

Catch the revival 12: God will catch you.

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Summary of this message

I try hard not take the Lord for granted and neither take his word lightly. Infact I cried when on 29 August 21 the Lord confirm that “Catch the revival” would be the word for this season.

Now there is just one problem. I am not a revival expert and a wise person would tell you that you should only hear about revival from someone who has lived through one. That is mighty good advice and I would tell you the same myself, but somehow, the God of the universe called me to this task of and yet I don’t know the first thing about the practical aspects of revival and this season the Lord has specialized in taking me through the unknown!

I am however encouraged by this: a one-eyed illiterate negro called William Seymour had never experienced revival or speaking in tongues before he set out to cause the Azusa Street revival of 1906 – the origin of the modern-day Pentecostal movement. Today there are over 500 million Pentecostals.

So, the Lord can choose anyone he chooses.

This message focuses on the fact that anyone who is going to be revived or lead others in revival can expect that God will catch them and keep them safe, his word promises that BUT the enemy also wants to catch them – and Satan knows scripture too – so you can be sure he will test you and ask:

“Will God really catch you?” “Can he be trusted to keep his word?” If he did this to the son of God, what about you?

About me and this series

After spending 20 years in rebellion, the Lord Jesus caught me as I was stumbling in the darkness and in March 2017, I saw the light and had a radical encounter with the Lord when Jesus visited me and by his Spirit, I repented of my many sins. I got baptized soon thereafter. He continued to hold me, to catch me and towards the end of 2021, the Lord’s eternal word went out: *“Whom shall I send and who will go for us?”* I caught his word and said, “here am I, send me!” The Lord thus commissioned me to prepare this series of 12 messages of “catch the revival” of which the full series of messages can be seen here: <https://www.shaweleroad.com/revival> This is the last message of the series!

Introduction to how God catches you

When you think of the idea of God catching you, perhaps you think of the following:

1. **Someone falling from the edge of a high point**, perhaps a cliff, maybe mistakenly – but they are caught by a giant eagle – God and so they miraculously survive and don’t die.
2. **Someone is walking alone on a dark path and trips** and falls over – perhaps over an obstacle – but then they didn’t realize that someone was there with them, protecting them and he catches them, so they don’t break their teeth.

3. **A baby learning to walk** - with their loving mother who almost lost them in labour pangs watching over them to catch them, lest they fall and hurt their fragile bones when they walk into the glass table nearby.

Isn't God good? That he is there for his children and ensures that he catches them all the time, even when an enemy wants to throw them off the edge or puts traps in their path?

Now the truth of the matter is this, everyone who is going to lead revival or going to be revived will however face a test: Will or won't God catch you? And this test will often come by the enemy who has also been waiting to catch you – but for a different purpose – so he can destroy you. So, in revival, just as God is waiting to catch you, the enemy is also waiting to catch you.

Take the example of God's son Jesus.

Jesus, the Messiah (deliverer) is the son of God. By human genealogy, the son of David and the son of Abraham. As you likely know, his birth was miraculous, his mother was a virgin.

His life as a baby was almost cut short by an evil ruler called Herod, but God hid him in Egypt, when his parents fled there.

He was then hidden by God working as a carpenter with his earthly father Joseph until when his time had fully come and at the age of 30, he was baptized by John the Baptist, his relative as a signal for the beginning of his ministry, which would bring revival of the human race.

At his baptism, the Spirit of his God came on him and then God the father, spoke from heaven to confirm who he was by saying these words:

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” Matthew 3: 17 (NIV).

Something interesting happened shortly after!

After this confirmation - that he was the son of God, this same Jesus, the Son of God was prepared and then led by the Spirit, who was resting on him, into the wilderness, so that he could be tempted by the devil.

The devil was also prepared, with the very word of God to test whether this son knew who he was.

This is what the bible says about one of the tests the devil set for the Son of God:

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:

*“He will command his angels concerning you,
and they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”[c]”*

*Jesus answered him, “It is **also** written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test. Matthew 4: 5-7 (NIV).*

This test of the devil to the Lord was the enemy at his ancient. He was testing whether we can trust God's word and his promises to us thus:

- “Are you really a son of God or are you deceiving yourself?”

- “If you are, will God REALLY catch you?”
- “If you believe and love him as He claims in his word, TEST him to prove it, since he loves you so much”.

Now, the scripture which the enemy quoted is a very famous psalm, Psalm 91 and it is a psalm about trust in God. It begins thus:

*Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*

It also says thus in verse 14 and 15:

*“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.
He will call on me, and I will answer him;*

As a by the way, before we continue to understand the story, in case you are wondering, how can the devil quote scripture and yet is unable to get saved, yet someone else hears the gospel and accepts Jesus. Here is the answer:

The only reason someone can feel guilty over their sin is because God in his mercy sends his Holy Spirit to make you feel guilty.

The person who rejects the Spirit, including Satan, commits an unpardonable sin¹ because without the Spirit of God, your heart becomes hardened to sin and it's impossible to need a saviour because sin brings pride – and since that's the root of sin, pride means you in fact laugh at the idea of a saviour for you are your own god - needing no one to tell you what's right and wrong!

It is for this reason that the unrepentant sinner and thus by extension Satan and his angels don't have access to the Spirit of our Master Jesus and so despite reading the bible, can never see their need for forgiveness and so never turn around and so never receive healing and so this goes on forever and ever - like a circle, with no end - hence eternal and because God is holy and must punish sin, as they sin eternally, he punishes forever - as the sin deserves. This is also why hell is eternal so now to you.

If you feel guilty about your sins - then you are in a good place, it means the Spirit of Jesus is near you but don't you dare grieve his Holy Spirit- in fact the more guilty you feel, the nearer he is! Don't let him pass you before touching and healing you! Don't let pride lie to you - don't let the son of God go, for today is the day of your visit and woe to you if you don't recognise the day the king came to your house.

So back to the questions we are often tempted with: “Will God really catch you?”

How would you know that you can trust him at his word, such that you don't need to put him to the test but trust him?

Now, luckily for us, we know that Jesus was successful in his test against Satan because after that, he began a great revival. About his revival, the bible shows that LARGE crowds followed him, the gospel was preached and people were healed. This is the ultimate “Old Time Religion” What we all long for! The bible says this:

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread all over

Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him. Matthew 4: 23-25 (NIV).

How about you? Can you be successful like Jesus? You can only do this by knowing him.

How? You have to know the Lord past, present and future – and that IAM caught you yesterday, he is catching you today and he will catch you tomorrow.

#1. Past. God caught you yesterday

To understand that God caught you yesterday, you could be inspired by thinking of the nature of revivals in Christian history.

A revival is like a river, a never-ending stream coming from the throne of God, trees grow on both sides of this river of God and its fruit is the revival of nations – but this river must be seen with eyes of faith.

Now, God revived people yesterday, when they drank the living waters he offered. He caught your brothers and sisters yesterday; he can do it again because revivals have been taking place throughout Christian history. Examples we have seen in these series including what happened in the past are:

- **Revivals bring repentance.**
 - True revivals can delay and almost fail, like a still birth of a woman in labour pain, especially if there is sin like hatred in the church, like the Korean revival of 1907 (**message #3**) then;
 - Revivals only often come after much tarrying (in some cases a 400 year wait) and frustration, like the Azusa Street revival of 1906 (**message #1**);
 - This frustration of waiting causes people to pray fervently, to hunger for God to move, like Gideon felt and when it does come, it causes an inner change – repentance of sins and walking in holiness following deep conviction – like the Second Great awakening with preachers like Finney (**message #5**),
 - Revival often leads to further increased prayer – even 100-year prayer watches like the Moravians (**message #2**),
 - Then during revivals, generosity increases, signs and wonders take place, the gospel spreads but there is also persecution – like after Pentecost (**message #4**).
- **Revivals can be controversial, messy and scary.** Most people who have heard of a Christian revival consider it to also be messy controversial business. It disrupts “normal”. During revival some preachers for example teach: “The end is nigh” and as a result for example people no longer want to marry because they are waiting for Jesus to come! Then also during revival many people get things like the “jerks” – violent shaking, others fall down – called being “slain in the Spirit,” and then you have “speaking in tongues” “barking”, “dancing in the Spirit, “crying”, “trembling”, “screaming”, “tearing clothes” “gnashing teeth” and more. Then additionally there is often tension over things like finances, disputes over doctrine and the press scrutinises and often persecutes or mocks Christians. Some people therefore hate or are terrified with this kind of stuff. What about you, would you be willing to endure the messy and terrifying stuff, but get God in the process? (**message #6**).

- **God used a might man called Elijah for miracles.** Elijah was a man of persistent prayer. He was a man who worked mighty miracles, but those miracles are born in a secret place. Your miracles today and tomorrow, will come from your persistent prayers of yesterday. Some miracles are instant - quick miracles and some take time - long miracles. (**message #9**).
- **God used a little-known priest called Ezra** to lead about 5,000 exiles on a 4-month journey, carrying \$195m worth of treasures – but with not one soldier to protect them. How did Ezra undertake this journey? He had faith – he knew the word of God and obeyed him. You can learn from Ezra. Just like not many know Ezra, yet he had tremendous impact, some revivals have unknowns, even lay people and yet they have long lasting impact. Like the *Balokole* revival of East Africa. Relatively unknown, but it was said to have the longest lasting impact in Africa. It's leaders? Men who went door to door doing grass roots preaching and sought to reform existing churches to focus on Christ, rather than creating mega churches or leading mega revival movements (**message #10**).

The first way to therefore know that God will catch you is by looking at God's history of "catching". The examples of past revivals will inspire you to show you that God's ways are not always as we men think:

- There is often long periods of frustration;
- People must often pray for a long time – and it could even almost fail to come like a still birth; and
- When the revival comes – it is not always smooth sailing, it can be messy and even controversial. Yes, it can bring benefits like miracles and signs and wonders, as well as increased prosperity or generosity, but it also often brings persecution.

Knowing how God has worked in the past, will give you the confidence to know how he might catch you – it might be messy, perhaps like when a child is being born, it's not always pleasant to see, BUT the end result is a beautiful work, even if covered in weeds or goo. If you recall this from past revivals, your faith to believe and trust in God will grow, even when the enemy sends a dart:

"Is this really a trust worthy God if you are suffering?"

#2. Present. God is catching you today

A lot of people wonder why we don't see revival today – in our generation, well, as we have seen, perhaps it's because we are not ready to deal with the hard work or challenges that go into it. As we saw, when catching revival, it is not always smooth sailing. But that is not all, revivals do bring impacts on you, which can affect you daily, in less positive ways, again, like we saw in some previous messages in this series.

- **You might have to deal with post revival depression.** Like Elijah who thought the fire of the Lord coming down would cause people to change. Instead, Jezebel was more powerful after and even swore to kill him. In such cases, where revival or indeed life brings depression after a huge victory, God will change your expectations, to show you that the problem of evil often takes longer than we expect. Thank God, even then, he doesn't leave us alone, he will give you helpers to carry the load and he will let us be forerunners to someone else who will continue to carry the torch of revival, for we are not as alone as we think, there are many faithful others, albeit hidden. (**Message #7**).

- **He could call you to live in humility in a world of wealth.** You could be poor, yet surrounded by so much wealth, like the reformer Girolamo Savonarola, who was a forerunner to Martin Luther's reformation. He was born during a time of great wealth and social change – the renaissance in Florence, Italy. Yet God moved him to live in humility. He chose to be a friar, doing manual labour and spending his time in fasting, prayer and leading a quiet life. **(Message #8).**
- **God could send his darkness.** A terrifying or dreadful darkness. We think of God typically as in the light, but he also inhabits the darkness and there is a mystery to him. In the darkness, he could actually wound you, and heal you. Like he did for Jacob, who he gave a limp, but a new name -Israel. In the darkness covenants are sealed, like with Abraham, like Jesus the Passover Lamb. In the darkness, faith is built – like David walking through the valley of the shadow of death. Revivals often start with covenants with God, in the darkness. **(Message #11).**

Many today are discouraged and thus tempted by the enemy not to believe in God because they might experience:

- Depression – even when serving faithfully;
- Poverty – when there is wealth all around them; and/or
- A season of darkness or waiting –and a feeling that God is punishing them.

What we don't often realize is that God uses these when reviving people to change their expectations, to refine them through teaching humility and to prepare them for a new covenant or a new birth.

If you want to “bring the Lord” even today, in our modern world, we need God, based on his unchanging, ever present but ancient principles:

- God is moved when people humble themselves and pray to him (See 2 Chronicles 7: 14).
- God is moved when people praise him for, he inhabits the praises of his people (Psalms 22:3) and
- God has ordained that it is by preaching that the good news is spread for the word says: *How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?* Romans 10: 14

Underpinning all this is humility. *“Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honor and life.” Proverbs 22:4 NIV*

This means that one way of understanding what humility is, is the act of fearing God – trembling before him, holding him in awe and treating him with deep respect. That is an example of humility. In return, those who do this, God gives them a reward – riches (the one they gave up), honour (the one they gave up) and life (the one they gave up).

When we do these things, today, in our generation revival will flow and our ability to faithfully endure will grow.

#3. Future. God will catch you tomorrow.

The bible does say that **“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”** Hebrews 11: 1 (NIV).

Faith by its nature is asking you to believe that God will catch you tomorrow, which is uncertain.

How can you have confidence or assurance in what you cannot see?

You can do so based on looking at what happened in the past, what God did for you. Based on seeing what he is doing today, in the lives of your brothers and sisters and then based on who he is.

But why can you trust this Jesus? Well, you can trust him because of who he has said he is, IAM – which can mean “I am the same, yesterday, today and tomorrow” or “I will always be.”

IAM says this about himself as his precious promises to you who believe him, like those who came before you. Hear some of what he said about himself:

“Then Jesus told her, “I Am the Messiah!”” John 4:26 NLT

“Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” John 6:35 NLT

“Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.”” John 8:12 NLT

““I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.” John 10:11 NLT

“Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying.” John 11:25 NLT

“Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.” John 14:6 NLT

““I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener.” John 15:1 NLT

If you are worried about tomorrow, you need to hold on, to catch the promises of God which can allow us to ride out the fear placed by the enemy and then like the psalmist you can confidently believe the same Psalm 91 that the enemy wanted to twist with our Lord. Some of its verses go thus:

*Surely he will save you
from the fowler’s snare
and from the deadly pestilence.
He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.
You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.
A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.*

*You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.*

Psalm 91: 3-8 (NIV).

The ultimate message about “catching the revival” so you can believe God will catch you tomorrow is really about catching Jesus who is THE REVIVAL or the reviver. In all the revivals, the people went after Jesus and once he set them on fire, or caught them - then they became fishers of men, they captured others and that’s why the only way to know God will catch you tomorrow is by focussing on who Jesus was, and is and will be and it is in such knowledge, such faith that you can rest and believe the words of the psalms, or indeed the scriptures as presented.

Put another way, knowing that Jesus is IAM as the statements above is really the root of revival for your knowledge of Jesus and opening your heart to him puts you in a position, in a situation where he can catch you because it will position you for repenting and when you repent then your spiritual eyes are revived and you come alive and then you can see that the kingdom of God is at hand. This urgency of seeing the kingdom at hand is what sets people on fire. Hence your heart burns and that’s why revived people cry: “Maranatha Lord Jesus (Come Lord Jesus).”

Conclusion

Before Jesus began his revival, another one had gone before him, John the Baptist had proclaimed, *“Repent for the Kingdom of heaven has near (Matthew 3:2)”*, after John was killed by evil people, the Lord Jesus continued where John had left and he too preached a similar message: *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” (Matthew 4: 17).*

This shows that the Lord is thus giving us the pattern of how you catch revival:

1. **You follow the pattern of those who went before you** by faithfully preaching the same gospel given once and for all – call this “old time religion” if you want. You also need to follow the same patterns like prayer, fasting, humility. You need to also be aware of the challenges in revival like the risk of controversy, the frustration, the controversy clothed around the good like the miracles, signs and wonders and increased generosity. In preaching and living your life faithfully like those who went before you, you honour God who sent the river of revival to these the men and women of God, your fellow brothers and sisters. It helps to therefore study the old revivals, so you know what God said to them.
2. **But you do it in a different style – as the Spirit leads you.** The main purpose of the Spirit coming is to empower you to preach the gospel, which brings salvation to all. With this power comes courage – and signs and wonders follow, to confirm that the message preached is true. Your style will be different and unique. Jesus preached a similar message as John the Baptist, but in a different style – the same Spirit, but different gifts. Follow his lead.
3. **You have to however be sensitive to the timing.** In this series the Lord showed that we typically catch revival during a period of grace. The bible says this:

““But now we have been given a brief moment of grace, for the Lord our God has allowed a few of us to survive as a remnant. He has given us security in this holy place. Our God has brightened our eyes and granted us some relief from our slavery.” Ezra 9:8 NLT

It means that successful revival – personal or corporate is not only about what we do, but when we do it. Don’t miss what God wants to do, by being insensitive to timing.

If you do these things, God will continue to catch you – as he caught you in the past, as he caught your brothers who went before you. If you know this, then you can resist all tricks of the enemy, when he asks you “will God really catch you?”.

“God will catch you” is therefore a declaration of faith, it’s the shield you have to raise to quench the enemy’s darts. Will you believe the eternal word of God?

The Message Jesus wants me to tell you about

“Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is near”, the master Jesus tells you and I, as he did 2,000 years ago when he walked this earth preaching his message of revival, like the many prophets and righteous before him.

This Christ the King, will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end, just as his God promised him. This Jesus, our saviour, wonderful counsellor, mighty God was actually born as a man, he became God with us, Immanuel when he was born of a virgin, Mary. When his time had fully come, he spoke his revival message to all who were moved in their hearts to follow him. He went about doing good on this earth but he was killed by sinful men, for whom he had actually come on this earth to save. After 3 days in the grave, he was resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit and now he is seated in heaven, next to the Power on High, the Majesty and he is always interceding for you who are heirs of his promise. He promises you, if you trust me, I will catch you.

Do you believe this message? Do you want God to catch you?

If you do, God is ready right now to forgive you all your sins and give you a new chance at life.

If you have never accepted Jesus as your Lord, pray with me:

"God of heaven, I confess that I am a sinner and have been one since birth, but I have heard that you can make me new, and you sent your son Jesus to die for me. He rose again and it is he who can give me his Holy Spirit. Please forgive me and welcome me into your Kingdom, teach me how to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen"

Notes

ⁱ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/the-unpardonable-sin/>