

c.h. Spurgeon

by David Smithers

The legacy of Charles Haddon Spurgeon teaches us that the key to a true revival is not great preaching, but a people who prioritize prayer and make the prayer-meeting the most important meeting of the week.

Scripture: Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:16, James 5:16

Topics: "Prayer Meetings", "Church Revival"

Description

David Smithers emphasizes the vital importance of prayer in the life of the church, drawing inspiration from the legacy of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who attributed his success to the faithful prayers of his congregation. Spurgeon believed that the prayer-meeting was the spiritual thermometer of a church and that true revival could only come through fervent intercession. He taught his people to pray by example, recognizing that the Church's greatest need was not more eloquent preachers but more dedicated prayer warriors. Smithers challenges believers to prioritize prayer meetings over preaching and praising sessions, echoing Spurgeon's belief that prayer is the powerhouse of the church.

Transcript

The memory of Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been cherished among evangelical Christians for over the past 100 years. Many Christian leaders consider him to be the greatest preacher England ever produced. He is commonly hailed as the "Prince of Preachers". Over 63 volumes of published sermons still bear witness to the richness and success of C. H. Spurgeon's ministry. Though known as a great preacher, it was not preaching that made Spurgeon great. Mr. Spurgeon repeatedly acknowledged his success as the direct result of his congregation's faithful prayers. "It has often been remarked that the whole church helped produce Spurgeon." When visitors would come to Spurgeon's church he would take them to the basement prayer-room where people were always on their knees interceding. Then Spurgeon would declare, "Here is the powerhouse of this church."

Spurgeon in his autobiography described his gratefulness for being blessed with such a praying church. "I always give all the glory to God, but I do not forget that He gave me the privilege of ministering from the first to a praying people. We had prayer meetings that moved our very souls, each one appeared determined to storm the Celestial City by the might of intercession." Spurgeon regarded the prayer-meeting as the spiritual thermometer of a church. His church's Monday night prayer meeting had a worldwide testimony for many years. Every Monday night a large portion of Spurgeon's sanctuary was filled with earnest and fervent intercessors.

"In Spurgeon's eyes the prayer-meeting was the most important meeting of the week." It is here many of us find ourselves in conflict with dear Mr. Spurgeon. We love our meetings for preaching and praising and yet sadly neglect those set aside for praying. One of Spurgeon's greatest concerns was that his people learn to truly pray. "He taught his people to pray, doing so far more by his example than by any preaching. People heard him pray with such reality that they became ashamed of their own mere repetition of words." Throughout his entire ministry many hearers remarked that they were moved by his preaching, but yet still more affected by his praying. D. L. Moody after his first visit to England, being asked upon his return to America, "Did you hear Spurgeon preach?" He replied, "Yes, but better still I heard him pray." A close friend of Spurgeon's, commented on his prayer life, "His public prayers were an inspiration, but his prayers with the family were to me more wonderful still. Mr. Spurgeon, when bowed before God in family prayer, appeared a grander man even than when holding thousands spellbound by his oratory."

Spurgeon fully recognized that the Church's greatest need was not to have another, "Prince of Preachers", but to have more princes of prayer. One of his many published sermons expressed his feelings on this. He wrote, "Shall I give you yet another reason why you should pray? I have preached my very heart out. I could not say any more than I have said. Will not your prayers accomplish that which my preaching fails to do? Is it not likely that the Church has been putting forth its preaching hand but not its praying hand? Oh dear friends! Let us agonize in prayer . . . "

There has been much talk lately about pockets of revival springing up in our nation. Many are saying they desire such revivals in our own local churches, and cities. Yet, is it not the prayer-meeting which is still most neglected? If Christ Jesus were to visit us today with real revival power, how could such a blessing be sustained where there is no ground work laid in prayer? To merely exercise our words about revival and not our knees is hypocrisy! It is time to make the prayer-meeting as crowded as our favorite preaching and praise meetings. It is then and ONLY then, that a true revival will come with lasting power! Like Mr. Spurgeon, let us regard the prayer-meeting as our most important meeting!

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