

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE Revival Fires are Burning

SERIES

DATE 2/19/2023

KEY SCRIPTURE 1 Kings 8:10-11

SYNOPSIS Revival is sweeping across the nation. How can we be included?

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ REVIVAL FIRES ARE BURNING

☞ Video clip from Asbury

☞ **Bill Elliff, author, pastor, church consultant, February 11, 2023 at the Asbury Revival**

I hesitate to even write of this because I've only been here one day. I have no idea of the magnitude of what God has done in the last few days. Many are asking me what I'm observing, though, so I would give these cursory thoughts. Heaven records the full reality.

1. ☞ This is real. **God is very present.**
2. ☞ **Worship is glorious, unified, and simple.** A piano and guitar, led by various student teams who understand that worship is not performance.
3. ☞ **The altar is almost always full.** Wonderful prayer counselors are helping them.
4. ☞ **It is not weird.** Everything is extremely orderly but vibrant, spontaneous, and powerful.
5. In some ways, it is a worship-based, Spirit-led, Scripture-fed prayer gathering. It is just what we should be doing all the time: waiting before God, worshiping Him, praying to Him, listening to Him, responding to Him, and being shepherded by wise leaders who see themselves merely as facilitators of God's activity.
6. When the microphones were opened for testimonies, there were long lines of grateful ☞ people telling what God has done in the last 72 hours. **Very real and profound things are occurring quickly in hundreds of lives.**
7. ☞ The unity and worship are heavenly. **No pretense, pride, or show.** No manipulation. You don't want to leave.
8. People seem to be moved by Christ deeply, not merely by emotion, although emotions are present. (How could we not be emotional if God is in the room in power and lives are being transformed?)

☞ **Tom McCall, professor of theology, PhD, February 13, 2023**

Most Wednesday mornings at Asbury University are like any other. A few minutes before 10, students begin to gather in Hughes Auditorium for chapel. Students are required to attend a certain number of chapels each semester, so they tend to show up as a matter of routine.

But this past Wednesday was different. After the benediction, the gospel choir began to sing a final chorus—and then something began to happen that defies easy description. Students did ☞ not leave. They were struck by what seemed to be a quiet but **powerful sense of transcendence**, and they did not want to go. They stayed and continued to worship. They are still there.

I teach theology across the street at Asbury Theological Seminary, and when I heard of what was happening, I immediately decided to go to the chapel to see for myself. When I arrived, I ☞ saw hundreds of students singing quietly. They were **praising and praying earnestly** for



themselves and their neighbors and our world—**expressing repentance** and contrition for sin and **interceding** for healing, wholeness, peace, and justice.

Some were reading and reciting Scripture. Others were standing with arms raised. Several were clustered in small groups praying together. A few were kneeling at the altar rail in the front of the auditorium. Some were lying prostrate, while others were talking to one another, their faces bright with joy.

They were still worshiping when I left in the late afternoon and when I came back in the evening. They were still worshiping when I arrived early Thursday morning—and by midmorning hundreds were filling the auditorium again. I have seen multiple students running **☞** toward the chapel each day. By Thursday evening, there was **standing room only**. Students had begun to arrive from other universities...

The worship continued throughout the day on Friday and indeed all through the night. On Saturday morning, I had a hard time finding a seat; by evening the building was packed beyond capacity. Every night, some students and others have stayed in the chapel to pray through the night. And as of Sunday evening, the momentum shows no signs of slowing down.

Many people say that in the chapel they hardly even realize how much time has elapsed. It is almost as though time and eternity blur together as heaven and earth meet. Anyone who has witnessed it can agree that something unusual and unscripted is happening.

As an analytic theologian, I am weary of hype and very wary of manipulation. I come from a background where I've seen efforts to manufacture "revivals" and "movements of the Spirit" that were sometimes not only hollow but also harmful. I do not want anything to do with that. And **☞** truth be told, this is nothing like that. **There is no pressure or hype**. There is no manipulation. There is no high-pitched emotional fervor. To the contrary, it has so far been mostly calm and **☞** serene. The **mix of hope and joy and peace** is indescribably strong and indeed almost palpable—a vivid and incredibly powerful sense of *shalom*. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is undeniably powerful but also so gentle. God is present and active.

I reminded my students that ...the worship we are experiencing in the chapel must have real-life implications for our fellowship outside of it. In previous revivals, there has always been fruit that has blessed both the church and society. For instance, even secular historians acknowledge that the Second Great Awakening was pivotal to bringing about the end of slavery in our country. Likewise, I look forward to seeing what fruit God will bring from such a revival in our generation.

At lunch on Friday, my son Josiah found me and told me that he and his friends had been kneeling at the altar and praying together. There were four people in his group, and they were each praying in a different language. He later asked me, "Is this something like heaven will be?" I told him I thought it was, albeit the faintest reflection of what "no eye has seen, what no ear **☞** has heard." It is as if **a tiny slice of heaven is meeting us here on earth**.



☞ **Craig Keener, pastor, theologian, professor**

The university chapel (seating 1500) and seminary chapels (seating 1000) and a local church are filled and lines are waiting outside. But what strikes me most is that, even walking near the ☞ chapel or out on the street (itself full of cars), **I CAN FEEL THE TANGIBLE PRESENCE OF GOD.**

☞ **Kelli Leavens, Facebook Post**

The main takeaway from the Asbury revival is this: There is a piano player, a guitar player, and a single drum. Hard chairs. 'Ugly' interior. The lights don't dim. No one is serving donuts. Not a single smoke machine. No fancy lights. No timers. No perfect productions. No hierarchy or competition. No kids class. Nobody greets you in the parking lot. Literally no structure ☞ whatsoever. Apparently, **the only thing needed to attract people to GOD is... God.**

☞ **Tim Hill, General Overseer of Church of God, Sunday February 12, 2023**

Don't Miss What God is Doing! There is an unusual revival and outpouring of the Holy Spirit taking place right now in various locations around the nation. Here are some examples:

*Asbury Chapel

*For almost an entire month, the New Life Church at Miramar Beach, Florida has experienced what they have described as "The Open-Door Outpouring." Pastor Shawn Baker just reported ☞ that "Blinded eyes have opened. **Creative miracles** are taking place. There is an aroma of God's presence." To date, there have been: 83 **Salvations**, 65 **Rededicated**, 83 **Holy Spirit Baptisms**, 31 **verifiable healings** of the sick, 41 Water Baptisms and numerous people have been set free from demonic power.

*Encounter Church in Fate, Texas near Dallas, is now in their 9th month of revival. Pastor Chris Binion reported that it came through prayer and is marked by the healing presence of the Holy Spirit. Over 100 verifiable healings have taken place.

*Most recently in a pastor's conference in Orlando ...I heard the Holy Ghost say, "I want this now." I postponed the session, and soon, pastors and their wives from all across North America were brought into the presence of the Lord. Weeping, prayer, prophetic utterances and intercessory prayer for one another seized the program.

I highlight these occasions only to emphasize that there are many more like them taking place ☞ seemingly everywhere. **Where people are hungry, repentant and obedient, the Holy Ghost is moving.** This must be our consuming prayer. **Repentance must be intentional and revival must be our passion.**

With that in mind, I'm prompted to plead with all who read this, make revival your passion. The other things that typically capture our thoughts and mark our hallway conversations ... will come soon enough and take care of themselves ... Right now, may it all be about Holy Spirit induced Revival that leads to Great Commission fulfillment.



At the dedication of the temple which Solomon built there was a revival. There's a brief description found in **1 Kings 8:10-11**. ***"10 When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. 11 And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple." There was such an overwhelming presence of the Lord that "business as usual" was not possible.

Subsequently, the people rededicated and committed themselves to the Lord. There was a great celebration and God blessed the people giving them joy and gladness of heart.

I want to be part of the revival fires that God is spreading across the nation. I want the glory of the Lord to fill OBC. How about you? As I read the account here, I was interested in what led up to this moment. Are there some hints about how we can be part of God's revival?

1 Kings 7:51-8:11

51 When all the work King Solomon had done for the temple of the Lord was finished, he brought in the things his father David had dedicated — the silver and gold and the furnishings — and he placed them in the treasuries of the Lord's temple.

☞ Honor the efforts of predecessors

8:1 Then King Solomon summoned into his presence at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the Lord's covenant from Zion, the City of David. 2 All the men of Israel came together to King Solomon at the time of the festival in the month of Ethanim, the seventh month.

☞ People come together in unity (during feast of tabernacles – remembering God's deliverance)

3 When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark, 4 and they brought up the ark of the Lord and the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings in it. The priests and Levites carried them up, 5 and King Solomon and the entire assembly of Israel that had gathered about him were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and cattle that they could not be recorded or counted.

☞ Sacrifice and preparation

6 The priests then brought the ark of the Lord's covenant to its place in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the Most Holy Place, and put it beneath the wings of the cherubim.

☞ God's presence is the primary focus; the core of everything else

10 When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. 11 And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple.

☞ God's presence overwhelms