

REVIVAL WE NEED

- Five years ago there came into my life a spiritual experience that revolutionized my work, and resulted in a Ministry characterized by some of the manifestations that usually accompany Revivals. It was in this atmosphere that these messages were born; and while the writing of them has occupied the five intervening years, they but breathe the spirit that then prevailed. May God through them reveal to His servants the shallowness apparent in so much of our Modern Evangelism, and turn them to that deep and abiding work of the Holy Spirit which will alone stand the test of divine fire! Oswald J. Smith Toronto, 1922
- If we all had faith to wait upon God in intense believing prayer there would be genuine Holy Ghost revival, and the living God would get all the glory. In Manchuria and China, when we did nothing else than give the address and let the people pray, and kept out of sight as far as possible, we saw the mightiest manifestations of Divine power. JONATHAN GOFORTH. Toronto, May 5, 1925
- THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT IT was in 1904. All Wales was aflame. The nation had drifted far from God. The spiritual conditions were low indeed. Church attendance was poor. And sin abounded on every side. Suddenly, like an unexpected tornado, the Spirit of God swept over the land. The Churches were crowded so that multitudes were unable to get in. Meetings lasted from ten in the morning until twelve at night. Three definite services were held each day. Evan Roberts was the human instrument, but there was very little preaching. Singing, testimony, and prayer, were the chief features. There were no hymnbooks; they had learnt the hymns in childhood. No choir, for everybody sang. No collection; and no advertising. Nothing had ever come over Wales with such far reaching results. Infidels were converted, drunkards, thieves, and gamblers saved; and thousands reclaimed to respectability. Confessions of awful sins were heard on every side. Old debts were paid. The theatre had to leave for want of patronage. Mules in the coalmines refused to work, being unused to kindness. In five weeks 20,000 joined the Churches. In the year 1835 Titus Coan landed on the shore belt of Hawaii. On his first tour multitudes flocked to hear him. They thronged him so that he had scarcely time to eat. Once he preached three times before he had a chance to take breakfast. He felt that God was strangely at work. In 1837 the slumbering fires broke out. Nearly the whole population became an audience. He was ministering to 15,000 people. Unable to reach them, they came to him, and settled down to a two years' camp meeting. There was not an hour day or night when an audience of from 2,000 to 6,000 would not rally to the signal of the bell. There was trembling, weeping, sobbing, and loud crying for mercy, sometimes too loud for the preacher to be heard; and in hundreds of cases his hearers fell in a swoon. Some would cry out, "The two edged sword is cutting me to pieces." The wicked scoffer who came to make sport dropped like a dog, and cried, "God has struck me!" Once while preaching in the open field to 2,000 people, a man cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" and prayed the publican's prayer, and the entire congregation took up the cry for mercy. For half an hour Mr. Coan could get no chance to speak, but had to stand still and see God work. Quarrels were made up, drunkards reclaimed, adulterers converted, and murderers revealed and pardoned. Thieves returned stolen property. And sins of a lifetime were renounced. In one year 5,244 joined the Church. There were 1,705 baptized one service. And 2,400 sat down at the Lord's Table, once sinners of the blackest type, now saints of God. And when Mr. Coan left he had himself received and baptized 11,960 persons. In the little town of Adams across the line, in the year 1821, a young lawyer made his way to a secluded spot in the woods to pray. God met him there and he was wondrously converted, and soon after filled with the Holy Spirit. That man was Charles. G. Finney. The people heard about it, became deeply interested, and as though by common consent, gathered into the meeting house in the evening. Mr. Finney was present. The Spirit of God came on them in mighty, convicting power, and a Revival started. It then spread to the surrounding country until finally nearly the whole of the Eastern States was held in the grip of a Mighty Awakening. Whenever Mr. Finney preached the Spirit was poured out. Frequently God went before him so that when he arrived at the place he found the people already crying out for mercy. Sometimes the conviction of sin was so great and caused such fearful wails of anguish that he had

to stop preaching until it subsided. Ministers and Church members were converted. Sinners were reclaimed by the thousands. And for years the mighty work of grace went on. Men had never witnessed the like in their lives before.

- And this is what we need today more than anything else. When I remember that such an Outpouring has come to China, India, Korea, Africa, England, Wales, the States, the Islands of the Seas, and many other Places
- Do we need it? Listen! How many of our churches are more than half empty week after week? What a multitude there are who never enter God's house? How many mid-week prayer meetings are alive and prosperous? Where is the hunger for spiritual things? Oh, the shame of it! And Missions — the lands beyond the seas, heathen darkness — what are we doing? Does the fact that multitudes are perishing ever cause us an anxious thought? Have we grown selfish? What about the tremendous wealth that God has given us? Take the United States as an example, the richest nation in the world today, and the major portion of her wealth in the hands of professing Christians. And yet the United States spent more on gum in one year than she spent on Missions. How many Christians are giving God even the tenth of what He gives them?
- And what of the Ministry? Does the minister grip, convert, and save by his message? How many souls are won through the preaching of the Word? Oh, my friends, we are loaded down with countless Church activities, while the real work of the Church, that of evangelizing the world and winning the lost, is almost entirely neglected.
- Ah, yes, men have forgotten God. Sin flourishes on every side. And the pulpit fails to grip. And I know of nothing less than the Outpouring of His Spirit that can meet the situation. Such a Revival has transformed scores and hundreds of communities; it can transform ours.
- Now, how may we secure such an Outpouring of the Spirit? You answer, by prayer. True, but there is something before prayer. We will have to deal first of all with the question of sin; for unless our lives are right in the sight of God, unless sin has been put away, we may pray until doomsday, and the Revival will never come. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you so that He will not hear." (Isa. 59: 2.)
- The average church does not aim at, let alone get, results. Men preach and never even dream of anything happening. Oh, how far away we have drifted! How powerless we have become! It is reported that there were 7,000 churches that did not win a single soul for Jesus Christ in an entire year. That means that 7,000 ministers preached the Gospel for a whole year without reaching even one lost soul. Supposing that they preached, putting it at a low average, on 40 weekends, not including extra meetings, that would mean that these 7,000 ministers preached 560,000 sermons in a single year. Think of the work, the labor, the money expended in salaries, etc., to make this possible. And yet 560,000 sermons preached by 7,000 ministers in 7,000 churches to tens of thousands of hearers during a period of twelve months, failed to bring a single soul to Christ. Now, my brethren, there is something radically wrong somewhere. There is either something the matter with these 7,000 ministers or else with their 560,000 sermons, or with both. In reading over the Twelve Rules of the Early Methodist church I was struck with the fact that they aimed at and looked upon soul-winning as their supreme task. Let me quote from one of them: "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. It is not your business to preach so many times, but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness, without which they cannot see the Lord." — From "The Twelve Rules." — John Wesley.
- The promises of God. In Jet. 23:29, I read: "Is not My Word like a Fire, saith the Lord; and like a Hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" And in Eph. 6:17, "The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." But the more I pondered over it, the more I was convinced that in my ministry the Word of God was not a Fire, a Hammer, and a Sword. It did not burn, break and pierce. There was no execution. Heb. 4:12, declares that "the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." I had never seen it so. John Wesley saw it. John Smith was a constant observer of it. David Brainerd witnessed its sharpness;

but I did not. "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. 55:11.) p6

- Then one day I read the Acts of the Apostles to find out if God's servants in the Early Church got results wherever they went. And I found as I read that they aimed at, worked for, expected, and never failed to get Fruit. Peter preached on the day of Pentecost and 3,000 responded to that first appeal. There was a definite Outcome. With Paul it was the same. Follow him from place to place, and wherever he goes churches spring up. See how repeatedly the results are noted throughout the book. "They were added unto them about 3,000 souls." (2:41.) "Many of them which heard the Word believed, and turned unto the Lord." (11:2.) "Much people was added unto the Lord." (11:24.) "A great multitude believed." (11: 1.) "Some believed, of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." (17:4.) "Many believed." (17:34.) "Some believed." (28:24.) And Paul was able to declare "what things God had wrought by His Ministry." (21: 19.)
- There is nothing that will deepen Christian experience, edify believers and build them up in the Faith so rapidly and thoroughly as seeing souls saved. Deep Holy Spirit meetings where the power of God is working mightily in the conviction and Salvation of sinners will do more for Christians than the teaching of years without it. Such was the experience of David Brainerd. P8
- People who are satisfied to meet together simply to have a good time among themselves, are far away from God. Real spirituality always has an Outcome. There will be a yearning and a love for souls. We have gone to places that have a name of being very deep and spiritual, and have often found that it was all in the head, the heart was unmoved; and there was, not infrequently, hidden sin somewhere. "Having a form of Godliness but denying the power thereof." Oh, the pathos of it all! Let us then challenge our spirituality and ask what it produces; for nothing less than a genuine Revival in the Body of Christ resulting in a true Awakening among the unsaved will ever satisfy the heart of God. P8
- Can we travail for a drowning child; but not for a perishing soul? It is not hard to weep when we realize that our little one is sinking below the surface for the last time. Anguish is spontaneous then. Not hard to agonize when we see the casket containing all that we love on earth being borne out of the home. Ah, no; tears are natural at such a time! But oh, to realize and know that souls, precious souls are perishing all around us, going out into the blackness of darkness and despair, eternally lost, and yet to feel no anguish, shed no tears, know no travail! How cold our hearts are! How little we know of the compassion of Jesus! And yet God can give us this, and the fault is ours if we do not have it.
- Who is really travelling in prayer? How many, even of our most spiritual Christian leaders are content to spend half an hour a day on their knees, and then pride themselves on the time they have given to God! We expect extraordinary results, and extraordinary results are quite possible; signs and wonders will follow, but only through extraordinary efforts in the spiritual realm. Hence, nothing short of continuous, agonizing pleading for souls, hours upon hours, days and nights of prayer will ever avail. Therefore, "gird yourselves, and lament ye priests; howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord." (Joel 1: 13-14.) Oh yes! Joel knew the secret. Let us then lay aside everything else, and "cry unto the Lord."
- All men of God have become men mighty in prayer. The sun never rose on China, we are told, without finding Hudson Taylor on his knees. No wonder the China Inland Mission has been so wonderfully owned of God! Conversion is the operation of the Holy Spirit, and prayer is the power that secures that operation. Souls are not saved by man but by God, and since He works in answer to prayer we have no choice but to follow the Divine plan. Prayer moves the Arm that moves the world.
- Oh, how few find time for prayer! There is time for everything else, time to sleep and time to eat, time to read the newspaper and the novel, time to visit friends, time for everything else under the sun, but no time for prayer, the most important of all things, the one great essential. P9

- Think of Susannah Wesley who, in spite of the fact that she had nineteen children, found time to shut herself in her room for a full hour each day, alone with God. My friends, it is not so much a case of finding time as it is of making time. And we can make time if we will. So important did the Apostles consider it that they would not even wait on tables, but said: "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word." (Acts 6:4.) Yet how many ministers are burdened with the financial side of the work, and how many officials expect them to bear it! No wonder their spiritual work is of such little account! "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God." (Luke 6:12.) Such is the record concerning the Son of God; and if it was necessary for Him how much more so for us! Oh, think of it, "all night in prayer." How many times could that be written of us? Hence, His strength! Hence, our weakness!
- "John Livingstone spent the whole night prior to June 21, 1630, in prayer and conference, being designated to preach next day. After he had been speaking for an hour and a half a few drops of rain disconcerted the people, but Livingstone asking them if they had any shelter from the storm of God's wrath went on another hour. There were about 500 converted on the spot." — Livingstone of Shotts.
- "I once knew a minister who had a Revival fourteen winters in succession. I did not know how to account for it, till I saw one of his members get up in a prayer meeting and make a confession. 'Brethren,' said he, 'I have been long in the habit of praying every Saturday night till after midnight, for the descent of the Holy Ghost upon us. And now, brethren,' and he began to weep, 'I confess that I have neglected it for two or three weeks.' The secret was out. That minister had a praying church." — Charles G. Finney.
- "In a certain town there had been no Revival for many years; the Church was nearly extinct, the youth were all unconverted and desolation reigned unbroken. There lived in a retired part of the town an aged man, a blacksmith by trade, and of so stammering a tongue that it was painful to hear him speak. On one Friday, as he was at work in his shop alone, his mind became greatly exercised about the state of the Church and of the impenitent. His agony became so great that he was induced to lay by his work, lock the shop door, and spend the afternoon in prayer. "He prevailed, and on the Sabbath called on the minister and desired him to appoint a 'conference meeting.' After some hesitation, the minister consented, observing however, that he feared few would attend. He appointed it the same evening at a large private house. When evening came more assembled than could be accommodated in the house. All were silent for a time, until one sinner broke out in tears, and said if anyone could pray, would they pray for him. Another followed, and another, and still another, until it was found that persons from every quarter of the town were under deep conviction. And what was remarkable was that they all dated their conviction at the hour the old man was praying in his shop. A powerful Revival followed. Thus this old stammering man prevailed, and as a prince had power with God."-Charles G. Finney.
- "I have often seen him come down stairs in the morning after spending several hours in prayer, with his eyes swollen with weeping. He would soon introduce the subject of his anxiety by saying, 'I am a broken hearted man; yes, indeed, I am an unhappy man; not for myself, but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of precious souls that I cannot live if souls are not saved. Oh, give me souls, or else I die!' " — Life of John Smith
- "Several members of Jonathan Edwards' church had spent the whole night in prayer before he preached his memorable sermon, 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.' The Holy Ghost was so mightily poured out, and God so manifest in holiness and majesty during the preaching of that sermon, that the elders threw their arms around the pillars of the church and cried, 'Lord, save us, we are slipping down to hell!'"
- But must we go back to these mighty men of old? Are there not some today who will ask God to burden them? May we not even in this generation have a Revival in answer to faithful, believing, travailing, prevailing prayer? Oh, then, "Lord, teach us not how to pray, but to pray." P11
- "Ye shall receive Power." And when Peter got it, 3,000 were saved. And so with John Smith, Samuel Morris, Charles G. Finney and others — there was Fruit. This is the evidence, this is the test, and

only this. If I am a man of God endued with power from on High souls will break down under my preaching; if I am not, nothing out of the ordinary will take place. Let this be the test for every preacher. By this we stand or fall. P13

Where is the soul anguish of by-gone days, the wounded conscience, the sleepless nights, the groans and cries, the awful conviction of sin, the sobs and tears of the lost? Would to God we might hear and see it in this generation! And who is to blame, the people? Do we attribute it to their hardness of heart? Does the fault lie there? Oh, no, my brethren, the fault is ours; we are to blame. Were we what and where we ought to be, the signs would still follow as in the days of old. Then should not every failure, every sermon that fails to break the people down, drive us to our knees and result in deep heart searching, and humiliation. Let us never blame the people. If our churches are cold and unresponsive, it is because we are cold. Like pastor like people. P14

- Such Anointings are only received in the soulagonies of deep travailing prayer. The nights and days of agonizing prayer for the souls of men, the countless hours of intercession that we find in the life of David Brainerd, the mighty wrestlings with the spiritual powers of darkness until the body is wet with perspiration that were so common to John Smith — this is something that goes much further than present-day teaching, but it is the only thing that will produce the Fruit, and do the work of which we are speaking. It is from these hours of prevailing prayer that we go forth to our work in the Anointing to wield the Sword of the Spirit with deadly effect. Prayer is the secret. There can be no substitute. And for each special work there must be a special Anointing. It is not merely a matter of yielding and believing now. Ah, no! The glorious supernatural results that I am talking of are not obtained so easily. It costs and costs tremendously
- "They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.' Prayer earnest, prayer united, and prayer persevering, these are the conditions; and, these being fulfilled
- At one time when they preached souls cried aloud for mercy under awful conviction. Now they beg and coax; the meetings are dead and cold, while only a handful respond, and even these are not Holy Spirit Fruit.
- "A clergyman once told me of a revival among his people, which commenced with a zealous and devoted woman in the Church. She became anxious about sinners, and gave herself to praying for them; she prayed, and her distress increased; and she finally came to the minister, and talked with him, asking him to appoint an anxious inquirers' meeting, for she felt that one was needed. The minister put her off, for he felt nothing of any such need. The next week she came again, and besought him again to appoint such a meeting. She knew there would be somebody to come, for she felt as if God was going to pour out His Spirit. The minister once more put her off. And finally she said to him: 'If you do not appoint the meeting I shall die, for there is certainly going to be a revival.' The next Sabbath he appointed a meeting, and said that if there were any who wished to converse with him about the salvation of their souls, he would meet them on such an evening. He did not know of one, but when he went to the place, to his astonishment he found a large number of anxious inquirers." — (Charles G. Finney.)
- This has been the history of revival work all down the centuries. Night after night sermons have been preached and no results obtained, until some elder or deacon bursts out in an agony of confession and going to the one whom he has wronged craves forgiveness. Or some woman who is a prominent worker breaks down and in tears confesses publicly that she has been gossiping about some other sister or is not on speaking terms with the person across the aisle. Then when confession and restitution have been made, the fallow ground broken up, sin uncovered and acknowledged, then and not until then, the Spirit of God comes upon the audience and a Revival sweeps over the community. Generally there is but one sin, one hindering thing. It was an Achan in the camp of Israel. And God will put His finger directly on the spot. Nor will He take it off until that one obstacle has been dealt with. Oh, then, let us plead first of all the prayer of David when he cried, "Search me, oh God, and see if there be any wicked way in me." And no sooner will the obstacle of sin be taken out of the way than God will come in mighty revival power.
- Much prayer had been offered that His Spirit might open their eyes and let them ***see the need and feel the responsibility.*** P30

- "We have toiled all the night and have taken nothing" (Luke 5:1-11). But when they let down their nets under Divine leadership "they enclosed a great multitude of fishes." P30
- ***The price has to be paid.*** And when the Spirit comes upon me and fills me I will know it by the evidence of Holy Spirit fruit. Short of this I dare not rest.
- It is for this I have been burdened, the coming of the Holy Spirit in such mighty convicting power that souls would cry out for mercy without even an invitation. God has set His seal and honored His truth. Lord keep me humble and teach me Thy will. P31
- Months of battling in prayer, then the victory. I do not believe that there is power enough on earth or in Hell to prevent a revival if I am willing to pay the Price. P31
- Have been greatly impressed with Joel 2:18 and 28- 29. There it is, the need, the methods, and then the results of a great revival. But I can't do it myself. My heart is cold and hard. I do not weep and mourn. May God melt and break me and then work mightily among the people. I found Jer. 5:14 also a great and precious promise and have prayed it on my knees: "I will make my Words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood and it shall devour them." God grant that it may be so. P32
- Do we need a revival? God knows we do. It matters not how holy a church may be, nor how famous as a spiritual center, if souls are not saved, sinners awakened and convicted, there is something radically wrong. P35
- Praise God! He answers prayer. Oh, the joy of soul-winning! The sweetest music I have ever listened to is the cry of a penitent sinner coming home to God. Am determined to cast ease aside and give myself unreservedly to this great work. P35