

**July 2020**  
**Daily Devotional**

*Your statutes*  
are my *delight*;  
they are my  
*counselors.*

Psalm 119:24



**Vistoso Community Church**

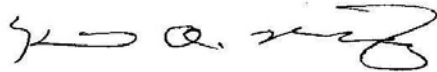
## Foreword

We begin this month with our last lesson in Genesis. Then, we will spend most of our time beginning to read through the Book of Galatians. Finally, we will take a look at the subject of revival for the second time this year. So, in short, we are going to focus upon the Gospel: How a lost person changes their eternal destiny from one in the Lake of Fire to one in heaven; and then how that one with a changed destiny can have a spiritually vital life.



I trust you will be blessed.

In His grace,



Kevin Redig

*All Scripture quotes have been taken from either the NKJV (1992 edition) or the NIV (1984 edition).*

# Finishing Genesis

## Wednesday, July 1: Read Psalm 62

The things we can learn from Joseph's life and faith are still on my mind. Sometimes I think life is like traveling on a river. We love those idyllic days slowly meandering through the beautiful countryside. In fact, we try to produce them as often as possible. But what do we do when we hear the roar of rapids in the distance and the current starts to pick up? Why, we paddle like mad for shore! Well, Joseph not only went through the *rapids*, but over the falls as well! And yet, God protected his tiny craft through it all, and brought him safely to his destination. See if this quote helps explain what I am trying to say:

*Faith is dependence upon God. And this God-dependence only begins when self-dependence ends. And self-dependence only comes to its end, with some of us, when sorrow, suffering, affliction, broken plans and hopes bring us to that place of self-helplessness and defeat. And only then do we find that we have learned the lesson of faith: to find our tiny craft of life rushing onward to a blessed victory of life and power and service undreamt of in the days of our fleshly strength and self-reliance.*

James H. McConkey

Think through the above carefully, and see if it applies to Joseph. Then reread Psalm 62. In Verse 3 David's enemies were comparing him to a wall that was about to collapse and a fence that was about to fall over. Yet look at the preceding and following verses. Outward appearances do not tell the tale for the man or woman of God. For God truly is a fortress that cannot be touched.

What then of the trials of this life? They are either that which will bring our faith to the point it rests upon Him alone, or that which will bring us home to Him! Either way, they are intended for our blessing and His glory!

# New Reading in Galatians

## Thursday, July 2: Read Acts 13

As we start our reading in the Book of Galatians, I suspect you won't be the least surprised that our first day of reading is somewhere else all together! For it is in the Book of Acts that we find the backstory of Paul's relationship with the churches in Galatia.

In Verse 1 of today's reading in the Book of Acts, we find that there was quite a gathering of talented individuals in the church at Antioch. It doesn't surprise me at all to see God step in and put some of them to work:

**While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."**

Acts 13:2

How wonderful is the way they responded to the voice of the Holy Spirit. I hope we would respond as well to His voice among us. You see for yourself their response in Verse 3:

**So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.**

Acts 13:3

As we read through Chapter 13, we see Paul entering Galatia in Verse 14:

**From Perga they went on to Pisidian Antioch.**

As you can see from the map, Antioch in Pisidia is in the southern portion of Galatia, which is part of modern day Turkey. Paul also visited the Galatian cities of Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe on his first missionary journey. He visited those cities on both the outward leg of his journey (the blue line) and on the return trip (the red line). This is where he went, but what message did he bring?

# New Reading in Galatians

Thursday, July 2: Read Acts 13  
(Continued)

We find the heart of his message starting in Verse 38:

**“Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through Him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the Law of Moses. Take care that what the prophets have said does not happen to you: ‘Look, you scoffers, wonder and perish. . .’”** Acts 13:38-41

Notice this is the same message you hear preached in our fellowship: forgiveness of sins in Christ and Him alone; justification—a righteous standing that will withstand the scrutiny of a holy God; and all of this to everyone who will believe in the person and work of Jesus Christ! The Gospel Paul preached is the same one we have believed! The Good News hasn’t changed a bit in the last 2000 years!



# New Reading in Galatians

## Friday, July 3: Read Acts 14

We are now into the nitty-gritty of Paul's first missionary journey and his time in Galatia. The chapter begins with great news in Verse 1, but relates difficulty in Verse 2:

**At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed.** Acts 14:1

**But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds. . .** Acts 14:2

As a result, Paul and Barnabas were forced to flee to Lystra. Here, as the result of a miraculous healing, the two missionaries had everything they could do to keep the people from treating them as gods come down from heaven. It wasn't a problem for long, because:

**Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.**

Acts 14:19-20



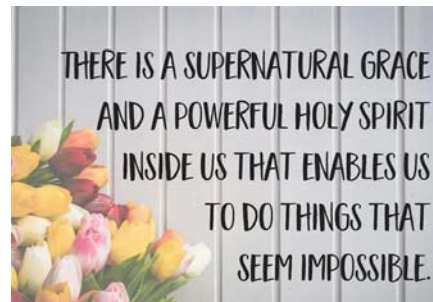
# New Reading in Galatians

Friday, July 3: Read Acts 14  
(Continued)

At this point, I think we can make several observations:

1. Sharing the Gospel with others can be very challenging. One day you receive adulation, the next the people want to stone you. Don't take it personally if a family member or friend gets upset with you. The same thing happened to Paul. There will always be some that get saved, and what a glorious thing it is when a lost person escapes Satan's dominion and enters the kingdom of Jesus Christ!
2. We can also learn something about perseverance in sharing our faith from Paul. He is stoned and left for dead and what does he do? He goes right back into the city inhabited by the very same people who stoned him. What does he do the next day? He moves on to the next city and keeps sharing the Gospel. What does he do after that? He revisits every city where lost people got saved, including the one where they had stoned him and left him for dead. Paul is certainly an intrepid servant of the Gospel.

Perhaps we could ask for a bit of Paul's courage in sharing the good news of eternal life with others! The Holy Spirit would be happy to enable us!





# New Reading in Galatians

## Monday, July 6: Read Acts 15

I know you are waiting to get into the Book of Galatians, but have patience for one more day as we have one more very important bit of the backstory to cover. After a time of great evangelism and great trials in the ministry, Acts 14 closes with the following:

**On arriving there (Antioch), they (Paul and Barnabas) gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.**

Acts 14:27-28

While Paul was recharging in Antioch, the following happened:

**Some men came down from Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."**

Acts 15:1

We do not know exactly who these men were, but they were clearly adding works to the message of faith in Christ. Things got even worse by Verse 5:

**Then some of the believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the Law of Moses."**

Acts 15:5

There is no doubt now, that we have believers holding out a false Gospel message, and leading others astray.



# New Reading in Galatians

Monday, July 6: Read Acts 15  
(Continued)

The rest of Chapter 15 is all about the first great council of the Church, and how this issue was handled. But here is what you have to know with respect to the book of Galatians. These same Judaizers, those who would add the Mosaic Law to the Gospel, were doing the same thing everywhere Paul had planted churches on his first missionary journey. Paul heard about it and he became extremely distraught. I say that because of the tone of what is probably his first epistle—Galatians.

Now we are ready to begin our reading in the epistle written to address the threat of legalism!



# New Reading in Galatians

## Tuesday, July 7: Read Galatians 1:1-6

Paul, the missionary and church planter, has heard that the precious brothers and sisters to whom he ministered are under attack from those who wish to turn them from the grace of God back to the Mosaic Law. So Paul begins by establishing his authority, before he *lowers the boom!* First, he claims the title *apostle*. The word means: *one sent with authority*. Then, Paul firmly declares that God is the one who did the sending rather than man!

We learned in Acts 13 that it was the Holy Spirit who set apart Paul and Barnabas and directed their journey. Next, Paul identifies the recipients of his letter—the churches in Galatia which he planted in Acts 13-14. Now, look how quickly Paul brings in the Gospel—by the third verse of his letter. For it is the Son who *gave Himself* at the cross. Those who respond in faith to the person and work of Jesus Christ have been *rescued* from the present evil age.

**He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins.** Colossians 1:13-14

It would be typical for Paul, after his mention of the Gospel, to expound upon the great blessings that are ours in Christ. Instead, he adds a jarring note of dismay:

**I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the One who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different Gospel. . .** Galatians 1:6

Paul is wasting no time. He is going to meet head on the error of the false teachers seeking to turn the churches he planted away from their devotion to Christ. He is mightily upset about the situation as we shall see. More on this false Gospel tomorrow.

# New Reading in Galatians

Wednesday, July 8:  
Read Galatians 1:1-16

Our goal for today is to better understand Verses 6-7:

**I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different Gospel, which is not another. . .**

Let me break it down for you:

1. The word translated *marvel* in this setting has the context of shock or dismay.
2. *Turning away so soon* has the idea of swapping one thing for another—as we shall see, the truth of the Gospel is being swapped for the error of legalism.
3. What has caused this problem? These are new believers and they haven't yet grown in the faith. As Paul says in Ephesians 4:14, they are being:  
**. . .tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men. . .**

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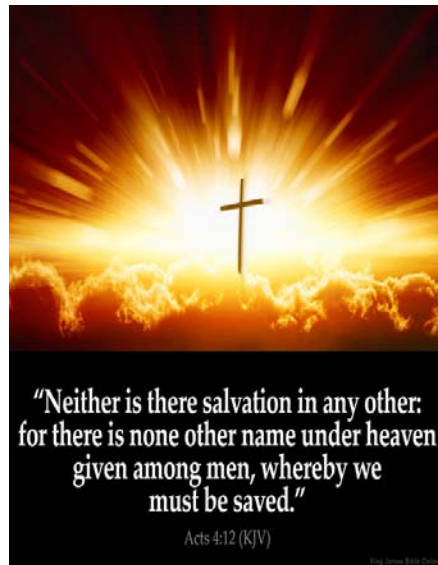
# New Reading in Galatians

Wednesday, July 8:

Read Galatians 1:1-16 (Continued)

4. Perish the thought of any child of God turning from the grace of God to the bondage of religious practice! How could man-made religious ritual ever improve upon what God has provided through His Son. Yet, I warn you, we are very prone to do exactly the same thing.
5. The phrase *different Gospel, which is not another* contains a very interesting play on words in the Greek language. It is concisely saying that the *gospel* preached by the legalists is another gospel alright, but it is not of the same kind as the gospel preached by Paul. It is not good news, for it has no power to save. In fact, any Gospel other than that centered in Jesus Christ is not another of the same kind! In short, the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism, the Five Pillars of Islam, the four sacred texts of Mormonism, or keeping of the Mosaic Law as a means of salvation are not a Gospel that can save anyone! They don't lead to reconciliation with God Almighty and instead they are counterfeits.

At this point, I can't help but think, "Paul, tell us how you really feel!" Boy, is he going to do so in the next few verses!



# New Reading in Galatians

## Thursday, July 9: Read Galatians 1:6-9

Yesterday we saw the problem—false teachers had infiltrated the churches that Paul had planted, and were holding out a counterfeit gospel. In this case, it was right-standing with God through keeping the Mosaic Law. But what has Paul so worked up is the incomprehensible nature of Christians turning from freedom in Christ to religious bondage. He is going to have much to say about our need to avoid legalism, but for today, let's see what he has to say about the false teachers who were spreading a false gospel:

**But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned.** Galatians 1:8

In case you weren't sure if you heard Paul correctly:

**As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned.**  
Galatians 1:9

This is some of the strongest language found in the New Testament epistles. Two considerations:

1. Some translations use the word *anathema* in Verses 8-9, which is a transliteration of the Greek word. It refers to something *devoted over to destruction*.
2. Both the language and the repetition indicate how strongly Paul feels about this subject. Let me suggest that God feels equally as zealous for the integrity of the message centered in the person and work of His Son!

So the issue has been raised of the *right* gospel and a *different* gospel. That raises the question: What is the Gospel? We'll go to work on that very question tomorrow.

# New Reading in Galatians

## Friday, July 10: Read Acts 16

Paul is zealous for the Gospel message he preached, so let's break down the Gospel that can save into manageable pieces. First, the word Gospel simply means *good news* of any kind. However when it comes to our eternal destiny, "The Gospel" is the *good news* from God to fallen mankind whereby we can change our eternal destiny from one in the Lake of Fire to one in Heaven.

Secondly, we have already had a glimpse of this Gospel in the opening verses of Galatians 1:4:

**...our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age. . .**

Note that we were mired in this present evil age, but can be delivered—that would be *good news!* Also notice who *gave* and who *delivered!* It was the Lord Jesus Christ! What do you see man doing? Man isn't mentioned at all in the text of Galatians! But our reading today helps us understand how man is to respond to this good news:

**"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved—you and your household." Acts 16:30-31**

We have a lost individual asking Paul what he needed to do in order to be saved. The answer is quite clear—respond to the Gospel in faith and you will be saved. To summarize, The Gospel is *good news* from God to man centered in the person and work of Jesus Christ. What makes it good is that it describes the means by which a human being can change his or her destiny from one of eternal damnation to one of eternal life in the presence of the Lord! What makes it particularly good news is that the work of salvation has been fully accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ, our sole response is to receive, by faith, what God has accomplished on our behalf! Wow!

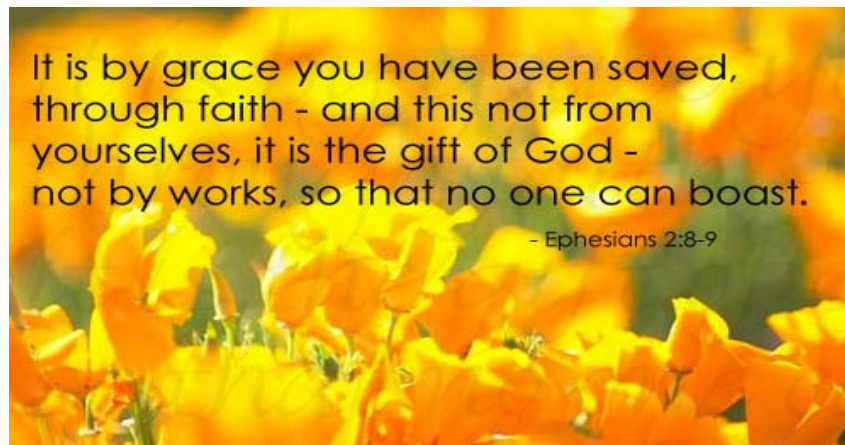


# New Reading in Galatians

## Monday, July 13: Read Ephesians 2:1-10

Friday we saw that God has done all the work of salvation, and the response He is looking for from lost mankind is simply one of faith. That makes salvation a gift from God to man. Could it really be that straightforward? Let's reinforce exactly that truth and pick up some further information from Ephesians 2:8-9:

**For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.**



Think this through with me:

- Salvation is a gift! It is God's means of salvation, through His Son, offered to the lost and desperately needy human race.
- This gift is received apart from works on our part—it has to be that way or it wouldn't be by grace and it couldn't be called a gift, as we see in Romans 11:6!

**And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.**

Continued on the next page.



# New Reading in Galatians

Monday, July 13: Read Ephesians 2:1-10  
(Continued)

- Just how do we receive this gift? The passage is clear—by faith! This is exactly the same way the Philippian jailer was told he could be saved—and thus it remains today:

. . .that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

- Because we don't do anything to earn or deserve salvation, notice how that excludes boasting on our part. The corollary is that all of the honor and glory for my salvation, and yours, belongs to the Lord our God!
- Some want to call a gospel that only requires us to believe—easy believism! Listen, it wasn't easy for our Savior! He was the perfect sinless One who bore our sin upon Himself in order to procure our forgiveness. Furthermore, to think that we could bring *anything to the table* when it comes to our salvation is to have an inflated view of our ability to contribute. For this is God's evaluation of fallen mankind:

**There is no one righteous, not even one. . .**

Romans 3:12



For God so loved  
the world, that  
he gave his only  
begotten Son,  
that whosoever  
believeth in him  
should not perish,  
but have  
everlasting life.

John 3:16

# A Return to Revival

Tuesday, July 14: Read Joshua 3

*As we move into the second half of the year, let's consider the topic of revival once more.*

I like the idea of periodically revisiting the topic of revival. For it is a topic that we cannot revisit too often and a goal against which we should continually measure our lives. For here is the definition of revival that we have developed by studying it within the Scriptures:

*Spiritual revival is characteristic of a Christian who returns to a condition of spiritual vigor, by means of the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the fellowship of the people of God. The revived see God as bigger than any obstacle, are faithful to keep all His promises, and are simultaneously convicted of their need and the wonders of God's grace.*

I remind you that revival is something that is personal, daily, and meant to be perpetuated through time. As revival occurs, it encourages others with whom we fellowship to also pursue a similar condition of flourishing spiritually so that we are on our way to having a vital fellowship of believers who are able to impact their surroundings for Christ.

Now is a good time to take a look at yourself and ask, "Am I flourishing spiritually? Am I living in the One True Vine?" As we read about the Jews preparing to cross the Jordan into the Promised Land, we can ask ourselves, whether we are spiritually ready for what the Lord has in store for the rest of this year. If not, we know what we need to do—turn to the Lord in repentance, confess any sin of which He convicts our heart, and trust Him to "Revive us again!"



# A Return to Revival

## Wednesday, July 15: Read Joshua 4

So here are the Israelites at the boundary of the Promised Land. It has taken them 40 years to complete an 11-month journey because of their contempt for the Lord 39 years before. Moses is dead, and Joshua is now leading the people. God supernaturally provided a means for the people to cross the Jordan River and gave Joshua an unusual command. He is to choose 12 men, one from each tribe, to carry a stone from the middle of the Jordan River and pile those stones up at the scene of their first night's camp in the Land.

The text is very clear about the intent of this action: that pile of rocks is to stand as a memorial to future generations of Israelites to the way that God fulfilled His promises (Verse 7), that all peoples on the earth might know that the hand of the God of the Israelites is mighty, and to prompt the Fear of the Lord on the part of the Israelites (Verse 24). The Hebrew word translated *memorial* in Verse 7 simply means that which prompts remembrance.

Let's ask ourselves two questions: What was so important for the Israelites to remember and what kinds of things were they likely to forget? I think the answers to these questions are contained within the story of the Israelites and are of great application to us as well. Both we and the Israelites need to remember:

1. The Capability of our God
2. The Holiness of our God
3. The Salvation (deliverance) that is available through our God

We'll investigate further over the next few days.

# A Return to Revival

## Thursday, July 16: Read Judges 2

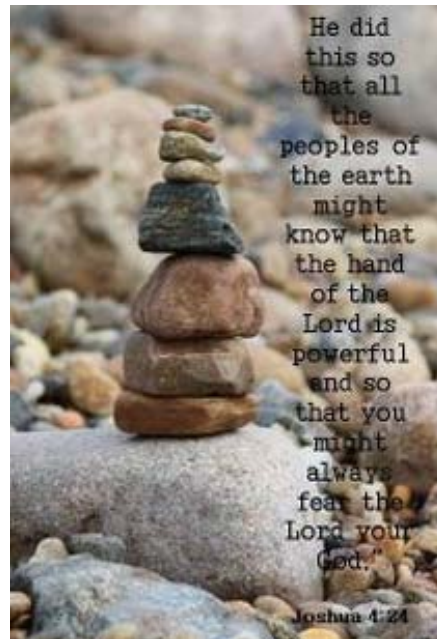
I would like to reinforce what I claimed was the intent of the stone memorial the Israelites built at Gilgal after they supernaturally crossed the Jordan.

The first purpose was to recall to their minds *the capability of God!* The name God gave Moses to give to the people was "I AM!" God is the self-existent one who reached into Egypt with an outstretched arm and mighty acts of judgment through the ten plagues, and then constantly demonstrated His capability to the Israelites during their time in the desert by providing water, food, clothes that didn't wear out, and military victory.

The outcome God was after can be found in Exodus 14:31:

**So the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped.**

But, despite God's faithfulness, the Israelites, like believers of all ages, are prone to wander and need to be reminded.



Continued on the next page.

# A Return to Revival

Thursday, July 16: Read Judges 2  
(Continued)

Second, the people needed to be reminded of *the holiness of God!* What happened when the people felt Moses was gone on the Mountain for too long? They engaged in idolatry and wild pagan revelry. Three thousand died for this transgression. In just a few days, many more are going to die because of the incomplete obedience of the people during the attack of Ai.



Third, the people needed to remember the *Salvation (deliverance) that God provides.* They were delivered from the judgment of the destroying angel upon the first-born, delivered from bondage in Egypt, and delivered from thirst and hunger in the desert. The Jews had experienced both physical and spiritual salvation and they needed a memorial to prompt their remembrance in the days ahead. The second chapter of Judges tells us what happened in just one generation after Joshua died.

Something tells me we have the same desperate need to remember. We'll consider that tomorrow.

# A Return to Revival

## Friday, July 17: Read I Corinthians 11

In order for each of us to spiritually flourish, that is live a *re-lived* life, we need to remember exactly the same things Israel was called to remember. So, how is it that we figuratively pile up memorial stones in our own lives?

- We corporately *pile up stones* through real fellowship! **And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.** Hebrews 10:24-25

This would include sitting under the accurate and authoritative teaching of the Word of God, authentic worship, and the iron-sharpening-iron potential of fellowship around the things of the Lord with other believers.

- We individually *pile up stones* through Bible study, prayer, scripture memorization, and meditation. For: **. . .blessed is the man who listens to Me, watching daily at my doors.** Proverbs 8:34

For true revival we need to *sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to what He has to say* (Luke 10:42) and respond to the call of our Lord to *abide in Me, for apart from Me you can do nothing* (John 15:5). These Scriptures remind us that our time in the Word is to be for the purpose of relationship and not scholarship!

- Then, Jesus left us one specific memorial by means of the bread, the cup, and His future coming. Through the communion remembrance, our Lord built a lasting memorial upon which we are to focus until He returns. And at that point, we won't have to worry about forgetting any more, for we shall see Him face to face!

And all God's people said, "Amen!"

# A Return to Revival

## Monday, July 20: Read Psalm 61

Our final set of meditations on the topic of revival will focus upon the idea of *heritage*. Did you catch the concept in Psalm 61? After calling to the Lord to be led to the Rock that is above all, David reflects upon the Lord's faithfulness and exclaims,

**You have given me the heritage of those who fear**

**Your name.**

Psalm 61:5

Even though I might not be sure exactly what this heritage might be, just the way David frames his plea causes me to know that this is something that all of us should want also. This brings us to a number of questions: What is this heritage that David is talking about? What does it have to do with the subject of revival? And, how is it connected with the Fear of the Lord?

Let me answer that last question first. Thus far in our study of revival we have defined revival; investigated the signs of revival; identified the agents of revival; answered the question, Can it Fail?; and highlighted the importance of building memorials to revival. The presence of the Fear of the Lord is simply the mark of the revived. For those who are spiritually flourishing have a great reverence for God, they recognize how high and exalted He is, and they respond in obedience to His revealed will. So whatever this heritage is, it is the heritage of not only those who fear the Lord, but those who live spiritually flourishing lives.

To finish this study, a reminder of our revival definition:

*Spiritual revival is characteristic of a Christian who returns to a condition of spiritual vigor, by means of the Word of God and the Spirit of God. The revived see God as bigger than any obstacle, faithful to keep all His promises, and are simultaneously convicted of their need for and the wonders of God's grace.*



# Return to Revival

## Tuesday, July 21: Read II Timothy 4

You have given me the heritage of those who fear  
Your name. Psalm 61:5

In our verse from Psalm 61, the Hebrew word translated *heritage* means inheritance, or that which is a possession. In other words, those who Fear the Lord, those who live spiritually revived lives, have a certain spiritual possession that cannot be lost—even by a life cut short by circumstances. Furthermore, they have an expectation of something that will come to them as an inheritance from the Lord. Eternity is a blessing for all Christians, but I am talking about those who persevere day by day, and attempt to appropriate the agents of revival and flourish spiritually in whatever calling the Lord may have.

The Scriptures say it this way:

**These all died in faith. . . confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on this earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. . .they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country.** Hebrews 11:14-16

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# Return to Revival

## Tuesday, July 21: Read II Timothy 4 (Continued)

All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:16

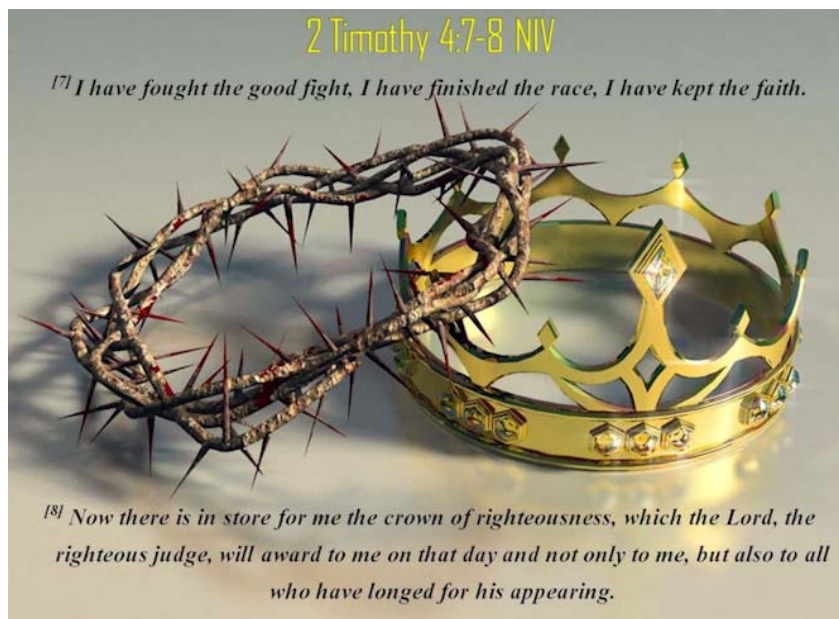
Now that all has been heard, here is the conclusion of the matter, Fear God and obey His commandments. For this is the whole duty of man.

Ecclesiastes 12:13

I have fought the good fight. . .now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness. . .

II Timothy 4:7-8

In order for this to really make sense, here is what I would like you to carefully think through. For two days I have equated living a revived life with walking in the Fear of the Lord: Is it Biblically sound to do that? Think about this question, but don't decide until after the next few meditations.



# Return to Revival

## Wednesday, July 22: Read II Kings 23

As we discuss the heritage we should want, consider two kings of Israel. Read about Jeroboam beginning in I Kings 11. He was a man of great valor and administrative skill. When Solomon sinned, Jeroboam was chosen by God to lead the northern kingdom of Israel. God promised him that he would head a dynasty as enduring as David's if he was faithful to the Lord.

Yet, when things began to unfold exactly as God had said, he doubted God. To solidify his grasp over his new kingdom, he introduced pagan worship and instituted his own priesthood. Here is his legacy: he was disciplined personally, his family line was cut off, and in the remainder of the Book of Kings he is remembered as, "Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. . ."

On the other hand, read about Josiah beginning in II Kings 22. He becomes king at a young age, after a period of great apostasy. He is not remarkable, and yet when he hears the Word of God, he repents. His repentance causes a great repentance throughout the land—and he leads the people into a time of spiritual revival. Here is his legacy:

**Now before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart, with all his soul and with all his might according to all the Law of Moses; nor after him did any arise like him.**

II Kings 23:25

Josiah was revived and left the legacy of the revived. Now did Josiah live a long life? No, he died in battle. But it is not about length of life, nor about giftedness; rather, it is about faith versus unbelief. I close as I started—we should long to leave a spiritual legacy of a revived life, and it is never too late to start.

# Return to Revival

## Thursday, July 23: Read Malachi 3

You have given me the heritage of those who fear  
Your name. Psalm 61:5

We should desire to belong to this group—to be one of those who fear God's name! Just meditate upon the words of Malachi 3:16-17:

**Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name. "They shall be mine, says the Lord of Hosts. . ."**

In our study of revival we have learned that it must start individually—each of us must make the choices necessary to flourish spiritually:

- To recognize the sovereign and capable God portrayed in the Scriptures
- To depend upon Him
- To build memorials to Him that we might not forget
- To walk in the Fear of the Lord
- And, finally, to realize that the only thing that can cause revival to fail in our lives is unbelief

However, and this is very important, neither in the Old Testament and perhaps even more so in the New Testament, revival was never meant to be an individual commodity. In the Old Testament, it was meant to be the heritage of the people of God, lived out as the nation of Israel. In the New Testament, it is meant to be the heritage of the Bride of Christ—His Church!

# Return to Revival

## Thursday, July 23: Read Malachi 3 (Continued)

This truth is easily proved in Malachi 3, for God has a Book of Remembrance in which are written the names of those who Fear Him. That means that the names of those who have spiritually revived lives are written in that book. This is the group to which we want to belong!

Now look at the corporate nature of those who are commended in the New Testament for the quality of their lives:

**Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. . .**

Hebrews 12:1-2



Did you catch that we are part of a “great cloud?” Then consider how Jesus offers an evaluation—church by church in Revelation chapters two and three:

To the angel of the church of \_\_\_\_\_ write: . . .

# Return to Revival

## Friday, July 24: Read Psalm 90

You have given me the heritage of those who fear  
Your name. Psalm 61:5

The last of the items I would like you to consider regarding the heritage of those who are revived is that of time! Consider II Kings 23:29

**. . .Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went to the aid of the king of Assyria. . .and King Josiah went against him. And Pharaoh Necho killed him at Megiddo. . .**

How do we make sense out of this? Why was one of the few great kings over Israel killed in battle? Josiah had taken a bad situation, turned it around and was making a real difference—and he was a godly man. We do not have to ponder this for very long before we ask the question, “Why, God?” I will discuss parts of the answer beginning with how it applies to Josiah, and as you will see, these answers have a great deal of applicability to us.

First, Josiah responded to the revelation he had from God. Therefore, he possessed an inheritance that was guaranteed in heaven where moth and rust do not destroy. In other words, his heritage had been established—as it is for all those who walk by faith, living revived lives.

We guard this capacity for heritage by understanding the thrust of the following admonishments:

- Make the most of every opportunity. (Colossians 4:5)
- “Be careful how you live. . .as the wise, make the most of every opportunity because the days are evil.” (Ephesians 5:16)
- “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord. . . knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. . .” (Colossians 3:23-24)



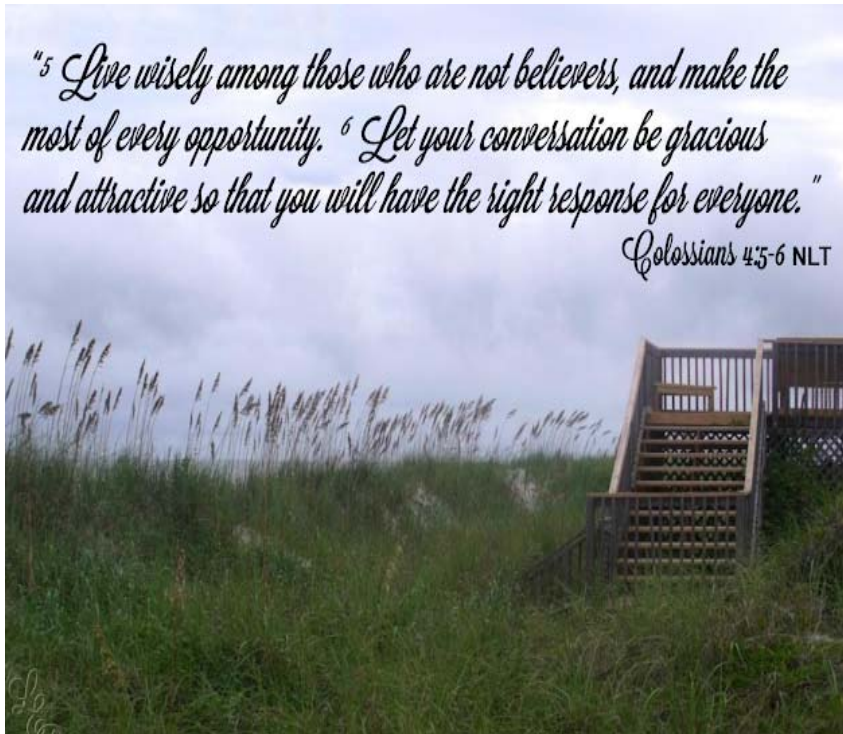
# Return to Revival

## Friday, July 24: Read Psalm 90 (Continued)

So it is not really about length of days, but how the days we have are lived. This is exactly the attitude we should have as expressed in Verse 12 of today's reading:

**Teach us to number our days aright, that we may  
gain a heart of wisdom.** Psalm 90:12

The revived, like Josiah, do not need to be long-lived, prosper materially, produce visible fruit, or be famous. The revived just need to live a spiritually vigorous life for as many days as the Lord has written in His book so that they too would have the heritage of those who Fear The Lord!





# Return to Revival

Monday, July 27: Read Psalm 85 and Revelation 3:7-13

So we are back where we began with our study of revival beginning in Psalm 85 and ending in Revelation 3 with the Church of Philadelphia. Interestingly enough,



the Scofield version of the Bible inserts an editor's note above Verse 7 which says, "The Church in Revival."

In closing our investigation of revival, I would like to challenge you to think about the ramifications of the choices we make. To begin with, God's offer of salvation is very broad, very inclusive:

**He gave His only Son that whosoever believeth. . .**

John 3:16

But as the verse goes on we almost immediately see the consequences of that choice:

**...believeth on Him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

There are only two options—either perish (eternally) or live (eternally)! In other words, will we choose to join the company of the redeemed through faith in the person and work of Christ, or choose to remain in the company of the lost. For, if we don't do something to change our status, we are going to end up in the same condition in which we started—in the dominion of darkness and an object of God's wrath.

# Return to Revival

## Monday, July 27: Read Psalm 85 and Revelation 3:7-13 (Continued)

After we have made the choice of salvation, the Christian has further choices to make. These are the choices of the quality of life lived. These are our choices of heritage:

- Will each of us choose to live a spiritually vigorous and flourishing life; or one that is like a wilted flower, choked out by the concerns of this world?
- Will we be among those who have a large view of a promise-keeping God, or will we be among those who let outward appearance, the lures of this world, and the fears of man shape their walk?
- Will we be open to the Lord who daily puts to use the agents of revival in our lives, who builds memorials to His capability, holiness and ability to save, or will we be found among those who seek the adulation and the memorials of this world?
- Will we be among those who walk in the Fear of the Lord or among those who live in love with the world?

From God's side, He has provided everything necessary for our salvation and for us to live a life of spiritual vigor, that our name might be added to the Book of Life and then to the Book of Remembrance. The only thing that can prevent salvation first and keep us from spiritually flourishing second is unbelief as to the plans and the capability of God.

Revival is a cry to God of a people who have decided they want what God has provided, no matter the cost. I trust that will be your heart cry and the cry of our fellowship.

And all God's people said, "Amen!"

# Mission and Disciplines

## Tuesday, July 28: Read Psalm 95

*We are back to our study of the Mission and Disciplines of the Christian Life. As a reminder, this study has caused us to think about the mission we have from the Lord to "Go and make disciples. . . ." Furthermore, there are also a number of disciplines associated with the Christian life including regular intake of the Word of God, regular prayer, and now we turn to the subject of worship.*

The most important thing that I would like you to grasp from this study is the way that both our *Mission* and *Disciplines* are inseparably linked. If we try to isolate them, we do so at our own peril. I am not saying one aspect is more important than the other, I am saying that you are not really fulfilling the call to *make disciples* unless you are involved in Bible study, prayer, and now worship.

Take prayer for example. If you are not praying for the lost people to whom the Lord allows you the privilege of sharing the Gospel, and if you are not praying for those you are mentoring in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, then you are not fully engaged in disciple-making! Conversely, if you are not engaged in disciple-making, then you are not really engaged in worship.



# Mission and Disciplines

Tuesday, July 28: Read Psalm 95  
(Continued)

Perhaps you are thinking, "What does disciple-making have to do with worship? I worship regularly, I am just not gifted in the area of disciple-making." Here is the connection. Matthew 28:18-20, and many other passages, command the followers of Jesus to be involved in disciple-making.

**And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.**

How can we truly be engaged in worship, if we have chosen to ignore a clear command from our sovereign Lord? For that matter, wouldn't worship be compromised any time we are apathetic toward the Word of God or allow unbelief and worldly pressures to take hold? I hope you will come to see there is a harmony between our mission and the various disciplines of the Christian Life. Stated another way, if we respond as we are called to in the first verses of Psalm 95:

**Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. . .**

and we are truly engaged in worship, wouldn't this naturally spill over into our lives simply by telling others about the Rock of our salvation? Of course! Worship leads to a heart so full it naturally overflows with what has filled it!

# Mission and Disciplines


Wednesday, July 29:  
Read Revelation 4

I am going to try to promote your understanding of worship by using the breadth of Scripture. Consider the following passages.

- This fascinating passage in Genesis connects mankind to our Creator in a captivating way.

**Let Us make man in Our own image, according to Our likeness. . .So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female. . .**  
Genesis 1:26-27

- Man was placed in a perfect environment and interacted face to face with God on a regular basis.  
(Genesis 3:8)



"And they heard the voice  
of the Lord God walking  
in the garden in the  
cool of the day:"

Genesis 3:8

# Mission and Disciplines

Wednesday, July 29:  
Read Revelation 4 (Continued)

- Though a fallen creation, it is still possible for those who turn back to the Lord to undergo a transformation that glorifies God. Could it be that in the process we regain some of that original image that was lost in the fall?

**But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.** II Corinthians 3:18

- And then from today's reading:  
...for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.  
Revelation 4:11 (KJV)

Before reading further, go back through and put the above four points together and see what you get!

I trust you discovered something like the following: In keeping with the purposes of God, and for His pleasure, He created mankind. He created man with the capacity for, and intent of, having fellowship, building relationship, and to reflecting His glory.

In short, mankind was made for \_\_\_\_\_! When I fill in the blank, I come to the conclusion that the word worship is the best fit, what do you think?

More to come in the next few days.

# Mission and Disciplines

Thursday, July 30: Read Acts 17

Let me open with the verse that closed yesterday's lesson:

**. . .for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.** Revelation 4:11 (KJV)

If it is true that God created mankind in order to have a relationship with Him, one that included man as both a reflector of God's glory and as a creature that would choose to worship his Creator, then all of a sudden a lot of things fall into place.

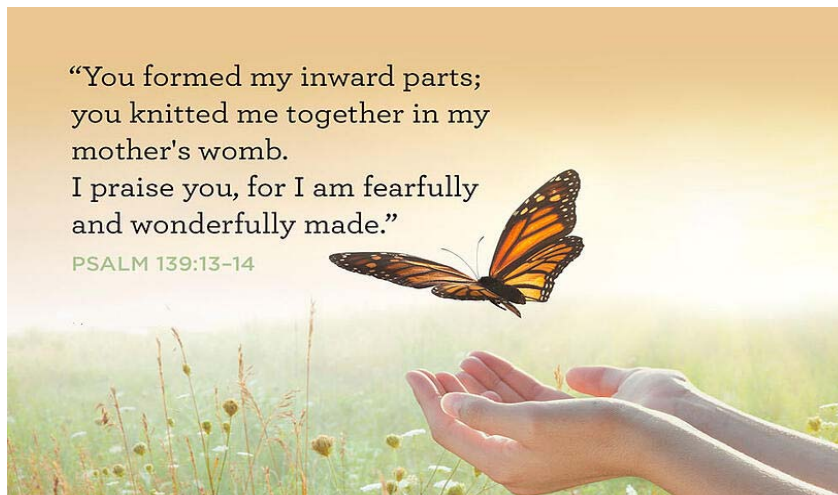
Some reject the notion of a loving personal God who cares about each person. But if we were created for worship and relationship, if this worship and relationship gives God pleasure, then it is no longer such a stretch to think that He would care about us, each one of us, and seek to restore us to relationship with Himself. Now that I know what I was made for, it is no wonder that He knit me together in my mother's womb. (Psalm 139:13)

It is no wonder that all the days for me were written in

"You formed my inward parts;  
you knitted me together in my  
mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully  
and wonderfully made."

PSALM 139:13-14





# Mission and Disciplines

Thursday, July 30: Read Acts 17  
(Continued)

It is no wonder that He has put eternity in my heart (Ecclesiastes 3:11) and deep calls to deep (Psalm 42:7).

This very issue of worship infuses history with meaning. What we call history is, in reality, a great redemptive story in which God has provided a means of reconciliation, is calling lost mankind back to Himself, and is restoring all things to the way He intended them to be. That is, in part, what the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21 is about.

In the meantime, as A. W. Tozer has said, most of mankind is in a deep, deep fog regarding the reason for his existence. Mankind has a *spiritual amnesia* as to why he exists and his purpose in life.

This is so easy to prove. The ancient Greeks claimed the goal of life was to obtain the highest form of knowledge (Plato). The Epicureans claimed it was pleasure, while out of the enlightenment came reason and social order. The Nihilists claimed life is without objective order and it is absurd to search for any such thing. Existentialism dogmatically asserts that life's meaning isn't determined by some god, but each of us creates his or her own meaning. Then there is the Christian, who against all this worldly wisdom, calmly asserts:

*God made me, He calls me to reconciliation through the work of His Son, to know Him, to bring glory to Him, to spend eternity with Him. He has given me a mission to engage in rescuing others as I have been rescued, and I have Christ within the hope of glory."*

That's the testimony you will hear when the fog of amnesia lifts, and that's a Christian who understands his or her mission because he or she has spent time in worship.

# Mission and Disciplines

## Friday, July 31: Read Acts 17

Perhaps by this time you are thinking, "Can you tell me plainly, what is worship?" The English word carries the idea of "to place worth upon an object." Both the Hebrew and Greek words focus on the position of the body, that is to kneel or to prostrate oneself (to lie on the ground before). You can see this concept in Revelation 4 and 5:

**. . .the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and worship Him who lives forever and ever.** Revelation 4:10

**. . .the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.** Revelation 5:8

I think of worship as the outcome of *sorting out* priorities and then *aligning oneself* with them. In other words, determining what (or who) is most important, and then giving that object its due. See if you can see that occurring in both this famous definition of worship by Archbishop William Temple and in the closing verses of Revelation 5.

*Worship is the submission of all of our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by His holiness; the nourishment of mind with His truth; the purifying of imagination by His beauty; the opening of the heart to His love; the surrender of will to His purpose—all this gathered up in adoration, the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable.*

**Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:**

**"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"**

**The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.** Revelation 5:13-14

# Mission and Disciplines

Friday, July 31: Read Acts 17 (Continued)

We must sort out Who, and Who alone is worthy of worship. Then, we must fall in delight before the Father and the Son!



"To the One seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and power forever and ever!"

Revelation 5:13 (TLV)

VISTOSO  
  
Community Church

He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit... *John 15:5*

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