

## The Preacher and the Revival.

BY BENJAMIN M. ADAMS.

What is a revival? Webster defines the word thus: "Renewed interest in religion after indifference and decline; a period of religious awakening; special religious interest." This is a good definition of revival, as generally understood, implying a state of torpor in the church, from which it is desirable it should be aroused; it also carries with it the thought of decline and return to the old condition—a fact we are often quite too careless about. We commonly put certain things with this stirring up of the church, such as the conversion of sinners and the establishment of the church on a working basis for future success.

The New Testament idea is much the same. After Pentecost, "the Lord added to the church such as were saved," and a constant accretion of force, with no decline of zeal in the church. We grant declines have occurred in all ages, but are declines necessary? After revival, reaction. Is it necessary? The real revival does not react. "His fruit shall remain."

It is a fact that the revivals of today, in many cases, have not benefited the Church or community, for the reason that converts are on the plane of the church and minister where or under whose instrumentality they have been brought in. John Todd, of Pittsfield, says: "I have felt, to have conversions and have the converts come in and set out in the Christian life on the plane where we were would be no gain, and no strength; and we might pass through a revival of religion and come out actually weaker than when we began." Speaking again of the "protracted meeting" plan of revival he says: "There are very many who would catch quick, and be off in a whirl of excitement. It is so much easier to have a 'protracted meeting,' and rouse up and make a noise, and then go to sleep again, then to repent and live out religion. Just as some families would prefer having a great bee once a year and have all the neighbors in to doing the work themselves." Josiah Strong says: "Our churches are growing, our missionary operations extending, our benefactions swelling, and we congratulate ourselves upon our progress; but we have only to continue making the same kind of progress long enough, and our destruction is sure."

It seems to me that the Bible idea of revival is a quickening of religious life in the church, if there be a church; a marshaling of forces for steady aggressive work in all departments of the same, a converting power always present, and the whole machinery of the church working for the salvation of souls.

In this movement the preacher holds the chief place. He is the revival, the center of influence. He is what the boiler is to the engine; he sets things going and controls motions. Whatever of gain there is in the church he gets the credit of it, and equally, in case of failure, the blame. The Bible carries the same idea. The preacher is the revival, the power producer. The messages to the seven churches are addressed to the "angels" or preachers. Paul to Timothy says: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Revival or no revival is settled by the preacher. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again, bringing his sheaves with him."

A preacher can always have a revival when he really wants it. God hears prayer and honors faith. God helps men who work with Him. A preacher can always have a revival when he really wants it, for then he will use the means to bring it to pass. He will ask God for himself, not merely as the pardoner of his sins, the sanctifier of his nature, and the empowerer of his ministry, but the endowment that gives power over devils and men. He will stop at nothing so he can win his victory. We see many holy men who have no revivals; the reasons are not hard to find. They do not start far enough back, or go far enough forward. The first victory must be won over the vast invisible forces against us. Back of all worldliness, indifference, and torpor in the church; back of all the infernalities outside the church, lies that vast power the Bible tells of, and which must be met and conquered ere the revival will come in power. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

As Jesus after He was baptized with the Holy Ghost went immediately into the wilderness, met Satan, and conquered him first, then went in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, so the preacher must first conquer in the in-

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visible battle these terrible forces outside and in. Any man who has in his boyhood wrestled such knows well that the grapple reveals every weak place in him; so in this wrestle with the powers of evil in the holy seclusion of the closet will Satan show every weak place in the soul; and more, when that battle is once fought to a finish, he will find the rest easy. Satan vanquished, the victory is already won. The preacher must not shrink that encounter. If he is ignorant of it, his experience is too shallow for a man with a message. If he ignores it, and makes the mere machinery of the revival his study, he may seem to do something, but the work will not abide; or if he tries to satisfy himself with going through the annual motions, with no real grapple with these unseen forces, he will never know the revival, the times, the Bible and God call for. No preacher by taking thought "can add a cubit to his stature," he may walk on stilts or increase the thickness of his boot-soles, but growth and real spirituality come from normal processes. No man can generate the revival power without the revival spirit. It is a great mistake to suppose a preacher can preach a revival sermon merely because the time has arrived when revival efforts are due, as the "Week of Prayer." There must be something far greater than this. Preachers are weak or woe to those who hear them, "a savor of life unto life or death unto death." To make rich they must be rich in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Howell, the novelist, says of preachers: "You can't preach cream and live on skim-milk."

A preacher can always have a revival when he really wants it. God is not intermittent. There can be no variation in the work of the Holy Spirit on the souls of men. With Him is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Jesus said of the Holy Ghost: "When He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." God is always ready. "Ask, and it shall be given you;" "Every one that asketh receiveth;" "Draw nigh unto Me, and I will draw nigh unto you;" "Ye shall seek for Me, and find Me when ye shall seek Me with all your heart." God cannot be intermittent. We may count on the forces of nature, gravitation, electricity, etc.; so we may on the Maker of all things. He is always ready.

Let us see what there is on the human side for us. There are some things always working for a sinner's conversion.

1. *The Holy Spirit is always striving with a sinner.* "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." The Holy Spirit is the foremost instrumentality, constantly working, always ahead of us, and unceasing in His efforts to save souls.

2. *The sinner's own judgment.* This is always on the side of God, though He rarely acknowledges it. The worst man has one thing always condemning his wrong-doing and commending the right. We may reckon on this force inside to be steadily for the salvation of the soul; deadened often, doing little, it may be, but at times terrible in its condemnation of the sinner's life.

3. *Human instrumentality.* If this third force kept pace with the other two, the wonder would not be that a man is converted, so much as that he is not. There are two things more discussed by all people in our land than any others—politics and religion; yet it is a fact that people who believe in the conversion of sinners, and human instrumentality to that end, hesitate about discussing religious topics with non-religious people, and only in rare cases with those of like faith with themselves. Here is a great mistake.

When this trinity of forces is brought to bear on a sinner he has only one resisting power, namely, his will. Granted, the will often impinges on a variety of facts, but the determining power is the will. With these great forces working for his salvation the likelihood is the man will be saved. It will be a wonder if he is not. The conditions of revival are few. On the part of the preacher there are two. In a paper on revivals, read before the New York Preachers' Meeting some years ago, the speaker set down a large number of conditioning facts as necessary to be met before the revival could be expected. George Woodruff rose and said in his peculiar way: "Mr. President, I despair of ever seeing a revival in any church, sir; the conditioning facts are too many for a revival in my church is impossible, sir." The conditioning facts are two:

1. *A burning love of men.* Preachers must love men; long for their salvation with a desire that shall be quenchless. They must not count

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their lives even dear unto themselves. In this day we need preachers who feel the necessity of saving souls, not as an incident in their ministry, but as the business of their lives; men who burn to save souls. The greatest man who ever lived was Moses. Had Napoleon Bonaparte had a moral character he might have come somewhere near him, but Moses stands at the head of the race, and the greatest thing he ever did was when he offered to be blotted out for the sake of his people, and Paul, who ranks up near Moses, stamps himself with imperishable nobility when he could wish himself accursed from God for his brethren's sake. "When there is this burning love for men the preacher becomes inventive, and all methods will have force born of the conquering power of love.

2. *Knowledge of the secret of God.* There is wonderful meaning in such words as, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him;" "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty;" "Secret things belong unto God." Somewhere and somehow the preacher must get where he shall know God and the secret of saving men. In my early ministry I made great effort to find out about this. Among others I interviewed was James Caughey, just after his return from England, where many thousand souls had been converted through his instrumentality—among them General Booth, of the Salvation Army. Mr. Caughey was very kind to me, answered my questions, but somehow did not tell me what I wanted to hear.

"What is the power by which you have saved so many?"

He said, "Brother Adams, it is a secret that none but God can show you."

He kindly prayed with and for me, and I left him determined to know, if possible, what this secret was. Not long after I saw Bishop Simpson, who had wonderful power over great men. After telling me his experience of full salvation, he went on to say:

"There was a time when I sought God for power to move and save men; I felt He heard and answered me, in some degree at least."

Bishop James said to me: "God gives ministers power to save men. It is His secret that any minister may know. If I had my way I'd stay out of heaven a hundred years to save one more soul."

Mrs. Phoebe Palmer said: "After I had been sanctified, I earnestly sought God for power to save souls, and He came upon me, and since then it has been in my soul as a flame of fire."

It is not needful to multiply such sayings as these. There has never been a great soul-saver of whom I have knowledge who has not somewhere and somehow had this experience.

Bishop William Taylor says: "God furnishes all kinds of power for man's use: water-power, wind-power, steam-power, electric-power, gravitation, and also for the highest work man has to do in the world, the power of the Holy Ghost." He who will may. God will tell His secret to the man who seeks it. In these two things lies the qualification for revival, a burning love for men and knowledge of the secret of God.

Let us for a moment look at our difficulties. They are mainly in ourselves, but we need not be discouraged, for if we have the qualities named they will surely disappear. I knew a young preacher who said, in a dreadfully cold, dead church, "I will lay my bones here but what I will see a revival. One of the old stewards came to him and said: 'I think, brother, the stewards will have to bury you.' Less than three months after, when the seekers were two deep all around the altar, the same old steward came to him and said: 'The funeral is postponed, you want have to die here.' Revivals don't often kill ministers. Our difficulties are mainly:

1. *Satisfaction with things as they are.* We are too easily satisfied, too apt to talk of the good work we have done. While the Church is below the Bible grade we have nothing on which to base satisfaction. We hear men say: "What is the use of all this ado? Is not the church paying its expenses, and the congregation large, and the preacher popular?" Alas, it is to be feared that the average steward and trustee of the church is perfectly satisfied if the pews are full and the expenses met. Ought this to satisfy us? Nothing less than the salvation of souls all the time in the church can approximate satisfaction in a preacher who has a message for men. We must "forget the things that are behind, and reach forth" to every possibility promised in the word of God.

2. *Skepticism as to certain great truths of the Bible.* A man may vary somewhat from the orthodox standards here and there, but certain great fundamental truths admit of no variation

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The divinity of Christ, the freeness of salvation, the fullness of Christ to save from all sin, the resurrection, heaven, and hell—these admit of no doubt: Dr. D. Steele says with great force: "The Holy Spirit is the conservator of orthodoxy." Fire is a wonderful preserver. A soul happy in the Lord Jesus is pretty safe as to his soundness. knows the secret of God is safe from the awful chill with which the world seems so full in these days.

3. *Our own love of ease and care of self.* If we are going to be revival men of the true sort, we must trample every easy-going thought under foot. A real revival is impossible to an ease-loving, selfish man. Such men do sometimes rouse up and have what are called revivals, and sail into a momentary prominence on account thereof. They have their reward, but the revival leaves very little trace after a year, save in the increased hardness of the people.

To save men self must go to the wall: yes, be masoned in and die; better than this, be nailed to the cross, "crucified with Christ." Not by ease and comfort, not good salaries, position; not doing the things easiest to me; souls. If a man has a burning love for men, and knows the secret of God, he is like the earth swinging round the sun. He is never still, always going, and always in order. Meteors may strike him. He may shift his place; may be in eclipse; earthquakes may shake and rend him; but he goes where God wants him, bears the burden of men, and God holds him up. Self goes out in the high control of the Sun of righteousness. He revives in his personality the lost art of self-denial, which Dr. Mark Hopkins says, "needs to be freshened and revived in the church." The value of one soul is enough to stir us to our utmost possibility. Lyman Beecher says: "I watched with the utmost care for the first sign of conviction in my congregation, and when I saw it, followed it up carefully until that soul was saved, then set him at work to save others." Let us be content to give ourselves no rest, but begin where Jesus began, with one—the woman of Samaria, and where Paul began in Philippi, with one, and keeps souls under pressure until we "save some."

Finally, *Revival is the imperative necessity.* A great and good man said to me lately: "Adams, a revival is the only salvation of the Methodist Episcopal Church," and I believe it. We are not Presbyterians, Episcopalians or any thing else but Methodists, and we must run on Methodist lines, or not at all. Methodism is an incarnated revival or it is nothing. We shall stagnate and die without this great movement for the souls of men. The Church will die out of the earth and Satan win unless this comes to pass. A burning love for men, and a knowledge of the secret of God, will surely bring it to pass.—*Chris. Advocate.*

### Sacred Money.

REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

In looking over the papers of my beloved and departed mother—who died five years ago, at the age of eighty-five—I discovered the account-book which contained the expenses of my early boyhood. If it requires financial ability to manage a large estate, it requires still more to eke out a scanty income and make both ends meet. In the list of frugal expenditures made by that widowed mother for an only boy, there was recorded on almost every page the words, "Sacred Money." This was sometimes bestowed in making him a life member of the American Tract Society, or the Home Missionary Society, or some other Christian organization. There was also a stout, large envelope which bore the same label, "Sacred Money." Into that enveloped the good woman was wont to put a certain portion of her very limited income, as soon as it came into her hands. When the money was once placed in that wallet, the Lord was sure to get His own. Come what might, no demand of luxury or of necessity was allowed to "rob God" of what had been consecrated to His service.

My only apology for this peep of the public eye into a bit of private history, is that it reveals the only sure and successful method of practicing systematic beneficence. It fulfills the apostolic rule of "laying by in store" a fixed sum for Christian charity, and then gives conscience the key. To touch a dime of that sacred money for any mere secular use, would have been in that godly matron's eye as egregious a theft as the picking of a neighbor's pocket. That lesson in systematic beneficence has lasted me all my life, and I most earnestly commend it to every Christian parent. Every child should be reared with the firm persuasion that if they give their heart to Christ, they at the same time give to Him not only their influence, but a

**K. D. C. Co., New Glasgow, N. S.**

certain reasonable share of their substance. If God's day is held sacred and God's house is sacred, so should the money that fairly belongs to Him be held sacred likewise. There is no hap-hazard about this method. The money thus put away and labeled is to be out of the reach of selfishness, and religiously parceled off for the various objects of benevolence, as good judgment directs. Suppose that this system were adopted and practiced in every Christian family, what a revolution it would work! Giving would be regarded as an act of divine worship. And the money thus consecrated in advance would be an element in the Sabbath service, and the pastor might fittingly (as some pastors now do) come down from his pulpit and invoke a special blessing on the offerings thus presented cheerfully to the Lord. This system thoroughly carried out would make the contributions of each church not a widely fluctuating, but a fixed and reliable sum from year to year. The great boards of benevolence could fairly determine their outlay, because they would know their probable income. The curse and stigma of debt would be avoided. The secretaries and directors of our church schemes would no longer be kept awake at night by the terrible spectre of "deficiency." The Lord would get His own, and His church would get the blessing. All the glorious result would follow if in every Christian house there was a box, or a bank-book, or a wallet, or some other safe receptacle that bore the inscription, "Sacred Money."

In many families the sum thus consecrated might be very small. But gifts to the Lord are to be weighed rather than counted. The two mites of the "poor widow" outweighed the shekels of gold or silver cast by the jeweled fingers into the Lord's treasury. Drops make the rivulets fill the broad lakes. Nine-tenths of all the money that drives the financial machineries of Christ's Church, comes from relatively small sums. Where there is one munificent James Lenox, or Mr. Fayerweather, or Mrs. R. L. Stuart, there are ten thousand humbler stewards, whose "sacred money" is to be reckoned by dollars and not by hundreds or thousands.

Sometimes small donations yield large results. This reminds me of a pretty incident that I may venture to narrate, since it is not likely to meet the eye of the person referred to. When my Brooklyn church, in the days of its infancy, was building the present sanctuary, they ran ashore for funds. The Civil War had just broken out, and almost every new church enterprise came to a standstill. On a certain Sabbath I made a fervent appeal for help, and a visitor from New York heard the appeal, and went home and spoke of it at his boarding-house table. At the table was a bright young lady, who taught in a school and sustained her widowed mother out of her small salary. I had over-rendered the young lady some trifling service, which I had quite forgotten, but she had not. The next day she came over to Brooklyn and told me how badly she felt that my church was in such straits. She was not a Christian, and had never given anything to any religious object, but she felt desirous to contribute "her mite," and slipped into my hand a bit of paper containing some coin, which I put into my pocket with a word of sincere thanks. After she had gone I opened the paper, and found that it contained a fifty-dollar California gold piece! I immediately sent her word that she must take it back, for I knew that she could not afford to give such a sum. But she wrote me that this, "the first gift she had ever made for a religious purpose, had already afforded her such delight, she would never allow it to be returned." The next Sabbath I told the story of the gold piece, and it fired the congregation with fresh enthusiasm and brought in such contributions of funds as tided us over into deeper waters. The young lady herself determined to follow up her gift by coming clear over to our chapel every Sabbath, and was soon converted, and became a happy member of Christ's flock.

When the orphan girl married a bright young man of fine promise, my family were happy to give them a wedding and launch them in good style on their matrimonial career. Their two children are winning high honors at two great colleges, and they are prominent members of a church in C—Verily that orphan girl's gold piece was "sacred money," and it yielded a grand "dividend." I have told the story of that coin in more than one place where money was being raised under difficulties, and I should not wonder if it were to go on and accumulate still more at compound interest. The Lord's treasury is a wonderful institution; it makes mites turn to millions, it pays magnificent dividends in this world, and its "sacred money" becomes precious treasures in heaven.

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### The Remedy.

A gentleman, while gathering cucumbers in his garden, near Oil City, Pennsylvania, was bitten on the end of the finger by a copperhead, one of the most poisonous of all American serpents. He killed the snake, then with his penknife promptly cut off the finger at the second joint, had the wound dressed, and is reported as doing well. This was heroic treatment, but it was doubtless the best that could be employed.

If we could get rid of the poison of the Old Serpent by cutting off a finger, or even by plucking out an eye, we would doubtless be willing to submit to the painful operation to escape endless death. But since the blood of Christ is a complete remedy for the poison of sin, and its benefits can be obtained by "looking unto Jesus," how wonderful is man's moral perversity that he will not "look and live!"—*United Presbyterian.*

## A SCROFULOUS BOY

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