

Pastor Jim Lloyd

Date: February 26, 2023

Title: REVIVAL?

Text: Psalm 85:6

Psalm 85:6 (NIV) - *“Will you not revive US again, that YOUR PEOPLE may rejoice in you?”*

Prayer: “Father, we thank You for Your presence. Lord, the air is pregnant with possibility, and we sense Your nearness. But we say that You are not near enough. Come, Holy Spirit. If not now, when? If not us, who? And if not here, where? Just tell us Lord, and we’ll go; we will pursue Your presence because we want You, Lord. Your presence is what we are after, and nothing less will do. Revive us, Lord. In Jesus’ name, Amen!”

Let me give you a BRIEF history of some American revivals. There is what has been called the **FIRST GREAT AWAKENING** which took place in 1730 – 40s. Jonathan Edwards was the primary messenger. It began in England. The **SECOND GREAT AWAKENING** took place in 1820 – 50s. Charles Finney was the primary messenger. The **THIRD GREAT AWAKENING** was birthed in Chicago. Moody, an uneducated man, was the primary messenger. During this time, the Civil War had ended and there was the Great Chicago Fire of October 8 – 10, 1871. The fire claimed hundreds of lives. It destroyed some 17,450 buildings covering nearly 5 square miles and caused \$200 million in damages. Roughly one third of the city lay in ruins. Nearly 100,000 were homeless. In great loss, people saw their need for Christ. Moody began a Bible study for street children. Abraham Lincoln attended to see for himself the working of God. Moody established Moody Church and Bible Institute. He preached around the country to 100 million people. **AZUSA STREET REVIVAL** took place in 1906 – 1915 at 312 Azusa Street in Los Angeles. It is often called the birthplace of the Pentecostal Movement. William Seymour was front and center. It is reported that Seymour prayed for 7 hours a day for months on end – with expectation! Here began a new focus on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. **20th CENTURY REVIVAL** took place 1910-1970. New York and Chicago were origin points. Billy Sunday, a baseball player turned preacher, carried the gospel message to 1.5 million people across the country in month long meetings. Then there is the **BROWNSVILLE REVIVAL** birthed on Father’s Day 1995 at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. It continued for 5 years. This was a call to holiness inspired by the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. More than 4 million people are reported to have attended those revival meetings. Of course, there are records of many, many other great revivals. In recent days, we are hearing the reports of revival again. On February 8, 2023 (19 days ago), a revival at **ASBURY UNIVERSITY** was prompted after students spontaneously stayed in Hughes Auditorium following a regularly scheduled chapel service. News of the revival spread on social media and tens of thousands of people have flooded the small, sleepy (now AWAKENED) town of Wilmore, Kentucky. I saw a clip where 20,000 people were waiting outside the Hughes Auditorium – an auditorium that seats 1,489. It has been reported that police have had to stop the flow of people into the town of Wilmore because of the masses of people descending upon it. It is my understanding that those meetings have of necessity been moved to multiple other locations. *Charisma Magazine* reported on February 24th, just 2 days ago – I QUOTE: “And now, Valley Forge has joined the growing list of universities, high schools, grade schools and churches where the Holy Spirit has overwhelmed these campuses and where nationwide revival - if not an awakening - is becoming more evident each day...the fire is spreading.”

I could go on and on. **SOUTH AFRICA** has had upwards of one million conversions in a year. In 1900 there wasn’t one Christian church in Korea. An old statistic said that in **SEOUL, KOREA** alone, there is now more than 4,000 churches. At one point 28,000 a day were coming to know Christ in **CHINA**. In 40 years’ time span, China went from one million to 63 million converts. In **IRAN**, more Muslims have come to know Christ since 1980 than in the previous 1,000 years. God’s promise to mankind is that *“IN THE LAST DAYS I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH!”* God is NOT a man that He should lie. If these are not the last days, we certainly are approaching those LAST DAYS.

I wouldn’t mind having a new Tesla. I’m quite sure I could find enjoyment in living in a bigger, new house in The

Gallery. I'd love to be wearing a Brioni suit this morning. Do you know WHY I am not driving a Tesla, wearing a Brioni suit or living in The Gallery? I'm not willing to pay the price. Well – more accurately it may be because I'm not ABLE to pay the price. Do you know why many a church is NOT seeing the fruits of REVIVAL? They AREN'T willing to pay the price. Contrary to my previous illustration, most ANY church CAN pay the price for revival. So, the question perhaps is NOT "Do you WANT REVIVAL?" Rather it is... "Are you willing to pay the price for revival?" If we are serious about seeing the fruit of revival, there is a price to be paid. If we're NOT willing to pay the price, then we'll likely do without. YES, Revival IS costly. I'm not just talking money here, but time, resources, efforts, dedication, commitment, desire and fervency of spirit. Most importantly – YOUR personal commitment to Christ. Revival might mean blood, sweat, and tears. In Isaiah 66, we see that when Zion travailed (paid the price), that's when she brought forth.

1. WHY ISN'T THE CHURCH SEEING A GREATER OUTPOURING OF REVIVAL? James 4:17, NIV – *"Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."* (Perhaps we're not doing what we should be doing.) Revival bypasses us because we have forsaken what we should be doing. We don't experience revival because of our lack. **A. LACK OF LOVE FOR GOD.** The church at Ephesus received condemnation from God because it had "left" its first love – that burning desire for Christ that once characterized the congregation. I don't see the Holy Spirit bringing revival to a church that merely fits Him in for a few minutes each week. It's hard to understand some folk's thinking. We see worship that features an outpouring of affection to the Lord during service time. Yet many of those same people don't have time for the Lord once the service is over. "Yes, Lord we love You, but – We have things to do and places to go, the shopping centers are open, we have company, the BIG GAME is coming on. See You next Sunday same time." Dallas Holm in a song entitled "Live What You Say," put it quite well – "Don't say that YOU LOVE HIM and live LIKE YOU DON'T. Don't say that He's VERY IMPORTANT TO YOU, then let EVERYTHING ELSE DOMINATE what you do." Article from *Our Daily Bread*, "Recently I talked to a man I will call Mr. Luke Warm, for he is neither cold or hot. He says he is a Christian but seldom attends church. 'I am under a great deal of tension where I work,' he explained, 'and often go fishing on weekends for relaxation. Church is all right, but a person can't do everything you know.' Mr. Luke Warm also had an uneasy conscience about his giving, for he continued, 'I put a dollar or two in the offering plate whenever I go, and I think that's all God can expect from me. If I gave a tenth of my income, it would amount to thousands of dollars. You just don't know how expensive it is for me to maintain my cabin at the lake and pay dues to keep my membership at the country club and the bowling league. Anyway, church puts too much emphasis on money. Sometimes I get so disgusted with this talk about sacrificing for Christ that I feel like quitting altogether.'" (Mr. Luke Warm wasn't always that way.) We need to guard our FIRST LOVE for the Lord. ILLUSTRATION: I received a call to speak to a few men on a Friday evening at a Christian drug rehab center. Diane and I arrived at the center to see between 400 and 500 men gathered. I hadn't expected such a crowd. To be honest, I was intimidated. I was expecting a few men on an ordinary Friday evening. Here were over 400 men, many of which had been in prison. All of which HAD drug and alcohol issues. Some had been delivered, and I would imagine those new to the program were seeking deliverance. Diane and I were led to the front of the auditorium. In the early part of that gathering, Diane sang "I Must Tell Jesus." Those men were on their feet, hands lifted, tears streaming down their faces. At that point, I realized THEY were going to have church WITH or WITHOUT me. I stepped to the podium and began reading the scripture. They shouted me down while I was reading. THEY were LIVING in their first love. This ugly, cruel world had taken everything from them. The ONLY thing many of them had now was their RELATIONSHIP with God. THOSE guys were living in what WE often forget – OUR relationship to God is EVERYTHING. Mark 12:30 says, *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."* Not some, not part, or even most, but ALL! For revival to take place, WE must return to our FIRST LOVE. **B. NEGLECT OF GOD'S WORD.** This one fits near the top of the list for hindrances to revival. Nothing SUSTAINS like the Word. Nothing MOTIVATES like the Word. Nothing CONVICTS like the Word. Psalm 119:11, NIV – *"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."* The WORD will keep you from sin. SIN will keep you from the Word. It would be amazing to learn how many believers have not picked up a Bible in days, or weeks, or dare we suggest months. Then there are the many who read the Bible on a regular basis

with no comprehension, not to mention retention – HIDE the Word in our hearts. 2 Timothy 2:15, NIV – *“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”* We need to view God’s Word – the Bible – as His love letter to us. Illustration: If a man were to freeze to death outside of a locked door with the key in his hand, we would ask why didn’t he use the key. Yet how many Christians are suffering, floundering, living beneath what God has for them, simply because they’ve not used the key – God’s Word? Many believers are struggling in their lives because they’ve not spent time in the Word. God has direction for your MARRIAGE. God has instructions for RAISING YOUR CHILDREN. God has a Word for your BUSINESS AFFAIRS. He speaks concerning our RELATIONSHIPS. **C. LACK OF LOVE FOR OTHERS.** (When I pause – fill in the words LOVE ONE ANOTHER.) 1 John 4:7a, NIV – *“Dear friends, let us LOVE ONE ANOTHER, for love comes from God...”*. 1 John 4:11 – *“Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”* 1 John 4:12 – *“No one has ever seen God; but if we LOVE ONE ANOTHER, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”* John 13:34 – *“A new command I give you: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. As I have loved you, so you must LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”* ILLUSTRATION: Some time back I read about an interesting display that was set up at Moody Church in Chicago for a missionary convention. It resembled a traffic light with red, amber, and green lights that come on and go off at intervals. The AMBER light indicated the departure of a missionary to the foreign field. It came on once every 35 hours. The RED light indicated the departure of a lost soul for eternity. It came on three times every two seconds. The GREEN light indicated when every North American church would give 2 cents to foreign missions. It came on every 24 hours. That was an old statistic that no doubt has changed, but the proportions are probably much the same. Let me share another Dallas Holm song: *“People are cryin’, people are dyin’. So why don’t we weep? How can we not cry? Have we been tryin’, or have we been lyin’? We say that we love our neighbor, but don’t even know their name. Do our lives describe His heart, or are our lives in vain? God give me a burden. God, give me a word and send me off to help the hurt and crying, wounded, hungry, lost and dying world.”* How many know hurting people? Have you offered to bring them to church? Or extended a helping hand? I remember one year where I was called upon to do funerals for 3 suicide victims. I recall receiving a phone call from a mother whose son had overdosed. (She had already lost a daughter to drugs.) If EVER there was a day of hurting people, it’s TODAY! **E. LACK OF SPIRITUAL TRAINING IN THE HOME.** Proverbs 22:6, NIV – *“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”* How can one expect a whole church to experience revival if there is not spiritual fervor in the homes. For way too many, God is delegated to a one-hour ritual. If there is no prayer or example of prayer in the home, how can our kids know how to pray when they get to church? I just want you to know it IS okay to bring your kids to our early prayer time OR our monthly prayer time. They might think it will kill them, BUT it hasn’t happened yet. Why is it so many parents see the need to provide for their children’s physical, mental, material, and emotional needs – and make little, if any, provision for their children’s spiritual needs? Wasn’t it last week we noted that the family was the first, the foremost, institution God created. Yet the spiritual dimension in the family is often the last entity we give attention to. I believe it was Chuck Swindoll I heard on a radio broadcast say that we are living in a generation where many parents would rather their teens be on the street involved in drinking and drugs than to be committed to Christ. I’m praying for spiritual and Godly homes. When that takes place, we will certainly see the evidence in our church.

2. FOR THERE TO BE REVIVAL, THERE MUST BE: A. INFORMATION – We must know what revival is. Vance Havner, in a book entitled *Repent or Else!*, says that *“Revival is the work of the Spirit among God’s own people whereby they get right with God and with each other.”* In an old issue of *Charisma* magazine (March 2007) under a subtitle *“The Key to Revival”*, it says, *“If you are praying for revival, the most important thing you can know is this: Revival is NOT an “it.” It is not a MOVEMENT. It is not an ACTIVITY. It is not an EVENT. Revival is HIM! It is JESUS visiting His Church. When we pray for revival, we are NOT pleading for a thing, but for the LORD. WE NEED HIM! We must know that God is at the door. He is ready to send revival. Why doesn’t He? We find the answer in 2 Chronicles 7:14, NIV – “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”* I don’t know that we have humbled ourselves. I’ve yet to see someone REALLY get excited at any

sermon I've ever preached on SERVANTHOOD. In America, no one's interested in SERVING. We ALL want to be served. Jesus says that if you want to be great, then you must learn to be a servant (Mark 9:35). I don't believe that we pray like we ought. Why is it that attendance usually SWELLS at a potluck or banquet and SHRINKS to its smallest number at a prayer meeting? Sometimes I wonder if we even know what it means to really seek His face and turn from our wicked ways. These days it's hard to tell a sinner from some professing Christians. Just because you go to a Christian church doesn't make you a Christian. Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to McDonald's makes you a hamburger or going to Chick-fil-A makes you a chicken sandwich. Earlier we mentioned the sin of OMISSION – *"He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."* There is also the sin of COMMISSION – doing what God has forbidden. I trust that there a healing will take place in our land. It is my understanding that every place that I mentioned earlier that experienced revival, had PRAYED for revival. Many had prayed for years. The church at Laodicea needed revival, BUT... She didn't know it. Revelation 3:17-18 (KJV) – *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."* This was the LUKEWARM church. She said, *"I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."* Jesus then says (same verse), *"...thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."* Then in verse 19 – He says, "REPENT." In Revelation 3:20, the Spirit sternly but tenderly rebuked her and reminded her that Christ was at the door – *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."* He is at the doors of our churches today. Some will let Him knock. Some will ignore His knock. A few will open the door to Him. What will it be for us? **B. REALIZATION** – Before revival comes, God's people must have a clear perception of two things: **IT IS GOD'S PEOPLE WHO NEED TO BE REVIVED.** The Psalmist prays, *"Wilt thou not revive US again: that THY PEOPLE may rejoice in thee?"* The very word "revive" presupposes the presence of life. We do not speak of reviving a dead man. There is reported to have been a church service where a man actually died. The ambulance was called. The report is that they took 4 out before they got the right man. You can't revive a dead man. But the FOUR living could still be revived. It's those who are alive but appear to be dead that are to be revived. ILLUSTRATION: To revive a fire, you don't start a new fire; you stir up the coals that are already there. You free them from the smothering ashes, add fuel, and fan them into a flame. ILLUSTRATION: Rev. J.G. Wood in his *Home Without Hands*, tells of an artificial colony of ants prepared for experiment. He reported that when the ants got sluggish and ceased to work for lack of moisture, a slight shower spray of water would set them all in activity with renewed energy. Should those ants be dead, a spray of water wouldn't do a thing for them. WE are not dead. It is GOD'S PEOPLE who need to be revived. Jesus' purpose for coming was that we might have LIFE and have it more ABUNDANTLY. Our text says – revive us that we might REJOICE in Him. WHERE is our joy? The joy of the Lord is our strength. What does one's lack of joy tell us? NO joy – NO strength! When we examine the early church during the time when they were living in the power of the Holy Spirit, we note two distinct qualities or characteristics. ITS VIGOROUS PRAYER LIFE. They believed in the shared prayer of God's people. When Peter and John were arrested in the temple and subsequently tried, threatened, and released, they reported to the assembled church what had happened. The church immediately engaged in prayer, not to be kept safe, but to be given the power to *"speak (God's) Word with all boldness"* (Acts 4:29). The greatest outpouring of spiritual power this world has ever known came 2,000 years ago. 120 Christians were in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. They had been there for 10 days. Not for a business meeting. Not for fellowship. They were there for a time of prayer and fasting. Not a couple minutes. Not a couple hours. But for 10 days and nights those early saints were in a great prayer meeting. Acts 2:2 reads, *"Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."* This visitation of God's Holy Spirit came because THEY WERE PRAYING. Not TALKING about prayer. Not READING about prayer. Not even PREACHING about prayer. BUT PRAYING! We also note ITS FEARLESS AND FAITHFUL WITNESS. The Savior was preached, and faith propagated. EVERY member was a missionary and evangelist. We note that it is God's people that need reviving, and that **IT IS GOD WHO DOES THE REVIVING.** *"Wilt YOU (THOU) not revive us again?"* the Psalmist prays. Revival MUST come from God. To meet the

conditions for revival to come is vital, but it is GOD and ONLY GOD who sends it. Joel 2:28-29, NIV – *“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”* Acts 2: 17-18, NIV – *“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”* There you have the promise from both the Old and New Testaments. We must realize: It is WE who need the reviving. It is GOD who does the reviving. **C. EXPECTATION** – Before revival comes there must be in the hearts of God’s people the faith that revival WILL come. There must be a sense of expectation. When we come to church do we really expect anything to happen? I like the chorus, *“We’re Together Again.”* The lyrics are, *“Something good is going to happen. Something good is in store.”* Bill Gaither wrote – *“I just feel like something good is about to happen. I just feel like something good is on its way.”* Jeremiah 29:13, NIV – *“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”* When we anticipate, expect, seek, and search with all of our heart, THAT’S WHEN we’ll see revival. A colleague of mine, after attending the revival in Pensacola, said, *“If people would attend their own church expecting like they do there, ANY church could have revival. Expectation (Anticipation)!”*

D. EXAMINATION – The Laodicean church had made a haphazard examination of themselves. *“We are rich, increased with goods and have need of nothing.”* Not a very good examination, in that, Jesus said they were *“poor, wretched, blind and naked.”* The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:28, *“Let a man examine himself.”* But it has to be a thorough and HONEST examination. We’re so much better at examining someone else. In Matthew, there were those who spoke about the splinter in a brother’s eye and they ignored the BEAM in their own eye. When a couple comes to me for marriage counseling, almost always the husband wants ME to fix his wife, and the wife wants ME to fix her husband. Sorry, but I’m just not that good at fixing things. Let me tell you – Magnifying your husband’s faults will never make the marriage better. Magnifying your wife’s faults will never make the marriage better. In fact, magnifying your spouse’s faults will ONLY make your marriage worse. Correcting ONE’S OWN misbehavior WILL ALWAYS make the marriage better. BUT... Most would rather examine their spouse. David wisely says in Psalm 139, *“See if there be a wicked way in me...”*. He’s talking to God. Be honest with yourself. Call upon the Holy Spirit to help you see yourself as you are. God knows. David says in the early part of Psalm 139, *“O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. ²Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. ³Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. ⁴For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether”* (v. 1-4). Then in verse 23 & 24 he says, *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”* I believe the way everlasting is the path to revival.

CONCLUSION. EXAMINATION means asking ourselves the tough questions: Do we really pray for the salvation of the lost? Do we pray for the day believers will seek to be reconciled to one another? Do we pray for the day members of churches will be mightily filled with the Holy Spirit and will go out in the Spirit’s power seeking to witness to lost neighbors and friends? IF we do this – rather WHEN we do this – GOD WILL ANSWER OUR PRAYERS. REVIVAL WILL COME! Gypsy Smith was once asked how to start a revival. He answered: *“Go home, lock yourself in your room, kneel down in the middle of your floor. Draw a chalk mark around yourself and ask God to start the revival inside that chalk mark. When God has answered your prayer, the revival will be on.”* With that in mind and in closing, I want us to stand and sing the old hymn, *“Revive Us Again.”* Can we go back and sing that 4th verse? Let’s change a few words. Sing it, *“Revive ME again. Fill MY mouth with Thy love. May MY soul be rekindled with fire from above. Hallelujah! Thine the glory. Hallelujah! Amen. Hallelujah! Thine the glory, revive ME again.”*

ILLUSTRATION: Jenny was a bright-eyed, pretty five-year-old girl. One day when she and her mother were checking out at the grocery store, Jenny saw a plastic pearl necklace priced at \$2.50. How she wanted that necklace. When she asked her mother if she would buy it for her, her mother said, *“Well, it is a pretty necklace, but it cost an awful lot of money. I’ll tell you what. I’ll buy you the necklace, AND... When we get home, we can*

make up a list of chores that you can do to pay for the necklace. AND... Don't forget that for your birthday Grandma just might give you a whole dollar bill, too." "Okay," Jenny agreed, and her mother bought the pearl necklace for her. Jenny worked on her chores very hard every day, AND... Sure enough, her grandma gave her a brand new dollar bill for her birthday. Soon Jenny had paid off the pearls. How Jenny loved those pearls. She wore them everywhere – to kindergarten, to bed, and when she went out with her mother to run errands. The ONLY time she didn't wear them was in the shower – her mother had told her that they would turn her neck green! Now Jenny had a very loving daddy. Each night when Jenny went to bed, he would get up from his favorite chair and read Jenny her favorite story. One night when he finished the story, he said, "Jenny, do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you," the little girl said. "Well, then, give me your pearls." "Oh! Daddy, not my pearls!" Jenny said. "But you can have Rosie, my favorite doll. Remember her? You gave her to me last year for my birthday. And... You can have her tea party outfit, too. Okay?" "Oh no, darling, that's okay." Her father brushed her cheek with a kiss, "Good night, little one." A week later, her father once again asked Jenny after her story, "Do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you." "Well, then, give me your pearls." "Oh, Daddy, not my pearls!" But... You can have Ribbons, my toy horse. Do you remember her? She's my favorite. Her hair is so soft, and you can play with it and braid it and everything. You can have Ribbons if you want her, Daddy," the little girl said to her father. "No, that's okay," her father said and brushed her cheek again with a kiss.. "God bless you, little one. Sweet dreams." Several days later, when Jenny's father came in to read her a story, Jenny was sitting on her bed and her lip was trembling. "Here, Daddy," she said, and held out her hand. She opened it and her beloved pearl necklace was inside. She let it slip into her father's hand. With one hand her father held the plastic pearls and with the other he pulled out of his pocket a blue velvet box. Inside of the box were real, genuine, beautiful pearls. He had had them all along. He was WAITING for Jenny to give up the cheap stuff so he could give her the REAL thing. So it is with our Heavenly Father. He is waiting for us to give up the cheap things in our lives so he can give us beautiful treasure. Isn't God good?!