**UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL**

**Scripture reading - Jer 17:9-10, Rom 12:2:**

**Rom 12:2** says: “And be **not conformed to this world**: but be ye **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and **acceptable**, and **perfect, will of God.**”

**Non conformity to the world, Transformed, Renewing of our minds, Acceptable, Perfect will of God**.

How can I have my **mind renewed**? How do I become **free from** **the power of** **sin**? How can I become the person **God wants me be**? What must **I do**? Do I need to be **revived**? **What is revival**?

**Revival** - an **awakening** in a church or community, of **interest** in and **care** for matters relating to ***personal religion***, an evangelistic service or a series of services for the purpose of effecting a **religious awakening**, **restoration** to life, consciousness, vigor, strength.

“**A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs**. To **seek** this should be **our first work**. There **must be earnest effort** ***to obtain the blessing of the Lord***, not because **God is not willing** to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are **unprepared to receive it**… A ***revival need be expected only in answer to prayer***.” Review and Herald, March 22, 1887

**WHEN A REVIVAL IS NEEDED?**

1. “*When there is a* ***want of brotherly love and Christian confidence*** *among professors of religion, then a* ***revival is needed***. When Christians have **sunk down into a low and backslidden state**, they neither have, nor can have, the same **love and confidence** toward each other, as when they are all alive, and active, and living holy lives.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 16

1. *When there are* ***dissensions, and jealousies, and evil speaking’s*** *among professors of religion, then there is a* ***great need of a revival***.
2. *When there is a* ***worldly spirit in the Church***. When Christians **conform to the world in dress, parties," in seeking worldly amusements.**
3. “When the Church finds its **members falling into gross and scandalous sins**, then it is time to **awake and cry** to God for a revival of religion.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 17
4. When there is a **spirit of controversy** in the Church or in the land, a **revival is needful.** *The* ***spirit of religion is not the spirit of controversy***.
5. **Consistency and persistency** is needed to finish the work God has **called us** to do.

**WHEN SHOULD WE** **EXPECT A REVIVAL**?

1. “A revival may be expected when Christians have a **spirit of prayer** **for a revival.** When they feel the **want of a revival**, they **pray** for it; they feel for their own families and neighborhoods; they **pray for them** as if they **could not be denied**.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 22
2. What constitutes a **spirit of prayer**? “**Prayer is the state of the heart**. The ***spirit of prayer*** is a state of ***continual desire and anxiety of mind* for the salvation of sinners**. A ***deep, continual, earnest desire*** for the salvation of sinners is what constitutes a **spirit of prayer for a revival**.
3. “A revival may be expected when Christians **begin to confess** their sins to one another**.** When there is a ***breaking down, and a pouring out of the heart in confession of sin***, the flood-gates will soon burst open, and salvation will flow over the place.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 28
4. “A revival may be expected whenever Christians are **found *willing to make the sacrifices necessary*** to carry it on. They **must be *willing to sacrifice******their feelings, their business, their time***, to help **forward** the work.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 29
5. If we **need to be revived it is *our duty* to be revived**.

**PERSONAL REVIVAL NEEDED**

1. A personal **revival** is nothing more than a ***new beginning of obedience to God***.
2. A revival **always** includes a **conviction** **of** **sin** on the part of **each** church member.
3. Backslidden members **cannot wake up** and begin **right away in the service of God**, without a **deep searching of the heart**. The fountains of sin need to be **broken up**.
4. A ***revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over Christians***.

Unless **we invite the Holy Spirit in daily** to give us ***His power* to overcome**, our battles **will not be victorious**. We are **leaky vessels** and need to be **filled daily**.

 **SOME SERIOUS QUESTIONS**

1. **Do you really wish a revival, both *personal and corporate*?** If God should ask you this moment, by an audible voice from heaven, "**Do you want a revival**" would you **dare to say: "Yes**"? If He were to ask: "Are you ***willing to make the sacrifices*** **needed**?" Would you answer: "Yes"? And if He said: "**When shall it begin**?" Would you answer, "Let it **begin today--let it begin here--let it begin in *my heart* NOW**"?
2. We can no longer afford to ***rationalize*** our spirituality to ***excuse*** ***our*** ***unfaithfulness*** of duty. This is why our communities have not been evangelized! **Revival is needed**.

**BREAKING UP THE FALLOW GROUND**

**“Break up your fallow ground: for it is *time to seek the Lord*, till He come and rain righteousness upon you.” Hos. 10. 12.**

What does it mean to **break up** ***your*** fallow ground?

“It ***is to break up your hearts, to prepare your minds*** to bring forth fruit unto God. **Fruit** represents the **actions and affections** of those who receive it. To break up the fallow ground, therefore, is to *bring the mind* into such a state that it is ***fitted to receive* the Word of God.**” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 33

It is this **softening of the heart**, to make it ***feel the truth***, which the prophet calls breaking up your fallow ground.

**HOW IS THE FALLOW GROUND TO BE BROKEN**

We **begin** breaking up fallow ground by a **deep and earnest** searching and ***examination***of our hearts.

1. **2 Cor 13:5**: “***Examine yourselves***, whether ye be in the faith; ***prove your own selves***. **Know ye not your own selves**, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be **reprobates**?”
2. **Reprobates - morally depraved; unprincipled; bad, rejected by God and beyond hope of salvation, excluded from the number of the elect or from salvation.**
3. To break up the fallow ground of **your hearts**, you must begin by **looking *deep* into your hearts**: **examine and discover the *real state of your mind***, and see where you **really** **are** and your **real** **condition**. This can **only be done** through the power of the **Holy Spirit**. He will **show** us, **teach** **us** all things, **lead** **us**, and **search** **our hearts**. (**1 Cor 2:13, Acts 10:19, Mt 4:1, 1 Cor 2:10-11**)
4. **“Self-examination** consists in **looking** at your lives, in **considering your actions,** in calling up the **past,** and learning its ***true character***. Take up your individual sins **one by one**, and look at them. **General confessions of sin will never do**. Your sins were committed **one by one**; **review and repent of them one by one**.”

“Search the Scriptures, **examine *your own hearts*, meditate, pray, till you *realize*, by vivid conviction, your *true state*, till you see the peril which threatens you**. ***Never* *rest*** till you know beyond all controversy that you have been ***transformed by the spirit of Christ***; till you have ***clear* evidence** that you have been **born again**. ***Never rest*** till you ***know*** that Christ abideth in you. It will be **vain** for you to hope to meet the **approval of God**, until you come up to the ***Bible* *standard***.” Review & Herald, November 7, 1882

***You* have the *power* to choose**. - **Josh 24:15**: “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, ***choose* you this day** whom ye will serve;…”

1. “In order to have **spiritual life and energy**, we must have actual intercourse with our heavenly Father. Our minds may be **drawn out** toward Him; we may **meditate upon His works**, **His mercies, His blessings**; but this is not, in the fullest sense, communing with Him. In order to **commune with God**, we must have something to say to Him **concerning our actual life**.” A Call to Stand Apart, 26.2
2. There are two categories of sin; **sins of *omission*** and **sins of *commission***.

**SINS OF OMISSION** (**Write these down as God reveals them to you**)

1. **INGRATITUDE**

 Write down ***all* the instances** you can remember wherein you have received ***favors from God*** for which you have ***never exercised gratitude***.

Set down the instances of God's goodness to you when you were in sin, **before conversion**, for which you have **never been** ***half thankful enough*; and the *numerous mercies*** you have received since. *On your knees* ***confess*** *them* ***one by one*** *to God and* ***ask forgiveness***. The very act of confession, by the **laws of suggestion**, will **bring up others to your memory**.

1. **WANT OF LOVE TO GOD**

**How would you feel** if you saw another giving **affection** to your wife, husband, or children; if you saw another engrossing **their *hearts****, and* ***thoughts***, and **time**. **God calls Himself a jealous God; and have you not given your heart to other loves and infinitely offended Him**?

1. **NEGLECT OF THE BIBLE**

Cases when for perhaps weeks, or longer, **God's Word** was not a **pleasure** and maybe even **boring** to you. Or you read it because you’re **supposed** **to**.

1. **UNBELIEF**

Instances in which you have *charged the* ***God of truth with lying, by your unbelief of His express promises and declarations***.

1. **NEGLECT OF PRAYER**

Times you have ***neglected secret prayer*, family prayer, and prayer-meetings;** or have prayed in such a way as to more grievously **offend God** than to have omitted it altogether, or when **on your knees** you "said your prayers" in such an **unfeeling and careless manner**, times you have just **gone through the motions**.

1. **NEGLECT OF THE MEANS OF GRACE**

 **Trifling *excuses*** **to prevent your attending meetings**, not properly performing your **spiritual duties**, making God’s grace **cheap**.

1. **THE MINDSET IN WHICH YOU HAVE PERFORMED THOSE DUTIES**

Want of **feeling and faith**, in a **worldly frame of mind** so that your **words and actions** were nothing but the **mere chattering** or just going through the motions**.**

1. **WANT OF LOVE FOR THE SOULS OF YOUR FELLOW-MEN**

Look upon your **friends and relatives**, and remember ***how little compassion*** *you have felt for them*. Saw them going down the **road to eternal destruction,** and it seems as though you **did not care.** How many days in which you did not **make their condition** the subject of a **single fervent prayer**, or have a **desire or longing for their salvation**?

1. **WANT OF CARE FOR THE “UNSAVED”**

**No interest** in them to attempt to **learn their condition**; Look and see how much you ***really* *care*** for the unsaved, and **set down honestly** your **feelings** for them, and your **desire** **for their salvation**. Measure your desire for their salvation by the **self-denial** you practice.

1. **NEGLECT OF FAMILY DUTIES**

Think how you have **lived before your family**, how you have **prayed**, what **example** you have set before them. What **direct efforts** do you **habitually** make for their **spiritual good**? What duties have you **neglected**? What **example** are you **leading** by?

1. **NEGLECT OF WATCHFULNESS OVER YOUR OWN LIFE**

How many times have you **hurried** over your **private duties**, how often have you **entirely neglected**

**to watch your conduct** and have **sinned before the world**, **and before the Church, and before God**! How much truth do I know that I’m **not living up to**?

1. **NEGLECT TO WATCH OVER YOUR BRETHREN**

How little do you **know or care** about the **state of their souls**! As Christians we are under a **solemn oath** to watch over them. (**Ezekiel 33: 3-10**)

Times I have seen my brethren **growing cold** in religion, and have **not spoken** to them about it? You have seen them **falling into sin**, and you **let them go** on. Would you see your wife or child going into **disgrace** and hold your peace?

1. **NEGLECT OF SELF-DENIAL**

“Many arewilling to do something in religion as long as it ***does not require self-denial***. They **think they are doing a great deal for God** but they are **not willing to deny themselves any *comfort or convenience* for the sake of serving the Lord**. They are **not** **willing to suffer reproach** for the name of Christ. Nor will they ***deny themselves the luxuries of life, to help save a soul***. ***Self-denial is a condition of discipleship that they do not desire***. Some are giving **of their abundance**, and are **giving much**, and are ready to **complain** that others do not give more**.** ***They only give of their surplus wealth***, **not sacrificially.”**

**SINS OF COMMISSION**

1. **WORLDLY MINDEDNESS**

What’s the **state of your heart** in regard to your **worldly possessions**? Do you look at them as **really yours?** Have you loved property and sought after it for its ***own sake*, or to gratify lust or ambition, or a worldly spirit.** Do I enjoy **engaging in worldly activities** more than I do **spiritual activities**?

1. **PRIDE**

***“Vanity*** *is a particular* ***form of pride***. How many times are you consulting **vanity about your dress and appearance**? How many times have you **thought more, and taken more pains and time, about adorning your body** to go to Church**,** than you have about ***preparing your mind for the worship of God***? **Caring more** as to how you **appeared outwardly** in the sight of mortal man, than how your **soul appeared** in the sight of the **heart-searching God*.*** It’s in vain to **pretend** that you do not care anything about having people look at you.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 39

Be honest about it. *Would you take all these pains about your looks if every person* ***were blind***?

1. **ENVY**

“Have you envied some that you have been ***pained to hear them praised***? Jealous of them! Is it agreeable to you to **dwell upon their faults than upon their virtues**, upon their **failures than upon their success**. If you have this spirit towards anyone, you need to **repent deeply before God.**

1. **SLANDER**

Times you have **spoken behind people's backs** of their faults, real or supposed, of members of the Church or others**, unnecessarily, or without good reason**. This is **slander**. To ***tell the truth with the intent to injure is to slander***.

1. **LYING**

 Lying is **anything designed to deceive**.

1. **CHEATING**

All the times you have dealt with an individual, and **done to them** that which you **would not like to have done to you**. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt 7:12

1. **HYPOCRISY**

How many times have you in your **prayers and confessions** to God confessed sins that you did **not mean** **to** **break** **off**, have confessed sins **when you knew** you as much as expected to go and **repeat them**.

1. **ROBBING GOD**

Misspent your time, in **worldly amusements** **or foolish conversation, or doing nothing**; times when you have ***misapplied* your talents and powers of mind**; where you have **squandered money on *your lusts***, or spent it for **things** **which** **you did not need**, and which did not **contribute to your health, comfort, or usefulness**.

1. **BAD TEMPER**

Perhaps you have **abused or cussed your wife, your children, your family, brethren, or neighbors**. Write them all down.

1. **HINDERING OTHERS FROM BEING USEFUL**

**Weaken** their influence by **insinuations** against them. Robbed God of your **own** **talents**, but **tied the hands of somebody else**. “Wicked servant is he who not only loiters himself but **hinders the rest**!”

If you’ve ***committed a fault*** against an individual*or*have **defrauded anybody**, go and **make it right** **by *any* means possible*.***

**In breaking up our fallow ground, we *must* *remove every obstruction***. Our ***proud and carnal*** minds have **covered up** something which ***God requires us to confess and remove***.

Whenever you find ***anything* wrong**, **resolve it at once** **prayerfully** in the strength of God.

 “The reason why **so few Christians** know anything about the **spirit of prayer** is because they **never** would take the ***pains to examine themselves properly***, and so never knew what it was to **have their hearts all** **broken up** in this way.” Revival of Religion, Charles Finney, 42-43

If we don’t **seek God** with ***all*** **our heart, soul, and mind**, our hearts will **continue to harden** and we will not be able to **grow to the full stature** that God wants for us. We need to ***let God continue to sanctify us***.

Unfortunately, for many their religion is a **change of opinion** than a **change of heart**.

**There will be no dishonest people in heaven!**

**Getting right with God** means getting right with **each other**. It’s a **matter of the heart**!

Do you want ***God’s peace***? Here’s what we must do to obtain it: “Those things, which ye have **both *learned, and received*, and *heard*, and seen in me, do**: and the **God of peace** shall be with you.” **Phil 4:9**

“Hours that should be given to the **study of the Scriptures or to active labor of Christ, are *worse* than wasted**… **Examine your hearts**, ***and pass sentence upon yourselves***… The mind, with all its capabilities, must be **strengthened**, and stored with the ***treasures of divine wisdom***. In the ***strength of God*** you may do noble work for the Master.” Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene, 97

“**God calls for a *spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation***. Unless this takes place, those who are **lukewarm** will continue to **grow more abhorrent to the Lord**, until He will **refuse to acknowledge** them as His children.” 1SM 127.3

**Phil 2:6**: “**Let this mind be in you** which was also in **Christ Jesus**.”