

Quickened by the Word

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

GRACE PUBLICATIONS
PO. BOX 18715
BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Printed in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

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From a message preached on January 10, 1988

Tape #3875

Grace Publications is a ministry of
Greater Grace World Outreach, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

Revival means to be quickened, refreshed, renewed, to be constantly filled with the Spirit, and to have God's Word as the norm and standard for your mental attitude, emotional response, confession, and behavior.

Through the grace of Almighty God, it is possible for anything to happen as the Holy Spirit of God visits each heart during this time. We are not using the usual textbooks for revival nor are we praying that God would send revival. That has been way overworked, it is often misunderstood, and it doesn't equate to the biblical premise for what the word "revival" means, generally speaking, in the Scriptures.

What Jesus Christ has done and who Jesus Christ is—being revealed in us and to us, being experienced by us, and being expressed through us—that's revival. What Jesus Christ has done for us is experienced by grace through faith according to the Word of God through the humil-

ity of the Cross. Many messages on humility preceded this series on revival, and not by accident nor coincidence, because God revives the contrite and humble heart and quickens us according to the Word of God as it is engrafted through meekness (James 1:21).

Satan wants Christians to be rooted and grounded in their circumstances, in their feelings, and in their knowledge, but without renewal, refreshment, and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. Satan desires that we become familiar with the sacred.

For that reason, once a child of God has had much tribulation, and that tribulation works experience, then the Holy Spirit quickens the Word of God to his heart. That experience causes him to be quickened and renewed for the present circumstances that he faces. He takes seriously all the subjects that relate to the Word of God. So the Word of God says, "Quicken thou me according to thy word" (Psalm 119:154). That is our very special premise for the meaning that is brought out in this booklet.

Chapter One

GODLY MOTIVATIONS FOR THOUGHTS AND WORDS

“And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

“For we were bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem” (Ezra 9:8-9).

Now that particular verse says, “To give us a reviving, to revive us while we are in a little bondage and to revive us out of bondage.” That’s what revival does.

I could be facing all kinds of mountains and walking before God in my heart and no one but

God might know it (Genesis 17:1). And the Word of God will be spoken by the Holy Spirit: "The flesh profiteth nothing but the words that God speaks, they are spirit and they are life."

Suddenly, the Word is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, and it pierces even to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and the soul and spirit, and becomes a critic of the motives of the heart.

One of the things that characterizes revival is having godly motivations for thoughts and for words. Constrained by the love of God (2 Corinthians 5:14), I am motivated to think in the relaxed attitude of God's love. Motivation in the quickening process of God is always an indication of the source of my life and the motives of my heart.

Let me say it again. Motivation is always an indication of the source of my life and the motives of my heart.

What can revival mean for you where you're living, or for me where I'm living? What can it really mean to be quickened immediately? It means that we don't lapse into serving God in the flesh. Instead, we serve God with knowledge through the flesh.

When Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians,

he said, “Are you foolish? You started out in the Spirit. Can you make yourself perfect in the flesh, you foolish Galatians? You started out in the Spirit through faith. Now can you make yourself perfect or mature through the energy of the flesh? No, you cannot, you foolish Galatians.”

And this is where so much of Christianity stands: Saved by grace through faith, starting out properly with God, knowing that Jesus did everything, and that they received Him as a Person. Then suddenly, a problem arises in the family. Difficulties enter into the marriage—relationships get challenged. Security becomes a serious problem because of finances. Physical afflictions come upon people. Having started out in the Spirit, they use the same Scriptures that they had previously used to try to solve the problem in the flesh. They are not quickened.

Often, someone will have an affliction and it is not of God. They were quickened but they’re not quickened now. They’ve been delivered from depression, but they stopped being quickened. They’ve been delivered from pride but stopped being quickened. They’ve been delivered from lust, but then they stopped being quickened.

Any time we're not revived, renewed, refreshed, and quickened exactly according to the Word and the filling of the Spirit, we will make cracks—even against the Word—and treat it with a familiar spirit. Revival is so necessary.

His Unfailing Love and His Abiding Loyalty

Revival is something that we experience by grace through faith in the Word of God. The first thing we must understand is God's unfailing love and His beautiful loyalty to every child of God.

The Ninevites were pagans. They were not under a covenant with God. Remember that. And Jonah did not want them to repent. So, in the second verse of the fourth chapter he said, "The reason I don't want to preach to them" (he finally revealed his heart) "is because I know that you are a gracious God. You are longsuffering, You are slow to anger, and You are a God of lovingkindness and mercy."

Can you imagine it? Jonah did not want to preach to these heathens who were not a covenant people. And the reason he did not want to proclaim the truth to these people is that he did not want them to repent. He knew that if they even so much as looked to heaven, they would

be forgiven.

See it for yourself: “And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.”

What a reason to backslide!

We have heard they made a sport in Nineveh of flaying the skin of small children and babies. Spectators cheered for those who did it. They were a vicious, wicked, vile, terrible people. Some people feel that Jonah was so patriotic that he pictured them saying, “We’ll accept God,” as they became saved—only to backslide and hurt Israel. That seems to be the consensus as to why he didn’t trust in their repentance.

But revival means to know God’s character, to experience God’s nature, to live in God’s words. Revival means to accept God’s promises. Revival means to keep being filled with God’s Spirit. And revival means knowing how to be quickened.

I want you to notice in this principle of revival, how very beautiful and special this unfailing love of God is—this absolute love which just

will not quit. It will not stop reaching toward anyone who responds by grace through faith. Even though the Ninevites were not a covenant people, Jonah knew that God would give them grace and mercy for any type of response at all as they believed upon Him. This is the unfailing love of God.

Psalm 89:1 says, "I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever." I will sing and show His kindness throughout all generations. I will sing of His unfailing love, His unfailing friendship, His unfaltering forgiveness.

Forever and ever, I will show forth His mercies.

Then revival centers around the precious Word of God. As we consider the Word of God, we will consistently see this. "I am He that speaketh," God says (Isaiah 52:6). "Let it be according to My word" (Isaiah 8:20).

In John 4:50, the man believed the word and his son was healed, perhaps thirty miles away. He believed the word. That is revival. He was renewed by the words spoken. "I am He that speaketh." He believed the word.

2 Corinthians 4:13b says, "we also believe, and therefore speak." One man said to Jesus, "You just say the word," and Jesus spoke the

word, and he was healed.

Now that's what revival is all about! Just hearing God speak the Word, believing it, and becoming revived, refreshed, renewed through simple childlike faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapter Two

WHO AM I?

Satan hates to see changes in the hearts and lives of God's people. Revival means to be constantly and progressively changed in the process of a response, through the process of a frame of reference, in the process of life, through the circumstances that face us. Satan despises this principle.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty—liberty to lay down our lives; liberty through the Spirit to love with unfailing love. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." "Follow" in Psalm 23, speaks of relentless pursuit. Surely, divine goodness and mercy shall make their relentless pursuit all the days of my life.

That was a prayer of affirmation by David in the Absalom revolution. He trusted God's character. He trusted God's name. He was fellowshiping with God's Spirit. David was exercised

with love for his son. But in the midst of it all, he was revived. In that situation David said, “The LORD is shepherding me, and I shall not want any thing.”

You see, he was being revived in the midst of a very difficult trial. What do you think revived him? The Word of God. In that case, the inspired Word of God. We read it today from the Scriptures, the full canon of Scriptures, and it’s still the inspired Word of God, despite what the liberals say. It’s all true.

Revival! David was refreshed. He was quickened. And he said, “Surely divine goodness and unfailing love will relentlessly pursue after me all the days.” All the days, not some days. That’s revival.

So, I take that verse and I walk along, and Satan comes against me with demons, and all kinds of things happen, and that verse comes to me. “Surely divine goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life”—relentlessly, a pursuit of God—“and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

This is what revival is. Revival is being quickened according to God’s precious Word.

Think with me. When you called upon Jesus Christ to save you, the moment you believed on

Jesus Christ, you were quickened by the fact that you were saved. Isn't that strange? At least I didn't have any great feelings. I just had two Narragansett ales—only two—and I was arguing with my brother about baseball. My first wife, who went home to be with the Lord, said she got saved, and I said, "Big deal. Aren't you really proud of that?" It was terrible. And she said, "I don't care if you believe it or not. I'm saved and I'm going to heaven if I die." And then she walked away.

I looked at my brother and I said, "Well, look at that. We've really got the holy one in the house tonight." And within an hour I was in the living room, in our little room asking Christ to be my Savior. I just didn't want her to have anything I didn't have. I simply said, "Lord, I know I'm a sinner. I cannot save myself. I believe You died, shed Your blood, were buried, rose again, and went to heaven, and You're coming back. The Bible says it, and I really believe."

Now, I didn't have an experience like some of you. You've got to remember this. Some walked through the door, some crawled through, some jumped through, some raced through, some turned somersaults, but the important thing is to get through the door tonight. Some of

you had every experience in the book. You got every gift, but you're not one bit more saved than I am.

“For by grace are you saved by faith, and not of yourself. It's a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast.” I got saved by grace through faith. In Romans 11:6, if grace isn't all grace, then it's not grace at all—just in case you forget that every once in a while because you're not revived and quickened by the truth.

I didn't really appreciate the great thing that God had done until I began to study the Scriptures and realized who I was compared to who He is—how precious He is and what a sinner I am. But then I understood the words of this song:

When I think of how He came
so far from glory,
came to dwell among the lonely such as I,
to suffer shame in such disgrace,
and on Calvary take my place.
Then I asked myself the question
Who am I?
Who am I that the King
would bleed and die for?
Who am I that He would pray

‘not my will, thine, Lord’?
The answer I may never know
why He ever loved me so.
And to the old rugged Cross
He’ll go for who am I?”

A while after I got saved, I realized what Jesus did, and then it began to enter deeply into my heart, and I understood the doctrine of the Word.

In Isaiah 53:3, Christ is despised as a man of sorrows and rejected of men. In Job 25:6, Job said he was a worm. And Jesus Christ, identifying with us, said, “He was a worm, and no man” (Psalm 22:6a). He was perfect but in identifying with us. Jesus bore our own sins in His body on a tree, paid for every personal sin, was buried and rose again (1 Peter 2:24).

I’ve seen some of my loved ones go through so much, and you have too, and they’re beautiful people, and I love them. But you always ask the question, “Who am I that I accepted Christ?”

“Who am I that the King
would bleed and die for?
Who am I that He would pray
‘Not my will, thine, Lord’?”

The answer I may never know
why He ever loved me so.
And to the old rugged Cross He goes,
for who am I?

When I'm reminded of His words,
'I'll leave you never. Just be true
and I'll give you a life forever.'
I wonder what I could have done
to deserve God's only Son
to fight my battles until they're won,
for who am I?

The answer I may never know
why He ever loved me so.
And to the old rugged He goes,
for who am I?"

Chapter Three

LIVE LIKE A KING

I said, “Quicken me. I don’t know how to say it to You, and I’m even afraid to, but quicken me. Just quicken me. Give me a hunger and thirst after righteousness. Help me to follow You and just work grace and mercy and love in my life. Help me to know You not after the flesh. Help me to serve You not in the energy of Adam. I’m just a creature, fallen and depraved. You’re everything! Quicken me.”

For salvation, that’s the whole thing. Think of it with me. When you believed in Christ, when I believed on Christ, He bore every personal sin I will ever commit. If we sin now, we must repent and forsake it. It grieves the Spirit. It quenches the Spirit. And if we don’t accept recovery, there’ll be chastisement through grace.

But when you confessed your sins to God, do you know what happened? He remembered them no more. He removed them as far as the

east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). But He crowned you with unfailing love—He crowned you. Do you know who gets crowned? Kings. You know what a king is in the original language? Someone who can. He crowned you as a king (Revelation 1:6), made you kings and priests unto God and washed you from your sins in His own precious blood. You see, He crowned you with unfailing love as a king who can right now. That's what revival is.

In Micah 7:18-19, He passes by your transgressions. Psalm 103:13 says that God Almighty pities you as the father pities a child. In Isaiah 44:22, He redeems us. He redeems us forever.

Believe and Know

What is revival? It's believing that you're saved. It's knowing that you are saved, that your sins are forgiven and forgotten, that God remembers them no more. It's knowing He can't impute sin to you. It's knowing that if you examine yourself, if you'll recover, He won't even chastise you after you've failed.

Still, so many people don't live in revival, my dear friends. Let me illustrate it.

You failed. You sin. And the Bible says, "If we confess our sins (homologeo, name them), He

is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” Then it says, “And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” But that’s not all.

Isaiah 43:25 is an Old Testament recovery verse: “I, even I, have blotted out your transgressions.” “I, even I”—God Almighty who is everywhere present, who has all knowledge and all power—“I, even I, have blotted out your transgressions.”

The next part of the verse says this: “For My name’s sake. Because of My unfailing love. Because I’m the Father of mercies. Because I’m the God of all grace. I, even I, the One that has all knowledge, the One that’s everywhere present, the One that has all power. I, even I, have blotted out all your transgressions for My name’s sake because I’m unfailing love, and My justice was satisfied through My Son.”

The next thing that God says is so precious. Oh, listen to what He says: “And I cannot remember your sins.” It’s in your Bible.

That doesn’t tell me to go out and sin over and over. But the righteous fall seven times a day and get up and the wicked fall and stay in the mischief. Revival is for salvation, and revival is for recovery. It means to be quickened with no condemnation, with no guilt, with no reflections

of negativity, with no self-intimidation, with no indictment.

It means to go on and serve this God who said, "I, even I, have blotted out your transgressions as a thick cloud, and I remember not your sins. And I did it for My name's sake. I'm everywhere present. I'm all powerful. I'm Almighty God. But I did it. I did it." And that's what being quickened is.

Revival means to be quickened by the everlasting consolation of God's unfailing name. He said, "I did it for My name's sake." And He said, "I've crowned you with mercy. I've crowned you with grace. I've crowned you with lovingkindness. I've crowned you with unfailing love. I've crowned you as a king who can do it." And so in Romans 8:37, we can say, "We are more than conquerors through him that loves us."

CONCLUSION

God will revive our hearts. We can run and not get weary. We can walk and not faint. Revival is here. That means the Word of God is being quickened. Jesus Christ is being revealed to us, through us, and by us, by His spirit. These are great days, and God is so good.

Think with me. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted." I love that. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God for Christ's sake forgave you."

Do you know why we should totally forgive and forget one another's transgressions? Because God did it for us. Do you know why we forgive each other just the way God did and never bring it up? Because God did that for us. That's revival.

God did it for Christ's sake, and I forgive you for Christ's sake, and you forgive me and you forgive each other for Christ's sake because God forgave you for Christ's sake. It's so simple.

That's revival—being renewed, refreshed, quickened, transformed, and changed from glory to glory—being changed.

When you're being changed, Tuesday is sweet, Wednesday is sweeter, Thursday is sweeter, and Friday yet sweeter. The circumstances may not be, but the love of God motivates us, and the Word of God is resting in our hearts. It's all because we're being changed.

As we look into the Word, the Spirit changes us. You see, as we go from glory to glory, we are changed by the Spirit of God. Christianity is not wearisome. It's not boring.

Who am I? Nobody. Nothing but a worm in myself—but in Jesus Christ I'm a new creature and a saint. I'm a member of the royal family. I'm a king. I'm a priest. I'm more than a conqueror. God causes me to triumph.

As God's people, we are changed. This is the beautiful thing about revival. The Word says it, we read it, then we humble ourselves before God, and He revives us (Isaiah 57:15). He quickens us, and we're changed into a new, reflected glory—or attribute of the nature of Jesus Christ Himself—on the inside.

It is so beautiful to be quickened by the Word of God.