

PREACH A VITAL GOSPEL

G. W. Ridout

John Wesley was a great soul-winner. He was never content unless he was evangelizing. Asked one day in a conference to give his present, up-to-date experience he expressed it in the language of the hymn:

"Jesus, confirm my heart's desire

To work and speak and think for Thee;

Still let me guard the holy fire

And still stir up Thy gift in me!"

Early in my ministry I learned that to be an effective minister of the Gospel I must experience and enjoy the baptism with the Spirit. Thank God, on the very threshold of my ministry I sought and received this great blessing, and I could never rest content after that until I saw things happening among my churches and people.

When in England last May, I spent some wonderful days at Cliff College and enjoyed fellowship with that saintly and apostolical man of England, Dr. Samuel Chadwick. Reading recently from his writing, I learned that when he received his Pentecost he said: "I felt I had received a new faculty of understanding. Every power was alert. My bodily powers also were quickened. There was a new sense of spring and vitality, a new power of endurance and strong man's exhilaration in big things. Things began to happen. What we had failed to do by strenuous endeavor came to pass without labor. It was gloriously wonderful."

The first revival God ever gave me was before I entered the ministry. I was in business at a point where no preacher appeared except once in six weeks. Too bad, I thought, not to have any meetings except when the preacher came. We resolved to hold Sunday meetings in an upstairs room over the store. The Lord blessed those simple meetings in such a way that when fall came a revival broke in which nearly the whole community sought God. I shall never forget that meeting. One peculiar thing about the revival was that the hymn sung as we opened the altar service night after night was: "I'm going home to die no more." Obviously it was not exactly an invitation song; nevertheless, it did the work and, as the people sang, mourners came forward.

In one of our revivals in China the meetings were attended by many Chinese preachers and Bible women. Many of the preachers did not attempt revivals themselves; they had no sympathy with evangelism. As the meetings advanced the fire began to burn and of course certain tides of emotion set in; God was honoring the meetings. One day I received a letter from the ministers' meeting commending my sermons but asking me to be less emotional. The next day they rescinded the motion and regretted they made such a request. We took no notice of it but kept on preaching and evangelizing. Among those saved at that meeting was one of the teachers who had lost her faith; another convert was a governor's daughter. About forty were received into church membership, and some of the preachers received a new vision and went back to their churches to preach a vital Gospel and seek the salvation of souls. In that meeting a missionary got a new vision and became a real soul-winner. After that he saw sinners converted to God.

Many years ago wife and I held a meeting in a certain mining town in Pennsylvania. Towards the close of the meeting, on a Sunday night, a woman came to the meeting attired more for the movies or the dance than for a revival meeting. The Spirit came upon us in the preaching and when we called for seekers among those

who came was this worldly woman. She was a great sinner. Some of the members had been strangely led to specially pray for her, and it was in answer to these prayers she came to church that night. When she fell at the altar some who know her surrounded her and prayed desperately for her. They did not spare her but urged her to confess and repent of her sins. She was at the altar until after ten o'clock, when light broke in upon her and she was converted. On Tuesday night she was forward for Holiness. She said, "I want the root taken out." The Lord sanctified her. Several days later she came to the parsonage to see us. We scarcely knew her; she had changed very much in looks and appearance. She told us that she had changed her mode of attire; adorning herself now as becometh a woman professing godliness and sanctification.

When I was preaching in South China a very precious revival was breaking out. Many Chinese preachers, pastors and Bible women were brought into the revival by the district superintendent and day by day the power of God was upon the meeting. About the third day I was taken ill—oh, so ill. I had to take to my bed. Fortunately, we were living in a doctor's home so that we had the best of care, but the doctor could not make out what the trouble was. My illness was so different from the ordinary Oriental setbacks. For nearly two days I suffered physical agonies. Wife was holding her women's meetings in the afternoon with blessed results—scores of women were getting to God in her meetings which generally lasted from 2:30 p. m. till after 5:00 o'clock. Coming into my room from one of her meetings she looked at me as I lay in bed and said, "George, I believe this is the work of the enemy. Here is this revival going on and you are needed. The devil wants to destroy this meeting. God has sent us here for these meetings and we must get hold of God." Wife prayed me out of bed, and together we took hold of the promise and I began to trust God for healing. When the doctor came in, I said, "Doctor, I shall not take any more of these medicines. I am going to trust the Lord for healing." The doctor was a very godly person and fully agreed with what I was doing. The next morning I was preaching as usual although very weak. At night my weakness was so great that I truly preached with stammering tongue through my interpreter. When through with the sermon, I thought, "Well, that weak, poor message could not have done any good." But God chooses often to use the weak things to His glory, and in the after meeting a Chinese preacher arose and made a confession of the sin in his life; then came to the altar and sought God's forgiveness and cleansing. God heard his cry and restored him. A few days later he received the baptism and he went back to his circuit and set things on fire and a blessed revival broke out. This circumstance reminds me of an incident in the life of Bishop Thoburn of India who preached at Cawnpore one night with a splitting headache. His thoughts and words seemed to lack coherence, and he thought the sermon was a dismal failure, yet God blessed that message to the conversion of four of his hearers who found salvation while he was preaching.—*God's Revivalist*.

A very learned man once said to a little child who believed in the Lord Jesus, "My poor little girl, you don't know whom you believe in. There have been many Christs. In which of them do you believe?" "I know which one I believe in," replied the child. "I believe in the Christ who rose from the dead."—*Heart and Life*.

WINE IS A MOCKER

E. M. Calvin

The following is a clipping from an editorial of "The Herald Statesman" of Columbia.

While this quotation treats of the physical and mental, yet when we consider the close connection of these to the spiritual, or real man, it makes it the more important.

If every boy or girl, who aims to make a mark in the world, could see the great importance of abstaining from liquor in any form whatsoever, the consequences would be great indeed. This beer that will soon be put out to the public will be in a more tempting form than if sold in an old-fashioned saloon. The editorial follows,—

"One of the most sensible newspaper writings I have read lately comes from the pen of Dr. Chas. Mayo, noted scientist, physician and surgeon. I am copying same below:

"It's the brain that counts—you can get along with a wooden leg, but you can't get along with a wooden head. The physical value of a man is not so much. Man as analyzed in our laboratories is worth about ninety-eight cents. Seven bars of soap, lime enough to whitewash a chicken coop, phosphorus enough to cover the heads of a thousand matches is not so much, you see. It is the brain that counts; but in order that your brain may be kept clear, you must keep your body fit and well. That can not be done if one drinks liquor. A man who has to drag about a habit that is a danger and a menace to society ought to go off to the woods and live alone. We do not tolerate the obvious use of morphine or cocaine or opium, and we should not tolerate intoxicating liquor because I tell you these things are what break down the command of the individual over his own life and his own destiny. Through alcoholic stimulation a man loses his co-ordination. That is why liquor is no advantage to the brain. You hear people tell how they had their wits quickened for the first half hour by liquor, but they don't tell how later their body could not act in co-ordination with their brain. You will hear on every side men bewailing the loss of drink, of their personal rights, but the rights of the few who can not see ahead or have the future of their nation at heart must be regulated to safeguard that great body of future citizens who are now ready to step into the ranks. You boys have something ahead of you in the problem of preventing the return of liquor. We have not lived up to our laws, but I repeat, education is what we need to combat this condition. When we have our younger generation completely educated, we will not have types who say, "Why should I not have my rights as a citizen?" It is through the boys of today that we hope to see a sound and everlasting prohibition worked out in this country. If there ever was any great man who accomplished anything through the use of alcohol I would like to have the fact pointed out. We in the United States of America have tried to give you a field of action free from the barricades which used to be set up by the legalized liquor traffic. Keep yourselves free from all entangling habits."—*The Church Herald and Holiness Banner*.

How long halt ye between two opinions. Choose you THIS DAY whom ye will serve. My Spirit shall not always strive with man.—Bible.

We must make our choice between the way of ease and the way of the cross.—Anon.