



Revival Starts Here

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First edition, modified page arrangement.

ISBN 978-0-9989226-8-3 (Print)

ISBN 978-1-970102-01-7 (Mobi)

ISBN 978-1-970102-02-4 (ePub)

Cover and interior design: Harrington Interactive Media

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INTRODUCTION

Here We Go

Several years ago my wife, Sydney, and I began to notice the Holy Spirit gently and persistently inviting us to explore some deeper waters of life with God. This invitation from God came at what seemed to be an unusual time in our lives.

Just a few years earlier, we had launched a new church called Ethos Church with a small group of friends. By nearly all measures, things had gone better than we had even hoped. Not only was the church growing, it was multiplying, and we were having more fun than we thought was possible for such a challenging task. As the church rapidly grew, my family began to multiply, as well. Like clockwork, Sydney would give birth to a little boy every two years or so. Our three boys filled our house with joy, laughter, and even some chaos, as we learned to navigate these new seasons of life.

Life was wild and full.

We had a young, growing church.

We had an even younger, growing family.

Marriage was good. Parenting was good. Church was good.

Life was good.

And yet despite all of the joy, we had a deep yearning for more. We longed to see God move among us in the powerful ways we had only read about in Scripture and revival history. We wanted to experience this kind of life with God for ourselves.

It was during this crazy season that the gentle voice of the Spirit began calling us to push into deeper waters—to believe God for more. We began to realize that in many ways, despite our “success” in ministry, we were still like little kids playing on the deck of our father’s sailboat as it was tied safely to the dock inside a peaceful harbor. Over time, we gained the courage to acknowledge that although it was fun to play on the sailboat, playing on the sailboat didn’t mean we were sailing—and it certainly didn’t mean we were sailors.

God began using this imagery of a boat, a harbor, and the open waters to illuminate what was a new way for us of understanding life in the kingdom. We discovered that if we weren’t careful, we could become so comfortable in the safety of the harbor that we would never stop to ask whether or not we were actually sailing.

I believe it is possible—dare I say common—for many Christians to spend their entire life “believing in God” without ever attempting anything in life that actually requires them to exercise their faith. It is one thing to read stories about people who took great risks with God, but it’s something entirely different to taste the sweetness of that kind of life on a personal level.

This temptation to play it safe, especially in the realm of faith, is still a real struggle for Sydney and me at times. Even though we have experienced the deep reward that comes on the other side of risk-taking faith, the gravitational pull toward comfort and certainty can still feel crippling.

Over the years, we have seen God move in astounding ways. Yet despite God’s flawless track record, we still have moments in which we are slow to trust him, slow to launch out in faith again, and slow to set sail toward the open waters.

I don’t know about you, but I want to be the kind of person who keeps pushing out toward the open waters with God.

I think I was made for that.

I think you were made for that.

And I believe that is precisely what Jesus came to offer.

PART 1

WE NEED REVIVAL

Why This Matters Now

*"HE ASKED ME, 'SON OF MAN, CAN
THESE BONES LIVE?'"*

—EZEKIEL 37:3

*"WILL YOU NOT REVIVE US AGAIN, THAT
YOUR PEOPLE MAY REJOICE IN YOU?"*

—PSALM 85:6

*"PRAYER IS THE VITAL BREATH OF THE CHRISTIAN;
NOT THE THING THAT MAKES HIM ALIVE,
BUT THE EVIDENCE THAT HE IS ALIVE."*

—OSWALD CHAMBERS



Recently, a good friend asked me an important question:

“DAVE, WHAT HAS BROUGHT ABOUT YOUR SUDDEN PASSION FOR PRAYER AND FASTING?”

It was a great question that caused me to do some real soul searching. As I examined my heart, I discovered that the answer was found not simply from our experiences in Kenya but maybe more significantly smack dab in the middle of a spiritual pressure point and a spiritual promise.

In other words, my soul searching revealed that half of my newfound urgency was connected to a **response** to the present, and the other half was connected to a **vision** for the future.

Let's start with my **response to the present**.

OUR CURRENT REALITY

Before our family left for Kenya in 2016, Sydney and I began to feel some deep spiritual angst. For anyone who knows us, this was a bit unusual for our dispositions. By every measure, we are optimistic, “the glass is half full” kind of people. During the season leading up to our global travels, however, we just could not shake the angst we were feeling. For a variety of reasons, we began to feel unsettled by what we were seeing on the landscape of both the American culture and the American church. By virtually all measures, most would say that both of these had seen better days.

AMERICAN CULTURE

In many ways, we began to notice that our culture was becoming increasingly divided and broken. Our country was drowning in the mire of racial tension, physical violence, political division, selfish ambition, sexual confusion, and spiritual disorientation. By all accounts, Americans had more money, more mobility, and more liberties than we had ever had—yet the fruit of “our excess” was proving to be rotten at best. In the midst of our so-called progress, our culture appeared to be “losing” in virtually every important sphere of human flourishing. But it wasn't just our culture that was suffering.



**IN
MATTHEW 7,
JESUS
WARNS THAT
WE WILL
KNOW A
TREE BY ITS
FRUIT.**

- Several consecutive days
- Several consecutive weeks
- Other: _____

With whom will you fast?

- Family / roommates
- House church / small group
- Friends
- Other

3. PREPARE YOURSELF

Third, you need to give your mind, body, heart, and community the adequate time needed to prepare for your fast.



YOUR MIND

Prepare your mind. Fasting is just as much a mental exercise as it is physical. Begin asking the Lord to mentally prepare you for the journey you're about to take.



YOUR BODY

Prepare your body. No matter what kind of fast you're preparing for, it will require some adjustments for your body. I encourage you to drink plenty of water in the days leading up to your fast. It's also important to avoid the urge to overeat in the days leading up to your fast, which actually makes things more difficult once you begin your fast.



YOUR HEART

Prepare your heart. Remember, fasting is about your commitment to the Lord. I find it helpful to spend time in confession and repentance before entering a fast. I will often spend several days leading up to the fast asking God to forgive me of my sins, making sure I am in good standing