

## CHAPTER ONE

### *WHAT IS REVIVAL?*

#### Introduction

What do you think of when you hear the word *revival*? Maybe the first thing that comes to mind is multitudes of sinners receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The *Mirriam-Webster Online Dictionary* defines revival as “a period of renewed religious interest.” But what is true revival according to the Bible? The Bible serves as the template for a study of the anatomy of revival. The book of Acts reveals the conditions and elements of true revival.

#### Revival in Tulsa

During the revivals of the 1950s, an Assembly of God church was birthed downtown in the city of Tulsa. From that church Central Assembly was established. Out of Central Assembly another church was birthed in east Tulsa which grew to 700 members. At the time, that was considered huge. My family attended this church and we would think, “How in the world do you get to know anyone in a church this large?” My sister and I were part of the youth group and involved in the choir. I actually met my wife at this church because we were both members of the church choir.

During this same time, the *Full Gospel Businessmen* organization was booming. Every time a speaker would come to Tulsa, our pastor would ask them to speak at our church. We were very

blessed hearing what was going on around the world with the move of the Spirit. We heard what was happening on the foreign mission fields, the Charismatic outpouring in the United States and the world, praise and worship, and even of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Catholics and other established denominations.

From that church a number of major churches and ministries were birthed. The church I have pastored for thirty-two years, Grace Church, was founded by a pastor from that church. Under him, the church began with less than a hundred people and within five years grew to 1200 people. It was the largest church in the city at that time. Our church has spawned other churches around the United States and the world. But we are not unique. This is the nature of revival. The revival of the 1950s came out of the revival of the 1900s at the turn of the century. If you study church history you will learn there have been specific times when revival has emerged, changing lives, cities, and cultures.

There are people who want to live in a perpetual state of revival. But as you will learn from this study on revival, revival has stages. How does revival begin? How does revival progress? What is the destination of revival? Through this study you will learn the answer to all of these questions.

## **Revival in Samaria**

The history of the revival we will study in Ephesus is recorded in three chapters in Acts: *the closing of chapter 18 and all of chapters 19 and 20*. However, before we go there, we need to look at John chapter four. It begins the story of revival at Samaria.

## Not Your Typical Day

**John 4:4:** (KJV)

*And He (Jesus) must needs go through Samaria.*

This was not your typical day. On this day, Jesus woke up and said, “Men, we *must* go to Samaria today.” I can imagine the disciples questioning, “Samaria?” The Jews typically hated Samaritans because they were neither pure Jew nor Gentile; they were half Jewish and half Gentile. The Jews didn’t like the Samaritans and neither did the Gentiles. They didn’t like the religion of the Samaritans, their race, their culture, or anything about them. Knowing human nature, I can just picture the disciples complaining most of the way to Samaria and then again after they had arrived.

Once in Samaria, Jesus sent the disciples into town to buy food (John 4:8). However, later His deeper intent for the disciples was revealed.

**John 4:31-38:** (ESV)

*Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work. Do you not say, “There are yet four months, then comes the harvest?” Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see*

*that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, "One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."*

Jesus said, "The food I'm talking about isn't natural food. I sent you to a place where you invested no labor; others worked before you arrived. I sent you into town to reap the harvest of souls prepared by the labor of others. I wanted you to reap the harvest but you missed it because of your hatred and prejudice toward the Samaritans."

Revival doesn't come through one person alone. It comes as a result of God putting people in the right place at the right time. We need each other. Revival begins years prior to its outbreak. It begins with someone willing to work and plow the hard ground, knowing God sent them.

**John 4:39-42: (ESV)**

*Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."*

Why was Jesus determined to get to Samaria? Because of one woman who God would use to ignite revival in Samaria.

Most Christians know they are to be witnesses to those they meet in their everyday lives. Often we may be planting or we may be watering the seed already planted in a person's heart. However, there are those specific times when God leads us directly to one particular individual to tell them about Jesus because God has been working on his or her heart. This individual may not have received Jesus yet, but there is a hunger in their heart to know Him—they are ready to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. These are the times God will very directly send a believer across an individual's path.

## **Divine Seating Arrangements**

I once took a seat on an airplane and shortly after, a college aged young man sat in the seat next to mine. The moment I looked at him, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, "He is going to receive Jesus while you sit here." I was excited. Usually when I travel, I will begin talking with the person next to me through small talk, "Hi! Where are you from? What do you do?" They then find out I am a pastor which leads to discussions about Jesus. As the other person is speaking, I am listening on the inside to the Holy Spirit to see how He is leading me. But in this particular case, this young man was ready. When I mentioned I was a minister, he responded "You are?!" and within ten minutes, tears were running down his cheeks. I asked, "Do you want to receive Jesus?" and he immediately responded, "Yes." Right there on the plane with flight

attendants walking back and forth, this young man was praying to receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, crying as he prayed. Looking back on my life, I can count on two hands the number of times I have had this experience.

## Revival in Samaria Increases

The revival in Samaria began with this initial meeting of Jesus and the Samaritan woman. His trip through Samaria had everything to do with this woman. But her conversion was just the beginning. Before Jesus went to the cross He instructed His disciples, “...*you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and **Samaria**, and to the end of the earth.*” Jesus’ encounter with the woman at the well was part of the beginning of revival in Samaria. What began in John 4 erupted in Acts 8. Philip traveled to Samaria and revival spread like fire.

### Acts 8:5-8: (ESV)

*Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city.*

Philip began preaching in Samaria and signs, wonders, and miracles began to break out and many people received Jesus.

**Acts 8:14-17: (ESV)**

*Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.*

The apostles in Jerusalem heard of the number of people being converted in Samaria and decided to send Peter and John. When they arrived, they laid hands on those who had received Jesus and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 8:18-24: (ESV)**

*Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." And*

*Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."*

The revival was so widespread, Simon, one of the town sorcerers, not understanding God's power, offered money to the apostles so he could also distribute the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as the disciples had not understood the real reason Jesus sent them to town, Simon did not understand the moving and power of the Holy Spirit.

## Sent to Reap the Harvest

**John 4:35-38:** (ESV)

*Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest?" Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, "One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.*

Jesus said, *"I sent you to reap..."* The disciples had completely missed the reason Jesus had sent them to town. I can imagine them complaining to each other about being with the Samaritans and wishing they were back in Jerusalem. They were also more focused on their



physical hunger for food than the spiritual hunger of the people Jesus had sent them to deliver. The hearts of the Samaritans were ripe for the harvest.

Again, Jesus says, *“My food is to do the will of the Father... lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.”* God intends for mature people to bring revival. Jesus witnessed to the woman at the well, she has just received Jesus—a brand new baby in Christ. The disciples, who have been walking with Jesus, had not led one Samaritan to the Lord. But this woman ran from the well back to town and told everyone about Jesus. Then many of the people followed her back to the well and they received Jesus. This woman received the reward the disciples should have received for the souls won that day.

**John 4:39-41:** (ESV)

*Many Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.” So when the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His Word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”*

Jesus said to the disciples, “You are able to look across a field and know when the crop is ready, but you missed a whole spiritual crop. Your hearts should have been in tune with God. If that had been the case, you would have walked into the city knowing the Samaritans were ready to believe.”

Never ever think you have failed because you witnessed to someone and they didn't receive Jesus. Remember, one plants, another waters, and another reaps the harvest, the salvation of a soul into the kingdom of God.

## Christ is Not Divided

### 1 Corinthians 1:11-13: (ESV)

*For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers. What I mean is that each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

As an apostle, Paul started the church at Corinth as their first pastor. Then after a period of time, he was led by God to leave. Paul was called to do the hard work. God sent him to difficult cities, difficult places, and difficult people. Paul plowed and broke up the hard ground. Often he would spend years in a particular place until revival began to break out. Once revival began, Paul would leave. In the case of Corinth, Apollos became the pastor after Paul left. Paul and Apollos were completely different as pastors. Paul was very rough. By contrast, Apollos was a very eloquent man, highly educated. Paul made some strong statements when he was pastor, especially about legalistic people.

Titus and Paul were very similar in their style of preaching. Paul basically had a three-point sermon: *Sit Down, Shut Up and Listen!* Titus eventually went to the Isle of Crete, which was

filled with rough characters. The Christian inhabitants of the island liked to drink and brawl. God had brought them out of the world, but they needed a pastor to get the world out of them and Titus was the right man for the job!

The difference between Paul and Apollos is Paul was blunt and rough while Apollos was highly educated and very eloquent. Apollos had a completely different personality from Paul's. He was kinder and nicer in his approach. The people in the church at Corinth compared Paul and Apollos. Some liked Paul and others liked Apollos. What was the difference between Paul and Apollos? It wasn't the anointing; it was personality.

This is common in our churches today. One minister leaves and another arrives. The people then compare the new minister with the old. Often they will judge, "I don't think this man is even anointed!" Again, the difference is usually not the anointing; it is a difference in personalities.

Apollos taught the same doctrines as Paul, but in a kinder way. There were probably a number of people in the church who didn't care for Paul's preaching, but when Apollos came along they thought, "Oh, thank God! An educated pastor! Oh, I'm so glad we have someone who knows what he's talking about. Now I can invite my friends to church because I was embarrassed to invite them to hear Paul. You never know what he will say or how he will say it." People began choosing sides. Never choose sides. Never!

People have said to me, "I won't even read that minister's book because I don't like him." It is natural for us to have our favorite teachers, but we can learn from all styles of ministers. I have some favorite authors in my life, but I stay open to new ones.

Paul was simply saying, “Don’t divide into camps—‘I follow Paul,’ or ‘I follow Apollos,’ or ‘I follow Peter,’ or ‘I follow Christ.’ Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” The answer is no. All of these ministers should direct our attention to Jesus. Don’t get attached to the style or personality of an individual.

### **1 Corinthians 3:5-10: (ESV)**

*What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field. God’s building. According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it.*

## **Foundation Layers**

Paul is saying, “I am a wise masterbuilder. I come into a city and I lay foundations. I do the hard work.” Any builder will tell you the most difficult part of building a structure is digging into the ground, searching for hard rock, pouring piers, and all of the work involved in laying a foundation. It is only after the foundation is laid that the walls, ceilings, windows and roof are

put in place. The most important part of any building is the foundation. After it is laid, most people never think about it unless it cracks.

Whenever we walk into a building, we never think, “I want to check out the foundation.” Typically the foundation is covered by carpet or other flooring. It is usually hidden from plain view. Usually when we walk into a nice building we are looking at the windows, the walls, the flooring, the ceilings, the doors, or the rooms. If the builder who laid the foundation could hear us commenting on the beauty of the building, he might be tempted to think, “What about the foundation? Isn’t it great?”

Most churches in the world have had ministers that are long forgotten who laid its spiritual foundation. If I tried to find the ministers who began the churches I’ve attended, history would probably be silent. Some planted, others watered. But the glory does not go to the ministers who planted or watered, but to God who gave the increase, the harvest. Those who worked so diligently and were not known or remembered will be known throughout all eternity because God will proclaim it. The hidden things will be made manifest. Until then, rest assured that God sees your labor of love and will one day reward it.

## **Tentmaking in Corinth**

Initially, Paul was the leader of the church at Corinth. He had laid the foundation. In fact, Corinth was the place where he traveled alone, ran out of money, and began making tents.

Paul had come through Macedonia, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Athens. He would usually go into a city to preach the gospel and his life would be threatened. He would then leave one of his team members behind to establish the church he had begun.

Paul ended up in Corinth, ran out of money, and began making tents. He made tents all week for financial provision and preached one meeting each week on Saturday. After the gathering on Saturday he went back to making tents. He was not led to ask the people for money. When Paul initially began preaching, he never asked for money. He would wait until the people knew him, his heart and motives, and then he would ask for an offering.

Corinth was a very wealthy city and could have easily supported the gospel, but Paul didn't want to ask for an offering too quickly. Instead, he depended on offerings from people who understood his calling and ministry. While Paul was in Corinth, God spoke to Timothy and the team members back in Macedonia and they received a large offering for him in a time of personal need. In a difficult time of life, the people gave generously to Paul's ministry and sent an offering to him. It enabled him to stop making tents and concentrate on ministering to the people. Even in the worst times, God has a plan!

God does not bring difficult times; that's the devil's work. But in those difficult times, God *always* has a plan. It was during this difficult time in Paul's life that he met Aquila and Priscilla. They were also tent-makers in Corinth. Paul got to know them very well and when he was ready to leave Corinth, he left the new congregation in the hands of Aquila and Priscilla. Eventually, Apollos arrived in Corinth and became pastor of the church.

## **Revival Takes More Than One**

As the scriptures reveal, the revival in Samaria began by many who came and plowed the hard ground, did the weeping, the praying, the intercession over the city. One person was saved and then another. It began small. One person came to Samaria and then another. They plowed the hard ground and watered until one day Jesus said, “We must go to Samaria. Today is the day.” There was a hunger throughout the city because of those who had labored.

Again, revival does not begin with an individual coming as the “great savior of the city leading multitudes to Jesus.” One individual does not bring revival. The minute someone thinks, “Look at all the people I have led to the Lord! Revival is happening because of me!” God says, “No, others before you have plowed and watered and sown. They did the hard work before you arrived. You are building on their foundation.” Revival is a team effort for God.

**Acts 18:19-21: (NKJV)**

*And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, but took leave of them, saying, I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing. And he sailed from Ephesus.*

Paul has been in Corinth but has now come to Ephesus. He entered the synagogue alone and *reasoned with the Jews*. This is how Paul usually began in an area. He ministered first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. Although he is called to the Gentiles, Paul usually began with the

Jews. This is much like Jesus, who *came to His own and His own received Him not*; even Jesus began with the Jews and later turned to the Gentiles. Paul maintained this pattern.

Notice, the Jews who were in the synagogue asked Paul to stay longer, but he did not consent. The fact that these men asked Paul to stay longer is important. Typically, when Paul went to the synagogue in a city, he was later kicked out. Much controversy surrounds Paul. He may get a few converts in a city, but overall the Jews do not like him. The fact that the Jews in Ephesus asked Paul to stay indicates there is something going on in their hearts. God was doing something.

Even though they asked Paul to stay, he declined to do so because he was headed to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. Paul would go back to Jerusalem occasionally to confirm what was happening among the Gentiles. Often, after Jews were saved they had a tendency to return to following the law and put new Gentile converts under it.

If we were to compare Ephesus to one of our modern day cities, it would probably be comparable to any city where prostitution and gambling are legal. Worship of Diana was a religion where sex with prostitutes was practiced; it was part of the religion. In both Ephesus and Corinth, Paul discovered soul winning to be easy, but discipleship, getting the world out of the convert after they were saved was more challenging.

In both Ephesus and Corinth, a wife was strictly for the purpose of bearing children; sex for pleasure was outside the marriage. This was true for both men and women. When Paul taught that God intended for a man to have one wife and that sex for pleasure was to be enjoyed within the bounds of the marriage relationship, it was difficult for many to adjust their thinking.



One of the major businesses in Ephesus was making and selling silver statues of Diana. In fact, Ephesus was so renowned in the ancient world for the worship of Diana, business conventions would take place there. Drinking, partying, and sexual pleasure were benefits of doing business in Ephesus. Often someone visiting would purchase a statue of Diana to remember the event.

But change was in the air in Ephesus. Laborers, sowers, waterers and foundation layers were at work, preparing for revival. What had happened at Samaria was about to take place again in Ephesus. The fact that the Jews in the synagogue asked Paul to stay a little longer indicates there was a hunger in the hearts of the people of that town.

By the time the revival has come to an end in chapter 19, Ephesus becomes a missionary center sending out missionaries as recorded in chapter 20. The worship of Diana almost dwindled to nothing. The entire city experienced a major shift because of revival. The entire societal culture was changed because of the preaching of the gospel. Paul did not go to Ephesus with the goal of changing the culture; he went to win souls. *When enough people are saved, the culture will change.*

Out of the revival in Ephesus, the six other churches mentioned in Revelation began: *Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.*

**Acts 18:22:** (ESV)

*When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch.*

Paul's ministry is based out of Antioch. Antioch is a Gentile church. After traveling to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, Paul travels back to Antioch.

**Acts 18:23:** (ESV)

*After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.*

After spending some time in Antioch, Paul departed and traveled over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia to *strengthen all of the disciples*. This is Paul's third trip to Galatia. The first time he went to Galatia, he was stoned to death and God raised him up and there was a great revival in Galatia; people came to the Lord and churches were started.

On Paul's second missionary journey, he returned to ordain pastors and establish leaders in the churches. This third time, Paul's purpose was to encourage the believers.

**Acts 18:24-26:** (ESV)

*Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately.*

Paul has left Corinth in the care of Aquila and Priscilla. The “Scriptures” Apollos was “competent” in reference to the Old Testament. He only had knowledge up to the baptism of John the Baptist. He knew nothing about the Church Age. He had received Jesus through John the Baptist’s disciples.

The baptism of John was a transition baptism. When John baptized converts it was in anticipation of the One who was coming. Today we are baptized looking back on the One who’s already come!

John’s converts were water baptized and John declared, *“I baptize you with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.”* (Luke 3:16 ESV).

The baptism of John the Baptist took place at the end of the time period between the Old and New Covenants. It was a transition period.

Apparently, some followers of John the Baptist had led Apollos to the Lord. Apollos filled himself with Old Testament scripture and became gifted at winning Jews to Jesus. He could take anything from the Old Testament and show Jesus Christ as Messiah. Apollos apparently won many of the Jews to the Lord.

## Recap

*To recap:* Paul went to Ephesus, began reasoning with the Jews in the Jewish synagogue and recognized there was a hunger for God. He departed from Ephesus and traveled to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. He then ministered in Jerusalem for awhile and then traveled to

Antioch where he stayed for an extended period. During this time Paul probably rested, maybe spoke a little, was refreshed and then traveled to Galatia. While in Galatia, Paul encouraged the saints and then traveled to Phrygia. While in Phrygia, the Lord spoke to Paul and instructed him to go back to Ephesus. When he arrived in Ephesus Paul learned that Apollos had come and gone and he began ministering to the Jews again. Aquila and Priscilla were also in Ephesus. Apollos was a great man of God, full of zeal, and a powerful witness for Jesus Christ, but Aquila and Priscilla recognized that Apollos didn't know about the baptism in the Holy Spirit or much about the teachings of the New Testament. Aquila and Priscilla took upon themselves to instruct Apollos in the more excellent way; they *explained to him the way of God more accurately* (Acts 18:26).

**Acts 18:27-28: (ESV)**

*And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.*

Since Paul was last in Ephesus, things have changed. Others have been there and have plowed and sowed and watered. Apollos had a part in the change. Aquila and Priscilla also had a part in it. Paul had laid the foundation. Apollos, Aquila, Priscilla and others have been building upon the foundation Paul established. Paul has returned and a great revival is about to break out. Revival begins in open and hungry hearts. It may begin in one person, but spreads to

others who do their part. One prays, another sows the seed of the Word, another waters the Word sown, and finally the harvest of revival comes.

Hungry hearts produce revival. With the revival in Samaria, it was hungry hearts. With the move of God in Ephesus, it was hungry hearts. Revival is not all up to us and revival is not all up to God. It is a divine combination of both. When the hearts of people are hungry in an area, God leads His people there to plant, water, and sow. *Then* revival comes. *“It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow.”* (1 Corinthians 3: 7 NLT)

## CHAPTER TWO

### *THE POWER BEHIND REVIVAL*

#### The Embers of Revival

Every revival starts with a turning to or a return back to the power of the Holy Spirit. In the 1900's of Azusa Street, there were many churches but very little presence of the Holy Spirit. However, in Topeka, Kansas at that time, the leader of a small Bible school approached forty students and challenged them, "You have one week to find the Bible evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit." They began searching out words, studying the Bible and at the end of the week all forty came to the same conclusion. According to the Bible, speaking with tongues was the evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

After the students shared their findings with the leader of the school, he asked them, "Do you speak with tongues?" They responded, "No." He then asked them, "Do you think it's still for today?" They answered, "From what we've studied, it is. There's no time limit on it." He then asked them, "Do you want to be filled with the Spirit?" They did, and those forty students were filled with the Holy Spirit and a revival broke out in that school in Topeka, Kansas. It grew so much people began traveling from Texas and other places to be touched by the revival taking place in Kansas.

A man from Houston traveled to Kansas to learn about the Holy Spirit and what was happening. He returned to his home church, preached about the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and

revival began in Houston. While he was there, a minister from Los Angeles was visiting, heard it and was filled. He went back to his church in L.A. at Azusa and revival broke out in California. We often refer to the Azusa Revival, but it began in Topeka. Many Pentecostal denominations came from that revival. Many decades later the healing revivals of the 40s broke out.

Between the 1900s and the 1940s there was a great departure from the Holy Spirit. Typically this departure begins when Christians become embarrassed about the manifestation of tongues or the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are hesitant to invite visitors because they are afraid the usual sister will speak in tongues and then the brother who usually screams out the interpretation will do it. They are embarrassed about the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead, who moves supernaturally in our church.

## The Power Behind Evangelism

The purpose of the gifts of the Spirit, and especially being filled with the Spirit, is power for evangelism. The Bible says speaking with tongues can cause the sinner to say, "Of a truth, God is in this place!" What some Christians feel is embarrassing about the manifestation of the Holy Spirit is the very power of God that draws people in. *You shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is come upon you to be My witnesses* (Acts 1:8). The ultimate purpose of speaking in other tongues is to bring us into God's power to lead people to Jesus; the main purpose of the Holy Spirit is to empower evangelism.

Around the world the churches where the greatest number of people are being drawn and receiving Jesus Christ are those who speak with tongues and believe in the power of God, the

gifts of the Spirit and healing. The point in time at which revival begins to diminish is when Christians begin leaving the truth of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, slow at first but increases over time. When an individual or group of believers then become hungry for the Spirit again, revival is not far away.

Today, our more liberal churches have taken us further and further away from the Holy Spirit. I believe the spiritual atmosphere in our nation is similar to what it was in the early 1900s before the healing revivals of the 1940s. The same atmosphere was present before the Charismatic Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. No two revivals are the same. Yet, all of them began the same, as believers turned to and returned to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the power of God for the supernatural.

## The Holy Spirit and the Twelve

### Acts 19:1-7: (ESV)

*And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy*



*Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all.*

Similar to the day in which we are living, when Paul came to the upper coasts of Ephesus, the first thing he found were believers wanting to grow and serve God but were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit. The hunger in them was crying out, “There must be more than this.” Paul arrived in Ephesus and asked, “Have you received the Holy Spirit?” and they responded, “No, we haven’t heard *anything* about the Holy Spirit. We’ve accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior, but that is all we know.”

Acts 19:3-4 (ESV) says again, “*And he (Paul) said, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ They said, ‘Into John’s baptism.’ And Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance (being born again), telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.’”*

The twelve men were saved because John’s was a message of true salvation. He preached for people to repent and believe in Jesus. However, John’s baptism was pointed to **the** upcoming kingdom of Jesus. Today, we are baptized into a kingdom that has already come. Jesus went to the cross to introduce it. This is the reason Paul re-baptized them; they were now baptized into the New Testament dispensation.

Verses five through seven continue, “*On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all.*” This is where the revival in Ephesus began.

Ephesus, was a heathen city. Prostitution was part of the worship of Diana, perversion was rampant, and the name of Jesus was virtually unknown. Paul introduced twelve new converts to the Holy Spirit. At the end of this chapter, Ephesus will be unrecognizable. Diana, the goddess of fertility and sex, will be replaced by worship of Jesus Christ. The entire continent of Asia will be shaken by revival, evangelism, and the miracle power of God.

### Three Participants in the Infilling

Three things happened in Paul's encounter with these twelve men.

**Number one:** *Paul laid his hands on them.*

We cannot fill the people with the Holy Spirit; we can only do our part. And Paul's *part* was to lay hands on them.

**Number two:** *The Holy Spirit came on them.*

The next part is the Spirit's responsibility, He fell on them. The Holy Spirit didn't have to come down from heaven; He was already there. The only time He came from heaven was on the day of Pentecost. Since that day He has always been here.

When we are first born again, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us and from that point on remains with us. Jesus said, "The Holy Spirit who's with you shall be *in* you" (John 14:17). This is a description of the new birth. However, beyond the experience of the new birth, the Holy Spirit wants to come *upon us* for power.

In Acts chapter 2 the Holy Spirit *came on them* in the upper room. In Acts chapter 8, the Holy Spirit *came on them* at Samaria. In Acts chapter 10, the house of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit

*fell on them.* And in this verse of scripture (Acts 19:6) Paul laid his hands on them and the Holy Spirit *came on them.* Paul did his part and the Holy Spirit did his.

**Number three:** They began to speak with tongues and prophesy. *The third responsibility belongs to the individual person.*

After Paul laid hands on the twelve, and the Holy Spirit came on them, verse 6 says, “...and **they** began speaking in tongues and prophesying.” They spoke with tongues, not the Holy Spirit.

In ministering the baptism in the Holy Spirit to people I like to instruct them, “Three things are going to happen. Number one and two: I’m going to lay hands on you and I guarantee you, the moment I do, the Holy Spirit is going to do His part; He’s going to come on you. Then, the third part is up to you. *You* do the speaking. Don’t expect the Holy Spirit to make you speak. He will give you the words to speak, but *you* do the speaking.”

These twelve men not only began to speak with tongues, they also prophesied. Prophecy is not an evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Speaking with tongues is the evidence. But speaking with tongues is the doorway into the gifts of the Spirit and they immediately began operating in the gift of prophecy, which is the first gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14:1. Prophecy does not automatically follow the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues, but it can.

## The Holy Spirit for Every Culture

In many of our churches today, speaking in tongues has become irrelevant. It is not denied but many say it's not culturally popular or our culture is different today. Let's talk about culture for a moment. Acts chapter two occurred in Jerusalem, which was the Hebrew culture.

**Acts 2:5-12: (ESV)**

*Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"*

Acts chapter 2, takes place in Jerusalem, which had a Hebrew culture. But on that particular day, devout Jews out of every nation under heaven were there, and 3,000 were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues; these were Jews who were filled.

A few chapters later, people from Samaria were filled with the Holy Spirit. Samaria had a completely different culture. Its people were half Jew and half Gentile yet they too spoke with tongues.

In chapter 10, even those from the Roman culture spoke with tongues. Cornelius lived in Caesarea, a city named for Caesar. It was a city built by Rome as a place for their military leaders to retire. It was a very wealthy city, and Cornelius was a military leader. He was a Roman, a Gentile, who had a hunger for the things of God. Peter was sent from Joppa along with others who were in the upper room in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Peter and the men with him came from a different culture than Cornelius. Cornelius and many who had gathered in his home listened as Peter preached.

**Acts 10:44-48: (ESV)**

*While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.*

While Peter was preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on all of them. They all began to speak with tongues and magnify God. And the men who came with Peter said, “This is what happened in the upper room. We hear them speak with tongues just like we did at Pentecost in Jerusalem.”

Imagine that! Jewish culture, Samaritan culture, Roman culture, and in Acts 19 it is the Greek culture. In every case, regardless of culture, they spoke with tongues. The big question is why would it be any different today?

### All Roads Do Not Lead to Heaven

One day I sat next to a lady on an airplane who was a college professor. When she learned I was a minister and believed the Bible, she stated, “I think Jesus was very open-minded.” I responded, “No, He wasn’t. He was very closed-minded.” She was surprised, “Really? I find Him very accepting of all people and all beliefs.” I countered, “No. He said, ‘I am *the way, the truth, the life*. No one comes to the Father but by *Me*.’” I continued, “I think that’s very closed-minded. *There is no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved than through the Name of Jesus Christ*. Jesus is saying there is no other way to heaven except through Him. Buddha is not the way. Muhammad is not the way. Jesus said, ‘I am the way.’”

Many, even born again Christians, have the attitude, “All roads lead to heaven. I’m okay, you’re okay.” But this is not true. Without Jesus we are *not* okay. Without Jesus, we will one day suffer in hell. Jesus is the only means of salvation. God has established principles that will never change. This is how the entire universe runs. The sun will always rise in the east and set

in the west. Scientists can tell us the exact second the sun will rise 125 years from today. The universe runs on principles that never change.

All roads *do not* lead to Rome. All religions *do not* lead to heaven. *Broad is the way that leads to destruction.*

**Matthew 7:13-14: (ESV)**

*Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.*

Every religion, every system of belief, and every brotherhood could stand side by side and fit on the road to destruction. Jesus said, “*Narrow is the way that leads to eternal life*” (Matthew 7:14). There is only one road leading to eternal life and that is Jesus Christ; the plan of the cross, the way of salvation. It is narrow because Jesus is *the way*, the *only way*. It is the only way for all, the educated, uneducated, Jew or Gentile. It is also the same message to all to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

## **Revival is Still the Same Today**

The same pattern for revival holds true today. The difference between the healing movement of the 1940s and 1950s and the Charismatic movement of the 1960s and early 1970s is the revival in the 40s and 50s took place primarily outside of mainstream America, in

the rural areas of the country, small communities and small churches. The Charismatic movement of the 60s and 70s brought revival to universities across the country. It also crossed denominational lines touching Catholics, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians; most of the major denominations.

But in every case, whether it's 1900s, 1940s and 50s, or the 1960s and 70s, it all comes back to the same point: *Have you received the Holy Spirit?* And preceding every revival is, "We have never even heard of the Holy Spirit baptism with the evidence of speaking in tongues." A great hunger begins to develop for the Holy Spirit. Believers know there is more to the Christian life than only being saved.

Just as there is a pattern for many things in our world, like the rising and setting of the sun, the pattern for revival remains the same. Before revival spreads to the world, it first occurs in the hearts of believers. Something cannot be *re-vived* if it hasn't been '*vived*' to begin with! Revival doesn't happen to sinners because they have never been *saved*, made alive through the new birth. Christians often think revival is winning souls when it is actually believers being revived who have lost their fire to win the lost.

**Acts 19:8: (ESV)**

*And he (Paul) entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.*

Three months is longer than Paul has ever taught in a synagogue. He was expelled much sooner from other synagogues where he went to share the Gospel. It is interesting to note that



Paul was allowed to remain for so long and when he did leave, a larger group of saved Jews followed him than ever had in the past.

Like Apollos, Paul had the ability to refer back to the Old Testament scriptures to appeal to Jews and show them Jesus. The Jews saw the law on every page, but Paul was able to show them that the sacrifices teach of Jesus. Every rule, law, grain offering, meal offering, the sacrifice of sheep, oxen, turtledoves or whatever was offered, spoke of Jesus Christ and the shedding of His blood once for all.

During this time, Jerusalem was on the verge of being destroyed and the temple was no longer being utilized for its original intent. The Jews were wondering how to deal with the sacrifices, not understanding that Jesus was the last sacrifice.

Every sacrifice spoke of Him. Everything before Jesus was a shadow of Him, but when the real came, there was no longer a need for the shadow. If you follow the shadow of the tree to find it, the shadow is no longer necessary. You found the tree! In essence, all shadows pointed to Jesus. Once the Jews found Jesus, the real Savior, the shadows were no longer necessary.

Like Paul and Apollos, Stephen was able to also reveal Jesus in the Old Testament to the Jews. Stephen's preaching can be found in Acts chapter 7. He used the Old Testament, weaved it together, and painted Jesus Christ in Abraham, in Moses, and in the major and minor prophets. By the time Stephen was finished, those listening were covering their ears and screaming because they didn't want to hear what he was saying, the truth about Jesus. Finally they stoned him to death.

**Acts 19:9:** (ESV)

*But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tryannus.*

Some in the synagogue eventually stood up and opposed Paul to his face. Verse 9 says Paul “took the disciples with him...” The disciples who went with Paul were those who were saved in the synagogue under his ministry and had grown in the Word during the three months they sat under Paul’s teaching.

## **The School of Tyrannus**

The school of Tyrannus was a medical school. Tyrannus was one of the most renowned physicians of his day. During the later years of his life he opened up a school to instruct young students in medicine. In the morning, Tyrannus instructed his medical students but by noon, the students were dismissed. The building where they met was empty until they reassembled for school the next morning.

Paul learned of this school and was given permission to use it when the medical school was not in session. Paul spent three years in Ephesus and in three years, the entire continent was turned upside down for Jesus Christ! But it wasn’t Paul alone; it was Apollos, Aquila, and Priscilla. It was a weaving lives together.

Paul will work out of the school of Tyrannus for two years. Church is not about a building; it is about people. There has been an argument in our day about the need to go back to home

churches because that is how the first churches began. A home is not holy. A building is not holy. It is always the people. I'm simply saying, if God has called you to start a church, just start. The building is not important. Begin in a home, storefront, or school. Paul used a school building.

The revival in Ephesus began with Paul ministering the Word of God. As a result of the Word, signs and wonders would happen. Revival *always* is accompanied by signs and wonders, *always*.

Although it is not recorded in the book of Acts, Paul went to the Corinthians with signs and wonders. In 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (ESV) he said, *"...and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."*

In Galatia, Paul was stoned to death and dragged out of town, but as believers gathered around him he rose back up and returned to town (Acts 14:19-20). Prior to Paul being stoned, a man in Lystra, crippled from birth, was miraculously healed through Paul.

#### **Acts 19:9-10: (ESV)**

*But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*

Paul took his disciples with him and was *“reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.”* The Greek word for *“reasoning”* is the Greek word *“dialegomai”* where we get the English word, *“dialogue.”* Paul not only spoke, but allowed questions from the people. He would receive questions from the Jews about the Old Testament and questions from the heathen of Ephesus.

Verse 10 says, *“...all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”* *All* means *every* resident of Asia heard the word of God. In Acts 17:6 when a mob dragged some of the believers before the city authorities in Thessalonica, they shouted, *“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also!”* The *“world”* that was turned upside down was Asia. The entire continent of Asia was shaken. There were seven major cities in the area including Ephesus, Smyrna, Thyatira, Thessalonica, and Philadelphia and all of them were affected because of this revival. They too would one day have churches because of the revival in Ephesus. They all had their origins in the church at Ephesus. John spoke of them in the book of Revelation.

Again, Acts 19:10 says, *“This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”* (Acts 19:10, ESV). Paul didn’t try to shake a continent; he went to get people saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. When we do what we are supposed to do, other people will tell other people. A fire begins with one match. Paul’s meetings were packed every day because the word spread that people were being saved, healed, and filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 19:11-12:** (ESV)

*And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.*

During the two years Paul was ministering at the school of Tyrannus, God did extraordinary miracles through Paul's hands. During revival, miracles and healings occur which are found in the Word, deaf hearing, blind seeing, lame walking, etc. Yet each revival is also marked by sovereign moves of God with miracles unique to that move. In history, revivals had people falling under God's power, building seemingly on fire, fire moving down the aisles, legs lengthened and teeth filled. God, during revivals, delights in doing exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think, special miracles.

## **Handkerchiefs and Tool Aprons**

Not only was God performing miracles through Paul's hands, verse 12 says that while the anointing to preach was on Paul, people would lay aprons and handkerchiefs on Paul's body and then would take them to others who were sick or demon possessed and those who had the cloths laid on them were delivered.

The handkerchiefs were from the women. The men would come from work after making idols, empty their tool aprons, and lay them on Paul as he ministered to the people. The manufacturing of idols was the major industry of Ephesus. It was a huge segment of the economy. Idols made by the workers attending Paul's meeting, were available in shops

throughout the city. Ephesus was a transient city filled with visitors. Men traveling through the city would worship Diana at the temple by having sex with temple prostitutes and to remember their weekend, would buy a statue on their way out of town.

The Bible doesn't say the aprons were laid on the demon possessed and the handkerchiefs on sick people. We often think the demon possessed person needs more power and of course, the apron is larger. The power that delivers a person from sickness and disease is the same power that delivers someone from a demon. The name of Jesus drives away sickness, disease, and demons! As the men and women left Paul's meetings, they laid their handkerchiefs and aprons on the sick and demon possessed. Both sickness and demons left the people. Paul's meetings were filled with formerly dying, diseased, and demon possessed people.

Like the man at the gate beautiful, born crippled from birth, they began walking, leaping, and praising God! The revival began to spread exponentially. Soon, the news of these miracles spread throughout Ephesus and the surrounding areas. Paul demonstrated that the anointing breaks the yoke of bondage, whether it is sickness, disease, or demons. Faith in the name of Jesus is all we need.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *TRUTH REVEALS THE FALSE*

#### Power of the Rebuke

**Acts 19:12:** (ESV)

*...so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.*

We have explained about aprons and handkerchiefs being laid on sick people in Ephesus. When people came in contact with the cloths, they were both healed of diseases and evil spirits left. Verse twelve distinguishes between diseases and demons. They are not the same.

Although, some diseases are caused by demons, not all sickness is a result of demons. Do not think that every sick person has a demon. That's just not true. Sickness is separate from demons.

It is interesting to note that Jesus did not pray for the sick or demon possessed. He *rebuked both sickness and demons*.

**Luke 4:38-41:** (KNJV)

*Now He arose from the synagogue and entered Simon's house. But Simon's wife's mother was sick with a high fever, and they made request of Him concerning her. So He stood over her and **rebuked** the fever, and it left her. And immediately she arose and served them.*

*When the sun was setting, all those who had any that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying out and saying, You are the Christ, the Son of God! And He, **rebuking** them, did not allow them to speak, for they knew that He was the Christ.*

In one case Jesus rebuked the demon, and in the other case he rebuked the sickness. Demons must leave when we rebuke them, and sickness must leave when it is rebuked. The same Greek word is used for both. No more faith is required to rebuke a fever than it is to rebuke a demon.

The word *rebuke* is *epitimao* in the Greek; *epi* means *higher* and *timao* means *to speak*. The word *rebuke* actually means *to speak from a higher level*. When we rebuke, we are speaking down to something.

Why would a demon leave when Jesus rebuked it? Because a *demon can hear*. If we rebuke a disease, why does it leave? Because *disease can hear*. Why do we *speak* to things? Because *things can hear*. Jesus spoke to a fig tree; it died. What shall we then *say* to these things? (Romans 8:31) *If God be for us, who can be against us?* So, what do we speak to? *Famine*,



*disease, pestilence, nakedness, peril, sword* all those things mentioned in Romans chapter eight. In essence, we speak because *things can hear*. Don't be afraid to speak. Understand the power of speaking God's Word and speaking a *rebuke* toward the things of the devil. Sickness, disease, and demons all come from Satan.

## Seven Sons of Sceva

**Acts 19:13:** (ESV)

*Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul proclaims."*

The moment evil spirits were cast out and diseases left bodies by anointed handkerchiefs and aprons, the financial trades of the city were affected. The *King James Version* of this verse reads, "*Then certain of the **vagabond** Jews...*" *Vagabonds* were much like a traveling medicine show. The seven sons of Sceva traveled to different cities casting out demons for money. Sceva, their father, was a chief priest living in Jerusalem. As Jews and exorcists they were thought of as holy men. The seven sons of Sceva had traveled far from Jerusalem to Ephesus. This is probably what Jesus meant when He sent the disciples to *the uttermost parts of the earth*. Ephesus was about as far away as possible from Jewish culture. It was Greek culture.

This passage is the only place in the Bible the word *exorcist* is found. The Greek word *exorcist* is a transliteration. The Greek word is *exorkizo*. In translating the word to English,

translators did not know what *exorkizo* meant, which is why the English word is so closely related to the Greek word.

An *exorcist* is one who casts out devils by magic formulas and incantations. *Exorcism* is not spiritual and has *nothing* to do with the kingdom of God. Jesus was not an exorcist. Born again believers are not exorcists. Jesus didn't cast out devils by magic formulas and incantations. In other words, an exorcist works in league with the devil he is supposedly casting out. As exorcists, the seven sons of Sceva were working in partnership with Satan and demons.

### Modern Day Lying Signs

I once visited a missionary we supported in the Philippines, on the island of Calibao. At the base of a mountain was a Bible school training students to take the gospel back to their own villages.

One young man had escaped from a village at the top of the mountain that was controlled by a witch. He escaped one night, ran down the mountain as fast as he could trying not to be caught. When the young man finally made it to the bottom of the mountain, the ministry brought him into their compound. They cleaned him up, cared for his needs, led him to the Lord, and he began attending the Bible school. Part of his ministry was to return to his village and share the gospel. When he was established in the Word of God, the Bible school sent him back.

This young man later shared what happened. He explained that a witch controlled his village, who was evil as well as a psychic healer. When he returned, he entered the village in the

middle of a moonlit night. As he walked into the village, he heard a voice. He turned to look and found it was from the home of the witch. She was standing on the tip of her thatched roof, perfectly balanced. She asked, “What are you doing here?” He was terrified but responded, “I’ve come to preach the gospel.” The young man said, suddenly she levitated, and slowly descended right in front of him. He was even more frightened but mustered up all the confidence he could and commanded, “I rebuke you in the Name of Jesus!” She responded, “What did you say?!” He repeated, “I said, I rebuke you in the Name of Jesus!” Immediately she fell helpless and screaming on the ground. People ran out of their huts and gathered around the witch as she continued flailing on the ground. Then the young man cast the devil out of her. He then led her to the Lord under the observation of all the villagers. As a result of the young Bible student’s visit to the village, the people were saved and revival broke out.

This witch also had a thriving business as a psychic healer. Through demonic powers she would reach into a person’s body and pull out the diseased part with her hands. There were no roads into the city, so people would fly in by helicopter from around the world to be healed by her. To be seen by her cost thousands of dollars. However, the “healings” never lasted more than six months. Often the people would come back to the witch when the disease would return. No one ever lived long enough to return a third time. Like the seven sons of Sceva, this witch had worked in partnership with Satan and demons.

**Acts 16:16-18: (ESV)**

*As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She*

*followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.*

Even though the slave girl following Paul didn't seem to be saying anything wrong by crying out, *"These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation,"* she was actually possessed by a spirit, a demon of divination. Satan tried to make the people think he was in league with God through this slave girl. She seemed to be a herald of Paul and his team. Satan's goal was for people to follow the girl once Paul left the area. Paul recognized a demon was driving the girl and cast the demon out of her.

## Seven Sons Exposed

The seven sons of Sceva worked in league with the devil. Although they preached and proclaimed what they practiced was the power of God, it was not. But the people ignorantly believed it was the power of God. Most of their business was probably repeat business. Someone would be supposedly "delivered" and the devil cast out. However, since the deliverance was not by the power of God, the same people who were delivered would be brought back again. The seven sons would charge again for services rendered.

Even though the people revered the seven sons of Sceva as holy men, when confronted by the truth, the men were exposed as liars. A lie cannot stand up to the truth; the truth always wins.

Paul didn't charge any money and the seven sons of Sceva noted that the healings and deliverance God performed through Paul lasted. It is certain the sons of Sceva knew about Paul teaching in the school of Tyrannus. They probably heard the reports of people being completely delivered from sickness, diseases, and demons and began wondering, *What's his power? What is Paul doing that we are not doing?* Either by observation or by a report, they found Paul was using the name of Jesus.

They thought, *If our formulas and incantations are so powerful, let's add the name of Jesus to them.* What they didn't realize is you cannot mix Jesus and Satan together. It will generate an explosion! This is exactly what happened; exorcists, empowered by Satan, added *the name of Jesus* and did not get the results they were expecting. When the seven sons spoke to the evil spirits, they said, *"I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims..."* (Acts 19:13).

The word "*adjure*" is the verb form of "*exorcist*." The word only appears twice in the New Testament, and it's all in one verse. The seven sons were called "*exorcists*" (that's the noun). Then it said, "*We exorcise (adjure) you*" (that's the verb). They said, "*We adjure you by the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches*" (Acts 19:13). In other words, "We don't know this man, but he uses the name of Jesus so we're going to try it. To be certain we're using the right Jesus, (there were many men with that name) it's the one Paul teaches about."

**Acts 19:13-17:** (ESV)

*Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.*

Verse 14 states, *"Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this."* The seven sons learned exorcism from their father who was one of the twenty-four high priests of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. Demons are able to infest the Jewish religion all the way to the top leadership. The moment we leave truth of the Word of God, demons interfere and have access.

The religion of the Jews had disintegrated to the point that exorcism rights were being performed on the Jewish people. Why was the name of Sceva mentioned? No other specific names were mentioned in this passage. Apparently, exorcism in Jerusalem was primarily under Sceva's control. His sons traveled from Jerusalem as far as Ephesus in an attempt to make money exorcising demons from people along the way. But again, why was he named? I believe Sceva had met Jesus.

## The Meeting of Jesus and Sceva

**Luke 11:14-20: (ESV)**

*Now he (Jesus) was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons," while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebub. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.*

Jesus was accused of casting out devils by being in league with Satan (Beelzebub). Jesus responded with, "If that's the case and Satan is the one casting out demons, then Satan is divided against himself and his kingdom will have to fall apart soon." Jesus continued, "But if I come to you by the power of God; (the finger of God,) then truly the kingdom of God is with you." Then Jesus continued, "If I cast demons out by the power of Satan, who do your sons cast them out by?" I believe Sceva was standing before Jesus when He posed this question. The power of Sceva and his sons operated by had been exposed. Sceva had been training his seven sons to cast out demons by the power of Beelzebub.

### **Satan Doesn't Know His Own**

Verses 14 and 15 of Acts 19 again says, *“Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?’ And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.*

This is something that had never happened to the seven sons of Sceva before. The demon spoke back to them and said, “I know Jesus, and I know Paul; but *who are you?*” (Acts 19:15, KJV).

Stop and think about this: the demon knew Paul and also knew Jesus. The moment we are born again, we are known in Satan’s kingdom because of Jesus. We become targets for the enemy. It is incredible to know that when we speak, the demons know who we are!

The demons know Jesus by name because when He rose from dead, He conquered them, made a show of them, and openly triumphed over them. They were humiliated by the work of Jesus and now anyone who joins Jesus’ team is also known by Satan and his demons.

Even more amazing to me than *“Paul I know and Jesus I know”* is *“...but who are you?”* I can picture the seven sons looking at each other and saying, “What do you mean, *who are we?* We work for you and you don’t know us? We’re the seven sons of Sceva!”

It is incredible to me that Satan knows me as a Christian, but doesn’t even know his own followers! Think about it, if you are a sinner, your master doesn’t even know you! What is sad is God doesn’t know you either! The seven sons of Sceva will probably stand before God one day and ask, “Didn’t we cast out devils in your name?” And God will respond, *“Depart from Me you workers of iniquity! I never knew you!”* (Matthew 7:22-23)



Sinners are not known in either world, but Christians are known in both worlds! The moment we are born again, we are known in both kingdoms. But before we are born again, we are not known in either kingdom. Imagine working for the devil all of your life, dying, going to hell and upon your arrival declaring, “Here I am, one of your greatest workers!” and Satan responding, “I don’t even know you, but come on in.” How humiliating!

**Acts 19:16: (ESV)**

*And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

Picture this, one demon possessed man was able to overpower seven men and strip their clothes from them before they even reached the front door! Before they reached the door to exit the house, all seven men were naked, wounded and bleeding because of one man! One demon is stronger than many men. However, when we use the name of Jesus, the authority we have in that Name is greater!

Since the seven sons of Sceva did not have the right to use the name of Jesus, a demon stripped their clothes from their bodies and all seven ran out of the house naked!

**Acts 19:17: (ESV)**

*And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear (reverence) fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled (magnified even more).*

Apparently, the Ephesus Gazette had reporters outside the front door, and the moment the seven sons came out, pictures were taken of the naked men running out because it was known the next day throughout the entire city. Although Satan's plan was to destroy the revival, instead of being brought down, the Name of Jesus was magnified even more.

Opposition only causes the name of Jesus to rise even higher. That is why we can rejoice in opposition. We can declare in the face of opposition, "Satan, your purpose is to destroy me, but Jesus' name will be magnified even more! When I come out of this on the other side, I am going to bring a testimony with me of the saving, delivering power of Jesus Christ!"

Why did great fear or reverence fall on all the people? Because they thought the seven sons of Sceva worked for God. Suddenly they realized the seven sons had worked for the devil all those years and they had been fooled by them. Great reverence fell on them when they witnessed the true power of God!

### **Preach the Truth and Untruth Will be Exposed**

One important thing to point out is that Paul never preached *against* the sons of Sceva or warned people about them. When we keep preaching what is true, it will not be necessary to preach against the false. People will recognize the truth. Lies have no lasting power. The power of a lie can never compare to the power of the truth. Satan has power but it is eclipsed by the power of God. Revival exposes the power of God. People will leave Satan and run to God.

**Acts 19:18-19: (ESV)**

*Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.*

Carnal Christians were the first group who came forward when Sceva's sons were exposed. They had kept quiet about their faith and some had been practicing witchcraft. Also unbelievers came forward who had been practicing witchcraft. They brought all of the books about magic and occult and burned them in a fire. The value of all those books was fifty thousand pieces of silver! That was a tremendous amount of money. Understand, each book burned had been handwritten and handed down from generation to generation because printing presses did not exist in that day. Once the books were burned, there were no replacement copies. These people were making a stand. "I'm burning these books because I have seen the power of God and I want my generation and future generations to know it stops right here. We are going to serve the true and living God!" *This is true revival!*

**Acts 19:20: (ESV)**

*So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.*

Verse 20 is a transition verse. Until now there has been some Word and many signs, wonders, and miracles have prevailed. However, beginning in verse 20, the Word is being

preached and taught everywhere, which leads into the second half of this revival in Ephesus; *the establishment of churches and the raising up of new ministers.*

Revival switches from the ministry of one minister to many. When there is transition in revival, a shift takes place from preaching to teaching more of the Word of God. New believers become stable.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### REVIVAL MAGNET

#### When Hearts are Open to God

There was a time when I believed revival was a sovereign act of God completely independent of man. I've looked at revival and thought, *Well, God just chooses a certain time. And when conditions get really bad, He sovereignly pours out His Spirit.* However, I have learned that revival doesn't break out solely because spiritual conditions are so negative. In conjunction with rampant sin and darkness, hearts must be open to God. Revival begins by faith. It was given on the day of Pentecost and it was never taken back. God sends revival to those who are trusting Him.

When Jesus told his disciples, "We *must needs* go through Samaria" (John 4:4 KJV), some were waiting for revival. The hearts of many in faith drew Jesus. Like a tinderbox where one match sets an entire forest on fire, one person arriving with the right message can turn a city around. Jesus and His disciples went to Samaria and revival spread. Later, in Act 8:5-8, Phillip also went to Samaria and revival spread even more. Both men were drawn to Samaria by the faith of believers expecting revival.

The revival in Ephesus also began with Paul being drawn by faith and hunger of a few believers. After leading twelve new converts to the Holy Spirit, Paul went to the synagogue and shared with the Jews. As taught earlier, another indicator that conditions were ripe for revival in Ephesus was that the Jews didn't immediately force Paul to leave the synagogue. Something was different; the Jews did not want him to leave. This is the reason Paul said as he was

departing, “I’m leaving, but if it is God’s will, I *will* return” (Acts 18:21, paraphrased). It was most definitely God’s will!

Acts chapter 19 describes the revival in Ephesus. The first half of chapter 19 describes the many signs, wonders, and miracles taking place. Preaching was prevalent, as was the infilling of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. But the second half of the chapter gives the outcome, God’s destination for revival.

**Acts 19:20:** (ESV)

*So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.*

As mentioned in the previous chapter, verse 20 is the transition verse. The King James Versions says, “*So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*” Prior to this time, the main thrust of ministry was miracles, signs, and wonders. Paul has been in Ephesus for three years and will soon leave. But what he will leave behind is the Word of God and those who are able to teach and instruct others in the Word, pastors over local churches.

Just before Paul left, a great riot broke out because of opposition to the revival and changes that took place in Ephesus.

**Acts 19:21:** (ESV)

*Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”*

In his spirit, Paul knows his time in Ephesus is coming to an end. The revival has lasted for three years with many miraculous healings, signs and wonders, and demons departing. Paul is sensing that he is to go to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem and Rome. He also feels that the leadership raised up during the revival can now handle the great number of new believers created by the revival.

**Acts 19:22:** (ESV)

*And having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.*

Until this time, Timothy and Erastus were not mentioned as helping Paul in Ephesus. Erastus was also mentioned in Romans 16:23.

Paul had Timothy and Erastus with him in Ephesus as members of his team and he sent them out ahead of his departure from Ephesus. The entire continent of Asia has been shaken because of the revival that has taken place in Ephesus.

## The Way

**Acts 19:23:** (ESV)

*About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way.*

*“The way”* is a term used throughout the book of Acts in reference to Christianity. It was called *“the Way”* because of what Jesus said about Himself—*I am the way, the truth and the life* (John 14:6). *The Way* is referring to the way of the cross, the way of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only way to salvation.

**Acts 19:24:** (ESV)

*For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen.*

Demetrius was a successful silversmith and business leader in Ephesus. The revival had adversely affected his silversmith business. He decided to gather together everyone associated with the business. He organized a meeting and invited those who mined the silver, those who smelted it, those who formed the silver, and those who created the statues of the goddess Diana. He also invited the retailers and wholesalers; anyone connected to the silver idol making industry was invited. It was similar to the meeting of a modern day union. Demetrius knew that the businesses of everyone gathered together had suffered financial loss because of the revival. The target of blame would be Paul and his team.

Just as Paul never preached against the seven sons of Sceva, neither did he preach against the worship of the goddess of Diana. Demetrius and those gathered with him will not be able to accuse Paul of preaching against them. He will however, speak of how the worship of Diana has drastically diminished, also the sale of silver statues, along with patriotism in Ephesus.



When Paul preached and demonstrated the truth of Jesus, there was no need **to** preach against false religion. The truth always exposes what is not true. In the study of counterfeit money, our own government has its agents study genuine bills rather than counterfeit bills. By studying the real they are able to identify the false. The same is true with the gospel.

## Stay With the Truth

A number of years ago, there was a man who attended our church who had temporarily moved to Tulsa from a Jewish section of New York. When he was preparing to return to the same area, he told me, "I think it is important for me to study the Jewish religion so I can talk to my friends with an understanding of what they believe." I responded, "I don't think so. All you need to do is present Jesus to them." He decided to study the religion in spite of what I advised him. When he came back to Tulsa for a visit he told me, "You were so right. I studied and studied the Jewish religion. But I discovered you can win an argument and lose a soul."

God never intended for us to "argue" the gospel; we are simply to present Jesus Christ. It is not "us against them," it is sharing the truth of Jesus Christ. The Word of God is *alive*. That is what will draw people to Him. The Koran is *not* alive. The Book of Mormon is *not* alive. There are no other religious texts that exist today or ever have existed that are *alive* as is the Word of God.

**Hebrews 4:12:** (NLT)

*For the word of God is ALIVE and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.*

I was once invited to speak at a church in Utah. In the hotel where I was staying, I opened a drawer and found a Book of Mormon lying next to a Bible. I picked up the Book of Mormon and began to read it and I could have just been reading a novel. There was absolutely no anointing to it. I put it down and picked up the Bible. When I began to read the Bible, I immediately sensed the touch of God. The Word of God is not just black words on a white page; as Hebrews 4:12 states, it is *“alive and powerful.”*

God had spoken to me before I received this invitation telling me I would be invited. I spoke for three days at a church and just one man was saved. Because God had told me I would be invited before I received the invitation, I had expected something spectacular to happen. I thought many would be saved during the meetings. Of course, it was wonderful that one person received Jesus; I was just expecting more.

When my wife and I returned home I said, “That was it? God told me ahead of time I would be going to Salt Lake City for one man?” A few weeks passed and I received a phone call from that one young man who had received the Lord. He began, “I’m a Mormon student studying for the Mormon priesthood. Somebody invited me to church the night you spoke in Salt Lake City and I received Jesus. I’m still in the Mormon priesthood classes at Salt Lake City University, an extension of Brigham Young. I am a student in a small class for those studying for the Mormon priesthood. We have about 200 in our class. I gave one of your teachings to our professor. He

listened to it and asked if you would come and speak to our group about the new birth. The professor told me you can have two hours to speak. Of course I accepted the invitation but told the young man, "It will only take a few minutes to teach about the new birth. How about after I speak about the new birth I open up for questions?" He agreed and we scheduled a meeting.

I knew nothing about the Mormon religion and determined not to study about it. I spoke for 15 or 20 minutes on the new birth and then opened it up for questions from the students. One young man raised his hand and asked, "What if you are not born again? What if you don't receive Jesus?"

I responded, "Well, you'll go to hell." The entire class began laughing. I said, "Maybe I'm missing something. Why are you laughing?"

They responded, "We don't believe in hell. Hell doesn't exist."

I asked, "So what is there?"

They went on to explain that they believed there are three levels of heaven; the sun, the moon, and the star levels. How hard you work as a Mormon determines the level you reach.

I asked them, "Why work at all if there is no hell? Why ride your bicycle, work up a sweat, go all over the world, just to reach a higher level in heaven? If I'm going to heaven anyway, I'll settle for the lower level. Even the lowest level of heaven would be better than this life." In other words, there was no reason to be a Mormon if hell does not exist and heaven is the destination of every person.

No one had an answer to my question. It suddenly became very quiet. Then they started asking questions, but I restricted them to answering questions only from the Bible. What I discovered was they didn't know anything about the Bible; their knowledge was primarily the

Book of Mormon. Since we both agreed on the Bible and I did not believe the Book of Mormon, let's both stick to the one we agree on.

I asked them to turn to the book of Job, and most needed to use the index to find it in the Bible. By the end of the two hours, excitement about the Bible filled the classroom. As I was leaving, the students followed me with more questions about Jesus, the throne of God, the plan of salvation, end time events; the questions went on and on. They had never had the scriptures explained like this and were so excited. As we walked out of the classroom, one student turned to the professor and asked, "Why don't you teach us this?" He told the students I believed in the literalists view of the Bible. The professor was so upset he said to me, "I wish I had never invited you because you've caused chaos. I have a lot of undoing over the next weeks."

About two years later I received a call from the professor. He said, "I want to apologize. Your class was one of the best classes we've ever had. The students still talk about it. Now we have a whole new group of students. Would you consider returning to speak to our new group of students?" I didn't hesitate to accept his invitation.

The point I am trying to make is I went to Salt Lake City completely ignorant of the Mormon religion. I didn't have to convince those students about anything; the Word of God convinced them.

## **The Same Gospel Everywhere**

Paul did not study the religions of the cities he traveled to prior to preaching; he preached the same gospel everywhere he went. When he arrived in Athens, Paul observed all of the statues representing the gods they worshiped and noticed one labeled “*unknown god*.”

**Acts 17:22-23: (ESV)**

*So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, “To the unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.*

Rather than preaching *against* all of the gods the Greeks worshiped, Paul used the “*unknown god*” to launch into preaching the truth of Jesus Christ.

**Acts 17:24-25: (ESV)**

*The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.*

Paul did not say, “Your religion is wrong and mine is right.” Paul simply shared the truth, and many accepted Jesus.

**Acts 19:23-27: (ESV)**

*About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way. For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, (Diana), brought no little business to the craftsmen. These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."*

In making an appeal to the laborers and artisans of Ephesus, Demetrius pointed out that because of Paul's message, not only was the silver trade in danger, so was the worship of the goddess Diana "*whom all Asia and the world worship.*" According to Demetrius, Paul had threatened their very existence; their livelihood, their religion, and possibly the destruction of their very nation itself. He made an appeal to both the religious and national fervor of those gathered.

## A Mob Explodes

**Acts 19:28-29: (ESV)**

*When they heard this they were enraged and were crying out, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul’s companions in travel.*

As mentioned earlier, Gaius and Aristarchus were Paul’s companions in the gospel. Gaius is mentioned in both Romans 16:23 and 1 Corinthians 1:14, and Aristarchus in Acts 20:4 and Acts 27:2.

In addition to this passage in Acts 19, Aristarchus is also mentioned in Acts 20:4 and Acts 27:2.

The mob captured Gaius and Aristarchus, both Macedonians, into the amphitheatre in hopes that Paul would come for them. Their plan was to kill Paul.

**Acts 19:29: (ESV)**

*So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul’s companions in travel.*

Notice, this verse says *“the city was filled with confusion.”* Mobs are *always* confused. The mob ran through the streets yelling, *“Great is Diana (Aretmis) of the Ephesians!”*

**Acts 19:30-32: (ESV)**

*But when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him. And even some of the Asiarchs, who were friends of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater. Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.*

This passage reveals the mentality of a mob. There was confusion and most of the people in the mob had no idea why they were there. Demetrius was the organizer behind them to accomplish his plans.

Typically, those behind mob activity are sitting somewhere safe and hidden. The mob becomes their hands, their feet, and their voice.

David knew Absalom was behind the scenes of the uprising against him. He wrote of it in Psalm 3.

**Psalm 3:1, 6: (NKJV)**

*Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who say of me, There is no help for him in God. Selah.*

*I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.*



Again, Demetrius brought out national and religious fervor in those affiliated with the silver business. Paul had not come with the intention of dismantling a religion or a nation. The mob ignored that. Paul's sole purpose was to preach "*the Way*." Jesus Christ ultimately brought the dramatic change in Ephesus.

### Paul's Desire to Address the Mob

Verse 30 says "*Paul wished to go in among the crowd,*" but "*the disciples would not let him.*" Paul heard about Gaius and Aristarchus being captured by the mob and taken into the amphitheater. He wanted to try to reason with the mob, but his disciples would not allow it. The disciples with Paul were many who had been saved in Ephesus.

Paul thought he could reason with the mob, "If I can just talk to them..." You cannot reason with a mob. The next step after confusion is anger and violence. Paul's team kept a cool head and wisely advised him not to try and persuade the mob.

Verse 31 continues, "*And even some of the Asiarchs, who were friends of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater.*" The Asiarchs were aristocrats and city leaders who had been saved. Not only were Paul's disciples trying to stop him from joining the mob in the theater, so were his influential friends.

### The Gospel Does Not Always Unite

The gospel does not always unite, it often divides first. Jesus said, *“I came not to bring peace, but a sword. I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Your enemies will be right in your own household! If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine”* (Matthew 10: 34-37)

That is precisely what happened in Ephesus. When the gospel was preached, initially those in the idol industry did not consider Paul much of a threat. But when revival hit, the city was divided. Cultures may not survive, but the gospel will survive anything.

Paul was at peace. He had seen riots before. He had been thrown out of cities before. After Paul was thrown out of Philippi, the church grew and became one of the greatest supporters of his ministry. He was thrown out of Thessalonica, and Thessalonica became another great church. But after the riot in Ephesus, Paul will not be thrown out, he will simply leave. A question some may ask is “How could Paul leave at this time?” The answer is *because God is leading him to leave*. Paul’s mission is over and the mission of the believers in Ephesus is just beginning. Churches have begun.

**Acts 19:33:** (ESV)

*The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander forward and told him to explain the situation. He motioned for silence and tried to speak.*

Alexander was a believer, part of Paul's team. He knows the language of the Ephesians and raises his hand to try to speak. However, the mob refuses to listen to him.

**Acts 19:34:** (ESV)

*But when the crowd realized he was a Jew, they started shouting again and kept it up for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"*

For two solid hours the mob screamed. Imagine a crowd of hundreds and thousands, filled with furor for their religion and their nation, screaming "*Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*" over and over again! In the past, Paul has been saved from destruction because of his Roman citizenship. Those who knew Roman law realized Paul had a right to speak and a right not to be killed. Similarly, Alexander knew Paul was a Roman citizen and tried to make an appeal, but the mob wouldn't listen to him because Alexander was a Jew.

### **A Wise Mayor**

The mayor of the city displays great wisdom in waiting two hours before attempting to speak to the mob. By the time he tried to quiet them, the crowd was probably so hoarse they could barely shout.

**Acts 19:35:** (ESV)

*And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky?”*

The Ephesians believed their goddess Diana and her temple fell from the sky. The mayor appeals to the mob according to what they know.

**Acts 19:36-37: (ESV)**

*Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess.*

He is reasoning with them, “If our religion is true, just be silent; it will survive the test. Furthermore, Paul has not spoken evil of our nation or our religion. He simply preached his religion, Jesus Christ.”

Apparently, the mayor was not a believer, but he was a man of law. As he appeals to the mob, he is reasoning only by the law. God created law.

The mayor was appealing to the crowd, both through common sense and through the legal system. “Ephesus allows freedom of speech. Anyone can preach what they want as long as they don’t hurt others. You’re defending your religion, but trying to kill Paul. He didn’t try to do you harm or destroy your religion. Yet, you’re trying to destroy his religion. He didn’t do anything to try to harm your nation, yet you want to destroy him.”

**Acts 19:38:** (ESV)

*If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another.*

He continues, “Let’s deal with this according to the courts. If you have something legitimate against Paul and his followers, bring your case to the courts.”

**Acts 19:39:** (ESV)

*But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.*

The mob suddenly realized they had nothing legal to stand on against Paul. They were opposing Paul based on conjecture and rumors.

**Acts 19:40-41:** (ESV)

*For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is not cause that we can give to justify this commotion. And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.*

The mayor continued to reason with the mob, “Many of our city rights could be taken from us. Legally, we have no case against this man.” After this, the crowd disbanded and went their separate directions.

Paul left the area and traveled to Achaia. He went to Rome for a time and also Jerusalem. He will eventually return to a small town outside Ephesus to meet with the church leaders of Ephesus to instruct them in the Word.

## The Destination of Revival

The destination of revival is not more revival. The goal of revival is churches. Then, like believers begetting believers, churches will beget churches. Why is this important? Because God never intended for just one individual to heal the sick and deliver people from demons; He intends for *all* of His children to pray for the sick and cast out demons. This occurs through discipleship. Discipleship occurs in church.

In other words, what Paul did as one person will be replaced by thousands of people doing the same thing. The Ephesian revival eventually spawned hundreds of churches in the city. Eventually, all of those churches came under the leadership of Timothy and then under the leadership of John. The church at Ephesus was responsible for the six other churches found in Asia in Revelation chapters one, two and three—Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### ***THE OUTCOME OF REVIVAL***

Now we come to chapter 20. The entire anatomy of revival we have been studying comes down to this chapter. Chapter 18 describes God working behind the scenes, for the lives of key people to prepare Ephesus for change. Chapter 19 describes the beginning and progress of the revival. And chapter 20 is the final outcome of the revival; what is to be left behind.

### **Chaos in Ephesus**

When Paul left Ephesus, the city was in chaos. His converts, disciples, and those who started the church were probably thinking, “Is this the way revival ends? Our city is in chaos. We’re divided.” The Christians were probably upset with the Ephesians and the Ephesians with the Christians. And the one person who could probably bring peace to the situation, Paul, had departed from Ephesus. But again, revival is not dependent on one individual. The torch must be handed to the converts and disciples who were created by revival.

Every minister brings people out of one place and into another. Moses took the children of Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness. Joshua took them out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land. God uses some spiritual leaders to create ministries where one does not exist. He then calls others to build on their foundations. Foundation builders, like Paul are usually evangelists and apostles. Those who build on their foundation, turning converts into disciples,

are teachers and pastors. This is the turning point of revival. We will see this as we move from evangelistic, miracle meetings to the establishment of local churches in Ephesus. This is chapter 20.

Paul brought the believers in Ephesus as far as he could. Paul was a wise master builder—a foundation layer. We often become so attached to an individual, we don't realize God can use other ministers to bring the same message or take us to a new level.

I believe our nation is ripe for revival. Believers are hungry for a demonstration of God's power in their lives and churches. Today we have large churches, but so many have become "shells" of their former selves. They have a form of godliness but deny the power of God's Spirit. Whenever there is a departure from the power of the Holy Spirit, the atmosphere can become ripe for revival. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (Amplified), *"And my language and my message were not set forth in persuasive (enticing and plausible) words of wisdom, but they were in demonstration of the [Holy] Spirit and power [a proof by the Spirit and power of God, operating in me and stirring in the minds of my hearers the most holy emotions and thus persuading them], So that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men (human philosophy), but in the power of God"* (See also 1 Thessalonians 1:5).

As mentioned previously, when Paul returned to Ephesus, he prayed with twelve new believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Revival doesn't begin with sinners, but with Christians who are hungry for the power of the Holy Spirit. From the day of Pentecost, the revivals at Samaria and Ephesus to the revivals of the past century, nothing has changed. When Christians allow the Holy Spirit to be free to change their lives, people are changed, cities are changed and nations are changed.



## Time Off

### **Acts 20:1:** (ESV)

*After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.*

Paul left Ephesus, and would not be talked into staying. After three years of preaching and teaching the gospel, Paul was ready to take a break. In 2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV) he says, *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”* Paul was as human as we are. If we continue working without rest, our earthen vessel will collapse. Paul had not had a day off in three years so he will take a long vacation. Even God rested on the seventh day, not because He was tired. *God set in motion a precedent for us to rest our natural body.* In the Old Testament, God demanded the children of Israel to let the land rest for one year, every seven years. They went into captivity for 70 years because they didn’t let the land rest. The land wasn’t producing and God said, “The land is going to rest.” Because Israel did not let the land rest, the land purposely rested. Your body is made of dirt. If you do not let it rest, it will purposely rest. Rest times are important to God. I’ve heard people say, “I’d rather wear out for God than rust out for the devil.” But why do either one? By taking time to rest, we actually extend our lives. All ministers have physical bodies. I may have a calling and an anointing, but that is on my spirit, my inward man. I am anointed to preach, not live. Jesus took time off. Paul took time off. Moses was instructed by his father-in-law to have other people

help him in ministry so he could rest more and live a longer life. Because of a lack of rest, many ministers have had emotional and physical breakdowns, as with Epaphraditus (Philippians 2:27-30). Paul knew the value of rest and is taking a well deserved break from ministry.

**Acts 20:2-3: (ESV)**

*When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.*

After leaving Ephesus, Paul stopped by a few churches to encourage the believers. When he arrived in Greece, he spent three months resting there. Greece is a gorgeous locale; a perfect place to vacation. Paul was making plans to sail back to Syria and discovered the Jews had devised a plot against him. Instead of sailing directly to Syria, he returned through Macedonia.

## Paul's Traveling Companions

**Acts 20:4: (ESV)**

*Sopater the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus.*

Paul knew all of the men listed in this passage. They traveled ahead of Paul to Troas and when he arrived, they spent a week together fellowshiping and resting.

**Acts 20:5-6: (ESV)**

*These went on ahead and were waiting for us at Troas, but we sailed away from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we came to them at Troas, where we stayed for seven days.*

Notice, verse 6 says “we sailed...” Luke, who wrote the book of Acts now joins Paul and his team.

Troas is where God maneuvered Paul into His will for Macedonia and eventually the revival of Ephesus. The vision to minister in Macedonia took Paul to Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth and finally Ephesus. Paul is now revisiting this seaside city.

**Acts 20:7: (ESV)**

*On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight.*

## **Preaching ‘Til Midnight**

Paul had gathered with his friends listed in verse 4 and others to fellowship with them. Paul began talking with them and ended up speaking until midnight. One young man who was listening fell asleep during Paul's sermon.

**Acts 20:8-9: (ESV)**

*There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him."*

**Acts 20:11-12: (ESV)**

*And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.*

## **Walking and Sailing to Assos**

**Acts 20:13: (ESV)**

*But going ahead to the ship, we set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul aboard there, for so he had arranged, intending himself to go by land.*

In this verse Luke now takes over leadership and writes about the events taking place. Paul has decided to walk while the others sail to their destination, which is about 20 miles away. Paul has some issues on his heart. Though Paul is taking time off, he does not neglect prayer. Paul is needing direction from the Holy Spirit.

He will eventually end up outside Ephesus to meet with the young ministers over the new churches. In his heart there is an urgency to go to Rome. After meeting with the young men he will determine to travel to Rome, taking a detour through Jerusalem on his way.

## Instructions from Jesus

Just as Paul will give these new ministers instruction about ministry, so Jesus gave His disciples instruction.

### **Mark 6:7-13:** (ESV)

*And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff—no bread, no bag, no money in their belts—but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. And he said to them, “Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you depart from there. And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.” So they went out and proclaimed that*

*people should repent. And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.*

Jesus instructed the disciples early in His ministry about how to minister to others. Jesus commanded them to lay hands on the sick, to cast out demons, and to preach the gospel. He instructed them to stay in homes where they were received and leave the places where they were not received and their message rejected. The disciples did as they were instructed and returned excited.

**Mark 6:30-32: (ESV)**

*The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.*

The disciples obeyed Jesus and went on the journey. Once they returned, Jesus said, “Now, let’s take time off.” They had been so busy preaching, ministering to the sick, and casting out demons, they hardly had time to eat. When we take time off, God sees to it someone else is available to minister.

**Praying is Listening Too**

Paul had already taken time off in Greece. After leaving Greece he spent time visiting friends, and later preached in one church until midnight. But outside the one service, Paul took a break from ministry. While resting he did not neglect prayer and study of the Word.

That is one of the things I enjoy when I am away. I relax, pray and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Most of my prayers are not speaking, but listening. Prayer should be a dialogue. After speaking to God we should expect a reply. I have heard people say, “God never speaks to me.” My question is *do you take time to listen?* God said, “*Be still and know that I am God*” (Psalm 46:10 ESV). Study and quiet times are a good time to listen.

A friend of mine has a missionary organization. He takes off one week every year to pray in a hotel room. He said, “I call it my *time of prayer*, spending an entire week with God for what I have planned for the upcoming year. I never leave without Him giving me the direction I’m seeking.”

In prayer, we speak and God speaks. Between the two of us, who has more important things to say? Of course, God does! Don’t dominate the conversation.

## From Resort to Resort

**Acts 20:14:** (ESV)

*And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene.*

Paul and his companions will now begin traveling from city to city. Assos and Mitylene are islands in the Mediterranean. They still exist today.

Mitylene is the capitol of the resort island of Lesbos. Lesbos is where we get our word “lesbian.” The Bible doesn’t indicate how long they stayed, but relaxation and refreshing was their goal. Imagine Paul and his companions lying on a beach in the Mediterranean. This is not your usual image of Paul.

**Acts 20:15-16: (ESV)**

*We sailed from there, and the next day came opposite Chios. The following day we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next day we came to Miletus. For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.*

They sailed from Mitylene and the next day came to Chios. After Chios, they arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium, which was a city on the island of Samos located in the eastern Aegean Sea. Each of the cities Paul and his companions traveled to was an island resort.

Chios was famous in the ancient world for the production of wine. Samos was a famous resort for the Roman military. It was near Ephesus, which was a free state under Rome. The temple of Hera was located in Greece, and the worship of the goddess Hera was similar to the worship of Diana.

What is notable about all the cities Paul traveled to is the Bible doesn’t mention that he ministered while there. The need was there, but Paul was there to be refreshed and prepare for his next spiritual assignment.



After this break, Paul will end up in Miletus where he will speak to pastors, the leaders of the churches of Ephesus. The churches have formed during the three years Paul preached the Word of God. This will be Paul's first contact with the ministers since the riots broke out and he departed from Ephesus.

## Meeting With the Elders

### **Acts 20:17:** (ESV)

*Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.*

The "elders" mentioned in this verse are the pastors of the churches. The word "elder" is the word *presbuteros*, which is simply the word for *maturity*. These are the ones Paul put into leadership positions in the churches. Not only were they mature but called to pastor. They weren't perfect, which is part of the reason for the conference. Paul has arrived to answer many of their questions.

### **Acts 20:18-19:** (ESV)

*And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews;*

Paul refers back to the three years he spent in Ephesus; reasoning with the Jews in the synagogue then ministering from the school of Tyrannus. He said, “To serve the Lord means tears and trials. It also includes plots against your life while you sincerely preach deliverance. Yet, don’t hold back anything profitable from those you are ministering to.”

Christians are not the greatest opposition to the church. Sinners are not the greatest opposition either. Legalistic, religious people are the greatest opposition and worst enemy of the church. Just like Jesus, Paul’s worst enemies were religious people. Most of the legalism Paul dealt with in the books of Romans and Galatians and Peter dealt with in the first and second epistles of Peter, had to do with religion. Religion can either come from the world or Christians. Paul tells those gathered, “My greatest opposition was the religious people. They were the ones who saw me as a threat and were plotting against me.”

Many of these young ministers had been saved under Paul’s ministry. They learned the Word under him and are now preparing to lead the churches which came from the revival. Now the time has come to put to test what they have learned. The ministry is filled with blessings and harsh realities. Paul will deal with both.

## Nothing Held Back

**Acts 20:20-21:** (ESV)

*How I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The *King James Version* says, “How I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you...” The Greek word for “kept back” is *hupostello*. It means “*did **not** furl the sails, cower, shrink, conceal.*” Paul said, “With you, I held back nothing. I didn’t furl the sails.” A sailor knows to slow down a ship you furl (roll up) the sails. If you want the ship to sail faster, you unroll them. Paul said, “With you, I never furled the sails. I opened them as wide as possible, and held nothing profitable back from you. I taught you at all times, in public meetings and from house to house (the churches which were forming).”

Verse 20 continues, “...but have shewed you, and have taught you...” Notice Paul said, “I have *shown* you and I have *taught* you.” These are the two parts to ministry—*teaching the Word and living it.*

I am sure you have known ministers who can teach the Word well, but they don’t live it. I have also been behind the scenes with ministers I admired and been shocked at what they say about other preachers. After teaching from the pulpit about God’s love and loving others, they gossip about other ministers behind closed doors.

## The World is Watching

I once heard someone question a minister about the way he lived compared to what he preached from the pulpit. His response to the question was, “When I’m in the pulpit, I’m just preaching.” Whether we like it or not, our life is preaching. Truthfully, people would rather *see* a testimony than hear one. We should not tell others about Jesus, but desire to live another way. Our lives should cause people to ask us, “There’s something different about your life. What is it?” We are living epistles, known and read of all men. Our testimony comes through in words and deeds.

I once worked at a grocery store in my hometown. Being raised in my dad’s church, I didn’t think much about the way I lived my life, or that people were watching me. The people I worked with didn’t know I was a Christian. But after some time passed, they noticed there was something different about me.

One day a lady came in and kept telling me how to pack her groceries. “Pack those two items together. Take that out of the bag and put it in the other bag. Make that bag lighter.” She went on and on. After awhile I started thinking to myself, “*Lady, I know how to bag groceries. I wish you would just leave!*”

I carried her bags out and when we got to her car she started up again, “Put this bag over there. I want this in the trunk. Put this one in the front seat.” After all that, I was sure she would give me a tip, but she didn’t give me *anything*! I walked back to the store with the grocery cart, rolling it to the door and BANG! I rammed it into place.

A cashier saw what I had done and said, “I’ve never seen you lose your temper. I’ve never seen you act like this. Never!”

I felt convicted I had allowed the woman to make me so angry and I apologized to the cashier. I realized at that moment people were watching me.

So, there are definitely two parts to ministry—what you preach and how you live. A minister should be the same outside the pulpit as behind it.

## Paul Rationalizes

### Acts 20:22-27: (ESV)

*<sup>22</sup> And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, <sup>23</sup> except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. <sup>24</sup> But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. <sup>25</sup> And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all, <sup>27</sup> for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.*

In his own heart, Paul senses the warning of the Holy Spirit. He knows he will be bound when he arrives in Jerusalem. He states, “I’m going to Jerusalem...*not knowing* what will happen to me there.”

In verse 24 (KJV) Paul states, “...*none of these things move me.*” Paul was prepared in his heart to go to prison and suffer persecution. Although he planned to preach the gospel, it never happened on this trip to Jerusalem.

## Innocent of All Blood

Paul says in verse 26, “...*I am innocent of the blood of all.*” Paul explained he was free from responsibility for their lives because he had shared with them everything God had commanded him to. Now, if they fail, they will be responsible, not Paul. Whenever a minister gives his people the Word of God and leaves nothing out, he is free from responsibility over them. Paul walked away from these ministers without a burden, knowing he had taught and shared with them everything God told him.

### **Acts 20:28:** (ESV)

*Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

The pastors were to prioritize their lives. They were to take care of themselves *before* they took care of others. If a minister does not prioritize his life, take care of himself and his family, he cannot properly take care of the flock God has entrusted to him. If he does not do these important things, he will not live long enough to take the congregation to the level God intends for them.

The men gathered with Paul had been placed in their positions by the Holy Spirit. Once a position has been given by God, it is the minister's responsibility to fully accept the responsibility of the position and walk boldly in the authority that accompanies it.

The pastor's main responsibility is to feed the flock. And, he must always remember that the sheep belong to the Lord. Jesus purchased them through His shed blood. Whoever purchases, owns. The pastor does not own the sheep; he is simply watching God's flock. His main responsibility is to feed the flock. We remember from Acts 6, the church leadership was to primarily give themselves to "*prayer and ministry of the Word.*"

## Wolves and Twisted Things

### **Acts 20:29-31: (ESV)**

*I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.*

The "wolves" mentioned in verse 29, refers to religious unbelievers, false prophets (Jude 4) coming into the midst of believers to destroy the work of God. They are not looking for followers.

In verse 30 Paul mentions a worse group; believers who know the truth, but twist it, who rise up and draw followers after themselves. These desire an audience and following. These are the ones who create church splits.

## Paul's Final Prayer

**Acts 20:32-35:** (ESV)

*And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Like a father, Paul is now turning his “sons” over to God. Everything Paul knew had been given to these pastors. As in Paul’s life, the Word should be the issue not money. He admonished them not to covet the riches of those in their congregations. As ministers, they should work hard in study, preaching, and caring for their congregation.

**Acts 20:36-38:** (ESV)



*And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.*

Paul prays one last time with the pastors. They had spent three years together and a bond had developed between them like father and sons. They were weeping with gratitude, love, and respect for Paul realizing they will not see him again.

Ephesus had been a city in need of revival. Now it was a city which would spread revival. What took the city from the preaching of one man to the establishment of hundreds of local churches? It was the plan of God, the anatomy of revival. From humble beginnings, revival has now produced powerful churches capable of reproving themselves. Excited converts have now become excited disciples and church leaders.

## **Many Converts, Few Disciples**

There are far too many churches today filled with converts but not disciples. We live in a day when the influence of the Holy Spirit has been diminished in churches for the sake of people feeling “comfortable” in church. We also live in a time when the Word of God has been watered down so as not to offend people. Cultural issues such as the homosexual lifestyle and couples living together instead of being married caused many to back off from the truth of God’s Word. There is a mindset that we must not be offensive to the hearers in our churches.

The truth is the Holy Spirit *can* be offensive, and the Word *can* be offensive. Some people need to be offended to shock them into a realization that Satan and hell are real.

For this chapter, I want to look at one last passage in Luke.

**Luke 14:23: (NKJV)**

*Then the master said to the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges (alleys), and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*

(Message)

*The master said, "Then go to the country roads. Whoever you find, drag them in. I want my house full!"*

There is an urgency with this command. The master said, "Go to the major thoroughfares and to the narrow passageways, big places and small places, and compel them to come!" God intends for all believers to fill His house. Until Jesus returns, we must compel and urge others to come. Compelling others means not giving up the first time they reject an invitation to receive Jesus. Compelling others also means not giving up when they say no to an invitation to meet you at church. Don't take a no personally. Remember, hell is real and so is heaven. We want to compel them toward heaven.

**Revival Has An End**

Revival has a destination, the transfer of ownership from the evangelist or apostle to the people of God. It is to see established churches empowered by the Holy Spirit taking revival to the streets of the world. God never intended for churches to begin with His power and then become dull and lifeless. Churches should be filled with the ministry and presence of the Holy Spirit. They should be filled with healing. Revival fires should never leave the churches.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### ***SOME CLOSING THOUGHTS***

If the scripture is true, “where sin abounds, grace does much more abound” (Romans 5:20), then what must the future be of our country and the world?

Some Bible teachers tell us the church will reach its lowest point of dedication and love of the Lord Jesus just before the coming of Jesus for His Church. The belief is based on two scriptures that say, “*that day (of Jesus’ return) will not come except there come a falling away first...*” (2 Thessalonians 2:3) and, “God will send strong delusion that they should believe a lie” (2 Thessalonians 2:11). Although I believe both verses are speaking of believers in the end times, they are not speaking of all believers. There always has been and still is a remnant according to the election of grace and seven thousand reserved who have not bowed their knee to Satan. It only takes a few, even one, to change what looks impossible.

Other Bible teachers, including me, believe a great revival will occur worldwide and usher in the return of Jesus for His Church. If the light truly shines brightest when darkness is at its worst, then grace will much more abound as sin reaches the greatest level in history. And, if the tribulation period is really the greatest time of evangelism ever known, then revival must have begun before Jesus’ return. It must have started at the time sin began to escalate. Even in times of greatest oppression, the church, which went underground, grew larger. When oppression ended, the church emerged in great power. Sin never catches God by surprise, He always has an answer prepared for the worst of circumstances.

## God's Perfect Timing

Each revival in history seems to come at a time when despair has taken over the hearts of the people. There seemed to be no answer to the tyranny of religion and legalism, when God spoke to the heart of Martin Luther and told him, "*the just shall live by faith.*" That was a turning point in our natural and spiritual history.

At the end of World War II, the world was disillusioned as Russia was given many countries of Eastern Europe. After fighting to set the world free, those countries were enslaved again under communism. In just a few years, the healing revivals of the late 1940's and early 1950's began. God's healing power was displayed before the world and healing evangelists took center stage.

The closest to destruction the United States had ever seen was in 1968. The peace movement, the radical social organizations, students rioting in the streets and shooting on university campuses was front page news. Then the Charismatic Movement erupted. The Holy Spirit swept through denominations, school campuses, and social movements. Young people were baptized in the Pacific Ocean, new worship music was being written and Christian rock music was heard on the top 40 radio stations. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the movement birthed Christian business meetings and a nationwide women's ministry. The teaching of faith, healing and divine prosperity arose and local churches grew to thousands as Christians came to hear the Word of God taught with signs and wonders. Never has sin abounded more than grace.

## God Has Saved the Best for Last

Why would today be any different? How could liberal religion and government and apathy among much of the body of Christ be greater than God's grace and power? Because you cannot see revival in your area, does not mean it is not there. A groundswell has begun in the world and is headed for your city. Revival has encompassed many countries in the Far East and South America, and is occurring in pockets of our own country. I believe the earth will experience a taste of the glory of the Lord covering the whole earth before Jesus comes.

Much of prophecy throughout the years, from leaders of great spiritual movements, have foretold of a great worldwide revival at the time of Jesus' return for His Church. Sin and great perversion have occurred in parts of the world before, but is now found in all countries. In the same way, righteousness and the power of God will be manifested everywhere by God's grace. Revivals have occurred in parts of the world before. Now it will encompass the earth. Sin and righteousness are both on an international rise. Righteousness will win.

Stop being disillusioned and saddened by the news. We know the end of the Bible, Jesus will return to the earth with power and great glory to set up His kingdom. How could CBS, NBC or CNN be greater than God's Word? How could any demon in hell or Satan himself be greater than the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ? Jesus promised the gates of hell would not prevail against us. So, enjoy revival. Do you think the best revivals have come and gone? You haven't seen anything yet!