



## The Heart of Revival

Text: Acts 3:19; Jeremiah 3:12-13

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1. When you hear the word “revival”, what comes to mind? Have you ever prayed for revival? Proverbs 29:18 speaks of vision, and without vision, the people perish. How will we know if a revival was happening, if we do not know what it looks like? Why is it important that we as believers pray for revival?
2. Read Matthew 6:9-13.
  - a. What are your dreams? What do you pray for most often and most fervently?
  - b. What did Jesus teach us to pray for?
  - c. What connection between repentance and revival do you see in The Lord’s Prayer?
  - d. How can we align our heart’s desires more with God’s desires?
3. Read John 16:7-15.
  - a. How does Jesus describe the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit?
  - b. What does the ministry of the Holy Spirit include?
  - c. Luann mention three means through which the Holy Spirit often does his work: corporate worship, the bible, and Christian community. (See Proverbs 27:17, Ephesians 5:18-21, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, and Hebrews 10:24-25) Which of these do you most regularly engage in? Give an example of spiritual growth you have seen in your life because of the Holy Spirit working through that particular means.
  - d. Which do you need to (re)commit yourself to, and what would that look like?
4. Read 1 John 1:5-2:2.
  - a. Do you struggle with identifying sin in your life? (See Study Deeper)
  - b. When you are hesitant to confess and repent, either to God or to others, what might be the root cause? Is it pride? Is it fear?
  - c. What encouragements does John give to confess our sin and repent? What benefits do we receive when we do?
  - d. How does the gospel, as we see in these verses, break down the walls of pride and fear?
  - e. If you are willing, share what God was calling you to confess and repent during prayer time. What are you asking God to free you from or change in you? How can others in the groups help and support you?

Challenge: Do you have a revived heart to begin revival? If you are honest, would you say that you have are hungry, excited, and passionate about pursuing God? Or has your faith become more complacent or comfortable? Revival in our homes, relationships, community, city, nation, and world, starts with us. Do you need to first start with prayer for revival in your own faith?

Prayer: Prayer of the Convicting Spirit

*Thou blessed spirit, author of all comfort and grace,  
Come, work repentance in my soul;  
Represent sin to me in its odious colors that  
I may hate it;  
Melt my heart by the majesty and mercy of God;  
Show me my ruined self and the help there is in him;  
Teach me to behold my Creator, his ability to save,  
his arms outstretched,  
his heart big for me.*

*May I confide in his power and love,  
commit my soul to him without reserve,  
bear his image, observe his laws,  
pursue his service,  
and be through time and eternity  
a monument to the efficacy of his grace,  
a trophy of his victory.*

*Make me willing to be saved in his way,  
perceiving nothing in myself, but all in Jesus:  
Help me not only to receive him but  
to walk in him,  
depend upon him,  
commune with him,  
be conformed to him,  
follow him,  
imperfect, but still pressing forward,  
not complaining of labour, but valuing rest,  
not murmuring under trials, but thankful  
for my state.*

*Give me that faith which is the means of salvation,  
and the principle and medium of all godliness;  
May I be saved by grace through faith,  
live by faith,  
feel the joy of faith,  
do the work of faith.*

*Perceiving nothing in myself, may I find in Christ  
wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption.*

(Prayer one of Luann's favorite prayer books -Valley of Vision, Puritan Prayers and Devotions)

# STUDY DEEPER

## **Know Your Sin**

By Jonathan Dodson, Gospel-Centered Discipleship

In Gospel-Centered Discipleship, Jonathan Dodson calls Christians to fight their sin. To put them to death. He recommends not going solo, but helping one another in small communities that he coins fight clubs. Fighting sin requires effort and strategy. The first of the three part strategy he proposes is to know your sin. We can know our sin by asking three questions: What, When, and Why?

### **What sins?**

Before we can fight our sin, we must know what sins are currently present in our lives. An unknown opponent is difficult to defeat. Knowing our sin requires familiarity with our particular temptations, areas where we are prone to sin. These temptations and sins may be visible or invisible, as obvious as anger or as subtle as self-pity. Begin by prayerfully reflecting on your life. Remember, you are God's child, not his project. He knows you and loves you enough to show you your sin. Talk to him about your struggles; ask him to reveal your sins and convict you of them (Ps. 139:23–24; John 16:8).

Another way to get at the what is to ask your fight club partners point out sins they see in your life. Very often, we fail to see our own weaknesses. A loving community can help us by holding up the mirror of God's Word so that we can see ourselves more clearly. While community is helpful, the Word is powerful, sharper than any sword, dividing between things visible and invisible, judging the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12). Use God's Word as a mirror to expose sin and as a sword to convict. Reading through James with my fight club recently helped us grasp our deep need for wisdom embracing God's grace agenda to change us in trial and suffering. Minister to one another with God's Word, not mere opinion. You can know your sin by praying, discussing, and reading the Word in community with a humble, teachable heart.

### **When are you tempted to sin?**

Once you have identified the what, it is important to consider the when. When are you tempted to sin? If we don't think about the when, sin will sneak up on us. Consider the circumstances that surround your sin, where and when you find yourself tempted. Identify your sins and the circumstances of temptation. For example:

Do you find yourself tempted to vanity or self-pity when lingering in front of the mirror?

Does sexual lust or despair creep in on late, lonely nights watching TV?

Are you prone to pride when you succeed or receive a compliment?

Are you easily angered in traffic or while waiting in line?

## **Why do you sin?**

Finally, the critical question to ask in knowing our sin is why? The why question is important because it gets to the motivation behind our sin; it addresses the heart. No one ever sins out of duty. We all sin because we want to, because our hearts long for something. If we don't address the motivational issues behind our sin, we will only treat it superficially, adjusting our behavior, not our hearts. God doesn't want mere behavioral adjustment; he wants affectionate obedience!

To uncover your motivation, ask yourself why you gravitate to certain sins.

What do you believe they will do for you?

What is your heart longing for?

What are you desiring or valuing most when you sin in a particular area?

Using the examples above, we may sin because we desire worth, companionship, peace, confidence, or convenience. These longings are not inherently bad; however, when they are associated with a lie they become deadly. Consider these examples of how good things can be twisted by lies into sinful motivations:

Vanity: If you perform beautifully, then you have worth.

Lust: If you find sexual intimacy on the Internet, then you won't be lonely or stressed.

Pride: If you received more compliments, then you would be more confident.

Anger: If you get angry, you can get your way.

Many of our sins can be traced back to a deep belief in a lie. These false promises of acceptance, approval, satisfaction, self-worth, beauty, and significance motivate our sin. If we are to discover true acceptance, approval, satisfaction, self-worth, beauty, and significance, we need the ability to expose those lies.

Cultivate a habit of looking beneath your sin to expose the lie underneath it. Once we understand why we sin, the false promise we believe, we can replace it with a better why, a better promise. If we don't address the why question, we will inevitably become religious or rebellious disciples who just try harder or give up trying altogether.

<https://www.crossway.org/articles/know-your-sin/>