

Revive Us: Pursue Holiness – 1 Peter 1:16

I concluded last week's message with a statement which is key for us here at Mt Freedom as we consider the significance and the hopefulness of this series on revival. If we truly desire that God **Revive Us**, then we must first get prepared. Remember, revival is not an event, but is a spiritual journey reserved for those who love the Lord and are desperate for Him to pour out something new and fresh into their hearts and minds. When I think of this on a much deeper level, I am reminded of a couple of verses that we should begin praying daily. First, if you desire to have a better heart, then you must ask God to help create that in you. Try adding the words of **Psalm 51:10-12** into your prayer life.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.”

If we desire for the God of Heaven to change us and breath new life into us, then, as I mentioned last week, we need to pray expecting Him to do just that! Also pray the words of **Psalm 119:17-18**.

“Deal bountifully with your servant, that I may live and keep your word. Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”

If you remember the formula discussed last week from 2 Chronicles, adding these verses to your daily prayers will help move you towards becoming a person of Christ who is better prepared to receive a revival from God. As you draw closer to Him, the stronger the desire to experience His holiness will become. As we also learned from last week, revival will not come to the unrepentant. Repentance sets the stage for revival and when it comes, the Holiness of God comes with it. Know this – a Holy God will only be found in Holy places. If we, individually and corporately, continue to participate in sin and live impure and selfish lives, then we will continue to construct barriers which will prevent us from experiencing the fullness of God's presence.

Each time the prophet Isaiah encountered God, what do you think was his biggest concern? His holiness. Not God's holiness, but his own. According to **Isaiah 6:5**, upon encountering God, he said, *“Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”* If we are serious about seeking revival, then we must get serious about our lack of holiness. You see, God wants our humility. He wants our prayers. He wants our worship. He wants our love. But, because He is holy, he also wants us to be holy. Without it, our relationship with Him suffers. Above our prayers and even our worship, God desires our holiness. He says so in Leviticus 11:44:

“For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.”

True revival leads us to a place of holiness. God's holiness, present in the hearts of those who love Him. How do we get there? That is a great question.

Holiness is not some unattainable characteristic. It is something that we must work towards each day. After all, holiness defined is: Being set apart for God. Ask yourself this question: Is my life set apart for God?

Consider your salvation. This is the first place to start. Peter says this about those who belong to Christ.

“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”” (1 Peter 1:13-16)

Apart from Jesus Christ, we have no hope of ever being holy. It is our regeneration, as born-again believers that sets apart from the world around us and allows us to live set-apart lives bent towards God.

If you desire revival, begin changing your thinking to the things of God. **Colossians 3:1-2** says, *“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”*

Direct your focus towards the heavenly things you have access to because of Jesus. What do you find beautiful about Him? What is great about the Gospel? What is great about the hope of heaven? These are some of the things we should be encouraging one another to consider. Search for the answers in His Word. This book is a treasure chest full of things that will help you pursue holiness. Try it. I promise, you'll be blessed.

Finally, holiness is not something fake, especially when it is something received directly from God, through His Son and through His Spirit. You've heard me encourage you to embrace who you are in Christ. When you set out to pursue genuine holiness, then you are setting out to discover who it is God intends you to be in Christ. Holiness is becoming that person. As God transforms you from the old to the new, it is His holiness that people will notice. This is why Paul often uses the metaphor of being clothed in the righteousness of Christ when teaching us about our relationship with the Savior. Listen to these words from **Ephesians 4:20-24**.

But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

