

Guest Editorial

A PLEA FOR REVIVAL

★ By the late O. G. Wilson, D. D.

The present hour is a time of bewilderment. The world is full of unrest. Christendom is in a perilous condition. Turn in which way we will we are confronted by potential clouds full of danger and death. The customs and habits of ages have been revolutionized by steam and electricity. Knowledge has increased but private morals and civic virtues are far below the proper standard. The liquor business was never more masterful, malignant, and aggressive than now. The dance, the theater, vile pictures, vile literature combine to corrupt and destroy youth. The Sabbath is recklessly desecrated. The home of God is abandoned. The Bible is neglected by millions of people. Too many working people, toilers with hand or brain, have taken themselves outside the range of Christian influence and more and more are becoming utterly submerged in their secular ideals and goals.

It must be crystal clear to every thoughtful Christian that the thoughts just presented suggest the importance and necessity of a wide spread, thorough, and profound revival, revitalizing the Church, arresting the sinner and bringing him to repentance.

More machinery, more organization, more human effort will not suffice. Lecture courses, fairs, festivals, picnics, athletic contests are utterly unavailing.

Says J. O. Beck, in *The Revival and the Pastor*: "A genuine revival of religion is a gracious work of the Holy Spirit unto righteousness in human souls characterized by unusual intensity and breadth of operation." There are some essentials of revival; we shall mention three—

First: Fall in love with Jesus Christ. Love knows no sacrifice. Love feels no burden. Love is not limited by geography or racial boundaries. Love is the foundation of all obedience, a stimulus to all activities, and a guide to earnest zeal.

Second: Be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit indites the sinner, infills the believer, interprets the Word, inspires the yielded workman.

"When he is come he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment."

He will unhorse the proud Sauls. He will expose the covetous Ananias. He will throw consternation into the ranks of wickedness. And He alone can do it.

Third: Be fervent in efforts to reach the lost. Charles L. Goodell, in his book *Herald of Passion*, says:

"We preach many sermons about the rejection of Christ. We blame the men of this century. But what is the condition with us. We bow before the conventional and are smug and comfortable. If we had Jesus with us today would we not find Him a great inconvenience and maybe send Him either to jail or to an asylum as a disturber of peace ... Even those who represented the Church would not abide it, but the record of history is that in all ages humanity has bridged the gulf which threatened it by walking over the body of some fanatic who made himself a highway for his race."

We are far too callused about the lostness of men. Victor Trimmer, in *Evangelical Action*, says: "A young man condemned to die for shooting an officer on duty, looking into the face of his visitor when questioned if he had ever been in church, answered, 'Sir, I have never been in church and as far as I know none of my family has ever attended church.' When asked if he would like to have a Bible the answer was Yes, and he commented, 'I have never had a Bible in all my life, in fact I don't know if I have

ever seen a Bible.' The visitor weeping put his arms around the young man and said, 'If I had no more chance in life than you have I no doubt would end my life as you are ending yours.' The hardened killer broke down and with tears said, 'Sir, maybe if someone had invited me to Sunday school, maybe if somebody had given me a Bible, I would not be here today.' This young man was led to the Lord Jesus Christ and knew Him as Saviour before he paid the price for his crime."

The lost are around us everywhere. The fields are white unto harvest. The opportunities and possibilities of evangelism and soul winning are unlimited. The local or individual Christian who really has a burden for souls will have no problem in finding a place to minister.

We sing "Throw the life line" but we never get it outside the church building. We sing "Rescue the perishing," but it might be well for me to ask myself, What have I done this week to rescue the perishing.

John the Baptist was a voice, a witness, a herald, a burning and shining light and he mightily moved a nation that was steeped in formalism and degraded by foreign oppression.

Plan for a revival that will reach the lost. Pray until the revival strikes your own soul and you will be restless until you find somebody and bring him to Jesus.

THE FULL BLESSING OF CHRIST'S GOSPEL

H. K. Sheets, D. D.

In "Wesleyan Methodist"

Full salvation has long been an identifying phrase for the Bible message of Wesleyan holiness. It is a scriptural phrase. Paul declared to the Roman Church, "I feel sure that in this long looked for visit I shall bring with me the full blessing of Christ's gospel. (Rom. 15:29 Phillips Translation). Fullness here certainly means first of all the absence of emptiness; also adequacy, completeness, sufficiency. What words these are to describe the gospel of Christ!

Other uses of the word "fullness" will further help in opening its meaning, such as a "full" tide, or a "full" moon, or a "full" schedule. The full blessing of Christ's gospel certainly relates to its content. It must be a message of assurance. Saint Paul opens the verse with the words "I am sure." This puts an end to doubtings, and fearfulness. This is an assurance which sets the heart to singing and makes the joy of the Lord our strength. Trace the life of John Wesley to Aldersgate. He traveled a long road before he found it, thank God, and he preached it to the close of his tireless ministry. To be sure, there is a relief of conscience which comes from reformation or the leaving off of certain sins. Yet God's assurance of salvation to the believing heart is something much greater than this. "His Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8: 16). It took this assurance to inspire the lines, "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine, O what a foretaste of glory divine.

Moreover this fullness of the gospel certainly includes all the scope of salvation which is contained in the preceding chapters of this Epistle—a justified life before God, a reigning of righteousness through Jesus Christ, a death to the sin that is on the inside made possible through Christ's own crucifixion, an ear sensitive to the voice of the Spirit of God, and a heart persuaded of the absolute completeness of the atonement and the power of redemption over every enemy of the soul. If you are tempted to cast away your confidence, point the devil to Romans 8:35-39.

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