jesus called the rejection of spirituality for the respite of religiosity, "hypocrisy." The hypocrisy of the Pharisees was to minimize the inner condition of the heart and try to control others by the external rituals of the flesh. Their hypocrisy was "leaven" in that it permeated their lives. Jesus said in effect, "It is your leaven and you shall be known by it." Religion likes to boast of the facade and hide the phoney. Jesus responded by pointing out that the phoney would be their boast and the facade would be removed. Be careful how you respond and react to the move of God for it may reveal the condition of your heart.

Notes

C. Godly Fear Turns Religion Into Revival 12:4-5

The strongest teacher on the fear of God was Jesus. "Fear" did not mean "reverence." There were other Greek terms used to mean reverence. The term for fear in these verses was the same term most frequently used when talking about the fear of God. The Greek term was "phobeomai." The modern term, "phobia," comes from this term. With a true phobia, a person is "controlled" and "overwhelmed" by something or someone. The fear of the Lord means that a person is controlled and overwhelmed by God.

Christ was telling his disciples that they were to not be fearful, that is, controlled or overwhelmed by anything except God. They were no doubt to pay attention to persons and things around them, take proper notice of threats and problems around them. Address those problems and persons, but not be controlled or overwhelmed by them.

The principle that Jesus was teaching was that if the believer properly and genuinely fears God, He will fear nothing or no one else. However, if he does not fear God, he is subject to be afraid of anyone or anything else. People live in anxiety because they are controlled and overwhelmed by everything except God. The dollar and debt is seen as bigger than God. The devil and disease, the angry neighbor, the threatening boss, the discouraging spouse, the troublesome children of life all seem to control us more than God. Revival brings a renewal of the fear of the Lord where the believer once again sees that God alone is in control.

D. Godly Fear Turns Revival Into Rescue 12:6-10

The result of godly fear is rescue from anxiety. The deception of the enemy is to try to make us think that the fear of God is an antiquated concept that breeds timidity and insecurity. On the contrary, godly fear is a haven of spiritual security. Verses 6-10 assure the believer that God will continually supply and sustain the believer against all threats of insecurity and all attacks of the enemy.

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E. Holy Spirit Reveals the Fear of God 12:11-12

Jesus turned to His disciples and told them that just as the crowd, the religious hypocrites and authorities were pressing Him that day, they too would press them. They would face the pressure of personalities, circumstances, trials and temptations. Revival comes in the midst of such pressure. The circumstances of revival are never ideal. Pressure is the place of revival. Trial is the timing of revival. Temptation is the topic addressed by revival.

The disciples' greatest pressure would be the temptation to rely upon the inward call of the Spirit or relying upon some external device of their own making. Rather than coming up with their own solution, the call of the reviving Spirit of God was to receive what the Spirit would give them.

The promise of the revival of the Spirit of the Lord was to be fearful of God more than of persons or circumstances, to be controlled by the Lord and not manipulated by men or women. In the midst of revival the Holy Spirit reveals the principle of the fear of the Lord, i.e., that in the midst of great trial, our first resource is God and our first mistake would be to think that what is on the outside of circumstances or people is what really controls our lives.

III. Revival of Witness Acts 4/ Living Out Luke 11-12

A. When Power Questions Power 4:1-7

The disciples had taken the bold step of faith in God. They had proclaimed that God was working. They had ministered in the flow of what God was doing. They had declared their dependence upon God and their break from the bonds of religiosity.

The power of the religious began to question the disciples and thereby they were questioning the power of God that was flowing through them. The religious power that confronted the disciples was based upon human assessment of what men thought God should be doing.

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B. Spirit Revives Witness to the World 4:8-20

In response to the skepticism of the power brokers of religion, the Lord sent the Holy Spirit. Verse 8 begins the response of the disciples that fulfilled Jesus' prophecy in Luke 12. The first words of the verse were, "Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them,...." The witness of the church, especially to a threatening world, is not a code, a creed or a dogma. The witness of the church begins with and is sustained by the Holy Spirit.

If a church has lost it's witness to the world, the Holy Spirit working within and reviving the saints is where the witness begins. The world will not be moved by a church that has not been moved. But when the reviving of the Holy Spirit takes place within believers, the world will be revived because the revival of the Spirit within the believer will be "shouted and proclaimed from the house-tops" (Lk. 12).

C. Spirit Revives Witness In the Church 4:21-30

The Spirit also bears witness within the church. Not only does the world need the demonstration of God's power by the Spirit, but the church needs to experience the proclamation of the Spirit as well. The Holy Ghost revives the church by proclaiming to the church the message that God desires it to hear. The church must witness to itself if it is to witness to the world.

D. Spirit Revives Witness of Power 4:31-37

The filling of the Holy Ghost is a revival of the witness of the Spirit of God. God witnesses by the Spirit through the demonstration of His power. A demonstration is an act that shows someone how something is done. The Holy Spirit is the demonstration of who God is. The work of the Spirit is not just for blessing but it is for witness. By His very nature, the Spirit brings revival and thereby shows the world who He is.

Notes

Revival by the Spirit

Joel 2

Notes

Outline

- I. Principles of Spirit-Filled Revival 2:21
 - A. Fear Not-Do Not be Controlled by the World
 - B. Be Glad and Rejoice-Worship
 - C. For the Lord Will Do Great Things
- II. Promise of the "Time of Pentecost" 2:22/Dt. 16:16
 - A. Three Feasts Dt. 16:16
 - B. Be Not Afraid-Do Not Lose Heart
 - C. The Harvest Can be Seen and is Happening
- III. Provision of Revival Harvest 2:23-26
 - A. Rain Before and After Pentecost 2:23
 - B. Storehouse Full 2:24
 - C. Restoration 2:25
 - D. Nourishment 2:26a
 - E. Praise 2:26b
 - F. No Shame 2:26c
- IV. Presence of the Lord of the Harvest 2:27
 - A. Presence
 - B. Power
 - C. Promise

Introduction

The power of the Spirit is especially made manifest when the circumstances around us seem to tell us that there is no hope. The nation of Judah had just gone through a terrible time. The crops that had once held so much promise for a great future harvest had been eliminated by a wave of locusts and other creatures. The harvest in one great catastrophe had been reduced to nothing. In the same way, life seems to disappear, promise becomes poverty and hope is reduced to helplessness. The seedbed of revival is the soil of sadness. When we least feel like having revival, God surprises us with something that only He can do. Joel 2 exemplifies the way that revival comes by the power of the Spirit of God.

The Spirit of the Lord is the key to the condition of the land and the people during the time of Joel as well as the prophetic time when the Spirit of the Lord would be poured out. The desolation of the land springs to life through the reviving of the Spirit of the Lord. God promises and brings to pass life upon the land, but the work of His Spirit makes what happen more than a miracle. In a miracle mere physical changes take place that do not ordinarily take place. More than these changes, lives are changed by the Spirit of God. The change wrought by the Spirit is the revival of God upon the land and the people.

I. Principles of Spirit-Filled Revival

2:21

A. Fear Not-Do Not be Controlled by the World

The initial declaration of the Lord in the face of calamity is that God is still in control. Therefore, the child of God is admonished not to act as though anyone or anything else is in control. "Fear" is a response to what or who we think controls us. The Lord admonishes the people to not be afraid of anything, anyone or any eventuality because He is in control.

Refusing to fear the work of the enemy, the consequences of the enemy's work or the possibilities that the future may hold as a result of what Satan may do is the first principle of revival by the Spirit. The calamity may be real. There is no denying that the enemy has power. This reality is sometimes dangerous or desperate. In Joel 2 the crops had been obliterated. However, circumstances do not mean that the believer has to be in fear. God's command is in fact exactly the opposite, "Fear not!"

B. Be Glad and Rejoice-Worship

God's further command is to be glad and worship Him. Circumstances, though of great calamity, never dictate our praise. In the midst of despair, God's command is to praise Him. The power of praise is that it does not depend upon anything except the command of God

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which calls us to praise Him. To not praise God, even when there may not appear to be any reason to praise Him, is to walk in disobedience. The call of the Spirit is to lift your eyes above circumstances and lift your voice above to God in praise.

C. For the Lord Will Do Great Things

The reason to not fear and be glad and rejoice is that God has and will do great things. The work of the Lord is not inhibited by the greatest destruction wrought by the enemy. The power of God is subject to no earthly power. The ability of God is not dictated by the ability of anyone. Evil does not stop the work of God. God continually works. The declaration of this verse is that God was, is and will continually work. The cry of revival is that God is still working, despite whatever we may experience or what things may appear to look like.

The truth of the declaration that God is still working is even in response to the failure of individuals. In Joel 2 the calamity had come in part because of the failure of the people to serve the Lord. Despite their sins, God was still working. He was not condoning their actions. There was still the responsibility to come to the Lord in repentance and humility. However, the message is that God's work is even greater than our failure. If we will but turn to Him, no matter how deep tragedy may have brought us, even tragedy that was the result of our sins, God is still able and willing to work in our behalf.

II. Promise of the "Time of Pentecost" 2:22/Dt. 16:16

A. Three Feasts Dt. 16:16

The reviving work of the Spirit in the face of great calamity was a promise foretold by the Lord through the system of feast celebrations He had instituted surrounding the seedtime and harvest of the nation. There were three significant feasts that surrounded the growing season of the nation. The feasts were times when the nation would affirm the work of God in their lives. The three great times of observance were as follows:

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1. Planting of the Seed-Feast of Passover
2. Sustaining of the Crop-Feast of Weeks
3. Harvest-Feast of Booths

Each of the great feast times were representative of the spiritual work that God does in the lives of His people. The Feast of Passover was at the time when the crops were first planted. The feast marked the provision of the Lord for spiritual security and life for His people. The feast was spiritually and prophetically fulfilled at Calvary by Christ when His sacrifice was the provision of deliverance and life for all who would confess their sins and turn unto Him.

The Feast of Weeks came the day after the passing of seven weeks into the growing season. The plants were beginning to show their first fruits, i.e., buds were coming out that would eventually become fruits of the harvest. The promise of this feast was that in between seedtime and harvest, God would supply exactly what would be needed to bring to past the eventual harvest. Spiritually, God supplies what the believer needs to remain faithful to the Lord all the way to the end. The Day of Pentecost was to be the prophetic fulfillment of the Feast of Weeks. The Feast Weeks came to be called Pentecost which meant, fiftieth day (seven weeks of days plus one). Joel 2 is about the fulfillment of Pentecost in the lives of God's people through the Holy Spirit.

The Feast of Booths was observed when the crops were harvested and brought into storage places or "booths." The endtime judgment will be the harvest observance of the Lord. Joel 2 refers to the prophetic fulfillment of this time in God's plan when it later referred to the "terrible day of the Lord" (2:31).

B. Be Not Afraid-Do Not Lose Heart

The command to not be afraid is repeated in Joel 2:22. Revival is the affirmation that no matter what the condition of my life may look like, the Lord is still faithful and will sustain me. Revival is a time of rejoicing and confidence building through the Spirit. The work which God has begun in me, He will bring it to completion. Just as verse 22 describes the result of God's provision, i.e., the abundance of fruit, God promises a harvest in us.

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C. The Harvest Can be Seen and is Happening

A major part of the power of verse 22 is that a work already in progress is described. That is, even though there were no crops to be seen, God was still bringing about His work. The truth brought about by revival is that we can experience the reviving of the Spirit even though the visible results of God's work may not yet be apparent.

III. Provision of Revival Harvest 2:23-26

A. Rain Before and After Pentecost 2:23

The rain in verse 23 represents the provision of the Spirit of the Lord. The former rain is the supply of the Spirit before calamity comes. The latter rain is the supply of the Spirit in the midst of and after destruction comes. The mistake many Spirit-filled believers make is to think that the Holy Spirit guarantees that there will never be any problems or that because problems come the Spirit has forsaken us. Revival reminds us that the Spirit is still with us, especially in the midst of trial. The latter rain message of the Spirit is that God is still working by His Spirit, in spite of what is happening around us.

B. Storehouse Full 2:24

The fullness of the Spirit is represented by the fullness of the storehouse in verse 24. Whereas the circumstances or relationships of life may look like there is nothing, the message of the reviving of the Spirit is that God has in fact prepared for us a full storehouse. Notice that the circumstances do not dictate the fullness of the storehouse. The focus is upon what the Spirit of God is doing within us, assuring us of God's provision. The world skeptically says the hope of the Spirit is fanciful, but the Spirit of the Lord fills the believer with the reality of God's work. The work of the Spirit is always in fullness. Just as the Word of God can never fail, the Spirit of the Lord is always directed toward fullness.

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C. Restoration 2:25

Revival means the reversal of the enemies of God's work and the restoration of what the enemy has taken away. God not only brings to pass fullness and fruitfulness in our lives, but he returns what was previously lost. Revival is an appropriate term for the work of the Spirit because it represents bringing again ("re-") the life ("-vive") that had been taken away.

D. Nourishment 2:26a

Revival is to be fed by God. The Spirit of the Lord gives us what we could receive in no other way. The believer needs the revival of the Spirit just as much as one needs physical nourishment. Without the renewing brought by physical food, the body would die. In the same way, after the wear and tear of living in a lost world has taken its toll upon us spiritually, we need the reviving of the Spirit to nourish us spiritually for spiritual life.

E. Praise 2:26b

At the heart of the reviving of the power of the Spirit is the renewal of the voice of praise. Many times the trials and circumstances of life and relationships rob us of our desire to praise. However, the work of the Spirit within us brings forth an eruption of praise. The praise is not our own doing but a work originating from the Spirit of the Lord. Praise does not begin with what we say but with what the Spirit is doing in us.

F. No Shame 2:26c

Shame is the terrible result of the work of the enemy. The land was barren and the lives of the people were destitute. They had been left with little hope for the future. In the same manner, the enemy of our souls wants to strip us of all decency and livelihood. He wants to render us hopeless and afraid. The mighty promise of the Spirit is that the Spirit of the Lord revives us so that we will not be left alone, helpless or ashamed. God's Spirit assures us that God is still with us, we are not alone.

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IV. Presence of the Lord of the Harvest 2:27

A. Presence

The reviving of the Spirit brings the presence of God to us. "I am in the midst" is fulfilled when in verse 28 the Lord declares that He would pour out of His own Spirit upon and into those who would receive His Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord is not a thing but God Himself in us. When we experience the Spirit of the Lord, we experience the assurance that God is in us, bringing to pass the work which He began in us.

B. Power

The work of the reviving of the Spirit assures us that God will do what no one or anything else can do. When we are revived by the Spirit we come to know once again that God is in control and nothing can threaten that control. The Spirit applies the work of God to us individually as well as corporately. That is, the Spirit assures us that God is indeed our God, working in our behalf. He loves us and cares for us, bringing life where death had once been.

C. Promise

The promise of the Spirit has been highlighted many times when we have looked at Joel 2:28-32, the passage that Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost. Joel 2:21-27 tells us that the promise of the Spirit is a promise of revival. Verses 21-27 describe the move from desolation to life. The Spirit is indeed poured out (vs. 28-32) but especially in places and lives just like the condition of Judah at the time of Joel. The land was lost and the crop obliterated. But, Praise the Lord, the Spirit that is poured out is a reviving, bringing to life again, Spirit. When we experience the filling of the Spirit of God we experience the renewing of life. The Spirit of God is a reviving Spirit.

Notes

Revival of Faith

Hebrews 10-12

Notes

Outline

- I. Step One: The Agenda of Faith 10:21-23
- II. Step Two: The Living God of Faith 10:30-39
- III. Step Three: Heaven is the Goal 10:32-11:40
- IV. Step Four: The Good Report More than Receiving
11:1-40
- V. Step Five: A Better Thing 11:13-12:24
- VI. Process: The Endtime Revival of Faith 12:1-29
 - A. Jesus Our Example 12:1-4
 - B. Changed by Chastisement 12:5-17
 - C. Moved at the Mountain 12:18-23
 - D. Unmoved at the Utterance 12:24-27
 - E. Receiving Revival (vs. "Making it Happen")
12:28-29

Introduction

The heart of the work of God in revival is in our faith. By faith God applies His work in our life. The work of faith is a reviving work, especially during the final days leading up to the fulfillment of God's endtime plan. Faith is critical for revival because if the enemy can remove faith, not only is the condition of the heart at stake but also the eternal destiny of the soul.

Of all the elements mentioned thus far in this study that are critical in revival, faith is summarily important because of the finality of faith. In our faith in God resides our eternal destiny. Ultimately, it is the condition of our faith that will determine where we will spend eternity. The power of a revival of faith lies in the eternal dimensions of faith. Faith is important for living but especially for living with the Lord in eternity.

True revival penetrates the darkness of the world and eternity when faith is revived. Hebrews 10-12 unveils the manner in which God revives our faith. The result is an immovable Christian for now and eternity.

I. Step One: The Agenda of Faith 10:21-23

The revival of faith means that we draw closer to Christ. The work of Christ has been the topic of the book of Hebrews thus far. Now the book draws to a conclusion by emphasizing that the believer must draw ever closer to Christ and His work. This drawing closer occurs through the process of faith. That process has at its core endurance. The chapters that follow will describe the testing of faith. The cultivation of faith is guaranteed by Christ's work. Because of what Christ has already done, our faith is and will continue to increase. The focus of the believer must be upon maintaining one's faith, not allowing the tests and trials of life to erode or compromise one's faith.

II. Step Two: The Living God of Faith 10:30-39

At the heart of faith is the God who has transformed our heart. God is the focus of our faith, not the works of God, not teaching about God, not even the testimonies of God. Faith must be built upon God Himself. A revival of faith begins with a renewed focus upon the God of our faith. A focus on faith is exactly that, not a focus upon an emotion, a commitment, a hope. More than what we think, feel or even confess, our faith is built upon the living God.

The latter part of chapter 10 calls the believer to focus upon God, to call Him to one's remembrance, to not allow any distraction, discouragement or despairing relationship to deter us from determined faith in God Himself. At the heart of faith is the task of endurance. While many feel that revival is the increase of our faith, revival is actually the endurance of our faith. Even the faith of a mustard seed is sufficient to move with the heart of God. The amount of our faith is not nearly as much at stake as the perseverance of our faith. The faith we receive from God is sufficient. The key is to the promises is patience (v. 36), not productivity. The productivity will come because of the power of faith, we must be patient.

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III. Step Three: Heaven is the Goal 10:32-11:40

Heaven is the greatest goal of the persevering faith that the revival of God brings us. Over and over again this passage describes heaven as the goal of:

- *our endurance 10:34
- *the will of God in our patience 10:36
- *the result of our salvation 10:38-39
- *Abraham 11:10
- *the ancient patriarchs 11:14
- *those who desire the best of God 11:16
- *God's preparation for the saints 11:16
- *the saints before Christ 11:39
- *the saints since the coming of Christ 12:22

God gives us a faith from out of this world so that we may endure through this world and receive a reward that is untouched by this world, heaven.

IV. Step Four: The Good Report More than Receiving 11:1-40

The heart of the revival process of faith is the "good report" (v. 2) of God. In verses 1-2 faith is defined and the climax of the definition is the good report. The language is the terminology of a legal proceeding. "Substance" was a term which meant, "evidence." Certainly faith is the evidence that we bring to present our case in the courtroom of life. "Evidence" was a term which meant, "the piece of evidence that wins the case." Assuredly, faith applies the evidence that wins the case for us in the courtroom of God's judgement. However, "good report" was the verdict and sentence brought by the judge. Powerfully, faith brings us in relationship with God the Almighty so that our verdict is mercy and our sentence is right relationship with God. Because of our faith, we obtain a good report with God. People "use" faith to bring things, but nothing we receive is as important as the good report of the verdict of innocence and the sentence of righteous relationship. The "good report" is repeated:

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- *"word of God" at creation v. 3
- *"witness" and "testimony" for Abel v. 4
- *"testimony" for Enoch v. 5
- *"heir of righteousness" for Noah v. 7
- *"inheritance" for Abraham v. 8
- *"promise" for Sara v. 11

The good report is more important than receiving something for our faith. Many use faith to receive answers to prayer. However, the possession of the good report with God is more important than anything received because of faith. Verse 13 reports that many had died "not having received the promises." They still believed and sought God for the answer to many things. Many experienced great tragedy, but the good report was the key to their faith (v. 39).

They had the right perspective that whether they received what they sought for in faith, the good report with God was the most important part of their faith. As a result of "good report" faith, God was not ashamed of those saints (v. 16). The revival of faith means a repurposing of our faith to what is really important first of all, right relationship with God, the good report of pleasing the Heavenly Father.

V. Step Five: A Better Thing 11:13-12:29

The measure of the revival of faith today is that through Christ we have an even greater report before the Heavenly Father and thereby an even greater faith. The revival of faith today is even more powerful than that experienced by the saints before Christ's first coming. God has provided in Christ a "better" faith for us (v. 40).

VI. Process: The Endtime Revival of Faith 12:1-29

A. Jesus Our Example 12:1-4

The revival, life-giving faith we have today is

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based upon Christ and Christ alone. The writer shared the principle that our faith is shaped by the object of our attention. Our faith begins with Christ, is defined by Christ ("author" and "finisher" in v. 2) and is sustained through our attention on Christ. That is why verse 2 exhorts the believer to "look unto," study, intently focus upon Jesus.

The revival of faith is sustained by the perseverance of Christ. Having stated in chapter 10 that the task of endtime revival faith was endurance and patience, the call is now to look to the One who makes faith-endurance possible, Christ. He endured the cross not just for our sakes but to shape our faith. In the process of revival faith, our faith is molded by the shape of the cross. Faith that seeks only to get and not to change to His image is not revival faith. But true faith that looks to Jesus and asks, "How can I be like the Christ of the cross?" That is life transforming, revival giving faith.

B. Changed by Chastisement 12:5-17

Change must be part of our faith. Faith does not make us more of who we are or who we would like to be. Reviving faith makes us change according to who He is. The process of change is like a father who changes his children through chastisement. Change is not just to what we must become but away from what we should not be. The change from that which is not of Christ is the first step and it is a painful step. Pulling away from the grasp of sin is like having chastisement applied when we want to persist in our own ways. The Heavenly Father knows how we must change in order to have the faith of revival and He will bring chastisement to pull us away from those areas that we need to change.

C. Moved at the Mountain 12:18-23

Once we have by faith moved away from the things that hinder our faith, we move to the place where we are transformed into true revival faith. The place of transformation is a place created by the awesome presence and power of God. The closest description of the dimension of the change that must take place by faith in us was Mt. Sinai, where Moses heard and received from God.

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The magnitude of revival faith is nearly like scaling Mt. Sinai, except much greater. At Mt. Sinai, Moses and the nation experienced the overwhelming presence of God. God blackened the sky and shook the earth. His power was so great that the people were awe struck. In the same way, revival faith is not something that we casually ask for and then apply at our own discretion and convenience. Rather, revival faith is something that God surrounds and overwhelms us with so that we know that we possess something that we could never create and that we could never predict. Faith in God comes from God in a way that only God receives the glory.

D. Unmoved at the Utterance 12:24-27

The good report is still the heart of faith, but now through Christ the good report thunders with God's power and judgment. We receive the good report through Christ but we must realize that the same God that receives us through His judgment will separate everything that is not according to His will and ways. Faith involves endurance and transformation so that the good report of Christ will consume us and be applied to our lives.

The good report comes through the blood of Christ. The blood of Christ is so powerful that it gives us a faith that is more powerful than this world. Just as faith formed the world through the Word of God (11:3), faith will transform the world through the Word of Christ's blood. Our faith prepares us for that process. Revival faith not only gives us power over the world, but it gives us endurance when everything in this world is shaken away. In the process of revival faith, God uses what we endure to shake loose in us what will keep us from receiving the good report.

E. Receiving Revival (vs. "Making it Happen") 12:28-29

Revival faith comes to us, we do not produce it. God uses the things that we persevere in order to bring to us and form within us enduring faith. We cannot create our own faith. Words we say, the belief we hold in our heart and the fellowship we maintain only enhances the faith that God has already given us.

Notes