

**Text: Ps 119, various**

This morning I encouraged you to develop the steady, confident, abundant life of a disciple.

That kind of life is a revived life.

In North America, revival has come to refer to a kind of intense spiritual change among a significant group of people where many seem to get right with God all at once.

Historically, several key events solidified the desire and expectation of revival among Christians.

- First Great Awakening (1735-1740)
- Second Great Awakening (late 1700s to mid 1800s) [Finney revivals part of this]
- The Moody revivals (late 1800s)
- The lesser revivalists (R. A. Torrey, Sam Jones, Billy Sunday, Bob Jones, Gipsy Smith, etc.)

In the late 1800s to early 1900s, evangelists would come into a town and hold large meetings, often with several churches in support, win converts and sometimes establish new churches.

Billy Graham was the last really well know revivalist, even though he called his meetings “Crusades.”

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “revival”

**“1:** an act or instance of reviving: the state of being revived: as  
**a:** renewed attention to or interest in something  
**b:** a new presentation or publication of something old  
**c** **(1):** a period of renewed religious interest  
**(2):** an often highly emotional evangelistic meeting or series of meetings”<sup>1</sup>

Some Southern churches still hold “revival” meetings, even though they are usually sponsored by just one church.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick C. Mish, ed., *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

Sometimes evangelists who hold revival meetings are quite manipulative in their attempts to persuade people to change for the Lord.

Many of these men are sincere, but I think their methods are sometimes misguided.

In thinking about the term “revival,” I thought we should simply look at the Bible and see what the Bible has to say about it.

**Proposition:** The Bible sense of revival comes from God when God’s people humbly seek God and his ways.

## I. Defining revival

### A. Two OT accounts speak of resurrections as “revival”

#### 1. The raising of the Widow of Zarephath’s son (1 Ki 17.22)

<sup>1 Ki 17.22</sup> The LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the life of the child returned to him and he revived.

#### 2. A dead man, thrown into a cave where a prophet was buried, revived and came to life (2 Ki 13.21)

<sup>2 Ki 13.21</sup> As they were burying a man, behold, they saw a marauding band; and they cast the man into the grave of Elisha. And when the man touched the bones of Elisha he revived and stood up on his feet.

### B. Observations from these stories

1. These individuals had physical life
2. They both died
3. God miraculously brought them back to physical life

### C. A spiritual revival happens

1. In someone who has spiritual life
2. Who has “deadened” his spiritual life (“hardened his heart”?)
3. God intervenes to bring him back to spiritual life

## II. Praying for revival

### A. We find several prayers for revival in the OT

Ez 9.8-9 "But now for a brief moment grace has been *shown* from the LORD our God, to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and grant us a little reviving in our bondage.<sup>9</sup> "For we are slaves; yet in our bondage our God has not forsaken us, but has extended lovingkindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.

Ps 80.17-19 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.<sup>18</sup> Then we shall not turn back from You; Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.<sup>19</sup> O LORD God of hosts, restore us; Cause Your face to shine *upon us*, and we will be saved.

Ps 85.6 Will You not Yourself revive us again, That Your people may rejoice in You?

Ps 143.10-11 Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.<sup>11</sup> For the sake of Your name, O LORD, revive me. In Your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble.

### B. With these prayers come urgings for revival

Ps 69.32 The humble have seen *it and* are glad; You who seek God, let your heart revive.

All references to revival are in the OT, especially the Psalms.

We who live in the NT era can nevertheless appropriate these prayers for our own spiritual lives.

## III. The source of revival

### A. The word of God (Ps 119.25)

Ps 119.25 My soul cleaves to the dust; Revive me according to Your word.

Ps 119.50 This is my comfort in my affliction, That Your word has revived me.

Ps 119.107 I am exceedingly afflicted; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your word.

Ps 119.154 Plead my cause and redeem me; Revive me according to Your word.

#### B. God's righteousness (Ps 119.40)

Ps 119.40 Behold, I long for Your precepts; Revive me through Your righteousness.

#### C. God's lovingkindness [covenant love, loving loyalty] (Ps 119.88)

Ps 119.88 Revive me according to Your lovingkindness, So that I may keep the testimony of Your mouth.

Ps 119.159 Consider how I love Your precepts; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your lovingkindness.

#### D. God's precepts (Ps 119.93)

Ps 119.93 I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have revived me.

#### E. God's ordinances (Ps 119.149)

Ps 119.149 Hear my voice according to Your lovingkindness; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your ordinances.

### IV. Achieving revival

Isa 57.15 For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell *on* a high and holy place, And *also* with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.

### Conclusion:

Revival is a renewal of a close walk with God, primarily from humble repentance and submission to God's word.