

## Pt. 10 City Wide Revival

### Acts 8:1-8

#### Introduction...

I'm a student of church history...and some of the most fascinating stories you can read are about the occurrences of **Great** City-wide **Revivals!** [*shake entire city for God*]

1. For example, 200+ years ago, a preacher named **Charles Finney** conducted Revivals in the NE part of the US.
  - These were large crusades during a time of revival in the US.
  - On one occasion in **Rochester, NY**, over **100,000** came to Christ...
  - the entire city was shaken for God!
2. Then there was the **great Welsh Revival** at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century led by an unknown young man named Evan Roberts.
  - It all started in a small room/teen meeting in a small church...
  - **spiritual fire fell on a youth meeting**
  - historians say it could only be compared to the day of Pentecost!
  - The young people were weeping and crying out to God to make a difference in their lives so they could make a difference in the world.
  - Their fire spread to the adults who carried it throughout their city, and eventually throughout the country of Wales...
  - the ripple **effect was felt around the world!**
3. The Bible records the revival in the city of **Nineveh**—
  - Jonah, at first reluctant but then eagerly went after a 3 day stay at the "Fish Innerd Motel."  
*[talk about having a revival in Wales [whales!]*
  - He went and preached a message of judgment
  - the Bible says the **entire city repented, beginning with the king** right down to the least of the people!
4. We have a similar thing happening **here in Acts 8**. The man, Philip, went to preach in the region of Samaria, and the entire city was moved heavenward in a great revival.

#### How about "The **Great New Haven Revival of the year 2014**"

- We need that kind of revival that would shake our city!
- I'm not talking about one of these temporary, counterfeit revivals that touch only the emotions...
- I'm talking about a revival where Christians genuinely get right with God, and lost people get saved in great numbers, where marriages are restored, alcoholics are delivered, and rebellious teens are brought to their knees, where liars

become truthful, thieves are made honest, prostitutes are made pure, adulterous men made faithful...

...an old-fashioned, soul-saving, sin-erasing, devil-chasing revival!

## Would you like to see that in New Haven?

And Acts 8 should make us hungry for it to happen again!

Let me show you 3 things in these verses about City-Wide Revival:

### 1. 1. The Man...Philip...v. 5

- Ch. 6 tells us this Philip is one of the original 7 deacons.
- By Ch. 8 he's an effective evangelist. *[not the apostle Philip!]*

## Revival...

### a. Can start with just one person!

*[willing to pay the price/hungry for God to do something awesome!]*

- 1 person can realize it only takes a spark to start a roaring blaze!

*In the 1800s Gypsy Smith was a great revivalist. When asked how to have revival he said, "go home, lock yourself in your room, draw a circle around yourself w/ chalk, and ask God to start a great revival w/in that circle! When God has answered your prayer the revival will be underway!"*

- Fire spreads!/energizes!/purifies!

*A further detail about the Welsh Revival—*

- according to historian Thomas Rayner,
- it all started in that testimony meeting in a youth group...
- one little girl was so nervous she could barely speak,
- but she stood up and shared one sentence: "O, I do love Jesus"...
- that's when it all started, God gripped hearts and the rest is history!
- It was just a little spark, but grew into a wildfire!

## Question...

### **Do you believe it could happen today?**

- God is no respecter of persons...
- He's the same yesterday, today, forever,
- I for one believe it can happen today!
- It might help if some bad things happened in our nation.
- And the good news is...we're asking for it!
- Perhaps God will get our attention in a drastic way.

## **Another great revival started in England, but spread to Scotland and Ireland Under D.L. Moody.**

Here's how it started, according to Moody's son, who wrote his biography:

1. On vacation, he was preaching for a pastor named Lessey in London on a Sunday am.
  - He was to be there that night as well.
  - But the AM service was so cold, dry, and dead, and the people were so unresponsive, he dreaded going back that night!
2. But when he got there that night, it was packed w/ more than in the morning, the spirit was electric, all were excited...
  - he preached and gave invitation to stand if you want to become a Christian, and dozens stood!
  - He thought they might have misunderstood, asked them to sit back down...
  - said, if you're really serious, then meet w/ me in the "inquiry room" after the service [*dozens showed up w/ some lined up out in the hallway!*]
3. Moody said the power of God was so strong he held over for 10 more days! Over 400 got saved in that period!
4. Moody knew that kind of revival only happens in response to prayer, so he investigated...found out that behind the scenes, something had been going on.
  - An elderly woman there that morning went home to her invalid sister, and told her about Moody being there.
  - Her eyes lit up, for she had been praying that God would send Moody to England. "put lunch away, we'll spend the rest of the afternoon in prayer and fasting," she said. And they did.
5. How did it start?
  - 2 old ladies, 1 bed-ridden, said, we don't need more organization or activities, we need the power of God on this place...let's put away lunch!...and they paid the price in prayer!

Not only can **revival** begin w/ just one,

### **b. Revival... Can be held back by just one as well!**

*F.B. Meyer talks about an unsuccessful revival meeting that drug on night after night w/ no results.*

- *A Deacon came fwd. to say he knew why...*
- *he had a grudge against another deacon, and they hadn't spoken in months...there was bad blood there.*
- *Meyer got the 2 together and led them in burying the hatchet...*
- *they made it public before the next service and revival broke out right then and there!*

- (1) Don't be the 1 that holds it back here just because you refuse to make something right,
- (2) give up that bitterness,
- (3) forgive as you've been forgiven...
- (4) settle for less than "YOUR WAY"!

**c. Don't be the one weak link that keeps it from happening.**

Because you refuse to repent of that immoral relationship, bad habit, pet sin!

**Revival broke out in Samaria in Acts 8 when one man, Philip,  
decided he wanted to be used by God.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Thing about City-wide Revival

**2. The Message v. 5b**

That's the kind of revival preaching we need...

**a. Preach Christ**

- (1) Preaching social reform won't bring revival...
- (2) nor will a feel good sermon designed to please the crowd!
- (3) Educational sermons are nice and helpful personally, but if the heart hasn't been changed, it doesn't matter what effect you've had on the mind!
  - (a) Educate a thief and all you end up w/ is a smarter thief...
  - (b) now instead of petty theft he knows how to embezzle from the company!
- (4) May we at FBC ever commit to preaching Jesus Christ!
  - (a) His virgin birth, perfect life, sacrificial death, bodily resurrection...
  - (b) All His teachings in-between including...
    - all He had to say about sin, death, hell, judgment, as well as love, salvation, repentance and forgiveness!
- (5) May we ever preach Jesus, and what He said to Satan in the hour of temptation in the wilderness, as well as what he said to the disciples arguing about who was the greatest!
- (6) May we preach Jesus w/out apology, including all He said about money, both that which we give and that which we keep!
- (7) May we preach over and over again the most powerful sermon the universe has ever known...6 hours long and preached atop a hill called Golgotha one Friday!
  - (a) That's the only preaching that saves souls, changes lives, brings repentance!
  - (b) Revival isn't brought because the Pastor is good looking or his jokes are funny...thank God that's not what it's dependent on!

(8) Philip preached Christ, not the mamby-pamby, wishy-washy, panty waste dribble that is so gently brush-stroked to itching ears so commonly this hour all across the city!

(a) No wonder revival is no-where in sight!

(b) Let's covenant together to be that place that God uses to start the needed fire!

*You know Daniel Webster [if not, look him up in the Webster's dictionary!].*

*1. He was a great politician, orator, scholar.*

*2. When he lived in Washington D.C., he attended a small country church faithfully.*

*3. One day his niece came to him and said, Uncle Daniel, why do you go to that little church? There's many large, fashionable churches in the city where you can hear a much better delivery!*

*4. He replied, "Young lady, in the fancy churches, they preach to Daniel Webster the Statesman...but in my church, they preach to Daniel Webster the Sinner, and they tell me about Jesus!"*

**Thank God Webster knew the difference between oratory and preaching!**

Joke...

*I heard about preacher coming down hard on subject of hell*

*- An elderly man had fallen asleep in the service*

*- The preacher called out a question: **Is there anybody that really wants to go to hell? If you wanna go, stand up!!***

*- All the elderly man heard was stand up!*

*- He looked around, saw no one else standing, so he stood up*

*- **He** said, "preacher, don't know what we're voting on, but looks like you and me's the only ones for it!"*

Let me read to you a statement written by anonymous....

*Noah's message from the steps going up to the Ark was not, "Something good is going to happen to you!"*

*Amos was not confronted by the high priest of Israel for proclaiming, "I'm gonna help you become a Joel Osteen Christian"*

*Jeremiah was not put into the pit for preaching, "I'm O.K., you're O.K.!"*

*Daniel was not put into the lion's den for telling people, "Possibility thinking will move mountains!"*

*John the Baptist was not forced to preach in the wilderness and eventually beheaded because he preached, "Smile, God loves you!"*

*The two prophets of the tribulation will not be killed for preaching, "God is in His heaven and all is right with the world!"*

*Instead, what was the message of all these men of God?*

*Simple, one word: "**Repent!**"*

What's the kind of revival preaching we need...

a. **Preach Christ**

b. **Repent**

Quotes from some famous preachers who've actually seen city-wide revival:

W.A. Criswell—when asked what's the secret to church growth and revival he said: "Preach the Word, brothers, and God will give the increase!"

Spurgeon—"I have no other secret than this: I have preached the gospel...not about the gospel, but I have preached the gospel, the full, free, glorious gospel of the living Christ...preach Christ, brethren, always and everywhere, preach Christ!"

*Philip is the man, 'preach Christ' & Repent is the message. Look now at...*

**3. The Miracles...v. 6-8**

a. Word "miracles" in v. 6 **Can be translated "signs"**

b. God allowed Philip...

- to work miracles as a sign,

- to authenticate that what he was saying was true...

(1) they didn't have the NT yet like we have, and God put His stamp of approval on Philip's message thru these signs...

(2) God proved Himself thru signs and wonders.

(3) The Bible teaches that the sign gifts were for that time, and would cease when the Bible was completed...now we are to believe because we have the perfect Word of God!

**Here's the point:**

1. Some awesome things happened in those days when God moved with power...just think about how it would be if, like in v. 7, we would see demons cast out and people healed!
2. Some may ask, why doesn't God still perform these awesome outward demonstrations?
  - a. Because, **those were minor compared to His greatest miracle...**
  - b. Look @ Vs. 12 for the greatest miracle of chapter 8...
3. Thank God that He still does choose to heal oftentimes, and for other miracles we still see from His hand, but realize, every sick person Jesus ever healed, died...eventually!
4. Physical healings are great and glorious, but temporary...**the miracle of salvation: that's forever!**

Jesus said, one drink of living water and you'll never thirst again/

"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish"!

We need to pray for revival at FBC, and that it would spread to our city and our world!