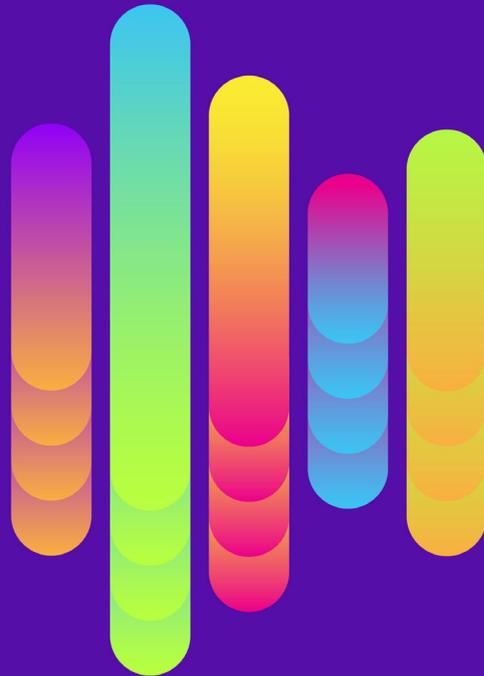


REVIVAL

five shifts to host revival



Revival is on the way. We cannot plan a revival. Revival is something God does. But we can prepare and pray for it. God is calling us to prepare for revival and we believe we are going to host revival right here in the heart of downtown Colorado Springs. Get ready.

REVIVAL • John 17:7, 2 Corinthians 9:6–15 • Joe Sangl • May 17, 2020

Let's start by talking about ownership. Most people remember their first big purchases very well in part because it was the first time they owned something. Maybe it was your first car. What was your first car? My first car was a 1981 Datsun B-210. It was incredible to be the owner of this car! It represented freedom—to go places without my parents! However, I quickly realized that ownership comes with responsibilities. I had to maintain the car. Several times I had to fix the car. Insurance certainly wasn't cheap. I was introduced to taxes when I purchased my license plates. We're talking about ownership. Many of you are probably thinking about the first time you purchased a home. It was a wonderful thing, wasn't it? Then you had the air conditioner unit quit working and cost you several thousand dollars to repair it. Ownership is a concept all of us understand. However, when one reads Scripture and truly surveys the realities of life, we know the real truth: We really don't own anything at all. It is all from God. It is all His! **If we are to shift from "Indebted to Investing," we must shift from believing "I am the owner" to knowing "God is the owner."**

- John 17:7—Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.
- Psalm 24:1—The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;
- 1 Chronicles 29:14—"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.
- The reality of life is that we are merely managers or "stewards" of God's property.

One day, short of Jesus coming back during our lifetime, we will all surely die.

Everything we possess will be given to someone else—maybe even some we don't like that much!

We are stewards for a little while.

- STORY: My farm | A dump on it | Trash all over it | It has been logged | I am a steward for a season—one day, it will pass on to someone else—I want to manage it in a way that honors the Creator.
- QUESTION: Are you managing God's property well?
- God owns it all!

If we want to see revival in our lives, in our church, and indeed, in our finances, we have to make another shift as well.

We must shift from "What can I do for me?" to "What can I do for others?"

- We are all human and veer toward selfishness. In the midst of chaos. In the midst of fear. In the midst of unknowns. Left to ourselves, we tend to race to selfishness.
- Want proof? Can you find a lot of hand sanitizer? Can you find a lot of toilet paper? People raced out and

hoarded it—far more than they could use in months and months!

- As God's people, we must be known—not for hoarding, but for sharing. Not for selfishness, but for selflessness. Not for taking, but for generosity.
- 2 Corinthians 9:8—And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.
- God provides for us so that we can abound in every good work. For others. For the least of these.
- Put another way ... We must shift from being "takers" to "givers."

Not just money—with our lives.

With our time, talent and treasure.

- 2 Corinthians 9:11—You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.
- It is during extraordinary times like this that the Church is most beautiful. Crisis leads people to Christ!

We must shift from being "indebted" to "investing."

- 2 Corinthians 9:6 —Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.
- What happens if one sows nothing?!
- When one operates as an owner, the focus is on oneself. When you operate as a manager, you focus on pleasing the owner.
- Many people, focused on self-focused living, are loaded up with debt and are facing major challenges with their finances.
- Maybe this is you today. You never saw the pandemic coming. As a result, you are facing very uncertain times financially.
- I want you to know that I understand your challenges. First Pres is committed to help you navigate them in a God-honoring way.
- My own journey with debt is so bad it could be a best-selling story. In fact, it has become a best-seller through my book, "I Was Broke. Now I'm Not."
- STORY: My debt journey.
- Here is what I discovered when I was drowning in debt: Giving, saving and investing were seemingly impossible. I felt like God needed to give me more.
- In the midst of my great financial challenges, I began reading His Word and discovered it had a lot to say about money.
- It said I should be a giver of the tithe to the storehouse (temple/church) and to the least of these.

Malachi 3:10—Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much

blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

- It said I should save money.

Proverbs 21:20—The wise store choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down.

- It said I should be an investor.

Proverbs 13:11—Dishonest money dwindles away, but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow.

- It said I should plan the rest.

Proverbs 21:5—The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.

- Church: If we want to see revival break out, we must break the back of “greed” and model “generosity.” If we ever hope to see God move in mighty ways, we must demonstrate our belief that He is indeed our Great Provider, our Jehovah Jireh, by making Kingdom Investments!

- QUESTION: Which word better describes the results of your stewardship today: “Indebted” or “Investing”?

- I want to be known as a giver. How about you?

- I want to be known as a saver. How about you?

- I want to be known as an investor. How about you?

- I want my generosity to point people to God. How about you?

- Our Kingdom Investments point people to Christ!

- 2 Corinthians 9:11-13—You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

- Sounds like a surefire way to set spark to revival fires to me!

In “normal” times, generosity is inspiring. In unprecedented times, generosity becomes wildly extraordinary and compels people to praise God and results in thanksgiving to Him. I want to finish today’s message by sharing a story, a true story, that I feel reflects the heart of generosity that God wants us all to have—a Kingdom Investment mentality.

“The Rich Family in Church” — Eddie Ogan

I’ll never forget Easter 1946. I was 14, my little sister Ocy was 12, and my older sister Darlene 16. We lived at home with our mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without many things. My dad had died five years before, leaving Mom with seven schoolkids to raise and no money. By 1946 my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home. A month before Easter, the pastor of our church announced that a special Easter offering would be

taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially.

When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20 of our grocery money for the offering. When we thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn’t listen to the radio, we’d save money on that month’s electric bill. Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible, and both of us babysat for everyone we could. For 15 cents we could buy enough cotton loops to make three pot holders to sell for \$1. We made \$20 on pot holders. That month was one of the best of our lives. Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we’d sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them. We had about 80 people in church, so figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be 20 times that much. After all, every Sunday the pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The day before Easter, Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change. We ran all the way home to show Mom and Darlene. We had never had so much money before. That night we were so excited we could hardly sleep. We didn’t care that we wouldn’t have new clothes for Easter; we had \$70 for the sacrificial offering. We could hardly wait to get to church! On Sunday morning, rain was pouring. We didn’t own an umbrella, and the church was over a mile from our home, but it didn’t seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet. But we sat in church proudly. I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt rich. When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill, and each of us kids put in a \$20.

As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs, and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes! Late that afternoon the minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment, and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn’t say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1 bills. Mom put the money back in the envelope. We didn’t talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids

had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our Mom and Dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly. We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the spoon or the fork that night. We had two knives that we passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor. That Easter day I found out we were. The minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor. I looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt so ashamed—I didn't even want to go back to church. Everyone there probably already knew we were poor!

I thought about school. I was in the ninth grade and at the top of my class of over 100 students. I wondered if the kids at school knew that we were poor. I decided that I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time. We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed. All that week, we girls went to school and came home, and no one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never known we were poor. We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way. Mom started to sing, but no one joined in and she only sang one verse. At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun-dried bricks, but they needed money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church. The minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week.

Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me, and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering. When the offering was counted, the minister announced that it was a little over \$100. The missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this church." Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87 of that "little over \$100." We were the rich family in the church! Hadn't the missionary said so? From that day on, I've never been poor again. I've always remembered how rich I am because I have Jesus!

You know what? You do not have to be wealthy to be generous. You just have to be generous ... to be generous." — Dr. Johnny Hunt

STUDY GUIDE

REVIVAL • "Indebted to Investing"

John 17:7, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

UP: **UP: Connect with God through Spending Time in His Word**

Friends, humanity is being rocked right now by needing to physically distance ourselves from one another. For the Christian, we do this out of love for neighbor. Fight hard to distinguish these two realities: physically distancing and relationally separating.

Now is the time to become the greatest artist you have ever been. Create ways to stay relationally and spiritually tethered to your core circle. We need each other. We are gifts to one another! Make phone calls; text photographs; set up video gatherings. Together, we are the hands and feet of Christ to one another and this city!

Begin your study in prayer. Read and reflect on John 17:7 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-15.

- 1) From our passages this week, as well as from Psalm 24:1, can we rightly name anything that does not belong to God? How does this shape our understanding of possessions?
- 2) What do we learn about Kingdom generosity in 2 Corinthians 9:6-15?
- 3) What is the "indefinable gift" mentioned in 2 Corinthians 9:15? How does God model generosity toward us and how ought that reality impact our view on generosity?

OUT: **Connect With the World Around Us (Join God in His Mission)**

4) What is most challenging to you within the discussion of generosity?

5) While unpacking Scripture, Joe Sangl affirms that "We must shift from believing 'I am the owner' to knowing 'God is the owner.'" Joe later asks, "Are you stewarding God's property well?" Host a discussion on how your heart understands possessions entrusted to you by your loving and generous Father.

6) Reflecting more on the "so that" in 2 Corinthians 9:11, how might you continue growing in the likeness of Christ regarding your generosity to the world outside of you

IN: **Connect with Each Other**

COVID-19: Spend time connecting with your core circle on how you are doing. Pray together.

Our *Revival* series places great capital on preparing our hearts to be as ready as possible for the movement of God. How can your Life Group pray specifically for you to this end?