

DEATH: THE SPARK OF REVIVAL

Pastor: Josh McPherson

Big Idea:

For every faithful death there will be a glorious resurrection, and the question before the church is whether God is giving us a window of corporate revival that we must not miss.

Opening question: What is revival, and are we in it?

- We are in week three of a spur-of-the-moment series called **Turning Point**.
- The question this morning:
 - What is revival?
 - Are we in it?
- Everybody wants to see revival in our nation. But few pray for it and most have never actually seen it.

Key Emphasis

- The goal is not to force an answer.
- The goal is to tune hearts, eyes, and ears to what God is doing.
- If God is doing something supernatural and miraculous, we do not want to miss it.
- We do not want the church to miss it.

Definition of revival

“Revival is when the God who is everywhere decides to be somewhere.”

Explanation

- God is already omnipresent
- So what is revival?



- Revival is when the God who is everywhere decides to be somewhere.

Analogy: Magnifying glass

- Like holding a magnifying glass up to the sun.
- It takes what is global and makes it local in a concentrated way.
- It takes what is everywhere and magnifies it somewhere with unique intensity.

Foundational principle: For every faithful death there will be a glorious resurrection

What was seen in Charlie's memorial was how Christians grieve tragedy.

- The world grieves tragedy and cities burn.
- A Christian man is martyred, Christians turn to God in hope, and God pours out revival.

Analogy

Riots or Revival

- That is the pattern of Acts.
- The gospel gets boldly preached.
- God pours His Spirit out.
- Supernatural revival.
- Thousands saved.
- The church was added to daily.
- Then attack comes:
 - riots
 - smear campaigns



- lies
- Then believers respond with more boldness and more gospel proclamation.
- God pours out His Spirit again.

Key Emphasis

- Revival, riots.
- That is the pattern of Acts.
- That is the pattern of revival.

John 12: the seed must die

Scripture reference in flow

John 12:24–26

- “Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed.”
- “But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”
- “Anyone who loves their life will lose it.”
- “Anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.”
- “Whoever serves me must follow me.”
- “Wherever I am, my servant also will be.”
- “My Father will honor the one who serves me.”

Key Emphasis

- If you want to save your life in this life, you lose it in the next.
- If you lose your life in this life by:
 - dying to yourself
 - crucifying the flesh



- taking up the cross
- following Jesus in faith
then you gain life in the next.

Key Emphasis

- Not every death ends in a glorious resurrection.
- A faithful death ends in a glorious resurrection.

Jesus as model

“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!” John 12:27

Key Emphasis

- Jesus knew the path to glorious resurrection goes through the door of a faithful death.
- Unless the seed goes into the ground and dies, it remains alone.
- If it dies, it produces many more seeds.

SEVEN MARKS OF REVIVAL

Mark 1 — The suddenly of God

Scripture references

- Malachi 3
 - “The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come upon his people.”
- Acts 2:2
 - “Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind.”
- 2 Chronicles 29:36
 - the thing came about suddenly

Big Idea



In revival, God makes up for lost time by suddenly shifting, releasing, or coming upon a people, region, or nation in unusual and demonstrative ways.

Key Emphasis

- Something is afoot.
- The church does not want to run ahead of God presumptuously.
- The church does not want to fall behind God fearfully.
- The church wants to stay in step with Him faithfully.

Challenge

- Where is God moving in your life?
- What is He calling you to do?
- Are you staying in step with what He is doing?

Mark 2 — Conviction and holy fear

Scripture reference in flow

Acts 2:37

- Peter stands up.
- He boldly proclaims the gospel.
- Then points the finger:
 - you killed Jesus
 - you lied about Him
 - you smeared Him
 - you condemned Him
- Then the people respond:
 - “Brothers, what must we do to be saved?”

Fishing boat analogy



- Normal Christian life:
 - You are in the boat, working for Jesus fishing for men. There is wind and waves and alligators. It is hard, messy work
- Revival:
 - You are in the boat... and suddenly all the fish are jumping into the boat

Key Emphasis

Revival is when the level of conviction and holy fear rises above what can be explained in the physical realm.

Illustration

- People living as God-haters and rebels see Charlie Kirk shot, and suddenly they think: "Dear God, I'm a wretch, I'm a sinner. I need to go to church."

Key Emphasis

- Many people die on TV every day.
- What made this different?
- Charlie's faithful life made his death powerful.
- It was who he was and how he lived that made the impact of his death so great.

Mark 3 — A renewed hunger for God's Word

Scripture reference

2 Kings 22

- The temple is in ruins.
- The people have been doing what is right in their own eyes.
- The king sends people in to find something of value.
- They find the Word of God that had been ignored for generations.
- It is read aloud.
- The king repents in dust and ashes.
- God responds through a prophet with mercy.



Revival broke out as the people gained a renewed hunger for God's Word.

Personal revival

- When someone gets saved:
 - the Spirit awakens them to sin
 - the Spirit awakens them to the glory of Christ
 - the Spirit awakens them to the glory and necessity of His Word

A new hunger for Scripture appears that cannot be explained.

That is personal revival.

When that hunger goes corporate, that is corporate revival.

Mark 4 — Uncommon unity

Scripture reference in flow

Acts 2:42

- They devoted themselves to:
 - the apostles' teaching
 - fellowship
 - breaking of bread
 - prayer

Key Emphasis

- These are the same people who were fighting, bickering, and competing before.
- Jesus dies.
- Jesus rises.
- He imparts His Holy Spirit.
- Now they experience uncommon, otherworldly unity.



Observation in flow

- People are having conversations with people they never would have considered friends before.
- The people of the burning heart, who sense God is at work, are being unified.

Key Emphasis

- Some are still trying to straddle a fence.
- But if you are worried about defending a political party, you cannot be faithful to the King you say you serve.
- God has removed the fence.

Observation

- Pastors being bold and courageous are seeing:
 - record Easter-level numbers
 - record Easter-level responses
 - people walking in with no church background asking to be told about Jesus

That is fish jumping in the boat.

Mark 5 — Uncommon generosity

Scripture reference in flow

Acts 2:45

- They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

Key Emphasis

- Before, they argued and bickered.
- Now, with the Holy Spirit, they realize:
 - what is mine is His



- you can have it

Key Emphasis

- Human definition:
 - little = what we used to have
 - much = what we have now
- God's economy:
 - what you currently have is your new little
 - be faithful with little, and more can come

Warning

- If the church says, "Look how much we have," it will miss the moment.
- It will sit back, kick up its feet, and mail it in.

What God says:

- This is not "much."
- This is your new floor for your new little.
- What will you do with it?

Illustration: Investing

- In personal investing:
 - when young, you can be more aggressive
 - when older, you get more conservative
- That may be wise for personal stewardship.
- It is deadly for kingdom ethics.

Illustration: Football

- Teams that get ahead and start managing the game instead of aggressively winning often begin losing.



Key Emphasis

- The blessings of God must not lull the church to sleep.
- The blessings of God should stir:
 - deeper hunger
 - more holy ambition
- If God did this with “little,” what might He do with the same kind of investment again?

Challenge

- Whatever you currently have, that is your new little.
- Will you protect it as “much”?
- Or sow it as “little” into the kingdom so God might give more?

Mark 6 — Bold proclamation of truth

Scripture reference in flow

Acts 4:13

- When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus

Key Emphasis

- Charlie was recently described by a politician as a kook, uneducated, and uninformed.
- What made Charlie great was not degrees behind his name.
- What made Charlie great was the Spirit inside him.

Key Emphasis

- There will not be a thousand Charlie Kirks.
- There was one.
- Others should not try to be Charlie.



- They should be who God has called them to be.

The authorities say:

- stop doing this
- stop spreading this
- stop teaching in Jesus' name

Peter and John reply:

- "Which is right in God's eyes, to listen to you or to Him?"
- "As for us, we cannot help but speak what we have seen and heard."

Key Emphasis

- Peter is the one saying this. Weeks earlier he denied Jesus to a little girl. Now he stands before people who can actually kill him.
- There is a new kind of courage that is not native to Peter, and it comes by the Holy Spirit.

Connection to Charlie

- Charlie said older mentors told him not to combine Jesus and politics and for a while he listened.
- Then he realized:
 - if Jesus is who He said He is then He is King over:
 - sex
 - relationships
 - marriage
 - policies
 - politicians
 - governments
- So why would Jesus and politics be separated?

Key Emphasis

- Churches and pastors pulled back so Charlie looked like a lone prophet.
- Not because he ran ahead of the church, but because the church backed away from him.



Strong emphasis

- God will use the courage of one man to make up for the failure of many when that man is willing to put his life in the ground for Jesus' sake.

Illustration: Justice, mercy, grace

- Justice:
 - you broke into the store
 - you get a year in prison
- Mercy:
 - you broke into the store
 - you get one month instead of a year
- Grace:
 - someone shows up and says,
 - "I'll serve the prison sentence for that guy."

Mark 7 — An unusual harvest of souls

All through Acts: God added to their number daily those who were being saved, sometimes by dozens, sometimes by thousands.

This is being seen across the world now.

Illustrations: stories of response

- A man who had only been to church twice in his life says:
"Since Charlie Kirk is unable to go to church this Sunday, I'm going to go and take his seat for him."
- Another says:
 - no parking at church people coming because of Charlie
- A family returns to church for the first time in 20 years.
- They want their sons to grow up with convictions like Charlie.



- Another man says: never met Charlie, never believed in God, now going to church, going to try to be a better father, husband, and leader

Definition restated

Revival is where the ever-present God becomes unusually manifest, resulting in:

- quickened spiritual hunger
- outpouring of grace
- change in individuals
change in a church
- change in a region
- change in a nation

Final call: respond in the middle of revival

Big Idea

If you want to receive Jesus as Savior, there is no better time than in the middle of revival.

Prayer movement

- Asking God to keep pouring out His Spirit on His church.
- Asking God to keep pouring out His power on His people.
- Asking God to continue saving lost people.
Asking God to bring sons and daughters in from afar.

Preacher's Summary

Big Idea

For every faithful death there will be a glorious resurrection, and what may be happening right now is a sovereign window where God is pouring out corporate revival.

Main Flow



1. Ask the question

- What is revival?
- Are we in it?

2. Memorial observations

- Jesus was preached
- hope spilled out
- the room felt carried by something not made by man

3. Revival defined

- when the God who is everywhere decides to be somewhere

4. Principle

- every faithful death brings a glorious resurrection

5. John 12

- the seed dies and then multiplies

6. Seven marks of revival

- the suddenly of God
- conviction and holy fear
- renewed hunger for God's Word
- uncommon unity
- uncommon generosity
- bold proclamation of truth
- unusual harvest of souls

7. Evidence

- salvations
- baptisms
- changed lives
- hunger for Scripture



- doors opening
- gospel proclamation spreading

8. Call

- do not miss what God is doing
- respond in repentance and faith
- keep up with the Spirit
fan into flame what God is doing

Closing emphasis

- We do not want to run ahead of God presumptuously.
- We do not want to fall behind God fearfully.
- We want to stay in step with Him faithfully.
- God is moving right now.
- The only question is whether we will keep up with Him.

