



sermon study summary

Reclaiming the Word

INTRODUCTION

Through revival, both individual and corporate, God restores our spiritual life, bringing us to a deeper commitment in our walk with Him. Both the Old and New Testaments provide us with examples of those who walked away from God and then, through revival, return to Him.

Revivals restore the authority of God's Word among His people. 'Reclaiming the Word' is vital to the life of the Church. We must be doers, not only readers/hearers, of the Word.

In the book of Chronicles there were prolonged seasons of spiritual dryness and decline. God's people were living in sin, indulging in evil deeds and had turned their backs on Him. Finally, one person named Josiah sought God, discovered and obeyed God's Word, and revival arose in the land.

Every individual can be the agent of change if we seek the Lord with all our heart. No matter what our family background, we can be catalysts in God's hands, bringing about spiritual transformation in our families, at school, work, or even a church community which has lost its spiritual fervor. God works through us when we open our hearts to Him. Many revivals, many beginning with young people, contributed significantly to worldwide missions. Throughout Church history, we see spiritual decline when God's Word is neglected and its authority questioned. Settling for an experiential Christianity apart from His Word does not last. Direct engagement with God's Word of timeless truths is a pre-cursor for revival, when the Bible comes alive once more and is no longer 'an old book written centuries ago'. It is essential that we reclaim the Bible as God's Living Word, through which God speaks to our souls.

God's Word casts light and exposes sin in the deepest recesses of our hearts. Unconditional obedience to the Word of God is a mark of genuine revival. In the events of the Exodus, God redeemed the Israelites through the blood of the Passover Lamb. In the New Testament, the redemptive nature of Jesus' death is called a 'Passover sacrifice'. Jesus' death on the cross served as the ultimate penalty for our sins. When we repent and accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we are forgiven and will have eternal life with Him.

Josiah and John Wesley, each in their own generation, affirmed the centrality of God's Word: they saw God's grace and mercy revealed in His Word and reclaimed it! One person today who honors God's Word and lives by the principles of the Bible can have an incredible impact in our world. Revivals impact the spiritual trajectory and accomplish God's purpose for that generation; each generation must take ownership in seeking revival and regaining a restoration of our connection with God.

Will you be the one person willing to obey God and impact our world with a revival? Let's begin by Reclaiming the Word, returning to the message of grace, and pointing people back to God by showing them His deep and unconditional love expressed through the cross of Christ.



sermon study guide

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What is a positive trait you've seen passed down through your family? What tends to be a negative trait?
2. Where in the cycle of decline and revival is the church now? Discuss some of the signs that show this to be true.

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read 2 Chronicles 33:21-22

3. What words would you use to describe the spiritual atmosphere of Israel previous to Josiah's reign?

Read 2 Chronicles 34:1-3, 18-19, 29-31, 33

4. What was the progression of Josiah's personal revival? How did this lead to national revival?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Reclaiming God's Word was key to revival in Josiah's time. What is the difference between reading the Bible and becoming wholehearted 'doers' of the Bible?
6. Pastor Ashwin said, "We know we need revival when the gospel no longer moves us to tears, when we lose sight of the power of the Cross." What has been your heart response to the gospel lately? How can you keep from losing the gospel's profound meaning?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Take a moment to allow the Lord to do a deep work in you so you are in awe of your salvation. Then ask Him to give you the power to share this message with the world.

THE WORD (NIV)

2 Chronicles 33:21-22

Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. 22 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon worshiped and offered sacrifices to all the idols Manasseh had made.

34:1-3

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. 2 He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and followed the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left. In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David.

34:18-19

18 Then Shaphan the secretary informed the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king. 19 When the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his robes.

34:29-31, 33

29 Then the king called together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30 He went up to the temple of the LORD with the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites—all the people from the least to the greatest. He read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant, which had been found in the temple of the LORD. 31 The king stood by his pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the LORD—to follow the LORD and keep his commands, statutes and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book.

33 Josiah removed all the detestable idols from all the territory belonging to the Israelites, and he had all who were present in Israel serve the LORD their God. As long as he lived, they did not fail to follow the LORD, the God of their ancestors.