



40 Days of Spiritual Preparation

WEEK THREE, Congregational Revival

Revival, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is defined as

- 1: renewed attention to or interest in something
- 2: new presentation or publication of something old
- 3: restoration of force, validity, or effect

It speaks of new life, restoration, and a spiritual “rising again”. As we experience personal renewal and awakening, our church community begins to transform. Like a single child waking up an entire household, one by one we are stirred and effected by revival until all are awakened. God longs for His people to collectively experience and walk in revival. We align with His heart when we pray for our church to be renewed, awakened, and restored to its full spiritual force.

March 17th:

Read Isaiah 43:16-21 prayerfully; as you read, circle/highlight/write down any words or phrases that stick out to you. Find one word or phrase you think God might be highlighting for you. Then ask Him why He wants you to pay attention to it. What is He saying to you in and through that word or phrase? Take time to reflect on what God is saying and ask the Holy Spirit to keep that word with you as you go about your day.

March 18th:

Read John 13:1-8. Here we see Jesus, God made flesh, kneeling down to serve His disciples. In Jesus’ day, washing feet was a duty reserved for servants -- a “bottom of the barrel” type job. Naturally his disciples would have been shocked and perhaps even appalled to see Jesus, their teacher and master, choosing to wash their feet. What does this action tell us about God?

Now read John 13:12-17. What is Jesus trying to communicate to his disciples? What is Jesus calling us, His followers, to? Are there people in our church family who you are reluctant to serve? Are there needs in our church family that you feel are “beneath” you when it comes to service? Ask God to reveal any pride or resistance you might have and confess these to Him. Ask God to show you who and how you can serve the church family.

March 19th:

Yesterday we looked at the story of Jesus washing his disciple’s feet and how He calls us to serve as He did. Later in that chapter, in verses 34 & 35, Jesus gives another radical call to his followers. Read John 13:34-35. What does this passage tell you about God and His people? The way our church family serves and loves each other matters. It is the defining characteristic of His people, the church. In what ways does our church family serve and love one another like Jesus? In what ways do we struggle to love and serve one another like Jesus? Spend time praying and asking the Holy Spirit to revive our love for one another.

March 20th:

Read Ezekiel 37:1-3 prayerfully. Ezekiel was led by the Spirit to the middle of a valley that was filled with dry bones. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the areas of dryness in your life and in our church family. Ask Him to reveal the barriers to experiencing new life and write down what He says. The Lord asks Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones live?". The Lord knows what He is about to show Ezekiel. He knows what He is able to and about to do. Why do you think God asks this question to Ezekiel? What might His invitation to Ezekiel be? Under your list of areas of dryness and barriers, write out the question that the Lord asked Ezekiel. What might God's invitation to YOU be as you consider the dryness of our church family? Hang on to this list, as we will revisit it tomorrow. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you ponder this invitation as you go about your day.

March 21st:

Read Ezekiel 37:1-6 prayerfully. Focus on verses 4-6.

Yesterday we pondered the Lord's question and invitation to us concerning the "dry bones" in our church family. The Lord then calls Ezekiel to join with Him in the work of revival. God invites him to hope, to believe, and to speak in accordance with God's will for these dry bones. As you look over your list from yesterday and consider God's invitation, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how He is working to revive the dry areas in your life and in our church family. For each thing listed, write down what it would look like for it to come alive instead. Allow the Holy Spirit to ignite imagination and hope within you as you pray for new life in each area.

March 22nd:

Read Ezekiel 37:1-10 prayerfully. Focus on verses 7-10.

Ezekiel moves to action as he speaks and prophecies as the Lord instructs him. He joins God in the work of revival and begins to see the impossible happen. What impossible thing do you want to see Him do in the life of our church family? How might God be calling you to join Him in His work of revival for our church family? What would it look like for breath to enter our church family? For us to come to life and stand up on our feet as a vast army? Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with hope and faith as you pray for revival in our church family.

March 23rd:

Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 prayerfully. Focus on verses 11-14.

Yesterday you considered how you might join God in his work of revival for our church family. In verses 12-14, the Lord gives a specific word for the people of Israel. As you think about our meditation in Ezekiel 37 these past few days - the dryness, the invitation, the call to action - ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His heart and word for our church family. Write out a prayer of revival for our church family, asking God to awaken, renew, and restore us.

Living Out Your Prayer:

Consider taking one or all of these action steps in the coming days

- Go out of your comfort zone to serve someone in our church family who you don't know well
- Listen to "New Wine" by Hillsong (<https://youtu.be/Y9apaWW52aw>) or "God of Revival" by Bethel music (<https://youtu.be/sRktj92jMjw>) and pray the words over our church family.
- Do a prayer walk through our church building, pausing in various areas of the building to specifically ask God to renew and revive our church family (do this alone, with your family, with your community group, or with a friend)