

The Old Paths

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." -Jeremiah 6:16

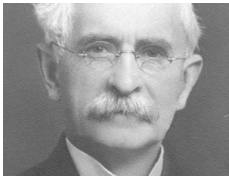
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www.sermonindex.net**Should We Not Weep?**

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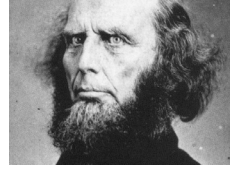
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Should We Not Weep?



If Jesus wept over Jerusalem, when He beheld a cloud of wrath gathering over it - why, Oh, why, should not we weep? I repeat it, why should not we weep to behold the mouths of the grave and of hell preparing to open and to engulf so many. Instead of repressing our tears, should we not rather say with the prophet Jeremiah, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people?" And if sinners will despise, and sin on, we can only resolve with Jeremiah again, "But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore and run down with tears." Who of us, or who that has ever read the writings and history of Jeremiah the

prophet, would charge him with weak-mindedness? We are the followers of "The Man of Sorrows." Like Him, we are "acquainted with grief."

From Christ's own lips we learn that, "unless you are born again, you cannot see or enter the kingdom of heaven." (John 3:3,5). And, had He added, you shall never, in that case, see or enter hell, perhaps our eyes could remain dry. But, alas! Exclusion from heaven implies incarceration in hell, - "the fire that never shall be quenched, - the worm that never dieth, - the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth in outer darkness; - and the horrors of everlasting punishment, - eternal damnation, - the fire prepared for the devil and his angels". Did Christ over sinners weep, and shall our cheeks be dry? Let floods of penitential grief burst forth from every eye. The Son of God in tears. The wondering angels see; be thou astonished, Oh, my soul, He shed those tears for thee! He wept that we might weep; each sin demands a tear; in heaven alone no sin is found, and there's no weeping there.

Ah! Poor sinner! We have the weeping part now, but YOUR weeping time is coming, but with this difference, ours is limited to time, yours has an eternity appended. The promise to us is, that God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes in heaven. (Rev. 7:17). Neither sorrow, nor cause of sorrow, nor tears nor cause of tears, for the days of our mourning shall be ended in heaven. But, alas for you who may drop into hell - for sorrow and the cause of sorrow, tears and the cause of tears, must coexist with your eternity; your mourning and the cause of

mourning shall never, never end. Why, then, should we not weep over you, in view of your sad future? Why should we not weep, seeing there is yet hope of your salvation that you may begin and weep as freely for yourselves, as we do for you? There is hope, and we weep. No wonder tears are wiped away in heaven, when hope for the willfully damned is gone, and gone forever! Hearken, all of you, to what Jesus says on this subject: "Woe unto you that laugh now; for ye shall mourn and weep." But He had just said to His disciples, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." So, then, this is our weeping time. Yours is to come. May it be now, also!

James Caughey (1810-1891) - James Caughey was an Irish-born emigrant to the United States who was converted in the times of revival in 1830-31 in the 'Burned-Over District' and soon after ordained to the Methodist ministry. He experienced powerful revivals in Canada but it was his revival labours in Great Britain during the 1840's, for which he is most well known. He was a great revivalist preacher who is almost totally unknown or ignored, being overshadowed in revival history by the revivalist giant, Charles Finney before him and the towering D. L. Moody afterwards.



The Revival We Need

"We need a revival of religion of solidity and substance..."

"My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." —Ps. 119:25. "I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word." —Ps. 119:107. "Plead my cause, and deliver me: quicken me according to thy word." —Ps. 119:154.

These Scriptures give us the definition of a true revival, the dire need of such a revival, and a simple description of how to get it.

A true revival is a quickening according to God's Word, not according to some man's magnetism or eccentricity.

Now, what we need is an increase of spiritual life which is in line with scriptural teaching. A revival means a giving of more life. David had life; what he wished for was life more abundant. We have love for God and men; what we need is more of the same quality; but be sure that it is love according to the Word of God. 'This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.' Obedience, not sentimentalism or unctuous joy, is love. Such obedience to God will be linked with unselfish ministry to man. A missionary by the name of Crossett died years ago

in China. He was greatly loved by the Chinese people. He chose a life of poverty, because he did not have time to make money. He spent his days and nights with the sick, the poor, the anxious. He led many of them to Christ. He thought not of himself, but of others. He loved men, not because of the ties of kinship or nationality, but because they were men with immortal souls precious in the sight of God.

We need conviction. Looseness is in the air, and we know who the prince of the power of the air is. There is a charity prevalent which rejoices not in the truth. We need men and women who believe something definite and are willing to live and die for their faith. Is there on earth today a John Knox, willing to face a Queen Mary and declare to her that she is an idolatress?

Have we any John Philpot and John Rogers left in our ministry, who are willing to burn at the stake rather than give even silent consent to soul-destroying errors?

Have we not, on the other hand, a namby-pamby, flabby sort of faith—a jellyfish conviction, without

any backbone? Is not our religion too much like a ball of wax—put into any shape by touch with things about it? We need a revival of religion of solidity and substance—a religion that resists evil and error and, with the gentleness and faithfulness of Christ, is true to itself and to its Author.

A.C. Dixon (1854-1925) -. Destined to become a great Bible expositor and elegant pulpiteer, A. C. Dixon knew early in life that he must preach the Gospel. After graduating from Wake Forest College, Dixon served two country churches in North Carolina. Leaving both congregations in a state of revival, he then went to study under John A. Broadus at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1906 he accepted the pulpit of the Chicago Avenue Church (Moody Memorial Church), and he spent the war years ministering at Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London.



Today's Sleeping Giant

"Christ must have preeminence over all other slants of truth..."

God pity us that after years of writing, using mountains of paper and rivers of ink, exhausting flashy terminology about the biggest revival meetings in history, we are still faced with gross corruption in every nation, as well as with the most prayerless church age since Pentecost.

This is a plea for the return of the supernatural; but I must also give this a word of explanation. For a decade, all over this land there has been a ministry of the miraculous (more or less), and thank God for all who honor Him and remain faithful. But having said that, here is a plea for sane thinking and a spiritual evaluation of the evangelistic field. To a large degree, have we not substituted seeing for hearing? In Acts, Philip the evangelist could have transferred the Ethiopian eunuch to a city seething with revival fever where the eunuch could have seen "the lame leap like an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing." Instead, he pitched right into the Word of the living God, and beginning at the same Scripture preached unto him Jesus. We need the miraculous but we also need Christ-centered teaching. Our crucified, ex-

alted Christ must have preeminence over all other slants of truth, for while the Church is languishing, the world is perishing. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord..." (Isaiah 51:9)

The problem of the Church is the problem in the garden of Gethsemane-sleep! For while men sleep, the enemy, sows his seed through his cults. Lest men sleep the sleep of eternal death, Oh arm of the Lord, Oh Church of the living God, awake!

If the church is going to attain to her potential in this last hour, it is apparent that we are going to have to dust off an old word that many of us have forgotten is in the English language -- DISCIPLINE!

Today, immediately when one gets out of step with a nearby Christian, he is considered a legalist. Just remember, in "that great day of Judgment" when we must stand before His throne, no man will be ashamed he was dubbed over-spiritual, though many will weep, groan, and "suffer loss" because of lack of discipline.

Truth lies fallen in the street! "Let the Church sleep! If she wakes, she will shake the world." Is not the Church the sleeping giant of today?

Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994). Leonard Ravenhill was one of Britain's foremost outdoor evangelists of the 20th century. God used him to help bring thousands of people to Christ throughout Britain. Ravenhill became one of the twentieth century's greatest authorities on revival. His message is drastic, fearless, and often radical. Appalled by the disparity between the New Testament Church and what passes for the Church today, Ravenhill gives a no-compromise call to the principles of biblical revival. His most famous book being: "Why Revival Tarries" well worth the read..



The Decline of Holiness

"The decline of vital godliness in the ministry..."

Now it does appear to me that we who are ministers, instead of looking abroad and searching for the fundamental difficulty beyond and out of ourselves, should see that whatever else may be an occasion of the great falling off and decline in revivals, our own spiritual state is certainly one, if not the primary and fundamental reason of this decline. Want of personal holiness, unction, power in prayer, and in preaching the word--the want of holy living and consecration to the work--of self-denial, and energetic effort in the ministry--these, no doubt, are the principal reasons why revivals are so few and far between, and of so superficial character at the present day.

The fact is, ministers have turned aside, in a great degree, to vain jangling; have given up their attention to Church-politics, Church-government, and Ecclesiastical proceedings of various kinds. The ministers have been diverted to an alarming and most injurious extent, from promoting revivals of religion out of the Church, and holiness in the Church. I appeal to you, my brethren, of all de-

nominations, if it is not a fact in your own experience and observation, that ministers have to a great and alarming extent suffered themselves to be diverted from the direct work of promoting the conversion of sinners and sanctification of the Church.

Until the leaders enter into the work, until the ministry are baptized with the Holy Spirit, until we are awake and in the field with our armour on, and our souls anointed with the Holy Spirit, it certainly ill becomes us to be looking around at a distance for the cause of the decline of revivals.

The decline of vital godliness in the ministry has been of course the occasion of so much decline in the churches that they are hardly aware either of their own state or of the spiritual state of the ministry.

Unless we are frank enough, and humble enough, and honest enough, to look the true state of things in the face, confess, forsake our sins, and return to the work and engage in the promotion of revivals, God will undoubtedly rebuke us, will raise up

other instruments to do his work, and set us aside; will alienate the heart of the churches from us, destroy our influence with them, and raise up we know not whom, to go forth and possess the land.

Charles Finney (1792–1875). Finney is called the "father of modern revivalism" by some historians, and he paved the way for later mass-evangelists like Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham. Thousands have been converted under his ministry and he was mightily used of God in the area of revival to bring much of the sleeping church back to full obedience to Christ as Lord. The serious and sober ministry he was involved in is estranged from our modern day Christianity, Oh how we need a Finney today! but could we bear his heavy message of repentance and revival?.



A Destructive Ministry Necessary

"They have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters...."

Why are God's special instruments young, as a rule, and not old as in the known exceptions? Probably the answer is to be found in the fact that young men are more malleable than old. Most people are converted when young, and the Lord loves to get His man before backsliding or prejudice can spoil him.

Positional truth cannot be profitably taught until conditional teaching has had its effect. Cast no pearls before swine. So great is this problem, that when the preacher hits out against sin among believers and urges purity of life, critics cry "Introspection" and some insist that he is trying to divert the eyes of the people away from Christ towards self and shortcomings.

It is generally conceded that the great problem of today is the lack of the sense of sin among believers and unbelievers alike. The consequent need must be met. It is a need of a message of strong rebuke first, and upbuilding can follow afterwards. "See," said the Lord to Jeremiah, "I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, to build and to

plant." Jeremiah's prophecy immediately runs along the line commanded by the Lord. The words put into his mouth enable him to fulfill his six-fold commission. "Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the Lord, and with your children's children will I plead."

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water." How true of us to-day. But people cannot go on for ever in sin without feeling some pangs of conscience. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backsliding shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts."

Backsliders are the most miserable class in the earth. They cannot fully enjoy the pleasures of sin, as the worldling does. They certainly cannot enjoy the things of the Lord. The great apostle of revival, Charles Grandison Finney, adopted the Jeremiah

approach and preached an unmistakable, faithful message. Perhaps we could say that his favorite verse was: "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns!"

J. Edwin Orr (1912-1987). Besides his writing, teaching, and preaching, Dr. Orr had great impact on evangelicals around the world through his friendship with other leading Christians. He was an advisor of Billy Graham's from the start of that evangelist's career, a friend of Abraham Vereide and helped shape the prayer breakfast movement that grew out of Vereide's International Christian Leadership, and he was an important leader in Andrew Gih's Evangelize China Fellowship. The impact of Orr's life on the evangelical world is still felt to-day, may we see another revival!

J. Edwin Orr



"The Revival of 1859 helped to lay the foundations of the modern international and interdenominational missionary structure...Every revival of religion in the homelands is felt within a decade in the foreign mission-fields, and the records of missionary enterprises and the pages of missionary biography following 1860 are full of clearest evidence of the stimulating effect of the Revival throughout the world."

"It is utterly impossible to divorce the story of student awakenings from the course of missions in countries overseas. From the beginning, one of the most immediate and dramatic effects of college revivals has been the recruitment of personnel for the work of Christ abroad."

"History is silent about revivals that did not begin with prayer."

"Revival is a movement of the Holy Spirit bringing about a revival of New Testament Christianity in the Church of Christ and its related community."

"Backsliders are the most miserable class in the earth. They cannot fully enjoy the pleasures of sin, as the worldling does. They certainly cannot enjoy the things of the Lord."

C.H. Spurgeon



"Groanings which cannot be uttered are often prayers which cannot be refused."

"If any of you should ask me for an epitome of the Christian religion, I should say that it is in one word- Prayer. Live and die without prayer, and you will pray long enough when you get to hell."

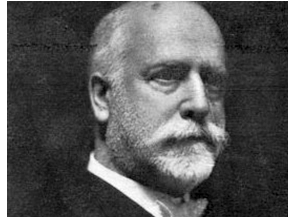
"If it were Christ's intention to save all men, how deplorably he has been disappointed! "

"You cannot make a sinner into a saint by killing him. He who does not live as a saint here will never live as a saint hereafter."

"Oh, if there be a place where sinners are more loathsome to God than anywhere else, it is in his church. Of all men, who stand in the most likely place to receive the mightiest thunderbolt, and the most terrible lightning's flash, those are the men who have a divided heart, and profess to serve God, while with their souls they are serving sin."

"Christ came to save his people 'from' their sins- not 'in' them. And it is essential to salvation that sin should be repented of, and, being repented of, should be renounced, and that, by the help of God, we should lead a new life, under a new Master, serving from a new motive, because the grace of God has renewed our spirit."

R.A. Torrey



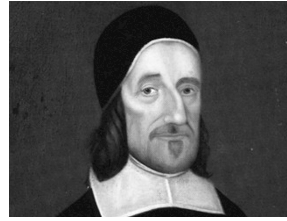
"If you make a great deal of Christ, He will make a great deal of you; But if you make but little of Christ, He will make but little of you. "

"The reason why many fail in battle is because they wait until the hour of battle. The reason why others succeed is because they have gained their victory on their knees long before the battle came...Anticipate your battles; fight them on your knees before temptation comes, and you will always have victory."

"Out of a very intimate acquaintance with D. L. Moody, I wish to testify that he was a far greater pray-er than he was preacher. Time and time again, he was confronted by obstacles that seemed insurmountable, but he always knew the way to overcome all difficulties. He knew the way to bring to pass anything that needed to be brought to pass. He knew and believed in the deepest depths of his soul that nothing was too hard for the Lord, and that prayer could do anything that God could do."

"We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power. We have a great deal of activity, but we accomplish little; many services but few conversions; much machinery but few results."

Richard Baxter



"I preached as never sure to preach again, And as a dying man to dying men"

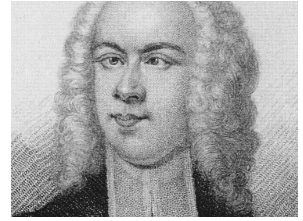
"Be careful how you spend your time: Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of"

"Use sin as it will use you; spare it not, for it will not spare you; it is your murderer, and the murderer of the whole world. Use it, therefore, as a murderer should be used; kill it before it kills you; and though it brings you to the grave, as it did your head, it shall not be able to keep you there. You love not death; love not the cause of death."

"If we were heartily devoted to our work, it would be done more vigorously, and more seriously, than it is by the most of us. How few ministers do preach with all their might, or speak about everlasting joys and everlasting torments in such a manner as may make men believe that they are in good earnest!"

"O sirs, how plainly, how closely, how earnestly, should we deliver a message of such moment as ours, when the everlasting life or everlasting death of our fellow-men is involved in it! Methinks we are in nothing so wanting as in this seriousness."

George Whitefield



"And there is still the more occasion for such an alarm, because worldly-mindedness so easily and craftily besets the hearts of men."

"At the day of judgment we shall all meet again."

"But he is unworthy the name of a minister of the gospel of peace, who is unwilling, not only to have his name cast out as evil, but also to die for the truths of the Lord Jesus."

"Mere heathen morality, and not Jesus Christ, is preached in most of our churches. "

"Dare, dare, my dear brethren in Christ, to follow the Captain of your salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings."

"Do not waver, but give him that which he desires, your hearts; it is the heart the Lord Jesus Christ wanteth; and when you have an inward principle wrought in your hearts by this same Jesus, then you will feel the sweetness and pleasure of communion with God."

"It is a poor sermon that gives no offense; that neither makes the hearer displeased with himself nor with the preacher."

"We are immortal until our work on earth is done."

"What has exceedingly hurt you in time past, nay, and I fear to this day, is want of reading. I scarce ever knew a preacher read so little. And perhaps by neglecting it you have lost the taste for it. Hence your talent in preaching does not increase. It is just the same as it was seven years ago. It is lively, but not deep; there is little variety; there is no compass of thought. Reading only can supply this, with meditation and daily prayer. Do not starve yourself any longer." -John Wesley