

REVIVAL OR RUIN?

2 Chronicles 7:14

- America is standing at the crossroads
Our nation is in turmoil –
Divided in every possible way -
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 says *“If my people will . . . then I will”*
- There are three things that God says He will do in 2 Chron 7:14:
I will hear from heaven,
I will forgive their sins and
I will heal their land.”
- America needs healing – desperately - **right now** – in our cities - in our schools - in our economy - in our families - in our government – in every area of life and society – in our churches
- God holds out a promise to the people of God - Deuteronomy 30:2-3 –
“and return to the Lord your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you”
- The Bible says, *“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Prov 14:34)
- The choice is ours – Revival or Ruin?
- Today I want us to look at the steps to national revival

TRANSITION: First, if we are going to see revival . . .

I. WE MUST RECONNECT WITH GOD.

1. I don't know how it happened or why - but somehow America has gotten disconnected from God
 - a. We have lost our way and we are drifting into dangerous territory
 - b. We need revival
 - c. Revival starts with God
2. So how do you reconnect to God?
 - a. Individually and corporately, we have declared our independence from God
 - b. God has been evicted from the public square
 - c. We no longer want to hear what God thinks

- d. We make our own decisions apart from any objective standard of right and wrong
 - e. We decide what is right and what is wrong and do what is right in our own eyes
 - f. As a nation we have pushed God to the periphery of our national existence and then wonder where He is when bad things happen
3. If we want revival, renewal and spiritual awakening in our lives and in our nation, we must begin by restoring God to His rightful place
 - a. We have to stop playing god and let God be God
 - b. Reconnecting with God starts with realizing that God alone is Sovereign ruler of *all* creation
 - c. Jesus was once asked what the most important verse in all the Bible was – He quoted Deut 6:4 - the *Shema*
 - d. This verse begins by stating - *“The Lord is our God is One Lord”*
 - e. We do not serve a bunch of gods – we are not polytheistic
 - f. There is only one God – *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* - He is the Lord
 4. We need to realize that God desires a relationship with us more than we desire a relationship with Him
 - a. God loves you and is ready to reconnect with you
 - b. He's waiting and wanting you – America – to return
 - c. This is the first step to national and personal revival - we who claim to be the people of God have to reconnect with God.

TRANSITION: We must not only reconnect with God . . .

II. WE MUST REJOICE IN GOD'S GRACE

1. What do I mean by that?
 - a. Folks, in case you haven't noticed, America is in deep trouble
 - b. Who's to blame?
 - c. There is enough blame to go around
 - d. Democrats – republicans – Bush – Obama – Supreme Court
 - e. Most of us want to blame everyone but ourselves

- f. As a nation are far removed from our original foundation and moorings
2. But here's the good news! Even in the midst of all the bad, God is still good
 - a. It is not our place to praise God only when everything is perfect
 - b. Phil 4:4 doesn't say "*Rejoice in the Lord . . . most of the time*"
 - c. No, it says. "*Rejoice in the Lord always*"
 - d. There was a guy in the Bible named Habakkuk. His country wasn't doing very well either. In fact God's judgment was coming and Habakkuk knew it. But he made the choice to rejoice even in the face of hardship
 - e. And here's what he said (Hab 3:18 ESV)

¹⁷Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
 3. Why is rejoicing so important? Because the world needs the witness of those who can rejoice in the midst of trouble
 - a. The Hebrew children and the fiery furnace – Paul and Silas
 - b. They were able to rejoice because they knew that the God who is Sovereign is also Savior – times don't have to be good for Him to bless
 - c. Our hope is not based on circumstances – or politics – or government policy – or who has the earthly power
 - d. Our hope is in God who loves us no matter what
 4. Sometimes God must look upon America and wonder, "Where are the other nine?"

TRANSITION: The third step for national revival – (reconnect – rejoice) is . . .

III. WE MUST PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS

1. We are commanded to pray for our leaders (1 Tim 2:1-4 ESV) says,

¹First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceable and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. ³This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
2. Why should we pray for our national leaders?

- a. So life can be peaceful and quiet
 - b. It is pleasing and acceptable to God
 - c. Because God desires all to be saved
3. According to the Bible, not to pray for our leaders is sin
 - a. 1 Samuel 12:23 NIV - "*Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you.*"
 - b. So the third key to national revival is prayer - pray – whether we like them or not – pray on their behalf

TRANSITION: The next thing we must do if we are sincere about a national revival is . . .

IV. WE MUST REPENT OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS

1. Self-centeredness is the root of every problem in life
 - a. Sin is the promotion of self over God
 - b. The middle letter of *pride* is "I" – "I" is also in the middle of *sin*
 - c. G.K. Chesterton - What's wrong with the world? – "I am"
2. The problem with America is a "I" problem
 - a. The last verse in the book of Judges (21:25) says –

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
 - b. We cannot fix the problem if we do not see the problem -
 - c. The biggest problem we have in seeing the problem is SELF
 - d. We cannot see because we are blind to the truth – *we are the problem*

CONCLUSION:

1. The issue facing America is a spiritual one
2. Sin is always about saying no to God and yes to self
3. America has rejected God's way and gone its own way - we ignored the principles and absolute truths in God's Word
4. Healing will only begin when we humble ourselves before God