Revival is Possible

Small Group Lesson

Big Idea: Throughout history, there have been many powerful moves of God across the globe. When men and women became discontented with life as they knew it and desired more, the glory of God was poured out in revolutionary measure. Revival is a sovereign move of God in the heart of society, where there is an awakening of the human spirit towards God. The church is mobilized to reach the lost and there's a massive harvest of people. Now, more than ever we desperately need a spiritual awakening in our country, starting with us!

Key Scriptures: Habakkuk 3:2 (NIV) & Psalm 77:11-12

Habakkuk 3:2 - "Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy."

Psalm 77:11-12 - "I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds."

5 Historical Revivals

1. The Welsh Revival

(1904 in Wales)

Evan Roberts was a young man who was pivotal in the Welsh Revival. He was known as someone who spent many hours each week in prayer personally and at group prayer meetings. He didn't allow his young age to keep him from crying out for souls. His prayer was, "Lord, bend me to your will." The Holy Spirit impressed him that 100,000 souls could be reached with the Gospel. And that impression became reality!

He began to preach, encouraging people to: 1) Deal with all SIN in their lives, 2) Deal with all DOUBT in their minds, 3) Become COMPLETELY obedient to the Holy Spirit, acting IMMEDIATELY when HE speaks, 4) Publicly CONFESS Christ! The entire region was impacted drastically by the Gospel and began to repent and confess their sin. Families were restored. Men no longer prioritized making money over church attendance. Local bars shut down because the miners quit drinking. There are even stories of pit miners' donkeys needing to be retrained after the miners found Jesus because their speech was no longer foul. They had encountered Jesus and He had made a real difference in their lives!

Discussion Question: Are you content right now in your Spiritual walk? Do you feel you have received all you can from God or are you hungry for more?

2. The Moravian Revival

(1722 in Germany)

Count Zinzendorf was another young man who was used by God to bring about revival. He was a religious and social reformer who had an incredible impact in his time. He had inherited thousands of acres of land and decided to let refugees from Moravia and Bohemia build villages on his estate. The villages became known as places of religious freedom and many who were persecuted were able to find refuge. Count Zinzendorf led prayer meetings and taught the Scriptures to the villagers. He also had a burden for those in slavery and became a missionary himself to the island St. Thomas where he preached his last sermon. Another pivotal part of the Moravian Revival was that of intercessory hourly prayer. Men and women devoted themselves to praying for one hour each hour of the day. Over 600 missionaries were sent out as a result of this prayer movement. The model of 24/7 is still practiced today and is crucial to the advancement of the Kingdom of God!

Discussion Question: How is your personal prayer life? Do you have a routine of spending time in prayer each day? What keeps you from devoting yourself to prayer?

3. The Jesus Movement

(1968 in California)

The 1960s-1970s was a time marked by the Vietnam War, Civil Rights movement, The Beatles, and the Hippie movement. Young people who were originally outcasts, drug-obsessed, and anti-religion began getting saved. Lonnie Frisbee, gave his heart to Jesus and began attending Calvary Chapel pastored by Chuck Smith. The church was well established, members were affluent and ran on a predictable schedule. As the hippies began attending it upset some of the members and several of them left the church as a result. In the midst of this, Chuck's wife felt that God was doing something special and that they should open their hearts to what He wanted to do among them. She was right! God continued to move on the hearts of these young people and the church was overrun with people getting saved!

Discussion Question: How would you feel if the lost started coming to your Bgroup or Bethany campus? The ones who smell like drugs, are dressed inappropriately, or are rough around the edges? Would you respond with an open heart or would you be tempted to judge or refuse to make room for them to experience Christ?

4. The Great Awakenings

(1730-1770 in the United States)

The people who had pioneered the settlement of the early colonies were tired of church and became preoccupied with their lives, raising crops to eat and turned their backs on God. As a result, a desperation began to happen in the hearts of pastors like Jonathan Edwards. He was typically a quiet, reserved man, and wrote a sermon called Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God. As he read the sermon, the Spirit of God fell in the room. People began to feel convicted of their sin and hit their knees repenting! At the same time, a fiery evangelist named George Whitefield came from the UK and began preaching in city after city. He preached over 17,000 sermons throughout his ministry. For thirty years, revival spread across America and people returned to God. The Great Awakening was the reason early Americans had the courage to stand up to the British to become independent. They began to value religious freedom, independence, and liberty. Years later, another great revival swept America. Charles Finney, a lawyer, began to travel and preach the Gospel. A huge wave of revival hit our country called the Second Great Awakening. Finney felt that slavery was wrong and was passionate about seeing it abolished. The Civil War resulted when men like Abraham Lincoln began to value life and freedom as a result of this Revival and made radical changes to end slavery in our country. Political movements don't bring about revival. It is revival that brings change in the human heart and impacts a nation!

Discussion Question: Do you remember the first time you felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit? How did you respond when you felt the weight of your sin? Is repentance a part of your walk with Christ or was it a one time thing?

5. St. Patrick's Revival

(400 A.D. in the United Kingdom)

A young boy, Patrick, was kidnapped from a beach and brought to the island of Ireland. He was made a slave and became a shepherd for the Irish people. Ireland was filled with clans and tribes and was overrun with witchcraft. God visited Patrick in the fields as a shepherd. He had a dream of a ship coming to set him free. Through the next six years, he grew in his relationship with God. His dream came true and he was able to escape and make it back home. His family was thrilled to have him safe at home. However, he was burdened for the people of that island and those who had enslaved him. After some training, he went back and devoted his life to share the gospel. He prayed for the sick and saw miracles. He was persecuted but was able to reach over 150,000 people for Christ!

Discussion Question: Patrick's imprisonment was an integral part of God using him to reach the lost. Think about some of the hardships of your life. Trials you've walked through, abuse or mistreatment you've experienced. Could it be that God wants to use those experiences for His glory? How would you respond if the Holy Spirit began to burden your heart for those who had hurt you or mistreated you?

Summary

Is revival possible today in 2024? In our city? In our nation? The answer is YES! God desires to breathe afresh on His people and draw all men to Himself. Revival begins with us. 1) We've got to have a divine discontentment with where we are personally! 2) We've got to pray continually! Perpetual and persistent prayer! 3) We've got to have an open heart to the lost, those who don't look, act, or smell like us! 4) We've got to preach the Gospel with boldness and passion! Every believer must be bold in sharing their faith! 5) We've got to be completely obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit! When we cry out for Revival God answers!

Results of Revival

1. Mass Evangelism
2. Open Repentance
3. Great Joy and Fellowship
4. Releasing of Evangelists & Missionaries

Prayer - *"Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds. REPEAT THEM IN OUR DAY, IN OUR TIME MAKE THEM KNOWN; in wrath remember mercy." Make us hungry, Lord. Help us to thirst after you. Give us a desire to see your Spirit move in our homes, our neighborhoods, church, our city, our nation. Amen!*