

Nurturing Revival Towards an Awakening Love – Troubling Ourselves for Others.

1. Nurturing Revival Towards Awakening – Action steps:

- a. Birthed and carried in Intercessory Prayer.
- b. Create a Revival Culture.
- c. Develop a life of power that is Naturally Supernatural.
- d. Frequent and repeated Testimonies are a key to sustaining faith.
- e. Showing the Goodness of God is the bedrock of revival.
- f. Understanding our identity brings the gift of righteousness.
- g. Live in expectancy with a personality of Hope.
- h. The greatest of these is Love.**
- i. Honoring one another is the value system of Heaven.
- j. Prioritize freedom over order.
- k. Joy - the atmosphere of Heaven.
- l. The Church functions with limitless restoration as believers constantly walk in forgiveness.
- m. Unity among God's people shows the world the truth of Jesus.

2. Love:

- a. Troubling Ourselves for Others
 - i. 2 Corinthians 5: 14 For the love of Christ controls us...
 - ii. A supernatural outpouring of the love of God marks every revival in history.
 - iii. Holy Spirit awakens in us deep love for:
 1. God
 2. Others.
- b. The unconditional love of God is the foundation of revival culture.
 - i. Love brings us protection,
 1. As Angela often states: Love keeps us safe.
 2. Protects us against distractions that pours water on revival fire.
 3. Love keeps us from falling back into old patterns.
 - ii. We all need an infusion of love:
 1. Strong enough to become carriers of His love to:
 - a. Those within the Church
 - b. Those in the world around us.

3. TROUBLE YOURSELF

- a. Mary's brother Lazarus
 - i. John 11: 32 When Jesus was approaching the tomb of Lazarus, Mary came out to meet him and fell weeping at his feet.
 - ii. Jesus could have ignored the emotion as He knew a resurrection was about to occur.
 - iii. Weeping would be replaced by rejoicing.
 - iv. But the heart of God does not dismiss our emotions.
 - v. Jesus was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled.
 1. Jesus was indeed touched with the feeling of Mary's infirmities.

2. “was troubled” could equally be translated “troubled Himself”
- vi. Think about it – He troubled Himself:
 1. Jesus is on the way to a resurrection
 2. Yet He troubles Himself to stop and identify with the suffering.
 3. Deliberately engaging with empathy for Mary and the others.
 4. Jesus stopped to acknowledge the emotions
 5. He joined in and wept with His friend.
 6. He troubled Himself:
 - a. Interrupting the plan and identified with the pain and suffering.
 7. While He was about the Father’s business He took time to love deeply.

4. GOSPEL OF LOVE

- a. Azusa Street revival:
 - i. Love that was poured out helped them cross the racial barriers.
- b. This kind of love:
 - i. Is initiated in the heart of God
 - ii. Demonstrated in the life of Jesus
 - iii. Now powers the awakening that is growing across the earth.
- c. The outpouring of the Father’s love in Toronto:
 - i. Set in motion an unprecedented expansion of the gospel.
 - ii. Many who were impacted have carried it around the world.
 - iii. Several, such as:
 1. Roland and Heidi Baker in Mozambique
 2. Leif Hetland
 - iv. Have seen over a million respond to the gospel of love in the last twenty years.
- d. This revelation of love:
 - i. Is more than an emotional response
 - ii. It is a compelling force that puts demands on the way we live our lives.
- e. The love of God calls us:
 - i. To trouble ourselves and stop to share His love with others.

5. Testimony of Nate:

- a. A carrier of revival in Dayspring Church
- b. He was driving down the road one day and saw a man in a wheelchair crossing the street.
- c. He heard the Lord say turn around and pray for that man.
- d. His first thought was,
 - i. “Oh no, Lord, I don’t think I have the faith for that type of healing today.”
- e. But the Holy Spirit kept insisting
- f. He finally turned around and looked until he found him.
- g. The man was limping into his house from his wheelchair that he had left in the front yard.
- h. Nate pulled up to his driveway and asked him what had happened to his leg.
- i. He said that he had:
 - i. An ingrown toenail six months ago
 - ii. It became so infected that he was scheduled to have surgery in three days
 - iii. They might have to amputate his whole toe.

- iv. Nate spent about ten minutes talking to him:
 - 1. He found out that this man had been in ministry when he was younger
 - 2. He had become offended at someone and had not been to church since.
- v. Nate encouraged him in his destiny in God and then they prayed.
- vi. After the prayer Nate had him stand up:
 - 1. His pain had gone from excruciating down to one or two!
- vii. So, they prayed again, and the pain was gone.
- viii. A few minutes later he WALKED Nate out to his truck!

6. Paul describes this kind of love:

- a. in his writing to the Corinthians:
 - i. 2 Cor. 5: 14 For the love of Christ controls us...
 - 1. In this phrase Paul connects the focus and motivation of ministry with a controlling love.
- b. This is the heart of the Gospel.
- c. Everything we say and do is to be controlled by the love of God:
 - i. every word,
 - ii. every action,
 - iii. every response.
- d. The love of God is the controlling influence over the method and the message.**
 - i. Control is not a word we naturally connect with love;
 - ii. We usually view it as a contradiction.
 - iii. It feels foreign to the freedom we have found from legalism.
- e. Paul taught us the **“law of the spirit”**
 - i. He describes this control as a total surrender to God’s love.
 - ii. An all-consuming love so pure and unconditional,
 - iii. A love when understood and apprehended:
 - 1. Demands sacrificial living in return.
 - iv. A love that compels us to:
 - 1. Follow Christ,
 - 2. Submit to His Lordship,
 - 3. Give our lives to see the world touched by loves transforming power.
- f. God’s love:
 - i. Breaks down the resistance of our flesh
 - ii. Causes us to live from the Spirit.
 - iii. It is a kind of love that knows no barrier
 - iv. It stops at nothing to see the message of the gospel reach others.
 - v. A kind of love that reaches out to others with no thought to our own.
 - vi. This love will break down any barrier and cross any divide.
- g. The Greek word control is used in several ways:
 - i. to compress,
 - ii. to arrest,
 - iii. figuratively,
 - 1. to compel,

2. to perplex,
 3. to afflict,
 4. to preoccupy.
- iv. It is a compound word,
1. Prefix - meaning “the union which arises from the addition or accession of one thing to another”
 2. And the word “to hold together.”
- v. The resulting word describes:
1. The powerful influence that results from the union of God’s love with our humanity.
 2. It describes the unifying power and compelling nature of love:
 3. Love that transcends the natural realm
 4. It beckons us to live life completely unselfishly.
 5. This love literally “compresses” us,
 - a. Causing us to be conformed to the image of Christ.
 6. This love literally “arrests” us,
 - a. Taking us captive to Him and His purpose.
 7. This love literally “compels” us,
 - a. A driving force that urges us irresistibly toward His purpose.
 8. This love literally “perplexes” us
 - a. It violates all our self-protection and calls us to live unselfishly.
 9. This love literally “afflicts” us,
 - a. Demanding that we die to the flesh and live to the Spirit.
 10. This love literally “preoccupies” us,
 - a. Filling our thoughts with His beauty and majesty.

7. BAPTISM OF LOVE:

- a. God’s kind of love:
 - i. Cuts across every barrier
 - ii. Releases God’s power into situations that human love could never affect.
- b. A testimony from Steve and Sally:
 - i. Steve and Sally was in Africa as missionaries,
 - ii. He was returning to the land where he was raised
 - iii. However, his wife Sally was about to experience some profound culture shock.
 - iv. She was raised in the city.
 - v. Prior to this they had spent time in Nairobi in language school – that was her extent in Africa.
 - vi. The move to the desert in the North of Kenya was a radically new environment for her.
 - vii. The dry, arid terrain stirred up clouds of dust and sand every time the wind blew –
 - viii. This is a mixed blessing since the wind was needed to offset the constant 100 plus temperatures.
 - ix. Dirt and sand blew everywhere and into everything.
 - x. It seemed no matter how well we sealed they food the sandy dust got in;
 - xi. Soon they became accustomed to all the food we ate having the crunch of sand.

- xii. The people they reached out to were nomadic herdsman who moved with their cattle and camels in a constant search for water and limited grazing.
- xiii. Water was much too precious to use for anything other than drinking,
- xiv. The idea of taking a bath was unthinkable.
- xv. Instead, many would coat their bodies with red ochre that acted as a kind of deodorant, as well as insect repellent.
- xvi. After a while, the smell seemed natural, but when first encountered, it was overpowering.
- xvii. Steve's job was well defined –helping to build buildings and repair water systems.
- xxviii. he would meet with the men early in the morning for prayer and discipleship,
- xix. Then he spent the day working with them to get the work done in the intense heat.
- xx. Sally's role was simply to keep them alive.
- xxi. They bought food supplies for three months at a time,
- xxii. It was necessary for everything we ate to be made from scratch.
- xxiii. This meant hours each day spent in baking bread and making the meals as well as trying to keep up with the dust and dirty clothes.
- xxiv. As Sally's fluency in Swahili improved,
 - 1. she began to reach out to the women in the community,
 - 2. seeking to develop friendships.
- xxv. Her challenge culturally was typified in her relationship with a woman named Ingetre.
 - 1. Of all the Rendilli women,
 - 2. Ingetre seemed to smell the worst and was the one who responded most demonstratively to Sally's reaching out for friendship.
 - 3. Every time she saw Sally she would run up and give her a hug,
 - 4. leaving smudges of red ochre on Sally's clothing and the fear of a deposit of lice in her hair.
 - 5. Sally fought through the struggle and continued to reach out,
- xxvi. But the battle that raged in her was bringing her to a crisis.
 - 1. In the crisis she cried out to God, "We are here to love these people, but I can't do it.
 - 2. I am repulsed by the filth and, if You don't help me, I won't make it!"
 - 3. As she cried out for help, slowly things began to change.
- xxvii. Through the Holy Spirit,
 - 1. God began to pour into her His love,
 - 2. A love that went beyond the smell and the filth.
 - 3. A love that gave her a new appreciation for this woman that God loved unconditionally,
 - 4. a love that no longer felt the repulsion of the flesh but saw into the heart of the woman
 - 5. This enabled Sally to make a living connection.
 - 6. Over the next few years Ingetre and Sally became great friends and ministered together at every opportunity.
- xxviii. The filth was still there but something had happened in Sally:
 - 1. That took her beyond herself and into a dimension of love:
 - a. That was powerful enough to overcome her senses

- b. Connecting her with a person that needed Jesus despite the cost.
 - c. The Spirit of the Initiator of love:
 - i. Lives in us and works in us to reshape us from responders to initiators.
 - ii. Paul in his letter to the Romans describes this process:
 - 1. Rom. 5: 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.
 - iii. It is a work of the Holy Spirit to put a God-like love into our hearts.
 - iv. The Holy Spirit who raised Christ from the dead was released onto us at Pentecost.
 - v. The Spirit who breathed life into the grave is ready to breathe life into us
 - vi. To awaken us to a dimension of love that is foreign to our flesh.
 - vii. This baptism of sacrificial, unselfish love:
 - 1. takes us out of ourselves
 - 2. connects us to the heart of Jesus,
 - 3. The One who gave Himself unconditionally that others could be free.

8. RESPONDING OR INITIATING

- a. We are not capable of producing this love in our own strength or ability.
- b. There is a built-in weakness in our fleshly nature that must be challenged and put to death.
- c. 1 John 4: 19 We love Him because He first loved us
 - i. At first glance it is a wonderful declaration of God's loving plan
 - ii. The truth behind it.
 - 1. God is defining our human ability and capacity to love and showing us its limitations.
- d. We love because...
 - i. We love because God initiated love toward us.
 - ii. We respond to that love and love Him in return.
- e. We love because
 - i. someone else did the right thing.
 - ii. We respond with love when someone sends the right signals or gives the right message.
- f. At our best we are hopeless responders.
 - i. If someone approaches us that fits into our paradigm and wants to give us a hug, we feel the love.
 - ii. But if someone who does not smell like us and is covered in filth walks up to give us a hug,
 - 1. The old responder suddenly takes over, causing us to put the brakes on.
- g. Jesus highlighted this issue of conditional human love in His first teaching after calling His disciples,
 - i. Luke 6: 32 And if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.
 - ii. There is nothing unusual in loving those who respond correctly to us.
 - iii. But growth begins when we learn to love those who do not.
- h. In marriage:
 - i. we find ourselves responding and do not seem to see the limitations of this kind of behavior.
 - ii. Marriage is intended to be the amazing journey of two individuals with different needs and backgrounds becoming one.
 - iii. But many never reach this stage,
 - iv. Living as a responder leaves us at the mercy of the flesh,

- v. Flesh will never give in to the needs of others.
- vi. To make a marriage work there must be the injection of a love without selfish motive,
- vii. A love strong enough to bridge the gap between two people and bring them together as one.

9. GOD'S LOVE INITIATES

- a. 1 John 4: 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- b. God did not wait for us to respond to Him
- c. He initiated love toward us without any demand that we respond correctly.
- d. God's kind of love is:
 - i. Unmoved by the response of others as it is unconditional.
 - ii. It operates in full power.
 - iii. Its source is not connected to the fickle nature of flesh but to the unchangeable nature of God.
- e. For the sake of love, Jesus the Son, at the Father's request:
 - i. Willingly came to earth as a man,
 - ii. Knowing full well all that lay before Him.
 - iii. He dealt with the frailties of humanity
 - iv. He perfectly modeled the love and compassion of His Father.
 - v. He brought the rule of heaven to earth
 - vi. He demonstrated its power by:
 - 1. healing the sick,
 - 2. raising the dead,
 - 3. releasing freedom to the oppressed.
 - vii. On the cross He drank the full cup of the Father's wrath
 - viii. This paid the price for our sin.
 - ix. Because of love, Jesus stood between us and the punishment we deserved;
 - x. His death paid the debt we could never pay.
 - xi. But the grave could not hold Him.
 - xii. He, the righteous Son, had finished His assignment
 - xiii. the Spirit of the Father breathed resurrection life into His beloved Son.
- f. **Unconditional love always makes a way and pays the price for others to find freedom.**
 - i. God initiated love toward us, and we responded to that love.
 - ii. Our response was and is dependent on His initiation.
 - iii. As responders:
 - 1. most of our actions have some component of self.
 - 2. Our feeble attempts at unselfishness are all tinged with motives
 - a. Motives we hide beneath a veneer of spirituality,
 - b. only to be exposed when others do not respond as we had hoped.
 - iv. The idea of unselfish sacrifice requires:
 - 1. Death to self that challenges our tendency toward self-protection.
 - v. 1 John 4: 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
 - 1. How can we possibly love others in the same way He loved us?

- 2. How can we as humans learn to love one another unselfishly and sacrificially?
- vi. 1 John 3: 23 we are to ... love one another just as He commanded us.
- vii. To obey Scripture:
 - 1. We should become initiators of love.
 - 2. Taking on the divine attribute of unselfish, initiating love.
 - 3. It requires that we look honestly at ourselves and respond to others with the kind of grace we would like to receive.
- viii. **It must be given without any demand for correct response in return.**

10. LOVING OUR NEIGHBOR

- a. The greatest commandment:
 - i. One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to identify the greatest commandment.
 - ii. Matt. 22: 37-39 Jesus gave a two-fold answer. ...
 - 1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment.
 - 2. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
 - iii. Two parts which combine scriptural injunctions:
 - 1. Deuteronomy 6: 5
 - 2. Leviticus 19: 18.
 - iv. The whole law is fulfilled in this expression of love.
 - 1. We must:
 - a. love God with all our heart, soul, and mind.
 - b. We must love Him and be in love with Him,
 - c. caught up with Him and awed by His faithfulness.
 - d. Our minds are to be filled with the wonder of who He is
 - e. With the goodness and grace He extends toward us.
 - f. This is the first and greatest commandment, because
 - i. it is the fountain out of which all other aspects of our relationship with God and others flow.
 - g. If our love for God is correct, then our responses, affections and love toward others will follow.
 - 2. We are to, "love our neighbor as ourselves."
 - a. This second half is an extension of the first.
 - i. It is "like" the first, meaning that it is founded on it and flows naturally from it.
 - ii. This second commandment is of the same nature and of equal importance and validity as the command to love God.
 - b. This commandment to love our neighbor occurs eight times in scripture
 - c. It is one of the most repeated instruction
- b. Many seek to grow their relationship with God and pay little attention to their relationships with others.
 - i. We are commanded to do both.
 - ii. We can never fully love our neighbor without first loving God and accessing His love.
 - iii. Conversely, we cannot claim to love God and disregard our relationships with others.

- iv. Loving God and loving our neighbors are interconnected.
- v. We cannot do one without the other
- vi. Our relationship with God can be measured by the quality of our relationships with others.**
- vii. 1 John 4: 20 If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.
 - 1. The fulfillment of the call of God on our lives is dependent on:
 - a. how well we love God
 - b. how we maintain love in the relationships around us.
- c. All encompassing:
 - i. Everything God requires of us is in these two statements.
 - ii. They provide the framework for the whole of the Christian life.
 - iii. Everything Moses and the prophets spoke of and looked forward to begins with loving God and loving our neighbor.
 - iv. God's expressed love in Christ has the power to draw people:
 - 1. to love God
 - 2. to real love for one another.
 - v. It is the measure of Christian maturity.

11. WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

- a. Luke 10: 29: Jesus was asked the question, Who is my neighbor?,
 - i. He responded by telling the story of the Samaritan who helped a stranger in need by the roadside.
 - ii. In the parable the priest, the Levite and the Samaritan all saw the person in need,
 - iii. Only one stopped to help.
 - iv. It registered with all of them that there was a need,
 - v. When the Samaritan saw the man in need something happened in his heart.
 - vi. Jesus said that he felt compassion!
 - vii. What he saw caused him to feel compassion
 - viii. The compassion moved him to action.
- b. Sympathy verses compassion:
 - i. Sympathy simply identifies with the pain or emotion of a situation,
 - ii. Compassion is a powerful emotion that starts where sympathy leaves off.
 - iii. Compassion moves us from feeling to action.
 - iv. When we feel compassion there is the potential for divine intervention.
 - v. A miracle is just around the corner.

12. LOVE IN ACTION

- a. Compassion is the expression of God's love in us.
- b. A look at the life of Jesus.
 - i. In scripture many times compassion is directly connected to the release of the miraculous.
 - 1. Jesus felt compassion and raised the dead
 - 2. He felt compassion and healed the sick
 - 3. He felt compassion and cast out demons.

4. The love of the Father was released through compassion as Jesus brought the reality of heaven to earth.
- c. When Paul was being challenged by some of the believers in Corinth:
- i. He wrote back giving a defense of his apostleship,
 - ii. He also highlighted what he believed to be their fundamental problem.
 - iii. 2 Cor. 6: 12 You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.
 - iv. He was saying we do not hold you back; it is not the leaders' fault.
 - v. They were not restricted by anything Paul or his team was doing,
 - vi. They were restrained in their own affections.
 - vii. The word translated affections here is the same word translated compassion elsewhere.
 1. Paul was telling the church that their restraint was that they could not love properly.
 2. Their compassion was restrained and so the love of God that should have been expressed through them was held back,
 3. blocked and in need of a breakthrough.
 - viii. If they had let compassion flow:
 1. many of the issues they were facing would have simply disappeared.
- d. Nurturing and sustaining revival:
- i. If we are to see sustained revival,
 1. We must deal with any blockage in our affections that keep the compassion of Christ from flowing through us.
 - ii. A revival culture creates an environment in which people are compelled to love their neighbor in a practical way.
 - iii. They have come to understand that their neighbor is the next person they meet
 - iv. They are willing to trouble themselves to show them the love of God
 - v. They are actively looking for the opportunity to offer someone a divine encounter.
 - vi. Jesus ends the parable about the Samaritan with a command.
 1. Luke 10: 37 Go and do like the Samaritan.
 - vii. God is looking for a people:
 1. who are compelled by His love,
 2. who will choose to live unselfishly,
 3. carrying His powerful gospel of love to a world in desperate need of His touch.
 - viii. The Samaritan man in Jesus' parable:
 1. pushed past cultural norms to express love to his neighbor.
 2. His compassion crossed barriers and violated social norms.
 3. He chose to value a man that others had chosen to ignore.