

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG105 - The Acts 2 Revival

I have been very burdened by the Spirit lately about revival, and because of that, I have been going back and studying many of the revivals that have taken place in history. The Welsh revival, for example; Azusa Street; the Latter Rain Movement in Canada. One of the things that burdens me is the fact that we have to look backwards to find what really is available in God, in the power of God. I think there is a cry that we should have in our hearts and our spirits as believers in this day and age to see revival come once again to the Church, the body of Christ – worldwide. The world is in need; and the more we approach the Kingdom of God, the more things will happen on a global level. I know we need this very much in the United States and the Church in America, but it is not limited to that. It really is something that is a burden in my heart for the whole body of Christ, because we need to see the world touched right now. I think things are in such chaos, not just in the world, but in the body of Christ, in the Church; and the only hope I personally can feel right now in my heart is that it is going to take an outpouring of the Spirit of God into the world, into the Body, to fix what is terribly, terribly broken. And so, I am recording this in faith, believing, and just expressing some of my burdens and concerns, some of the concepts that I am aware of about revival that I think we should, as believers, be pressing into, praying over, and very much believing for to manifest in our own walks with God.

If you read the Bible as a believer, and if you believe the Bible is the Word of God, then as you read you very quickly come to an understanding that what we have of God, of Yeshua, Jesus, and of the Holy Spirit, in our personal lives and in the Church, falls very short of what the Word of God, the Scriptures, promise us. For example, in Ephesians 1:18-23, it says, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” Paul is proclaiming this, praying it, and I am praying it today, right along with him. I wish the eyes of our hearts would be enlightened to see “what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.”

I know these podcasts come out at different times, but we have just finished celebrating Passover; in the Christian celebration, it includes Easter, or the Day of Resurrection, as I prefer to call it. To me it was a devastating day, because to look around at what we have in the Church, to look around at how the Resurrection Day is celebrated in the Church, honestly, it was devastating for me, because it is powerless; and yet it is celebrating the greatest power that has been released in the world since the creation of the world itself; maybe even a greater power, of God reaching down into Sheol and resurrecting His Son, bringing Him out of death, breaking the bonds of death, and pulling Him up from that place into life, into a resurrection life – not just a life He had known on a human level. It was the exertion of the greatest power the world has ever known. And it is very difficult to experience what we have today in the body of Christ and say we are celebrating that day. If we are, we are certainly very far from the experience of the power that was released during the resurrection of Christ. And Paul is speaking about that here in this verse in Ephesians. In verse 19, he says, “And what is the surpassing

greatness of His power toward us who believe.” There is a power that is being focused upon us as believers. But we have to ask ourselves, where is that power? Is it working in your life today? Is it working in the church that you are going to? Is it working in the body of Christ globally? Not with the same power that was released on that day.

Paul goes on to say, “These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body” – now get this – “the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” According to Paul, the Church, which is His body, the body of Christ, is the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We do not have to be critical of anybody, or any movement, or any group; we just need to ask ourselves, with all honesty, this question: are we the fullness of Him who fills all in all? Are we really the expression of this which Paul is talking about? Where did that come from? It came from the power that He is focusing upon us. Paul wanted our eyes to be enlightened to know what is the hope of His calling, what is the surpassing greatness of this power toward us, that is being beamed toward us – the same power that He exerted when He raised Christ from the dead, and seated Him above all rule and authority. These are the things that we are to manifest as the body of Christ.

It is important that we be able to manifest these things, because part of the doctrine of the Church is that we are to be witnesses of Him. To me, this is being a witness: when we are the fullness of Him who fills all in all, and people can see that and experience it – experience what people experienced when Christ was on the earth, when seeing Him or hearing Him, or watching Him cast out devils, or watching Him heal the sick, watching Him raise the dead. When people are able to see this witness and this testimony – which is the witness and testimony of the beginning of the Church – then we will be able to say, “Yes, if you do not receive, then you are going to be judged.” I do not know that there can be judgment the way that the Church has functioned in a powerless state for so many years.

We have to go back into the early nineteen hundreds to really see the power that is available released. I was reading a story in the research I was doing about Smith Wigglesworth; and of course, he is an important figure to me, personally, because my spiritual father, John Stevens, was one who was around Smith Wigglesworth. He heard him speak, watched him minister, and was around many other expressions of revival, or outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whatever you want to call them, and he watched the things that were released through these times of revival – things that were amazing, if we go back and study it. A lot of times, history is just filled with the clutter of the criticism and the putting down of things that transpired in these movements or in revivals; and to me, that is almost just a satanic way of covering over, painting over, what God was really bringing and restoring to the earth. Because each revival, when you look at it, had an expression of God that was restoring something to the earth – important things, many of which have been lost in the last years; in the last fifty to seventy-five years, they have been lost again and gone into darkness. But they need to be restored, and at one time they were restored – things such as the revelation of Israel and the ending of the concepts of anti-Semitism and replacement theology. This type of revelation came back with the Latter Rain movement, where they saw the revelation of Israel, and what Israel was and what part it played, and how it had been swallowed up in the idea of British Israel, which was just an expression of replacement theology; but the revelation came of how wrong that was. There were expressions of true church government, so that we could see divine order once again restored into church leadership. Some of these are answers that we need today, based on moving with a demand for total oneness and agreement, which is what Christ

prayed. He said, "That you all be one, even as the Father and I are one." And this is the foundation: He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, and He gave an order in which things were to function. Now, these things have been criticized, and they have been set aside and pushed out of the way. But I tell you, these are revelations which came during outpourings and revivals. And you can say, "Well, maybe they were abused. Maybe they were wrongly used or misunderstood." I would agree with all of that. But it does not relieve us, as the body of Christ, of the responsibility to go back and see what God has done, and mine the purity of His Word, and the purity of the Holy Spirit's moving, back into our lives today, back into the Church today. And instead of being critical of one another, or of things that were done maybe incorrectly, we should look for the purity that came in the beginning of the Church. We see that in the very Scriptures themselves.

One of the things I wanted to talk about in this podcast was really what you could consider the first revival, and that is the revival of Acts 2, the outpouring of Acts 2, the movement of the Church in its beginning form. This really was a revival, and it had many of the elements that I believe are necessary in order for revival to come into the earth. One of them is the fact that these people who went up to the upper room after the Ascension of Christ were in a state of devastation; they were devastated over the fact that what they thought, what they believed, how they were relating to the Lord, was all wiped out. It was all taken away. They were wrong in their assumptions of what was to happen and how it was to happen. When they went back into that upper room, they went back up as a devastated group of people who were also hiding in fear from the Romans; because what they were aware of is that the Romans had crucified the Lord, and they were looking for the disciples also, to do away with them. So they were devastated. They were in a state of fear. They were hiding away. And it was out of this attitude in the upper room that they began to cry out to God.

I believe that there has to be something in our hearts that is devastated about the state we are in – the way we are living, how we are living, what we have lost, what we are lacking – as the body of Christ, as the Church, as individual believers. We should be contending for God. We should be devastated when we look around and we see what is going on in the earth today. We are in the middle of Russia invading Ukraine. You ask the question – I ask the question, at least – where is the body of Christ, in power, manifesting? You know, there were times like with Elisha, when he would take the armies coming against him and smite them blind, and lead them back to the king. That would be a great expression for the body of Christ right now, wouldn't it? If somebody would go to the Russian invading armies of Ukraine and just ask God to smite them blind, lead them back to the Kremlin, present them before Putin. You see, we have got to get out of this idea that it is fine for the Church to be powerless, that it is fine for us not to be able to move as the prophets of God, as the apostles moved in the New Testament. And so, we need to go back to this Biblical outpouring, or revival, and realize that this should be for us as believers today.

If you say, "Well, I have problems with what happened with the Latter Rain Movement, with what happened in Azusa Street, what happened in the Pentecostal Movement. You know, there was this and that wrong with it." Okay, fine. How about the book of Acts? How about the Word of God? Can we look at that and say, "My gosh, yes, this should be a pattern to us"? When those disciples returned from watching with their own eyes the Lord ascend into heaven, you would think they were ready to move; but they weren't. Christ Himself told them, "Go back to Jerusalem and wait until you are endued with power from on high." That should be a command today to the Church. If there is anything we should be doing, it is waiting on the Lord until we are endued with power from on high, in order to be able to move as His body in the earth, in order to move as He moved in the earth. As Paul said, we are His body;

we are supposed to be the fullness of Him who fills all in all. We are to have the power. The Scripture says that He has given unto us all things pertaining to life and to godliness. There is nothing God is holding back from us right now. So the question has to be, on our part, "Lord, where is it? Why am I not moving as I see them moving in the book of Acts?" They were not super men, they were not wonder women, of the hundred and twenty who were in that upper room waiting upon Him, crying out to Him. They were a devastated lot. They were in confusion, many times, not knowing really what was happening. He had told them clearly, and taught them clearly; and yet they did not know, they had lost the perception and the understanding. And if you remember, that was one of the things after the resurrection that He tried to do – to tell them what His teaching was already about the resurrection.

In Luke 24:36-38, it says, "While they were telling these things, He Himself stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be to you.' But they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit. And He said to them, 'Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?'" They were filled with unbelief. He had chastised them for their unbelief time and time again. If He would walk into the room with us right now, what would He say? Would He have the same chastisement about our unbelief? In John 14, He spoke to them in verses 25-26 and said, "These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." See, the disciples were in a place that they had not grasped what He was saying. They did not remember. He had to remind them when they came to the tomb: "Remember, He said He was going to arise." He had to remind them when He walked into the room, after the resurrection, that He had told them He was going to be resurrected. They did not remember. How much do we not remember and understand? What is the answer? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the One who comes and teaches us all things, leads us into all things, gives us all the truth. That is what they were crying out for in that upper room – they were believing to have the understanding. After being with Him forty days following the resurrection, they were becoming aware of something very, very clearly: they did not know, nor did they understand, really what He was saying and what He was teaching. But He promised that the Holy Spirit would remind them and teach them. And we need to recognize, we exist in the same place. We may have the Scriptures, the Word of God, but how much do we read that and have really no grasp or understanding?

The Bible, in this generation, is one of the greatest sources of division among believers. People say, "Well, it's saying this, oh, it's saying that. Well, I understand this, I understand that." Without the understanding of the Holy Spirit, without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the body of Christ, the Scriptures themselves are lacking the ability to bring about the oneness that we were to have, which He talked about in John 17. He said, "I have given them My glory that they may be one." And it takes that glory of the outpouring of the Spirit that gives us the understanding. The disciples realized, "We do not understand. We were right there listening to Him teach it, but we do not understand what He was saying." And the Holy Spirit – they had the cry out in that upper room in those days for the Holy Spirit to be poured out upon them, in order that they might understand what the Lord had been teaching them for those years they were with Him. They also understood that they had lost the Presence of the Holy Spirit. Yeshua had the Spirit without measure. When He ascended to the Father, the Spirit went up with Him, and they recognized that they were without that. The Presence of the Holy Spirit they had known was by virtue of Christ's Presence with them, because He had the fullness of the Spirit. They now began to realize, "We do not have the Spirit. It was resting upon Him, but we must have that same experience that He had."

When the Spirit came upon Christ, it came upon Him, it says, “without measure”; and, “it descended and it remained upon Him.” It did not just come and go. It did not manifest while He was in service, or when He was in the synagogue teaching, and then leave when He went out to lunch. But that is a very common experience for believers today. The Holy Spirit is something that comes and goes, and it comes in a measure. But it did not happen that way with Christ or the apostles, and those who were part of that one hundred and twenty that were with Him. It descended; it remained; it was the power of God being restored to the earth following the Ascension of Christ to the right hand of the Father. We need that same experience. We need the Holy Spirit to descend and remain with us. We need the power that was turned loose, unleashed at the resurrection of Christ, to be in us, among us, and with us, by the Holy Spirit, so that we can move in this world by the power of the resurrection. That is what was preached – read the New Testament, read the book of Acts. Salvation as we know it today was not their focus, it was the resurrection of Christ; because it was the resurrection that brought about the power and the release of everything that would minister salvation to the world.

The other thing they recognized was that they were filled with division. They were divided from each other because of their pride, their arrogance, and their competitiveness. And yet, again, in John 17, Yeshua had said, “You are to be one, as the Father and I are one.” They understood that they were not one. Part of what they were crying for in that upper room in those days was the oneness that they had to have in order to go out and face the world. And, in fact, they got it, because on the Day of Pentecost, Peter stands up with the eleven. They stand up as a united force to speak the Word of God – and that is what touched the hearts of people. We need that once again. We need to get out of this thing that we, as the Church, are divided groups across the face of this earth, and we have an absolute inability to stand up as one man and speak from the Holy Spirit to the world that we live in. But I'll tell you, this world today needs the voice of the Holy Spirit. If there is one thing that is lacking in this world, it is truth. The lie is overtaking everything. The truth comes by the Spirit of truth. When we are one and filled with the Spirit, we will speak truth into this world; and it will break the lie, it will sweep away the refuge of lies, and it will set the world free. It will open the eyes that they can see the truth. It will open the ears that they can hear the truth. And it will open minds and hearts that they will receive the truth, and receive the salvation that is available in this day and age.

The disciples, before they entered that upper room, as far as we can see in the Scriptures, did not have a prayer life. They did not really know how to pray. They had asked the Lord to teach them to pray, but we never see them expressing that in their lives. Yet, through the Scriptures, we see very clearly the prayer life of Christ. We see that He constantly was in prayer. He would go out and pray all night, after performing signs and wonders. We do not see that with the disciples. So when they entered the upper room, they learned to pray. We as the body of Christ right now, we need to learn to pray like we have never prayed before. We need a prayer life. We need an individual prayer life, we need a corporate prayer life, that is going to be freighted with the power to change the world that we live in.

Before the Ascension, they were not hungry; they were very satisfied. They were very satisfied to walk with Christ, to walk with Yeshua, Jesus, in the earth – to have Him carry the responsibility, to have Him do everything, to have Him with the anointing, to have Him feeding them, to have Him teaching them. They were satisfied. What a wonderful life they had to walk with Jesus – you know? Unfortunately, a lot of people feel very satisfied right now with what they have. And I think part of it is that they have never seen an example of anything different. Many Christians today, especially young Christians, have never seen a true outpouring of the Presence of God where miracles take place, where things happen that are divine and without any possibility of being initiated by humans.

I was reading a fun story about Smith Wigglesworth, which I started talking about earlier in this podcast. He was talking to a man, and this gentleman had no legs from the knee down. As Smith Wigglesworth was talking to him, he said, "You need to go and order shoes." Of course, the guy was stunned. He went home and could not sleep that night, he did not know what to do. He was just wrestling with this idea of being told by Smith Wigglesworth to go order a pair of shoes. So finally, he grappled with the Lord over it and said, "I'm just gonna do it!" He went to the store and sat down before the attendant, and he said, "I want to order a pair of shoes." The attendant, of course, looked down and said, "Sir, you have no legs." But he said, again, "I want to order a pair of shoes." The attendant said, "Okay, what size, and what color?" He said, "Eight and a half, black." So the attendant goes to the back and brings out these shoes, eight and a half, black. The guy looks at them, yes, he likes these shoes. So he takes the shoes and he stuffs them onto the stumps where his knees were, one shoe on each stump. All of a sudden, miraculously, legs begin to grow. And at the end of this process, he was sitting in the chair with legs and feet that were in these eight and a half, black shoes, which he had just ordered by faith.

See, miracles come with a purpose. They are not for show. They come because they bring about faith. And we as the body of Christ need to be asking ourselves, "Where are the miracles?" I think the world has a right to see miracles. Maybe that is a strange statement to you, but think about it – Christ performed miracles for those who did not believe. Many who saw the miracles believed because of those miracles; and Christ Himself said, "Listen, if nothing else, believe because of the work's sake. Because of what you are witnessing, believe God is moving and speaking through Me." I think the body of Christ today needs to be able to say the same thing to the world: "If nothing else, believe because of the work's sake. Believe because of what you are witnessing in the miraculous moving of God." Christ said, "I can do nothing on My own. I can do nothing by Myself. It is what the Father does." Miracles do not come because we are anything. They come because God wants to show Himself alive by many infallible proofs, and He wants to glorify Himself before the world. He is going to, in this end time, glorify Himself before the nations. And one of the ways He is going to do that is by the miracles.

These disciples in the upper room had to get rid of their being satisfied with what Christ was working, and they had to reach in, to now become those who were the source of the signs and wonders to the world that needed to be seen. And they did become that, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They had been filled with unbelief, and they had to get rid of that unbelief. I encourage you, go back and read Acts the second chapter, and look at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that came on that Day of Pentecost that created what we call the Church. And let's ask ourselves, is this the same Church that we are living in today? Is it the same Church that we are walking in? Is it the same signs and wonders? Is it the same Word? Remember, they all spoke the Word of God with boldness in that time; thousands at a time were being saved. There were so many things that happened. How is it that we can be satisfied with the Church that we witness today? We must be honest with ourselves, when we read the Scriptures, and say, "It is telling us the way things should be. It is a witness to us of what God wants, and what we should have, by the outpouring of the Spirit." Let there be something in our hearts that begins to contend for another outpouring of the Spirit as we see in the book of Acts, that is the nexus of what we are as the Church, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Just a couple of points to end with. We must hunger and thirst with a desperation for God to move in the earth. If we do not, nothing will happen. We must persistently and specifically ask, and keep on asking. And our asking must be in faith, with nothing wavering, knowing He who promised is faithful, and He will give that which we ask.

We pray for this, Father, to be alive in our hearts. The same cry that was in that one hundred and twenty before the Day of Pentecost, let that cry come upon the body of Christ worldwide in this day. We believe for it in the name of Yehoshua HaMashiach. Amen.