

HARVEST ROCK CHURCH

REVIVAL HOPE

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TEXT: Isaiah 60:1 “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 2 For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

INTRO: We are currently in an extraordinary season globally. God is setting the stage for the greatest Revival, even in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis.

Sadly, the number of lives lost globally is over 130,000 and counting. The number of U.S. deaths is over 30,000 and counting. Over 20 million have filed for unemployment in the USA alone. Many have been fighting despair and discouragement.

But I want to speak to you about revival hope. The principle I want to share is this: **It is always the darkest time before the great light of revival breaks forth.**

Our text prophesies that before the great light that draws nations into God’s Kingdom, there will be deep darkness over the earth.

Isaiah 60:1 “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 2 For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. 3 Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

This principle is seen throughout revival history.

I. REVIVAL HOPE: FIVE EXAMPLES

A. The Black Death of 1348 that lasted until the Reformation of 1517.

1. 250 million people died during the Black Death or Bubonic Plague. This plague started in 1331 in China and lasted over 700 years.
2. It happened within the centuries-long period of intermittent bubonic plague epidemics.
3. The plague was caused by a bacterium that is usually transmitted through the bite of an infected rat flea.
4. In the midst of this darkness, reformers were raised up, culminating in Martin Luther’s Reformation in 1517.

B. The Great Plague of 1665 in England and then the Great Awakening of 1738.

1. The Great Plague, lasting from 1665 to 1666, was the last major epidemic of the bubonic plague to occur in England. The Great Plague killed an estimated 100,000 people in London alone—almost a quarter of London’s population—in 18 months.
2. You also had the “Gin Age” or “Gin Craze” in England. Before gin had come on the scene in the late 1680s, it was rare and expensive. Most Englishmen drank beer. English women had drunk it too—up to a point—but beer and the alehouses where it was served had catered to men. Gin, which was new and exotic and metropolitan, didn’t have any of these old associations. There were no rules around gin. Gin became cheap due to the agricultural revolution and it was relatively easy to make. Every fourth house was a gin house in London. There were no social norms about who could drink it, or when you could drink it, or how much of it you could drink. A lot of places served it in pints because, well... that’s what you drank. Gin was twice as potent as it is today.

3. The nation became a nation of alcoholics. Unemployment skyrocketed. People couldn't function because of the influence of gin and lost their jobs. With poverty came increased crime. Women became prostitutes to finance their alcoholism. They sold their daughters into the sex trade. It was a dark period in English history, and it was in this dark backdrop of English history that Whitfield started to open-air preach to the coal miners of Bristol in 1738. Thus the Great Awakening was on.
4. A young man named William Wilberforce got saved under Whitfield's ministry and became a great reformer. By 1806, the slave trade ended, and by 1831, slavery ended altogether in the British empire.



C. The Great Apostasy of the 1790s and then the Second Great Awakening of 1801.

1. Between 1738 and 1801, there was a 10-year period of deep spiritual darkness in America.
2. The Methodist church was the largest denomination in the U.S. because of the First Great Awakening. In the 1790s, they lost 4,000 churches that were closed down, more than the number of churches that were started.
3. In the 1790s, there was a religious survey taken in the Ivy League schools. There was not one believer at Harvard. There were two at Princeton.
4. Church historians like J. Edwin Orr believed that the influence of the French Revolution of humanism and enlightenment (1789-1799) had a tremendous impact on our culture. When you have some of our leading founding fathers like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin embracing the Enlightenment and becoming deists, you can see how secular America had become.
5. 1790: Thomas Paine was a blasphemer. Jefferson, a deist, boasted that he was part of no particular church because he was a sect unto himself. He rewrote the Gospels and took all the miracles and the supernatural out of the Gospels.
6. When Jefferson became President in 1801, he predicted that the Unitarian Church would be the largest denomination and the philosophy of rationalism and humanism from the French Enlightenment would be the philosophy of the U.S. You can see how dark things were in America. But God!
7. In 1801, James McGrady started to hold camp meetings in Cane Ridge Kentucky, and revival broke out. Soon, 30,000 were gathering together. He had invited Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist preachers to preach. The Second Great Awakening was on.
8. In 1806, five students from Williams College were meeting in a grove of Maple Trees, when a thunderstorm hit. They saw a stack of hay and ran under it to take cover. Under the haystack, they made a vow to do all they could do to reach the unreached nations with the Gospel, and the modern mission movement was on.
9. Charles Finney and others like the Methodist circuit riders began to spread the revival throughout the U.S.
10. Jeremiah Lanphier, a New York businessman who was saved under Charles Finney's ministry, on September 23, 1857 started a prayer meeting at the North Church, a Dutch Reformed Church on Wall Street.

11. “Within six months, ten thousand business-men were gathering daily for prayer in New York, and within two years, a million converts had been added to the American churches. The Fulton Street Prayer Meeting continued daily (excepting holidays) to this present generation.” (J. Edwin Orr’s *The Second Evangelical Awakening*)
 12. Two million had given their lives to the Lord from 1858-1861, by the time the Civil War began. This revival was primarily in the North, where most of the population became abolitionists that defeated the South and abolished slavery in the United States.
- D. The turbulent 60s and then the Jesus People Movement of 1967.**
1. In the wake of the Vietnam War, sexual revolution, and antiestablishment movement, the Jesus People Movement began in 1967. The light of revival broke out in California with Chuck Smith and Lonnie Frisbee, and the waves of revival swept across the world.
- E. The 80s and then the Toronto Blessing of 1995.**
1. You had the Jim Baker and Jimmy Swaggart scandals of the 80s. “The eighties were from Hades.”
 2. The decade of the 80s was the hardest and 1993 was the worst year of my life. But 1994 was one of the best years as revival light broke through.

II. TRUE HOPE LEADS TO ACTION

- A. If you hope to get good grades, you study. So, what must we do as we hope for revival?
1. **REPENT: Acts 3:19, Joel 2:12-28**
 2. **PRAY: Jonathan Edwards said if you want revival, there must be “visible union, explicit agreement, and extraordinary prayer.”**
 3. **EVANGELIZE: During an adverse time, people begin to cry out to God.**

CONCLUSION: Let us pray together for revival to come, that God would heal our land, and give our hearts to the Lord today.