

# **IF...THEN!**

or

## **THE PRICE OF REVIVAL**

**TEXT:** **2 Chron.7:14** *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

**THESIS:** To outline **THE PRICE OF REVIVAL** as revealed in the text.

**INTRO.:** A. Solomon had just completed the magnificent Temple & God had given him His assurance that He was pleased. (v.11,12) No doubt the workers who had spent years of their lives building this monumental edifice were elated. It's situation on top of Mt. Moriah made it visible to all & with the sun glistening on its roof, it was as if God's glory was upon the Temple. Perhaps even the angels were rejoicing at its completion. All seemed well indeed. Then immediately God made a covenant with Solomon where 2 vital words were used: **"IF...THEN"** (V.14, 17-20).

B. God was saying to **Solomon & Israel** **"IF..."** Israel would live to please Him, **"THEN"...** He would bless them, but **"IF" not, "THEN" He could not.** This text, though given to Israel, nonetheless states a universal principle in God's dealings with His children. It has been recognized over the centuries as **"THE PRICE OF REVIVAL."**

**NOTE:** This is obviously a promise and challenge to the nation of Israel, nevertheless the principle is applicable to us today...

**TRANS.:** Here then is a conditional promise of God that we would do well to examine carefully, if we desire God's blessings nationally, corporately or individually...

### **I. SINCERE PENITENCE: "humble themselves"**

A. We Are God's People: Privileged

1. God's people are different than all others, because they are trusting in Someone other than themselves.
2. God's people have realized their own weakness & God's power.
3. God's people seek God's glory & not their own.

**ILLUS.:** God is aware how soon His people forget Him. They had just witnessed His awesome power when He sent fire down from heaven & had seen His glory. They had responded in bowing down before Him **"with their faces to the ground upon the pavement..."** (v.1-3), but He knew how prone they were to forget Him.

If we really desire revival, we must be willing to humble ourselves before Him. Are you willing to do that today?! It is a part of **"THE PRICE OF REVIVAL."**

B. We Are Called by His Name: Precarious

1. To be called by His Name, is an honor & identifies us with the Lord.
2. They called the believers in the N.T. Christians, no doubt because they reminded them of Christ. (Do we remind others of Him?)

**ILLUS.:** Alexander the Great had a soldier in his army who also was named Alexander. This man was a coward. Alexander called him before him & said: "You must either live up to your name or you must change it."

The world expects more of those who are called by the name of Christ. We need to be humble as He was humble. We need to humble ourselves before Him if we are going to experience revival.

3. The danger is that we become prideful instead of humble because we are called by His Name; we think we are better because we are privileged.
4. We are never to be puffed up or self-sufficient; all pride must go, pride of position, pride of possessions, pride of race or face or grace.

**"PEOPLE TOO PROUD TO KNEEL ARE TOO WEAK TO STAND."**

### **II. SIMPLE PRAYER: "and pray"**

A. Prayer Is The Breath Of The Believer:

1. We are wonderfully blessed in that we get many things from God even when we forget to pray
2. But we would get many more things from God if we would only pray: **"you have not because you ask not..."**
3. Prayer acknowledges our dependence upon God; often we don't ask because we can get things ourselves without prayer.

4. Even when we do pray, we often pray selfishly; we ask for things which will benefit us, rather than asking for things which God wants in us & for us.

**ILLUS.:** When was the last time you prayed unselfishly?! When you asked for God to do something just so *He* would be glorified? Revival is what *God* wants! It is beneficial to us, but we ought to be praying so that *He* would get the glory. We ought to want God's blessings on our nation, our church, our homes, our lives, because it is what *He* wants!

5. The Temple was a place of prayer, never a place of bingo, carnivals or ball games; recreation is no substitute for revival; play should never replace prayer.

***A CHURCH WITHOUT PRAYER IS A MAUSOLEUM WITH MANY OCCUPANTS.***

**III. SEARCHING PETITION: "seek My face"**

**ILLUS.:** It is hard for a man to be unfaithful to his wife, when she is present & he has to look into her face. It is hard for a child to be disobedient when he is looking in- to the face of his father.

**A. Sin Hides God's Face from Us:**

1. The reason we don't hear from heaven & experience revival is because our sin, worldliness, indifference & unfaithfulness hides God's face from us.
2. Our sin is like the cloud that hides the face of the sun; we cannot seek His face as long as the cloud of sin obscures it from us.

**QUES.:** What is it that hides God's face from us: some secret sin of the flesh? Some bad habit? Love of self, ease, money? A critical spirit, a fault-finding attitude? A bad feeling toward someone? Why not tear that cloud that obscures His face from your heart right now?! How badly do you want revival? How much do you long for a drink of that refreshing water? How hungry are you for His blessing?

***Ps.42:1-2a As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God...***

***REVIVAL CANNOT BE WORKED UP, BUT IT CAN BE PRAYED DOWN.***

**IV. SERIOUS PURPOSE: "turn from their wicked ways"**

**ILLUS.:** This is the key to revival. A dairy would never put its milk into cartons filled with bugs or dirt. God will not place the power of His Holy Spirit into lives filled with secret sin.

**A. Seeking God's Face Results in Turning from Sin:**

1. Turning from sin is a natural result of a vision of God.
2. A heart satisfied by the sight of God's face will no longer want to hold on to the things which are an abomination to Him.
3. The text says: "turn from (our) wicked ways" & our ways may not seem wicked to us, because we have been comparing ourselves w/someone else, but when we compare ourselves to Him, we will see how wicked we are.
4. The person most in need of revival today is the one who doesn't see that he needs revival!
5. But the person who knows he needs revival can claim the promise of this passage if he meets the previous conditions.
6. The results will be that "THEN..."

- a. "I will hear..."
- b. "(I will) forgive..."
- c. "(I) will heal..."

***GOD WILL NOT SEND REVIVAL INTO HEARTS FILLED W/SECRET SINS.  
GOD WILL SEND REVIVAL INTO HEARTS WHICH MEET HIS CONDITIONS.***

**CONCL.:** Are we willing to meet His conditions today? Are we willing to pay "THE PRICE OF REVIVAL?"

Israel asked "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" **Ps.78:19** The reply was that He did so daily for 40 years. A similar question is "Can God send revival in this decadent world, in this Laodicean age?" The answer is yes, but the conditions in the passage still apply. **"IF...THEN..."** Are you willing to meet these conditions?! Are you willing to ***humble yourself, pray, seek His face & turn from your wicked ways?*** **"THEN...!"**