

**Revive us, Oh Lord:
Through Radical Repentance
Isaiah 1:1-20**

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Text Introduction: I am trying to help us to think about revival. We are praying for revival. I have asked you to pray about two things this year—revival and our impact on the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. As we pray for revival, I am preaching this month on the theme of revival.

When I use the word revival, I want you to think this way with me:

A revival is a spiritual awakening in the lives of believers that results in spiritual conversion of unbelievers so large in scope that the results can only be explained as a work of God.

So far, we have talked about revival being initiated by (1) a radical dependence on God (2) radical praying and a (3) radical return to the Bible. Today, I want to add to that list by saying we must have radical repentance. In fact, I really have just one point to make today.

If there is not complete repentance there cannot be revival. Repentance is absolutely essential to revival.

We can have prayer-meetings, fasts, evangelistic gatherings, and all-day worship meetings, but until there is repenting of sin, there can be no real revival.

The Old Testament is filled with God's warnings to Israel on this very subject. Isaiah 1 is one such place.

We are going to read the text as we go along today, so let's begin in verse 1 as we describe the situation.

The Situation

Isaiah 1:1-9

The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

² Listen, heavens, and pay attention, earth,
for the LORD has spoken:

"I have raised children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against Me.

³ The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's feeding trough,
but Israel does not know;
My people do not understand."

⁴ Oh sinful nation,
people weighed down with iniquity,
brood of evildoers,

depraved children!

They have abandoned the LORD;
they have despised the Holy One of Israel;
they have turned their backs on Him.

⁵ Why do you want more beatings?

Why do you keep on rebelling?

The whole head is hurt,
and the whole heart is sick.

⁶ From the sole of the foot even to the head,
no spot is uninjured—

wounds, welts, and festering sores
not cleansed, bandaged,
or soothed with oil.

⁷ Your land is desolate,

your cities burned with fire;

foreigners devour your fields

before your very eyes—

a desolation demolished by foreigners.

⁸ Daughter Zion is abandoned

like a shelter in a vineyard,

like a shack in a cucumber field,

like a besieged city.

⁹ If the LORD of Hosts

had not left us a few survivors,

we would be like Sodom,

we would resemble Gomorrah.

Four words describe the situation of Isaiah's day.

- **Rebellious (2,4)**—What is summarized in verse 2 is detailed in verse 4 with 6 phrases. In the Hebrew, the word translated “nation” is the Hebrew word that usually describes pagan nations instead of the people of God.
- **Blind (3)**—The analogy is that even dumb oxen and donkeys know how to get back home when it is time to eat.
- **Desperate (5-8)**
- **Merciful (9)**—Only God's mercy kept Israel and keeps us from utter destruction.

The Solution

Isaiah 1:10-17

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD,

you rulers of Sodom!

Listen to the instruction of our God,

you people of Gomorrah!

¹¹ “What are all your sacrifices to Me?”

asks the LORD.

“I have had enough of burnt offerings and rams
and the fat of well-fed cattle;
I have no desire for the blood of bulls,
lambs, or male goats.

¹²When you come to appear before Me,
who requires this from you—
this trampling of My courts?

¹³Stop bringing useless offerings.
Your incense is detestable to Me.

New Moons and Sabbaths,
and the calling of solemn assemblies—
I cannot stand iniquity with a festival.

¹⁴I hate your New Moons and prescribed festivals.
They have become a burden to Me;
I am tired of putting up with them.

¹⁵When you lift up your hands in prayer,
I will refuse to look at you;
even if you offer countless prayers,
I will not listen.

Your hands are covered with blood.

¹⁶“Wash yourselves. Cleanse yourselves.
Remove your evil deeds from My sight.
Stop doing evil.

¹⁷Learn to do what is good.
Seek justice.

Correct the oppressor.
Defend the rights of the fatherless.
Plead the widow’s cause.

First, in verses 10-15, we see where our solution is not. Then in verses 16-17 we see where our solution is.

Our solution is not in worship and prayer if not accompanied by obedience. This is not the only time we encounter this truth in the Bible.

- Amos 5:21-24—

I hate, I despise your feasts!

I can’t stand the stench
of your solemn assemblies.

²²Even if you offer Me
your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;

I will have no regard
for your fellowship offerings of fattened cattle.

²³Take away from Me the noise of your songs!

I will not listen to the music of your harps.
²⁴ But let justice flow like water,
and righteousness, like an unfailing stream.

Note to technical team—Depending upon time, I may not use these next two references.

- Micah 6:6-8—

What should I bring before the LORD
when I come to bow before God on high?
Should I come before Him with burnt offerings,
with year-old calves?
⁷ Would the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams
or with ten thousand streams of oil?
Should I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the child of my body for my own sin?
⁸ Mankind, He has told you what is good
and what it is the LORD requires of you:
to act justly,
to love faithfulness,
and to walk humbly with your God.

- Psalm 51:16-17—

You do not want a sacrifice, or I would give it;
You are not pleased with a burnt offering.
¹⁷ The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit.
God, You will not despise a broken and humbled heart.

So, back to our one truth of this morning.

If there is not complete repentance there cannot be revival. Repentance is absolutely essential to revival.

Our Salvation

Isaiah 1:18-20

¹⁸ “Come, let us discuss this,”
says the LORD.
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
they will be as white as snow;
though they are as red as crimson,
they will be like wool.
¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient,
you will eat the good things of the land.
²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel,

you will be devoured by the sword.”
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Our restoration back to God is based on two things...

God’s ability to restore—For that, there is no question.

Our willingness to repent—For that, there is a question.

So What?

We must repent.

- We must repent personally. We should not expect national repentance if there is not a willingness to repent personally.
- We must repent completely.

Luke 15 gives us one of the Bible’s most well-known and well-loved stories in the story often called “The Prodigal Son.” The young son asks for his inheritance early. He leaves for a distant country and quickly squanders the inheritance. Now penniless, he finds work feeding pigs. To Jesus’ Jewish audience, this boy is as far away from his father’s house as he can be—in Gentile land, among the forbidden pigs. It is that point in the story that we get a classic description, even definition of personal and complete repentance. Don’t miss it.

Luke 15:18-20

When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, and here I am dying of hunger! I’ll get up, go to my father, and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight. ¹⁹I’m no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired hands.’ ²⁰So he got up and went to his father.

- A Change of Mind—He came to his senses.
- A Change of Will
- A Change of Actions