

IT'S TIME FOR A REVOLUTION:

Judges 11:1-7 (ESV):

(1) Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah.

(2) And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."

(3) Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.

(4) After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel.

(5) And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob.

(6) And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader that we may fight against the Ammonites."

(7) But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"

Judges 11:11 (ESV):

(11) So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah.

Judges 11:32-33 (ESV):

(32) So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them, and the LORD gave them into his hand.

(33) And he struck them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a great blow. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.

Judges 12:7 (ESV):

(7) Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in his city in Gilead.

Introduction:

The prophetic isn't about the old,
but it IS about the new.

It isn't about comparing the old,
but it IS about heralding in the new.

It is not about what has gone,
but it IS about that which is coming.

It is about what we all know.

We know that God is trying to do something, but we are having trouble putting words to it.
It is the unsettled feeling you get in the pit of your stomach.

I am **inspired** by what is happening in some of the big churches and older movements everywhere. It's just that we should have been looking at them 20 years ago when God was saying "that" particular thing to the church. We are living in an age where we need to assume that nothing will ever be the same again.

The current models of church, of evangelism, and even of Christianity (**not of Christ**) are inherently brittle and inflexible. The old way seemed like building blocks.

We are a liquid generation. It is not a matter of re-engineering. It is a matter of building from Gods blueprint, an ark of salvation.

That's what Noah did.

Noah built something that no one had ever seen, because there was a threat coming that no one understood, from a source that no one could perceive.

The result was that he built a vehicle of salvation for an entire generation.

It is not those who can inflict the most, but those that can suffer the most who will conquer.

95% of Australians are going to Hell.
In the next 10 years;
100,000 churches will close in the United States of America alone.
4,000 new churches begin each year in the USA.
Over 7,000 churches will close.
In 1999, 10,000 churches across America reported not even one salvation in 12 months.

Let's call it as it is.

FAILURE

If we were a business we would be shut down.
If we were a football team, they would sell our franchise.

Yet it is the Church of the living God, so we tolerate it.

We perpetuate old models. We regurgitate old teaching.
We embrace another's programs mindlessly, as opposed to praying for God's revealed will for us.

After 200 years with the churches in Australia, only 5% of the population is born again.
After a history of Christian occupation, the church in America is being marginalized to that of an obsolete philosophy.

You either get change from the top, or revolution from the bottom.

Trotsky:

"The masses go into a revolution, not with a prepared plan of social reconstruction, but with a sharp feeling they cannot endure the old regime".

Nelson Mandela:

"One of the most difficult things is not so much to change society, but to change ourselves".

I personally don't think we will be the generation of leaders who will usher in the second coming of Jesus.

But I do think we are the generation called to build the platform for the return of Christ.

I believe that we are called to prepare and raise the generation that may very well usher in His return. It might sound the same, but the differences are subtle and powerful.

One perspective is about me, the other is not.

One is about what I will do; the other is about helping them do what they must do.

We must be passionate enough to look beyond ourselves.

We must build something with a long range view that will bring changes to society that will be able to change our world.

What I believe we should do is build an organization with a National and International influence to give our children in 20 or 30 years time, so that they will be able to do what they are called to do.

I don't want to build my thing, but lay the foundation for theirs.

Let's get busy building something that will last more than 30-50 years.

Let us build the kingdom of God and leave a legacy for the ones to come after us.

You see a Commitment to Revolution is a Commitment for a Lifetime.

It is not a crusade.

It is a commitment, a desire, a passion to bring changes to the nation.

If we really want to cause changes then we need to have a view of longevity.

I must take **me** out of the equation if I am to build this for my children's children.

It moves the emphasis from the spectacular and puts it on to the significant.

It puts me in the background, not the forefront.

We must be hearing the voice of God, and not the affirmations of men.

In order for this to be a success, I must have it settled in my heart that I am called to build something that will change my world. I must take my eyes off myself and put them onto Jesus.

In a culture that is society driven-

My self gratification and prominence and the cult of success of the individual, we seem to have forgotten that Jesus never saw the Church, and never saw "his vision" fulfilled as we now know and interpret it.

He laid a foundation for a revolution. He poured His life into just twelve men.

He put the entire history of humanity into the hearts of these men and equipped them to do it.

He did that and He died, *without* seeing the results.
He knew it prophetically; He just never saw it physically

Are you prepared to die and not see it?

Are you prepared to pour yourself into this house, this vision, and the call to a reformation in our life time?

Are you prepared to live with the intent of leaving a legacy that goes beyond who you are?

Are you prepared to write yourself out of selfish ambition in order to ensure a dynasty beyond personal destiny?

Understanding that this time and hour is not about personal prominence, but individual significance.

It is not about equal giving, but equal sacrifice.

Maybe you will have to commit to living debt free.

Maybe it will cost you the third car, the sixth bedroom, cable for a year, and four hours a week in service.

Maybe it will cost you your insecurity as you share your faith

An extra 20 minutes of sleeping in, as you rise and read your word and pray for your church.

John Basse:

"Not many people will vote with their whole lives--give their days and nights, their money and influence, to a single cause. But those who do will have a disproportionate impact on society, as one would expect from their investment of energy and conviction, as compared with the lukewarm or diffident commitment of others. That is why intense minorities often prevail over lackadaisical majorities in a democracy."

Why use the term Christian Revolution, and not Revival?

The word “revival” is not a Biblical word.

The word meaning “to recover” is translated as revival in the New King James (Ezra 9:8).

The word “refreshing” is translated as revival in the Weymouth translation.

What some have come to look upon as revival in the modern church, was in fact revolution in the early church. To revolt, to recover, and to refresh that which was lost.

Unfortunately, the term revival has come to represent the desires of a particular group of Christians, who want to hop from meeting to meeting, looking for a spiritual high instead of changing the world they live in for good and for God.

Let’s not use a term that has lost its meaning; let’s use a term that is closer to the term used by the original men, their mandate, and their outcome.

Acts 16:20-

(20) And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city.

Acts 17:6-

(6) And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also,

Ladies and gentlemen, Bible revival *is* modern revolution.

It *is* turning your world upside down!

It is a generation of Christians who live out revolutionary love every day of their lives with a passionate desire to bring a living Jesus to a dying world.

God’s command to us:

Jesus, in Mark 12, said that in this revolution you must love God with everything and love you neighbor with the same passionate goodwill and fervent desire that you love yourself.

The Christian Revolution is a revolution of passion, intimacy and love. The Christian Revolutionary love is to live, and live to love. For them, God is their life, and their mission is to reconnect a dying and desperate humanity with Him.

This isn't a soft love, this isn't a romantic love. This is a love, as John the Baptist said, that baptizes you with Spirit and fire.

It is a not a contained love, it is a boundless love.

It is not a love of restrictions, regulations, excuses and cop outs.

It is a revolution of YES

A Christian Revolutionary is engaged in an unfettered passionate love affair with his God all his days.

The world needs to see that this God that we say is so great, this God that we say that we love, is so wonderful that we do more than lay down our lives for Him, but that we will LIVE for HIM DAILY!

Brennan Manning was so right when he said:

"The single greatest cause of atheism today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, then walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyles. That is what an unbelieving world finds unbelievable".

To be martyred at 16 for the cause of Christ is easy compared to living 80 years as a martyr for the cause of Christ.

Daily taking up your cross.

Daily living out your faith.

Your everything:

Deuteronomy 6:5-6 (ESV):

(5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

(6) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

In Deuteronomy 6:5-6, God commanded the children of Israel to love Him with all their hearts, soul and strength.

That is all that He wanted,
He wanted their undivided attention and affection, and in return He would be their God and they would be His people.
Their passion for Him and commitment to His kingdom would be a sign to the peoples of the world that He was the one and true God.

Now think about this....

There passion for Him and commitment to His kingdom would be a sign to the peoples of the world that He was the one and true God.

A Christian revolutionary;

Gives their heart; that is his seat of courage, his emotions, and his determination.

Gives their soul; that is his appetites, his passion, his individuality, his desires, and his very living being.

Gives their strength; which is his force, his exceeding might.

Stongs defines this word for strength as his "*much muchness.*"

They that love God gives their everything, they do not hold back, they are solely and utterly committed with not way out.

The gospel in the 21st Century:

We have refined and sanitized the call to serve Christ.
On altars, in books, and on CETV we have watered it down to a personal enhancement, not participating in a revolutionary cause.

It goes something like this:

Jesus died and rose again so you can be healthy and wealthy all of your days. You can have endless comfort and convenience.

All you have to do is walk down the front here, or pick up the phone, and you will be saved from hellfire.

There is nothing revolutionary in that!

According to this, you sit around and live a comfortable life, and then you disappear to heaven and everything is dandy.

Civilized Christianity claims to have some sort of group package negotiated with God. It is always the premium package.

The get rich, be safe, get well;

Nobody has to be crucified upside down like Peter, nobody has to be eaten by vultures like Thomas, and nobody has to be stoned to death like Stephen package.

A life without risk is a life without faith.

And a life without faith is a life that does not please God.

The tragedy of our day:

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of modern Christianity is that so many people, who once declared their passionate and undying love for the Lord Jesus Christ, have allowed themselves to become domesticated, sanitized and civilized in their faith.

They have lost the passion, and unquestioning devotion of their early love; they have lost the simplicity of a raw, unfitted and untamed faith. The faith that would allow them to move the mountains of insecurity and fear to share the truth of Christ.

The faith that would allow them to give themselves unreservedly to the things of God.

Jesus was not a fan of this thing called Conservative Christianity or Cultural Religion.

His nickname for the Pharisees and Sadducees;

(Those careful, balanced, acceptable religious leaders of His day, the stars of the religious scene, the pinnacle of the religious elite.)

It was “**brood of vipers**”!

The fire and brimstone message of both Christ and John the Baptist, was never directed at sinners in search of their God, but at leaders who had forgotten their God.

Their sermons were aimed at the hard hearted, civilized temple goers, who had sold their soul for acceptability and prostituted their love on the altar of conformity.

He was a revolutionary in the midst of a domesticated people.

A people who had forgotten their first love and the commitment to love their God with their EVERYTHING!

It made Him sick!

The call of Christ:

The call that Christ made to you, made to HIS twelve, was not a call of comfort or conformity.

It was a simple call to “come, follow me”.

To live in this world, but not of this world.

To be driven and committed to something beyond what you see and what you touch.

To be committed to something beyond yourself.

Committed to an eternal kingdom with an eternal goal.

In his book “The Barbarian Way”, Erwin McManus makes reference to Matthew 10:16.

Matthew 10:16(ESV):

(16) "Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves".

He says:

“One of the dangers of a civilized faith is that we become so domesticated; we begin to live as shrewd as the dove. We are blind to the spiritual nature of life and the unseen reality in which we reside.

Another danger is that we become as innocent as snakes. For far too long, sincere followers of Christ have had to live with the consequences of those who use religion to manipulate others and camouflage hypocrisy. Jesus made clear to those who were choosing to be HIS disciples what kind of leader He was and what kind of follower he would require”.

When Jesus asked Peter, “*who do they say I am*”, Peter answered “*The Christ*”.

Jesus went on and very clearly told him the sort of qualifications and attributes a follower of Christ must have.

Luke 9:23-26 (ESV):

(23) And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

(24) For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

(25) For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?

It was the commitment and dedication of a revolutionary, not a member of the religious convenience and comfort crowd:

The Hall of Hero's in Hebrews 11 is divided into two parts, those we know by name and fame because of their successful exploits, and the others.

Hebrews 11:36-38 (ESV):

(36) Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment.

(37) They were stoned, they were sawn in two, and they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated--

(38) Of whom the world was not worthy--wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

Civilized or domestic fame driven Christians look at the list and say, "I don't want to be an OTHER, they are the losers of faith, not the heroes".

Yet that is not the bible view, or the view of the apostle, or indeed of Christ.

How cruel it is!

How foolish it is to look at a life and weigh it in terms of possessions or status!

These people lived untamed lives for the King who loved them. They gave there much, muchness! Their heart, mind, and their strength.

They gave everything to the Kingdom they were part of, and a King who first loved them.

What if we lived that way?

What if instead of trying to second guess each other, or second guess God, we just gave our whole heart to this one thing and labored together. Fully loving, fully giving, fully serving each other, and just sold out for the possibility of changing our world?

What if we just decided we would do this till we died, and never regret, never retreat, and never surrender?

All of the people in Hebrews 11 were there because they were examples to us of passionate people living passionately for their God.

Your passion for Christ is not a vocational issue, but a salvation issue.

Your calling is your vocation; your passion should be because of your salvation.

I am not passionate because I am a preacher or run a business. I am passionate because He loves and I have a revelation on the inside of me.

A revelation that:

Our world has One Chance.

Our World has One Savior.

We need men and women of an uncluttered faith.

Revolutionaries in all walks of life.

They may not fit in with the religious crowd.

They may not run with the popular crown.

But heaven watches and waits for a generation to arise that will usher in a Revolution of Love.

A generation who will make a stand, and let their God reign regardless of situation or circumstances.

And this brings us to the life of Jephthah:

The life of Jephthah:

Judges 11:1-7 (ESV):

*(1) Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah.
(2) And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."*

Jephthah wasn't a man with a pretty pedigree.

He was the result of a sexual encounter between his father and a prostitute.

His father took him into his house and raised him as his own, he was the eldest son, yet he was despised and rejected by the other members of his family.

Gilead's wife was to have sons of her own, and she came to hate the young man, and raised her boys to do the same.

He grew up a fighter, the first thing we know about him is that he had a reputation as a warrior.

He was a hard man.

He had to fight all of his life because of the circumstances of his birth, probably at home and probably in the community.

Israel at the time:

Israel was away from God at this time.

They had forgotten their first love.

They were actively engaged in the worship of foreign gods, worship and sacrifice to Baal, yet they were enjoying a time of prosperity and relative peace.

God out of His love and mercy was giving them room to repent, room to get right, and they took this grace as license to continue in their god-less actions and lifestyles.

They thought that their lifestyle would go unchecked.

That God could and would be mocked.

(3) Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.

Jephthah's family hated him.

Probably following the urging of the family, (they must have had influence), the elders and the religious leaders of the community drove Jephthah out of the country and out into the wilderness.

And like David after him, the rejected, the worthless men gathered around him. This hardened warrior forged an army with the rejects of his nation, and began raiding in the towns, cities and territories of the enemies of Israel.

His people may have forgotten him, but he did not forget his people.

His people may have forgotten who their enemies were, but Jephthah and his men did not.

(4) After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel.

(5) And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob.

God would not be mocked.
He brought judgment on the children of Israel for their sin and rebellion.
They had become soft as a nation
They had given their hearts to other gods.
And now, they were in a desperate situation.
They had become soft and they didn't have a warrior leader, a revolutionary among them.

They needed a hard man to lead them.
They needed someone to lead them.
Someone who had dedicated their life to preparedness.
Someone who had given their being to preparing to fight.
So they sort out a warrior
They could not find one among the temple crowd.
They could not find one among the religious elite.
They could not find one in the soft and safe places.

They went looking for a warrior.

Someone who had not forgotten his passion for God and God's people, they went to the wilderness.
The wilderness isn't a place, it is an attitude.
It is a place in the soul of a revolutionary.
It is a place that is free from conformity and social niceties.
It is a place of abandonment to the elements of your faith and to the love of your God and the mission he has given you

(6) And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader that we may fight against the Ammonites."

(7) But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"

We live in times where the comfortable and the conservative are not going to be the catalysts for change.
We live in times where the pious and the placated are not going to have the answers that the world is looking for.

Right now our world, our nation;
The Church of Jesus Christ is looking for answers, but it is looking in
all the wrong places.

In times of peace, a nation or a people who have no use for history,
have no use for warriors.
If a people are too successful for too long, they become lazy and
sloppy. They take pride in the accomplishments, not in the
preparedness.

Times of peace and prosperity are not times to relax, they are times
to prepare.
If I am in a fight, that I know is not over, even if I know victory in this
round, it just gives me a little breathing room for the next round.
The church was never called to relax, it was called to stay sharp
focused and labor till the mission was accomplished.

Unfortunately, like those in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, with
building the temple, we got half way through the job and forgot the
mission. We stopped building God's house, and started to build our
own.
God prospered the people so they could complete the work, not so
they could forget the work.
God prospered the church in the west for the same reason,
But those times are over.

The need is great.

The world and the church are looking for a different sort of person.
They are looking for a band of warriors.
They are looking for people who have trod a difficult path.

Those who chose a difficult road and know the pain of defeat and
rejection, as well as the sound of victory.
They are looking for the warriors like Jephthah.

You see revolutionaries can be counted as worthless and not
necessary in times of peace and security. In times of war, in times
when change and reformation need to take place, suddenly they are
the ones that are sought.

Those that were previously despised, become invaluable.
We live in such times.

I believe the church at large, not the church specific, has become soft and complacent.

She does not yet know it, but the church is looking for the Jephthah's, the warrior's who are trained and hardened, to lead her again to victory.

6 Lessons from the life of Jephthah:

1.) Many great things arise out of rejection.

Are you prepared to get past your past, and prepare in your present for your future?

Just because someone told you were of no value, doesn't make you of no value.

Both my grandfathers encouraged my parents to have an abortion when they found out my mother was pregnant with me.

They saw no value in my life, but my parents saw different. God knew different, and I am living my life as a life redeemed.

What the enemy meant for evil, God has used for good.

2.) Jephthah was big enough to get past his personal issues to the need of the nation.

Jephthah could have quite easily remained bitter and useless to himself, and his people.

He chose not to.
Get BIG People!

In sight of eternal issues, it just doesn't really matter.

3.) Jephthah prepared while others slept.

His passion for the kingdom was greater than his personal comfort.

4.) He built leaders and prepared for war.

When no one else saw it as necessary, he did.

We are actively raising an army of Christian leaders in a time of peace.

An army to bring a living Jesus to a dying world

5.) Jephthah prepared himself today for what may or may not be needed tomorrow.

Are you prepared to equip your self for the times ahead?

To train as if the need is now?

We have to get ready church.

We have to give our life to this thing.

We have to prepare now for the need, not wait for the need.

We need to be starting our business to fund the kingdom.

We need to be giving our time, talent and treasure to the things of God.

We need to be studying.

Preparing.

Getting our degrees.

Getting ourselves equipped and trained.

Starting our business.

6.) Jephthah took on a role of leadership after the victory.

He took responsibility to ensure longevity.

20 years from now is our starting point...all we are doing is preparing!