

3 Keys to Personal Revival

I have found that there is a real cost to revival. I believe the parable of 10 virgins in Matthew 25 shows such an important picture of this.

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be like ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them. But the wise took jars of oil with their lamps. While the bridegroom delayed, they all rested and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out to meet him!’

“Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. But the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps have gone out.’

“The wise answered, ‘No, lest there not be enough for us and you. Go rather to those who sell it, and buy some for yourselves.’

“But while they went to buy some, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. Afterward, the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open the door for us.’

1”But he answered, ‘Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’

“Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming” (Matt. 25:1-13).

This parable is an such an interesting picture of revival and how we can so easily miss it. If you read this passage of Scripture and don’t view it as a parable you can easily miss what Jesus is trying to communicate to his disciples. Many read this and think that it is a parable about the end times and the return of the Lord. However, I want to show you why I

think its speaking about living in personal revival.

Notice, the parable starts off talking about the kingdom of heaven is like ten virgins. The description of virgins here is actually referring to Christians. Virgins are pure and not given to a lover and here the virgin represents a pure and saved follower of Christ. The passage also says each of these virgin (Christians) all had lamps which represents ministry. We know this from the Scripture in Matthew 5:14 that we are the light of the world. This reference of the lamp represents ministry.

So we see that they were all Christians and all had ministries but there were only half that were wise and the other half were foolish and what differentiated the two was the fact the wise had oil and the foolish did not. The oil in this parable represents the Holy Spirit and intimacy. See, when the bridegroom was coming only those that were prepared in their hearts through intimacy with the Holy Spirit had access to the dining table with the Lord.

Those that didn't have oil tried to buy oil from those that had it and their reply was "go and buy for yourselves." In essence what they were saying was: "We cant give you freely what we paid the price for. You have to go pay your own price through prayer, fasting and seeking God yourself to obtain this oil of intimacy."

Receiving the anointing of God is costly. It can't be bought with money; that's not what I am referring to when I say it's costly. It's costly meaning you have to pay a price by sowing your life into the things of God.

The price you pay is crucifying your desires and surrendering your will to the Lord. It also requires a lifestyle of prayer and fasting. Those are both things that speak of paying a price. Many people in the body want the anointing and power of God but aren't willing to lay down their life and pay this

kind of price. With anything of value there is a price for it, and the anointing is of great value.

Those that want to carry the weighty presence of Gods power will have to be those who pay the price in the secret place of prayer and fasting. Salvation is a free gift according to Romans 6:23, but the price to manifest the kingdom of God is a laid-down life that is marked by prayer and fasting. This is what releases the oil of the Holy Spirit to us.

Just being saved and having a ministry doesn't mean that God will give us the treasure of revival. The treasure of revival is always found in the place of prayer and fasting.

This parable also shows us something about revival that I believe is extremely key. It shows us that many great Christians with ministries can easily miss an outpouring of the Spirit. You can easily miss this from the parable by thinking that when they weren't allowed into the feast they were being sent to hell.

I don't believe that's what it is communicating to the reader. I think what Jesus is saying here is that you will miss your divine visitation from Him if you don't have oil. There are multiple types of visitations that we can invoke from the Lord based on our willingness to steward His Presence.

I want to show you three quick keys in this chapter on how to position yourself to live in a place of personal revival and oil stewardship. These keys will help you unlock personal revival and cause you to live under an open heaven.

Three keys to personal revival:

1.) Live in a place of repentance: Repentance is not just for the unbeliever. I actually think it's just the opposite. To understand repentance you have to understand the original Greek word for repentance which is *metenoia*. This word

literally means to change the way you think.

When John came preaching a message of repentance he was preaching a message of a mindset change. I grew up always being taught that repenting meant that you changed the direction you are going and begin to walk in a new direction. However, if you change the way your going without a mindset change, you will eventually revert right back to the way you were before because you didn't have the new mind to carry you to your destination.

I have found that repentance is a necessary part of my personal revival. As I am growing in God there are always new mindsets He is wanting me to walk in as I am growing in Him.

“Therefore repent and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

In this Scripture we see repentance as a key element in walking in times of refreshing, which is speaking of personal revival. I love how it says times and not a time. Times here is plural meaning more than once. The greater the level of repentance or willingness to confront a wrong mindset in yourself, the greater the personal revival or time of refreshing.

2.) Radical Obedience: Radical obedience is such an important key in walking in personal revival. The story of Jonah is one story that comes to mind on how important it is to walk in obedience. When you do, the fruit can be astonishing. After Jonah disobeyed God and ran from his call to preach to Nineveh and finally surrendered and went; in just one day there was one of the most significant revivals in all of history.

In just one day of Jonah preaching, the king repented and so did all the people of the city. They called a fast, and because of this God turned away His wrath on that disobedient city. This story is amazing! One man's obedience was an entire

city's deliverance. Never underestimate the call of God on you to perform a task, no matter how small you may think it is.

This passage gives me hope for America. I am asking God to raise up radical revivalists all over America that would begin to sound the alarm and awaken the sleeping church. What America needs more than anything is men and women who would obey the voice of God no matter the cost.

I am praying for 10,000 radical revivalists to sweep across our nation preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand!" You could be one of these revivalists, but obedience must be an action that you do not flee from but rather embrace.

3.) Lifestyle of prayer: Revival is the treasure hidden in the next dimension of prayer. God will never send revival to a person who doesn't have a solid and consistent prayer life. When we started to see revival in the panhandle of Florida, there were serious and focused prayer meetings months in advance leading up to our personal and corporate outpourings.

I firmly believe that revival never comes to a church, city or region before it comes to a person. It always starts within a person in the private place of prayer. Once that person stewards personal revival and a life of prayer, God then causes what is on the inside of that particular believer to manifest in everyday circumstances. This in turn causes what we call "revival."

A revival meeting isn't something that is just scheduled on a calendar in hopes of a legitimate outpouring of God's Spirit. A revival meeting without a person already walking in personal revival is just another ordinary church service. It honestly shouldn't even have the title revival.

It is actually illegal in the Spirit to advertise something in a meeting that nobody is actually walking in or stewarding. It

is false advertisement and can cause great discouragement when believers come looking to be refreshed and aren't because there isn't a person who has paid the price for revival yet in prayer.

Pastor Chris Mathis is the lead pastor of the Summit Church in Crestview, Florida, and oversees several churches and ministries, as well as serves on the leadership team of New Breed Revivalist Network. Chris travels extensively around the world teaching, training and equipping the church in conferences, revivals and church services. He is the author of Thy Kingdom Come. He is married to Nikki Mathis, an internationally respected worship leader, and they have three children, Micaiah, Judah and Eden Mathis.