

REVIVAL

~~NOT~~

SURVIVAL



R E V I V A L ~~N O T~~ **S U R V I V A L**

Poverty rates are climbing. Suicide rates are rising. Vital truths like morals and the difference between what's right and wrong seem to be non-existent. Of all these things, what may be worst of all is that many of our students simply do not seem to care.

Why is this? I know there are so many factors that could play into this, and I know many of those factors are unique to the community you live in. There is one factor, however, that is always existent; one that stands out to me every time I think of it: us.

What do I mean by that? Who is "us"?

When I talk about "us", I'm talking about student pastors, parents, volunteers, teachers, or anyone who claims to work with students for the purpose of impacting their lives for Christ, and those of us who expect those students to turn around and do the same for others. In short, I'm talking about me... and you. You may be confused- This mission we have seems like good stuff, so how does that make us part of the problem? My answer is that what we are doing is often not enough. We are focused on teaching our students a faith that is just about staying out of trouble. Don't get me wrong- keeping our kids out of trouble is definitely a good thing. I'm not saying we should want our students making bad decisions. However, it does bring about two major problems:

1. This kind of teaching is only half the solution. Pure and undefiled religion is about keeping oneself unstained by the world, but it is also about ministering to widows and orphans. We aren't called to bunker down and hide. Instead, we are called to actively reach out to a world who is hurting and in need.
2. This type of teaching often comes from the attitude that the world has gotten so bad that it's beyond hope. Which leaves us hopeless, thinking that the best thing we can do is just stay out of trouble and throw in the towel. This is flawed on so many levels. For one, this goes against the heart of the Gospel, which is that Christ died for us, and because of that, grace is available to us all, regardless of our past. Not to mention that it goes against major parts of scripture that refer to how Christ has overcome the world, that we

will do even greater things than He did, that He has a purpose and a plan for us, and that we have not been given a spirit of fear.

Unfortunately, far too often that isn't what our students hear. So what does this lead to? Our students end up just trying to survive the culture around them instead of trying to impact it. And after a while, all the hiding and just trying to stay out of trouble starts to get old. When that happens, they no longer see a purpose for their faith and they walk away from it.

This study is about fixing that problem. We want to change the conversation. We want students to live believing that not only can revival in our world be a reality, but it can be **their** reality. With each lesson, we hope that your students (as well as yourself) will be spurred on to bigger and greater things in the community around you, and that together we will see revival happen in this generation. I firmly believe not only that it can, but also that it will happen. So let's get to work!

Sincerely,
Buck Baskin

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 1 PURPOSE

Introduction:

Ask your students the following questions, and be sure to give time for answers. Don't be afraid to tailor these questions to what you already know about your group, to get them talking.

- Why do you go to school every day?
- Why are you involved in the organizations that you are in?
- Why do you come to church?

Response:

If your answers weren't somehow related to "knowing God and making Him known", then you are simply *surviving* life. Yes, you may be staying out of trouble. Yes, you might be kind to others. Yes, you may be winning a lot of trophies and making good grades. Not one of these things are bad, but at the end of the day it means you're just getting by in life. As believers, we are called to help others come to know Christ, to share the Gospel and then do life with those people and disciple them. So, if this isn't your goal in all that you do, at the end of the day, your hard work is meaningless. Doing these things are not an impossible task! Remember those good things I listed before? They can play a part in you getting the opportunity to share the Gospel. Make this your ultimate goal, and it will not only give you purpose, but also give those things real value.

SIMPLY PUT, YOUR LIFE NEEDS TO BE ABOUT REVIVAL, NOT SURVIVAL!

Ask:

What does that mean? What is a "revival"?

Response:

THE WORD "REVIVAL" HAS A FEW DEFINITIONS, BUT IN THIS CONTEXT IT MEANS "REAWAKENING OF RELIGIOUS FERVOR". ANOTHER DEFINITION IS "INCREASED SPIRITUAL INTEREST".

Ask:

- Do you think we need that in our world?

- Why?
- If it were to happen, what might that look like?

Response:

I can't tell you exactly what revival will look like where you live, but I can tell you it is needed. Not sure if you should believe me? Just look around you: People are hurting, people are asking questions, and fewer and fewer people are choosing to follow Christ. In fact, the trends show that less than 4% of your generation will follow Christ.

That can be an overwhelming number. But what if, instead of it being overwhelming, it was motivating? What if that number got you out of bed every morning with the purpose of being involved in bringing about change? You can, because God wants to use *you*. He wants to use your talents, abilities, and influence to change the world around you. To Him, your past and what you (or the world) think your level of talent or skill is do not matter. Think about that: the God who made the Heavens and the Earth wants to use you. Don't miss out on that opportunity! Don't let this life just pass you by.

My hope is that because of this study, you will be motivated to begin (or continue to work towards) turning that number around. For far too long, many generations of Christians (including mine), just went through the motions of life and simply did their best to avoid doing bad things. We never saw the huge opportunity that God had given us! We didn't understand that he wanted to use our time, talents, treasure and influence for Him. Knowing that, do you see how things have gotten so bad?

Let me take a moment to explain this a little further by giving an example of how the two sides of this coin might look for you:

Let's say you make straight A's, or at the very least, you study hard and always give your best in class. One day you notice a student struggling in class, so you offer to help them study. Since they already know you're a good student with fantastic discipline, they happily agree. This is your opportunity! Out of this relationship, you can talk about what motivates you to do your best in your studies, such as your relationship with Christ and wanting to give your all to Him, in everything you do. Going one step further, you can even talk about how we are imperfect people and God loves us anyway. You can share how Christ gave everything for *you* on the cross for you to get a fresh start, have purpose in your life and give everything for Him. As a result, that person comes to know Christ, and they share the Good News with someone else, and you share with someone else, and so on, and so on... Suddenly hundreds, maybe even thousands, of people's lives are changed for Christ, and their eternity is secure. All of those people now get hope, joy, and purpose, because you took a step of faith. Then, when it's your time to leave this earth, you are surrounded by the people who are in Heaven because you saw the bigger picture of life and what God had in store for you. Here is the best part: as you stand before God, you get to hear, "Well done my good and faithful servant". That's powerful. That's life change. Better yet, that's revival!

On the other hand, you could make straight A's or just work hard and do your best. You might get some cool awards. You may even get some kind encouragement from parents and teachers. Who knows, you could even get into college and get a great job and make billions of dollars. Surviving life this way is cool and all, but at the end of it, what do you have to show for it all? You do the good things everyone expects of you, so that the world sees you as a successful person. You may even do a few of the not-so-good things that no one cares about because "you only live once" and "it makes you feel good, so it's no one else's business", or better yet because "everyone else is doing it". This is surviving, and guess what survival leaves you? Nothing. You still die and what do you left behind? You're a billionaire, but you can't take the money with you. If you know Christ, you're in Heaven, but who else is there because of your influence and impact? What about those people who are not in Heaven? They are in Hell...for eternity. So, what was the point of it all? What legacy have you left?

There are lots people who claim to follow Christ, yet for far too long, have been simply *surviving* life. They're getting by with just enough to not feel guilty, and, sure, they can take care of themselves, but God is calling us to so much more than that! God wants us to be an ambassador of life change. God wants us to be a part of bringing revival to this world.

If you haven't realized this yet, this is what this study will be about: Helping you move from just *surviving* life to, instead, bringing *revival* to your generation. So let's dig in.

Main:

We've answered a few questions so far, which have one word in common. I don't know about you, but this is a word that pops into my head daily, so let's talk about it. Let's talk about the word "Why?".

"Why?" is a powerful question, and unfortunately, one we are often too busy or too afraid to ask. When we do ask "why", however, we can discover a lot of things. For example, we can discover how we might improve at something, or we can discover the reason things bother or stress us out. Most importantly to me, though, we can find the purpose in something.

We've already mentioned that the purpose of everything in your life is to use the opportunity to share the Gospel. Asking "why" can help you keep that in focus. For example, why do you go to school every day? One answer is that you have to. Well, that's probably true. So while you're there, take the time to see the bigger picture, which is that *you* can be setting an example and looking for opportunities to share the Gospel with others. This not only gives purpose to everyday activities, but brings you more hope and joy in being at school from day to day. Plus, when trials come (trust me- they *will* come), you can persevere through them because you have your eye on God and the bigger prize He has in store.

Let's see how asking "why?" can help from another angle. I know I asked this earlier, but let's readdress it:

WHY ARE YOU INVOLVED IN THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT YOU ARE INVOLVED IN?

Think about your answer. Based on what we've already discussed, do you think your focus needs to shift? Do you think your actions need redirection? How are you praying about these opportunities you're presented with? Do you see a real purpose in those things you do, or is it merely a distraction from what God is calling you to do? If it is, do you feel like you need to cut it out of your life? I'm not saying that cutting it out of your life is the only solution. If you leave it in your life, it may not be all bad, but you may be running a great risk. By leaving this in your life, will you miss out on the greater purpose God has for this stage of your life?

You see, when you don't take the time to ask "why", you fail to see the purpose in your daily life and relationships, which leads to you just going through the motions of life. When you are going through the motions, you are not giving your best, which is something God calls us to do at all times. If you spend too long not doing your best, and simply going through the motions, it leads to boredom. Which leads to either walking away from things that could have been great opportunities to honor and serve God, or sticking around but failing to see the bigger purpose in what you are doing.

By now I'm hoping you've figured out that the main idea of this lesson is your purpose. In focusing on that idea, I want to ask you one more question:

WHY DID GOD SEND JESUS TO DIE?

(If your students seem clueless about all of this, I encourage you to redirect the lesson for a moment and lay the Gospel out for them, because not knowing Jesus was sent by God or why He was sent may mean many of them have not heard it. If they haven't heard the Good News, they definitely haven't received it, and if they haven't received it, this lesson may seem pointless to them.)

Since the Gospel is so beautiful and deep, we could talk about this question for days, but I won't do that to you right now. You're welcome. There are just a few key things I want you to understand for now, and I promise that all of this will help you to take that first step in living for revival instead of survival.

Let me first say that Jesus died for you so that you could be saved from your sin, have a relationship with Him, and have eternal life. The story, however, doesn't end there.

1. GOD SAVED YOU BECAUSE HE LOVES YOU.

Read John 3:16.

Whether you have grown up in church or not, you have probably heard this verse. But hopefully, even though you have heard it many times, it has never lost the excitement that should come in reading it.

“For God so loved the world....”

Let that wash over you. God didn't have to send Jesus. God didn't send Jesus because He felt guilty. God didn't send Jesus because He was bored. God didn't send Jesus because he felt lonely or like he was missing anything. God didn't send Jesus because we deserve it. In fact, we absolutely did not deserve it, but God sent Jesus anyway. Here's that question again: Why? Because He loves us.

Take a second to think about that fact- that God saved you. He didn't have to, but God sent His Son Jesus to die for you. God gave up everything for *you*. It should be impossible for us, because of this, to have any other response than to want to give up everything for Him in return. Dreams. Goals. Dating. Relationships. We should sacrifice everything God asks us to, whatever that may be, in order to follow Him and to live for His purposes.

2. GOD SAVED YOU FOR A PURPOSE.

Duh, the purpose is He loves me. You're not wrong; that is totally true, but it is so much more than that.

GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE!

He didn't just save you for *you*. He saved you so you could reach others and those others would come to know Him, as well. Remember, *“God so loved the world...”* Not just you and your corner of the world, but everyone.

“....so that whoever believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life.”

Look back at those first few questions we asked. Let me answer them for you. You go to school every day so that others can come to know Christ. You have skills, interests, and abilities that lead you to be involved in things that give you the opportunity to share Christ with others. You go to church so that you can draw closer to God, as well as a community of believers, so that you can spur each other on to go out and reach others for Christ.

Know this: you live where you live, have the schedule you have, and are designed the way you were designed for the purpose of reaching specific people for Christ that no one else can reach. Let that sit with you for a while. God is working in the world and He wants to use you as part of that plan. God loves each of us so much that He saved us, but He also wanted to give us a purpose, and He is continuing to actively use us so others can receive the same purpose and salvation we got.

You should never say you are bored again, or that this life and the things you have to do in it have no meaning. If that's how you feel, then you must be seeing things the wrong way or doing the wrong things. Maybe you should stop and ask yourself "why" you feel that way. :)

3. GOD SAVED YOU FOR REVIVAL, NOT SURVIVAL.

I don't know what you think about the Christian life, but for a long time I thought the main goal was to stay out of trouble. I thought that if I didn't do "bad things", then I was doing all I needed to do. Basically, I was simply trying to survive each day. I have since learned, however, that God and the life He has called us to is much bigger than that. God is giving us an incredible opportunity: to be a part of literally changing the world for Him! Hopefully you're beginning to realize this as well.

Think about the people you know from the Bible or throughout history. You have an opportunity to be like them, to make a mark on history in your generation. You could be part of a revival.

I want to give you some Biblical proof of what I'm saying, with the hope that it will stir your head to dream and your heart to long for what might be possible. The aftermath of the story of Jesus in the Gospels is what I boldly call the first massive revival. It's my hope that you, too, will see God's greater purpose for your life and the possibilities those purposes hold.

A. WE ARE TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF THE WORLD.

¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, ^[a] baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28-18-20 NIV)

Making disciples means sharing the Gospel with others. When they experience life change, it's our job to do life with them, and to teach them what it means to be a Christ follower. It is only then that they will have the tools to turn around and do the same for others. You see, revival isn't a hit-and-run proposition. It is about a commitment to invest in people for the long haul, so that life change can continue. I want you to notice something from this passage: it says to "*make disciples of all nations*". What does that mean? Simply put, it means that all people can receive the Gospel. We are called to see that this happens, though any means. Sometimes that means you pray for them, sometimes that means you give, and sometimes that means you "go and do". Now, "going and doing" can be an intoxicating thought, because the possibilities are endless. Let me put the brakes on, however, before we get too carried away, because "all nations" also includes where you live. Going on trips around the world and rallying for some faraway cause is good, but don't forget to look in your own community! I want you to dream big about what could happen around the world, and how you could be a part of it, but I would urge you to start helping others experience life change right where you are

B. WE HAVE THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues[a] as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:3-4 NIV)

We can't and don't have to do this life thing on our own. When we come to know Christ, we get the power of God inside of us. This is what propels us to go out and see our world changed. Through that power, we cannot even begin to imagine what God will do in us and through us. If you take a look at the verses surrounding this passage, you'll notice that the disciples go from hiding and afraid to boldly preaching the Gospel, first in the streets, and then all over the known world.

C. GOD CAN DO BIG THINGS.

41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. (Acts 2:41-45)

I'm sure this fact didn't come as a great surprise to the disciples. After all, Jesus did promise the Holy Spirit would come, and because of that, those who came after Him would do even greater things than He did. And, boy, did some crazy things happen! Just let this sink in for a second: thousands of people came to know Christ in one day, and poverty was wiped out in their community of believers. This was all done with the power of the same Holy Spirit we received when we came to know Christ. Do you see life change happening like this around you? Do you see God moving this way around you? If not, then the problem isn't God or the people around you. I think the problem is that we are just not willing to lay everything down for the sake of the Gospel, and fully believe the truth: that God can and will do big and mighty things.

D. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SPECIAL IN THE WORLD'S EYES.

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

If you thought the disciples were chosen to do the things they did because they were special, you're wrong. They were mostly fishermen, though there was one that was a tax collector, as well as a few other trades mixed in. They were all working specific trades when Jesus called them. Believe me when I say that none of these trades would be considered especially glamorous. They didn't have special degrees. They didn't have extraordinary skills. It was because of these things that somewhere along the way, someone decided they weren't good enough. But Jesus does not see what the world sees; He saw greatness in what the world saw as "not good enough". One of the most amazing things about them is that they had *just* met Jesus and were obedient to be used by Him. You know another amazing thing? They were all teenagers when this took place. This means that none of us in this room have an excuse to wait. You don't have to wait to be older, and you don't have to have some kind of approval or validation from the world. If you have come to know Christ and have a relationship with Him, then there is nothing that can stop you, except for yourself. So what are you waiting for?

God has given you a purpose in this life, and nothing this world has to offer could even compare to it. Not only that, but He has given you the examples, directions, and power you need to live out that purpose in your life. All that's left is this:

1. Make sure you know Christ. If you don't have a personal relationship with Christ, then you need to take care of that right now. All you have to do is believe that He died and rose from the dead, that He can and will forgive you of your sins, and invite him into your heart.
2. Believe in what scripture says and be obedient to act. It won't always be easy, but between the power of the Holy Spirit and the loving community you have around you, nothing can stop you from pursuing God's purpose for your life.

So what will you do? Will you continue living for survival or will you live for revival in your generation?

~~REVIVAL~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 1 SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. When “revival, not survival” comes to your mind, what do you think about?
2. When you look at the world around you, do you think we are in need of revival? Why or why not?
3. When you think about living for revival, what are some of your biggest fears?
4. Why do you think revival is not happening in the world around you?
5. What are some specific ways your small group could bring revival to your area?

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 2

BREAK THE CHAINS OF SIN

Introduction:

Ask your students the following questions, and be sure to give time for answers. Don't be afraid to tailor these questions to what you already know about your group, to get them talking.

- What is your dream job?
- What is the worst job you could possibly imagine?

Response:

My dream job has changed a lot over the years. There was a time I wanted to be in the NBA. That is, until I realized I wasn't that tall... or that good. There was also a time I wanted to be a rock star. I refuse to rule that one out completely, however, I doubt taking three kids on tour would really be that much fun.

You may have many answers to what you would deem the worst job in the world. Some of you might think washing dishes, picking up trash, or serving food is a job you would never do. Now, these aren't bad jobs in themselves, but they may not be what you envision yourself doing for the rest of your life.

Whenever I think of this questions, there is one job that immediately comes to my mind: slavery.

I'm guessing that's not what you expected me to say. Slavery has been a terrible blemish on the history of our world, and unfortunately, continues to take place all over the world today. It's not something we would wish on anyone else, and definitely not something we would sign up for ourselves, because we long for the exact opposite: freedom.

We long to be free. If you're like I was growing up, all you can think about is how one day you'll be on your own, without someone telling you what to do. This is one of the reasons we often rebel and sin. We watch things we shouldn't watch, drink, smoke, and inject/ingest things that we shouldn't allow in our body- all because we think these things make us "free". What we don't realize is that these things are actually enslaving us, and what we sometimes refuse to admit is that we will always be a slave to life. That sounds awful, but keep in mind that there is one form of slavery that actually provides the only freedom we could truly ever have in this world.

All this talk about slavery and freedom coming from slavery may be confusing, but it's true. You will always be a slave, but there is one form of slavery that offers the ultimate freedom. Don't

believe me? Let's dig into scripture to better understand what I'm talking about. Then, we can discuss exactly why all of this is true for us and the world around us, and exactly what we need to do about it.

Read the following passage:

³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

³³ They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

³⁴ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:31-36 NIV)

1. IF YOU SIN, YOU ARE A SLAVE TO THAT SIN.

I'm not clever enough to make this stuff up; these aren't my words. They are the words of Jesus.

Sin is serious. It will take control of your life, it will take you places you do not want to go, and it will destroy you. Granted, you may not end up living in a gutter somewhere because your addictions got the best of you, but it will definitely destroy the potential greatness that your life could have had if you had followed Christ.

IN SHORT, SIN WILL NEVER MAKE THINGS BETTER.

This is important to understand because we have a tendency to downplay sin, or to see sin as a small thing. It's easy for us to justify sin by saying things like "It's just a little white lie," or "Everyone else is doing it", or even "No one else will ever see this." When we say these things, however, what we are actually doing is allowing Satan to tempt us toward sin in a way that he believes will trap us. By doing this, he can derail us from the purpose that God has for our life. Falling into his trap and sinning is easier than most people want to admit. Generally, it starts with just a thought or an idea, which you begin to chew on. The next thing you know, you're justifying why it's not so bad and how you can get away with it. Then, before know it, temptation has turned to action and that sin now controls your life. I don't know about you personally, but I know most of us humans hate to be controlled, especially against our will. So why would we allow sin to do this to us?

This concept of being a slave can be hard for us to visualize, so I want to share a couple of personal examples to help you understand what I mean.

(NOTE TO LEADERS: I want to encourage you to take this idea, but share some of your own personal examples. Transparency can go a long way in helping students experience life change.)

When I was 18, I was frustrated with the way my life was going. Things weren't "perfect" anymore and I blamed God for that. So I decided that if bad things were going to happen to me, then I was done doing good things. I wanted to try something new, and what I chose first was tobacco. I started with dipping (using smokeless tobacco). As silly as it sounds, I justified this by saying it would make me a better baseball player. Before I knew it, I would be running out of school at the end of the day so I could get a dip. After a while, I knew I needed to quit, so to wean off of it I started smoking. I know, I was a real genius. This carried on through my first year of college. I would have to leave in the middle of class to have a cigarette. I wouldn't be able to make it through movies with friends or even on a date without having to go outside and have a smoke. If I couldn't get a cigarette fast enough, I became irritable and angry. The cigarette controlled my life- I became a slave to my sin. Eventually, smoking wasn't enough, so I decided to also start drinking. I reached a point where I would get out of bed with the only purpose of eating breakfast and to start drinking again. At night, I would drink until I passed out and fell asleep. I became a slave to that sin, as well.

You may be thinking, "Of course you can get addicted to those things, you idiot. We know those things are bad." It's so obvious, so I should know you would never do that. I understand. At one time, I had that same mindset, but I want you to realize that things can sneak up on you.

Another example of becoming a slave to sin begins while I was in my junior high and high school years. From 1991-2001, there was one day I could not wait for: the annual release of the Madden Football videogame. I would spend that whole evening and late into the night playing the game. Then I would take the game insert to school to study the playbook. I wouldn't be able to sit still in class because all I could think about was getting home to play Madden. I would even skip invitations to go places, because all I wanted to do was play the game. In order to get more time, I would no longer read the Bible or pray, and if I *had* to go somewhere, like church or family functions, I would get so mad. I became a slave to a videogame.

You see, it doesn't have to be one of those big, obvious sins that suck you in. It can also be small, even "acceptable" things. Why?

2. SATAN WILL DO EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO ENSLAVE YOU.

Read the following passage:

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10 NIV)

Satan is out to destroy you, and he will do whatever it takes to do so. He may decide to attack you from the front, or be sneaky and attack from the back. Sometimes the temptation you have will be like the dripping of a leaky faucet and you won't even realize it's happening. Maybe he

just makes you busy, comfortable, or bored. Be aware, when one strategy stops working, he will switch to another.

To sum this up: you are in a never ending war and Satan is your enemy. Your knowledge of this is your protection. Your life could be great. It could be full of hope, joy, and meaning. Your life could even change the world now and for generations to come. It's because of this that the enemy wants nothing more than to take it all away from you.

Please realize the cost is high. Please realize that sin-“small” or “big”- will destroy you. Please hear that Satan's way of turning to sin will never make things better. It will enslave and destroy you, and in turn, destroy those around you.

3. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SLAVE.

Too many people just accept that sin is going to be a part of our lives. But it doesn't have to be that way. Thanks to the grace and the power we receive in Jesus we can have something better in life. Let's take a moment and read a verse that not only helps us see this but also gives us one final reminder of what sin will do to us.

Re-read the following passage:

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. (John 10:10 NIV)

Satan will destroy you, but Jesus will give you life. This is important for a few reasons:

A. SIN IS A BIG DEAL.

I know we've said this like a dozen times at this point, but take note. Far too often, I think we view sin in terms of a line to dance around. One day, we decide to dance to the sin side, then on the next day we decide to dance back to Christ. This may seem like a solution, but you can't have it both ways. If you do that, you are only halfway committing to one thing. This may seem kind of blunt, but the choice is simple: either have life (Christ) or have your life destroyed (Satan and sin). You have the option- you can choose life! Jesus didn't say Satan will destroy your life, He said the thief *wants* to. So, you don't have to live in defeat and accept sin. There is another way. A better way.

B. SALVATION IS AVAILABLE FOR ALL AND CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET IT.

Re-read the following passage:

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16 NIV)

GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD. THAT MEANS EVERYBODY.

Salvation is available to all, regardless of past, nationality or whatever label you want to put on someone. It's because of this that if you ever say that someone who is still living is beyond salvation, then you are saying *you* are beyond salvation. We must never forget that we, too, you have sinned.

Read:

⁶ *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6 NIV)*

There is only one way to Heaven. This is hard to fully comprehend, even for me, because I know a lot of nice people who are of other faiths or are even atheists. I wish I could just agree with them when they say there are other ways to Heaven or other purposes in life, but this is simply not true. There is only one way to be made right with God and only one way to Heaven. That way is through a saving relationship with Christ. While this is a hard truth for many to accept, they should actually be grateful. God sent His Son to make the ultimate sacrifice, even though He didn't have to, for the sole purpose of our salvation. He also made it abundantly clear what the path was, so that we can go out and share this message of salvation with others. He took the guesswork out of life by making the purpose clear, and the best part is it's not based on how many good things we can do. It is a gift, given freely, to us all.

This is fantastic news, but it should also give us followers of Jesus a sense of urgency. With Christ, we get eternal life. Without salvation in Christ, we spend eternity in Hell, separated from God. This is the reality your lost friends are facing and we don't know how many more opportunities we will have to reach them. Don't waste a moment!

C. THERE IS ALWAYS A WAY OUT.

Read:

¹³ *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. (1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV)*

Sin doesn't have to just be a reality of your life. Every time there is temptation, there is a way of escape that God provides. It could be a different activity. It could be your phone ringing. Sometimes it's as simple as staying home or going to bed instead of staying up later on the computer. Regardless of how or where it comes, you have to know the escape is coming. When you sin, don't just say, "It's okay because everyone sins." Instead say, "How can I avoid this sin next time? Where is the escape coming from? I don't want to be a slave and I don't want my life destroyed. And how can I help others avoid their sin?"

4. YOU CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.

A. YOU NEED JESUS.

You can't just wake up and say you want to live right. If you try to do it in your own power, you will surely fail. But if you do it in the power of the Holy Spirit, you can surely succeed. This is a constant process of pursuing Jesus and relying on Him. I want you to realize the importance of this, so let me show you different terminology.

Read:

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God—
(Romans 1:1 NIV)

Depending on your translation, it may use the word “servant”. Some other translations say “bond-servant” or “slave” of Christ. That’s how Paul refers to himself- as a slave. I mentioned earlier that there is a form of slavery that brings absolute freedom. Regardless of how hard you work, something or someone will always control your life. If it is Christ, you will experience absolute joy and freedom in life, because His plans and His love are always perfect and He always wants what’s best for us. This is the truth. So, here is a challenge to you: live every day to be a slave to Christ, and allow Him to guide and control your every thought and step.

B. YOU NEED PEOPLE.

Loving Christ is vital, but we also need people to walk alongside us in our journey, as well.

Read:

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. (James 5:16 NIV)

Read:

*⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:
¹⁰ If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
¹² Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NIV)*

Ask the following question:

- What are some lessons you see here about why it is important to do life with others?

We need to be able to confess our sins to each other and be held accountable so we don't sin again. Sometimes we need people to be our way of escape. We need people to pick us up when we fall. We need people to help us stand strong for truth in the face of opposition.

You cannot do this life alone. God didn't design this life that way. You need your relationship with God through Christ and you need loving Christian community around you.

5. YOU CAN **FREE FUTURE GENERATIONS** FROM SLAVERY.

Read:

⁸ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.⁹ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,¹⁰ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Deuteronomy 5:8-10 NIV)

This verse refers to something that is commonly referred to as "generational sin". What does this mean? Basically, you sin and then your children struggle with the same sin. There is a debate about whether or not this is real, but I think it definitely is. Easy proof of this are the statistics of children who come from divorce who get divorced, as well. We often follow the behaviors of our parents, even if we don't know what those behaviors are. I'll give you an example: As you know, I struggled with alcohol. Well, recently I sat down and talked with my dad about those struggles. He then proceeded to share with me how he had some of those same struggles. Now, did that mean I was doomed to be an alcoholic? Not at all. However, it did mean that I was probably more likely than others to struggle with it.

My parents also got divorced when I was 23. Does this mean I'm doomed to get divorced? Not at all. It does mean that bad behaviors in relationships have been modeled to me. To safeguard my marriage, I need to be aware of what I learned from them that was wrong, and be proactive about fixing it. More importantly, I need to be proactive about allowing Jesus to continually work in my life- to mold and shape me into what He wants to be.

In addition to this, I can have open and honest conversations with my children (at age appropriate times), so that they don't repeat the same mistakes. Basically, I can break the cycle for "thousands of generations", as the scripture says.

The truth is that you weren't *just* saved for you. Jesus can break the chains of sin for yourself and then use you as a tool to break the cycle of sin in your family. Once He's done this, He can use you to go out and share the truth with others. Do you see what's happening? By doing this, you can bring about revival in our world now and for thousands of generations to come. That's sounds like a life I want to live. What about you?

I know there were some principles and scriptures that were repeated in this lesson. Maybe that annoys you, but sin is a big deal, and somehow that truth doesn't seem to be sinking in for people. If we are going to start a revival, nothing will derail it more quickly than sin entangling your life. So, I want to repeat anything and everything I have to until the light bulb goes off, and change happens.

If you have sin enslaving you, deal with it openly and honestly now. If you know that you have friends and family members dealing with sin, share and pray about it now. If you know there is a cycle of sin in your family, confess that and allow others to pray for you with boldness now. Let's break the chains of sin in our lives, the lives of those around us, and the lives for generations to come. Let's not stop there, though. Let's bring revival in our generation and for generations to come!

~~REVIVAL~~ NOT SURVIVAL

LESSON 2

SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are some sins that enslave those around you?
2. Why do you think people struggle with these sins?
3. Think about times you have fallen into temptation. Can you think of how there might have been a way of escape you missed in that moment?
4. What generational sins do you see in your family?
5. How can you be a part of breaking the cycle of sin?
6. What might you miss out on if you choose to be a slave to sin?
7. What might your friends miss out on?
8. What are some ways that you as a community can help each other be free from sin and slaves to Christ?
9. What are some ways that you can be part of transforming your school and your community, so that they can be slaves for Christ as well?

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 3 THE WORD

Introduction:

- In football, how do you know where to run, who to watch for, or who to block?

You have a playbook.

- In theatre, how do you know what to say?

You have a script.

- In music, how do you know what to sing or play?

You have sheet music or charts.

- In school, how do you know what's going to be on the test?

You have a textbook, notes, or a review sheet.

No matter what you do, there is information recorded somewhere that you need to read or listen to in order to be successful.

The Christian life is no different. In the Christian life, we have been given the Bible.

The Bible is God's Word, given to us as a love letter, so we can know how to live, regardless of what life throws at us. It is absolute truth and continues to be relevant, even though times have changed. If you are going to bring about revival in your generation, you're going to need to know the Bible pretty well. You'll need to know it so you can bring comfort to those who are hurting, so you can stand firm in trials, so you can see right from wrong, and so you can have a hope of answers to the questions that come.

It's because of this that I want to give you a few tips to help form a strategy for studying the Bible and to also give you some motivation to make it an integral part of your life.

1. YOU NEED TO **STUDY** THE WORD.

I wasn't always the most disciplined student. I would often tune out of lectures, and failed to study for tests. My biggest effort was to do the bare minimum to get by. Part of the reason for

this is because school didn't come that difficult for me. That is, until I hit college. Once I got to college, things got difficult, and my bad habits caught up with me. So much so, that in the first semester of my freshman year, I almost flunked everything. With two weeks left in the semester, I locked myself in my room and did nothing but study notes, read the textbooks, and gather any other information I could get my hands on. I'm proud to say that after all that studying, I did well enough on my finals to pull up my semester average to a 2.3. ☺ I am left even now wondering what I could have accomplished if I had *just* put in the effort to start out with.

The Christian life is the same way. It goes along smoothly and doesn't seem that difficult, so we don't think we need to pray and definitely don't think we need to read the Bible. After a while, we are going along in our own strength and begin to go through the motions in life. The next thing we know, a temptation catches us off guard and derails us. Or maybe a trial comes and you are unprepared, which causes you to blame God and turn away from your faith. Or even worse, a friend has a question about life and truth, giving you the opportunity to share the Gospel with them and you are unprepared. You would have no idea what to say, and they would be forced to go somewhere else to look for answers. Sure, you might be able to cram in those crisis moments get by, but you won't get the full benefits. You wouldn't know the joy of being disciplined to get in the Word on a daily basis. So, what do you need to do to effectively study the Word?

A. YOU NEED TO READ THE BIBLE ON A DAILY BASIS.

Every day, you need to get into your Bible. I like to try to read a chapter a day, but sometimes one verse sticks out to me, so I just spend time reading that verse over and over again. There are no set rules for getting into the Word, but taking the time to do so daily is vital for a successful Christian life. It seems like a big task, and I am often asked where I think is a good place to start. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Read the book of John**
- **Read through Psalms or Proverbs**
- **Read the book of James**
- **Read Galatians-Colossians 1 chapter a day.**

B. YOU NEED TO DO THIS FREE FROM DISTRACTIONS.

Our minds are amazing things. No matter what you do, your brain may drift off. As best as you can, remove those distractions. Turn your phone off. Turn off the computer, TV, and radio. Find a quiet place for yourself. Do everything you can to make this a time between just you and God.

C. SET A CERTAIN TIME.

I know life happens, so you may have to adjust this time occasionally. The goal is to try to set a consistent, scheduled time that is your time with God. There is no biblical mandate about when

this time has to be. The best time in your day to get into the Word is whatever time works best for you. I like to do it in the morning, so I am ready for whatever the day may throw at me. However, I do know a lot of people who like to end every day with their time God.

D. MEDITATE ON THE WORD.

Don't just read it to get it done- take time to process the words you read and what they really mean. Pray over what you read. Take time to ask questions about what that scripture means for your life and for others. Spend the day chewing on it. This way, it can truly become a seed that is planted in your soul and takes root, so that it never leaves you.

2. MEMORIZE THE WORD.

Read:

¹¹ *I have hidden your word in my heart
that I might not sin against you.*

¹² *Praise be to you, LORD;
teach me your decrees. (Psalms 119:11NIV)*

We need to memorize scripture so that it continually comes up in our minds and it's ready for recall, when needed. We may not always have our Bible with us, and you never know when you might need to recall scripture. Keep in mind that scripture has the power to help you avoid becoming a slave to sin. I don't just mean the sin that has you doing bad things, but also the sin that stops you from doing the things God calls you to! Being in the Word allows you to be ready to have the courage to step up for God when necessary. It also allows you to remember to flee temptation. Memorizing scripture will be a great weapon in that battle.

3. LIVE THE WORD.

Read:

²² *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. (James 1:22NIV)*

The Bible isn't just words on a page; it is guidance for our lives. So, don't just be a scholar and memorize a bunch of words. Allow those words to change your life and bring you into action. Don't just read that we're supposed to love our neighbor. Go out and love your neighbor! Don't just read that we're supposed to forgive others. Go forgive them! Don't just read that we are to make disciples. Go out- share the Gospel and disciple someone! Don't just read that we are to feed the poor and clothe the naked. Go out and show love; sacrifice what you have to meet their need! Every single day, look for a way that the words of scripture can change your life and spur you on to do great things. Hearers aren't what is going to bring about revival in your generation. It will take a collection of doers working towards the purpose of living out the truth they have learned in the Bible.

4. **KNOW THE TRUTH (OR AT LEAST WHAT ISN'T TRUTH).**

You live in a world that doesn't like truth. Those in this world want to be free to do whatever they want, believe what works for them, and change those things as they please, based on what they're feeling in that moment. Life doesn't work that way. There are truths we must live by and the Bible tells us what those truths are. So, a big part of studying the Bible is learning what the truth is, so you can stand firm and not be swayed by friends, family members, teachers, or even church staff members who aren't speaking or living the truth. The thing is, sometimes what they are saying will sound really good, but if it's not truth, then it's not right. If you know what the Bible says, you always have a standard to compare everything you hear and learn.

This is especially true, because in life there will be difficult situations or questions, and the answers may not always be clear. It may seem like the Bible has nothing to say about it specifically, but when you dig in and connect the dots from different parts of scripture, you can get more clarity to either provide words of comfort or at least a clear direction on what is not right. To me, life is like a multiple choice test. You study hard and then a really tough question comes up that you can't quite remember the answer to, but you learned enough that you can eliminate two or three of the choices that are definitely wrong. By the process of elimination, you have a pretty good idea of what is right. Sometimes the same thing happens in life. You may be faced with choices that the Bible doesn't specifically say is right or wrong. Through knowing the Word, however, you can begin to rule things out that you already know, and make a wise decision.

There are a lot of examples I could think of, but I don't want to start a philosophical or theological debate. Instead, let me introduce a very often asked question: "If God is so powerful and so loving, why does He allow bad things to happen?" You can't just go to one verse and get a clear answer. Even if you could, you probably wouldn't want to spout it off, because this question often comes from someone who is facing a difficult time.

Through studying scripture, we can go back to the Garden of Eden and see that bad things happening was never God's intention. It was sin, committed out of free will and choices made by humans, that brought death and trials into the world. When looking at other scriptures, we can clearly see that sin always leads to death and destruction. We can see that even in the most difficult times, God provides comfort and love. I also like that when you look at Jesus's acts of healing, He points out that it wasn't a specific sin that left people lame or blind. This means that it may not be the person who sinned originally that the bad thing happened to, but could actually be sin in general messing up the whole world. If you continue to study the Word, you can also find that scripture commands us to be loving, gentle, and encouraging in our words, which tells us not only know what truth to share, but also how to share it.

Even though there aren't always simple answers, the Bible can still teach us what to say and how to say it.

In case you're still not convinced it's important to be in the Word, meditate on it, study it, memorize it, and live it out, let me close with this: Living to bring revival in your generation will be difficult. You will be attacked and challenged from all sides. You will get beaten down and maybe even beaten up, and often times, the Word may be the only thing that gives you the words to say, and the encouragement to go on. It may be the only beacon of truth in a world that vehemently rejects truth. So you need to eat it up daily, chew on it and meditate on it. Let the Word be the driving and guiding force behind all you say and do.

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 3 SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Has there been a time where knowing scripture helped you in life or helped you help someone else? How?
2. Has there been a time where it would have, if you had known scripture? How?
3. Describe your quiet time? When? Where? How often? What do you study?
4. What are the things that get in the way of you having a quiet time if you don't have one at all? If you just miss it from time to time, what are the distractions that cause this?

(LEADERS: Spend the rest of the time helping students plan when and how to have a quiet time. Feel free to share lessons from your experience and resources your student ministry might have. I encourage you to have them write down their plan, put reminders in their phones, and share their plans so they can learn from each other and hold each other accountable.)

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 4

CHANGE YOUR MISSION
FIELD...DON'T JUST
SURVIVE IT

Introduction:

Ask your students the following questions, and be sure to give time for answers. Don't be afraid to tailor these questions to what you already know about your group, to get them talking:

- How many of you have gone on a mission trip?
- Where did you go? What type of work did you do?
- How did God move? How did He change others lives? How did He change your life?
- Did you go back?

Response:

What would you say if I told you that each and every one of us goes on mission every single day?

Your mission begins the moment you wake up in the morning, and doesn't end until you lay your head down at night. Let me explain what that means:

When you go to school, practices/games/tournaments on the weekends, hangout with friends after school, or go out to eat, **you** are going on mission. For those of you who belong to a family who do not know Christ, your mission starts with every interaction you have with them, beginning the moment you wake up. For those of you who know a family who does not know Christ, your mission is every interaction you have with that family. Every single time that you go out into the world, it's your job to be a light that shows God's love to the world around you. This is it. This is your opportunity to be a part of changing lives. People dream of having the chance to change the world, but they fail to realize that the opportunity is there, just waiting for someone to grab it. Will it be you?

As you grow up and move onto new stages of life, you will still continue to go on mission. Thanks to advancements in technology and the ease of travel, you'll have opportunities to make an impact all over the world. The work of bringing revival in your generation, however, needs to start where you are right now. Why? Because right now you have an incredible and unique opportunity. This opportunity will not last forever.

You can never go back to this time in your life. You get one shot at middle school/high school—exactly one shot at having the schedule you have, which puts you in front of the same people each day. You have one shot at impacting the friends you have right now, because after graduation, life will change. Sure you might see some of those friends again, and you can keep in touch on Facebook, but more than likely you will lose touch. My wife has one friend from high school she stays in touch with regularly. As for me? I have seen three people I graduated with in 14 years. Of course, all relationships are different, and you may do much better than we are, but the odds are that it won't be by much. The opportunity in front of you is big but it is fleeting. It will come to an end.

Let's give the benefit of the doubt that after graduation you saw everyone you went to school with. Even then, things won't be the same. Just as you have, they will grow and change. During this time, they'll find "answers" to the questions they seek in different places. Some of these people may find their way to God, but others may not, and over time, they will become less and less receptive to the Gospel. Plus, there's a good chance that if you approach them later on in life, it might not be received the same way. They might wonder why did you not share this with them during the time you knew them in school.

Please hear me, God can move in any way at any time, and because He is who He says He is, the way he does this may be in a way you would never expect. For example, I got the opportunity to reach someone for Christ over Myspace whom I hadn't seen for four years. That was an amazing example of God's reach, but I can assure you that it's not always that simple. As much as God will use you throughout your life to change the world, no time will ever be like it is now. Each stage of life is unique and presents unique opportunities to glorify God. Don't let any of those opportunities pass you by.

It's easy to forget your incredible reach. Many of you have more time, influence, energy, and moments for conversation now than you will ever have again. In addition to this, will may have more disposable income and resources, as well as a more captive and receptive audience than you ever will again.

Regardless of what stage of life you are in, you always have to remember this truth: We are not promised tomorrow. Life is full of surprises. You don't know what will happen or if you will have the opportunity to impact someone on another day. This is a great truth, but here is an even greater one: if you're friends die without Christ, they spend eternity in Hell separated from God. This is not the kind of chance I would want to take. Do you?

You now understand the great urgency to this work, so let me ask you two very important questions. Take a minute to think it over before you answer them.

- If you left your community right now, how would you be remembered?
- How would you like to be remembered?

This is not about trying to win some popularity contest. It's not about who has the best hair or who is the most athletic. Case in point, if you're truly living for Christ, there's a chance you'll become less popular (Christ warned us of that). This is about having a reality check. The first question helps you think about whether or not you are actually making a difference in the community around you. The second question helps you think about your goals and motivation. Simply put, how you answer these two questions will help you realize whether you are changing your mission field or just surviving it.

For example, if no one would even know you left, there's a chance you're just surviving your mission field. You can tell you're working toward revival if others would remember your example of serving Christ, however, and be motivated to step up and lead and do the same. If people are coming to know Christ because of your prayers, words, influence, and/or example then you are changing your mission field.

Question two is a little trickier. Again, the world around you won't necessarily understand what you are doing. Some times they won't appreciate it, or even receive it, however, thinking about how you want to be remembered does help you to think about your motivations. So I will say this: If you want to be remembered as anything other than a life-changer for Christ, you are selling short what God can and will do through you.

Knowing what you know now, do you currently think you are surviving your mission field or changing it? Do any of you think you aren't even surviving it? Why?

When we use these terms, I see it much like a number line.

- If you are on the left side, you're not even surviving your mission field. This means you are a slave to sin and living just as the world does.
- The middle of the line means you are simply surviving. This means you are lukewarm and just going through the motions. You are staying out of trouble like a "good church kid", but not standing for your faith and making a difference in anyone's life. This is a tough spot to be in because many in your family, and maybe even leaders in your church will praise you for being different from "those other kids." God has a different view of lukewarm Christians, however. He says they make Him want to vomit.
- If you find yourself on the right side, you are a life changer. You are living out what James refers to as "pure and undefiled religion", and you are making an impact in the community around you.

What does that mean?

Read:

²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. James 1:27(NIV)

To me, this says that someone who is truly following Christ is avoiding sin, but they are also going out and ministering to others, showing love, and making an impact. It's a both/and

proposition. Yes, you are ideally ministering to the least among us and meeting their needs, but all people who do not know Christ need reaching, regardless of their status or prestige. So knowing that, would you consider yourself as someone who is simply surviving, not surviving, or as a life-changer?

This whole study has been geared toward you bringing about revival in your generation by not just surviving your daily life and getting by. In this lesson, we will get into some specifics on how to do that. Keep in mind that this will look different for everyone, but the principles will apply everywhere. Please know that you can carry this with you when you graduate, when you get a job, when you get married, etc. This is because you will always have a mission field, and you will always be called to change it. For right now, I want you to focus on the mission field you are in currently. If you are going to change your mission field and not simply survive it you must do the following:

1. LOVE GOD AND LOVE PEOPLE.

Read:

³⁴ *Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together.*³⁵ *One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question:* ³⁶ *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”*

³⁷ *Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”* **Matthew 22:34-40(NIV)**

In this exchange, the religious leaders are trying to trip Jesus up. Jesus takes this opportunity to not only share truth, but to make clear what all the scriptures, all He has said, and all of life has been about. It all boils down to loving God and loving people. That is what every moment of every day is to be about. But what exactly does it mean to love God and love people?

A. LOVING GOD MEANS OBEYING HIS COMMANDMENTS.

Jesus, who was God with skin on, said that if we loved Him, we would obey His commandments. So if you are going to love God, you must do what He commands. This means avoiding sin. As you can see, it's all interconnected. So, why is this such a big deal?

For one, if you live a life of strong character, you are going to stand out like a lighthouse. People will see that there is something different about you and want to know why. The other reason, though, is that as you pursue starting and leading a revival in your mission field, Satan will look for ways to bring you down, and people will be waiting for you to mess up. You don't want to become another in a long line of leaders to fall to the way-side because of a moral breakdown.

The way you do this is to love God with all your heart, soul, and strength by doing what He commands.

There is one more piece to this. Sometimes God will command you to do things you don't want to do or you may be uncomfortable with. This might be anything from speaking in front of a crowd, to quitting an activity, or even reaching out to someone who has wronged you. In those difficult moments, you need to remind yourself that if you truly love God, which I know you do, you must obey what He commands. The outcome obeying Him may be surprising.

B. LOVING PEOPLE MEANS MEETING NEEDS.

People have many needs. These needs can be broken down into emotional, physical, and spiritual needs. Through meeting these needs, people know they are loved and become more and more receptive to the Gospel. We all have a need to belong and feel connected. By befriending people and doing life with them, we are able to let them know they are loved. There is healing from their sense of loneliness. Some people are without the food and clothing they need and through meeting those needs, you let them know that they are valued and someone cares. The truth is that we all have a spiritual need. We all have sin in our lives and are in need of Jesus for salvation. It is through sharing the message of the Gospel with others that we truly show love and help people experience life change. This is because without sharing the Gospel we are not truly loving people. Without the Gospel, there is no revival. On the flip side though, if you share the Gospel and leave them physically hungry, that is not truly love either. It all works together.

If you want to see how seriously Jesus takes this principle read **Matthew 25:31-46**:

³¹ *"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.*

³⁴ *"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'*

³⁷ *"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'*

⁴⁰ *"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'*

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

⁴⁴ “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

⁴⁵ “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

⁴⁶ “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” (NIV)

2. BUILD DISCIPLES.

Read:

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” **Matthew 28:16-20(NIV)**

In these verses, Jesus gives the charge to His followers to go out and change the world. This is what this boils down to when it comes to you leading a revival in your community.

A. SHARE THE GOSPEL

In case I wasn't clear, this is the heart of revival. This is how people experience life change. They hear that they are sinners, and because of that, they are doomed to be separated from God. In spite of that, Jesus came, lived a perfect life and died for their sins. Then, He overcame death and the grave and rose on the third day. If they will confess with their mouth that they have sinned and ask Jesus to forgive them and be Lord of their life, they will be saved. By doing this, not only do they get eternal life after death, but they also get life and a purpose. A purpose that is greater than everything they could ever imagine.

If you are going to change your mission field and not just survive it, then you must actively look for and take advantage of opportunities to share the Gospel. It seems like a scary task, but the Bible is full of verses to help you out. Including my best suggestion:

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Romans 3:23 (NIV)

and

²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in^[a] Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 6:23(NIV)

Using the first verse can help people to understand that they have sinned. It doesn't matter what the sin is. It just matters that they have sinned, just like you and me. The first part of Romans 6:23 helps them see that this sin separates us from God and causes us to deserve death. I like to explain it this way: imagine that we are on one side of the Grand Canyon and God is on the other, and no matter what we do we cannot get across. God sent His Son Jesus to die for us so that we didn't have to deserve death anymore. If they will confess with their mouth that they have sinned and ask Jesus to forgive them and be Lord of their life, they will be saved. Not only do they get eternal life after death, but they also get life and a purpose. Imagine that the cross of Jesus made a bridge so we could get to God and have a relationship with Him.

(Note to leaders: If your ministry has a way you like to train students in sharing the Gospel, feel free to share that. I would also encourage stopping to take some time to really discuss sharing the Gospel, students' fears, and maybe even practice for a while. Because without life change in Christ, there is no revival.)

Jesus talks about sharing the Gospel with everyone, including those you do not like. When He says Samaria, He is speaking of the neighbors of the Israelites. They were considered half-breeds and were hated. You may remember the Samaritans from the Good Samaritan story. I feel like Jesus is saying, "In case you are trying to think of someone you don't have to reach or somewhere you don't have to go, I want you to know that person does not exist." So, regardless of someone's gender, race, nationality, sin, past, school, family situation, neighborhood...they are just like us. They have sinned and they are in need of a Savior. It is our calling to share the Gospel with them. You can't pick and choose who you think deserves salvation, because if you say that any human being on this earth is beyond salvation, then you say the same thing about yourself. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

B. TRAIN UP YOUR HELP AND YOUR REPLACEMENT

When Jesus says make disciples, He means do what He did. He had a group of people who He called to follow Him. It was after they met Jesus that they experienced life change. He did life with them, training them in how to reach others, teaching them what scripture really meant, and giving them opportunities to do ministry. This way there were others who could do the work with him, but more importantly who could do the work after He was gone.

You need to be a disciple to people in the same way. This means that after you present the Gospel and people experience life change, your job is not finished. Continue to meet together to study scripture, work together, pray together, hold each other accountable, and continually

change your mission field. For one, the more people helping, the better. You also need to keep in mind that you will not be there forever. So if you are going to truly change your mission field, and truly lead a revival in your generation, you need someone to come after you to keep the change happening.

3. NEVER QUIT.

Read:

⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7(NIV)

When you leave your mission field, for whatever reason, I hope this can be your prayer. That you fought and you finished the race. I hope you can, with Good conscience, say you did all you could to not only bring about revival in your mission field, but do it in such a way that the revival continues long after you are gone. It will be hard. You will face opposition. People may bail on you. You may even fall a time or two, but God is forever faithful and will always be there for you. Please don't quit. Please don't get distracted and move on to "the next big thing." Stay focused. Persevere. Change your mission field and keep changing it, and then in the next stage of life, change that mission field. This way, when you look back on that time, you can say you fought and finished the race. Keep going until your life ends.

The stakes are too high for your lost friends, for your generation, and for our world as a whole. Run the race until it is complete.

4. MINISTER IN YOUR CONTEXT AND NO ONE ELSE'S.

At the beginning of this study, I mentioned I wanted to be a rock star. What I didn't mention is that a couple of the guys I was in a band with did (and still do) get to be rock stars. So I will admit that I have moments of jealousy and wonder why I can't have the opportunities they have, but I had to realize that God had unique opportunities for me that they don't get to experience. I have unique talents that they don't have, I have a unique purpose that God has called me and no one else to, and I have to celebrate and pursue that instead of complain about it.

You may face some of the same temptations. You may wonder why someone else gets to be on stage and you don't. You may wonder why someone else gets more praise than you do. You may long to do the job someone else has. You need to continually remember, however, that we are all parts of the body of Christ, and like a body, we each have a unique function. If we do not perform our function, then the body won't work properly.

There is another layer to this, as well. The world is shrinking, so we can see what is happening in just about any part of the world at just about any time. You can't fall into the trap of hearing someone is reaching 1,000 people while you are reaching two, and get discouraged. If you are being faithful and obedient, that is what is important and that is what matters to God. Also, you may look and see that someone started something unique, like a skateboard ministry, in your community. Well, if no one in your community owns a skateboard, that won't be an effective

ministry for you. On the flipside, God may give you an outside the box idea that won't work anywhere else. Run with it, even if others think it might be strange. Your job is to be obedient to God and faithfully love Him and love others in the unique context where He has placed you.

As we come to the end, I have to say this may be the most difficult time I have ever had trying to find a way to wrap up a study. This idea of bringing about revival is such a big idea, has so many layers, and is also so important.

I think I will just make sure it is clear to you that you can do this. One reason I know this is because it says so in the Bible.

- **Philippians 4:13** promises that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.
- In **John 14:12**, Jesus promises that those who choose to follow Him would do everything He did and even greater things. That is a promise straight from the words of Jesus.
- In **John 16:33**, Jesus promises us that we will have trouble in the world, but to not fear because He has overcome the world.
- **2 Timothy 1:7** reminds us that we have not been given a spirit of fear but one of boldness and of love and power.
- In **Luke 21:14-17**, Jesus once again lets us know that we will face opposition from enemies to family members, but that He would always give us the words to speak and that if we stand firm, we will win and not be harmed.

Almost every great spiritual awakening that has happened throughout history was started by young people around your age. The apostles themselves were about your age. If you read Acts, you see stories of the work they were part of, that thousands of people come to know Christ, and every need was met in their community. They had no special degrees. They had no special training. They simply had met Jesus, been empowered by the same Holy Spirit you received when you came to Christ, and were obedient to do what He commanded.

- In **Acts 17:6**, we see that they had turned to world upside down.
- In **John 10:10**, Jesus tells us that He came so that we could have life change and experience to its fullest. To me, that means if we are still here, then He must not be done with this world or the people in it. This means that you, too, can still turn the world upside down.

There is no excuse. There is no time left to waste. Too many generations who came before you, mine included, have dropped the ball. You can bring about revival in your generation. You *must* bring about revival in your generation. If you will lay down your life before Christ, give up everything (because none of it matters in the grand scheme of things anyways), allow Jesus to then guide all your plans and steps, and be fully obedient to Him all the days of your life, you will bring about revival in your generation.

Think about it. Think about looking back on your life and realizing a whole generation of people turned their lives to Christ and you were part of that. Think about the fact that because of that,

generations to come followed Christ. Think about standing before God when you die, and because of the work you were apart of, He says to you, "Well done my good and faithful servant." Nothing can compare to that. No diploma, trophy, relationship, compliment, high, nothing.

I can't wait to hear the stories of life change happening in this generation and how they trace back to the students sitting in this very room. Now, let's get to work!

REVIVAL ~~NOT~~ SURVIVAL

LESSON 4 SMALL GROUP

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Hopefully you studied beforehand and have already read this before you got started. This is a time for you to be a leader. I can encourage you to begin to formulate questions throughout your time together, fit to where God is taking your group, and that will help them take that next step. I also encourage you to have your students formulate three fairly concrete ideas.) Ask the following questions:

1. What is your next step?
2. What are some specific ways you are going to impact your community?
3. What are some fairly specific timelines for this work?

(I want to encourage you to discuss ways your group can stay in touch and follow up on each other's progress, as well as remind them that they are not alone. You, as their leader, and their student pastors will always be available to help them reach their goals.)