



Revivals And Church History :: the Welsh Revival

the Welsh Revival - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2015/12/15 11:06

Chapter 4 "The Welsh Revival" Rees Howells: Intercessor by Norman Grubb

Rees's return to Wales was in a strategic year. It was in 1904, the time of the great Revival, and his own recent experience just fitted him to take part in it. "In a short While the whole of the country was aflame," he said. "Every church was stirred to its depths. Strong men were in tears of penitence, and women moved with a new fervor. People were overpowered by the Spirit as on the day of Pentecost, and were counted as drunken men. In the services they were praying, singing and testifying. It was a church revival, turning Christians everywhere into witnesses: 'Certainly we cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.'"

The presence and power of the Holy Ghost in the church has always been a fact recognized by true believers; so it was not so much a case of asking Him to come, as acknowledging His presence, and very soon realizing His power: but often they had first to pray out the hindrances to blessing; disobedience and unforgiving hearts were two sins that were constantly dealt with. On the other hand, obedience to the promptings of the Spirit and open confession of Christ brought down the blessing. Once the first hymn was given out, the meeting conducted itself. There was no leader, but people felt an unseen control. Speakers were often interrupted by a chorus of song and prayer, but there was no sense of discord or break in the harmony. There was noise, excitement and emotion in the meetings, but it was only the effect of people being freed from bondage. When some complained, one old preacher said he preferred the noise of the city to the silence of the cemetery!

The Revival proved what the Holy Ghost could do through a company of believers, who were of one spirit and of one mind as on the day of Pentecost. We had seen over and over again what the Lord could do through a yielded evangelist or pastor, such as Moody or Finney, but in the Welsh revival it was a divine power manifested through the church. The key note was, "Bend the church and save the world." The one aim was the saving of souls. The Saviour said there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repents, and they could say there was joy in the church over the converts. The bells of heaven rang every time, and there was a shout of victory in the camp.

Under the influence of the Spirit there was an irresistible power. The feeblest ones were often clothed with a majesty that was indescribable, and their words were with unction, as they showed how the Saviour was "slain for our offences and raised again for our justification." Whole congregations were melted, and people were crying out in agony of soul. "What must we do to be saved?" Multitudes experienced the power of the Blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse from all sin.

But the real problem arose as the Revival proceeded and thousands were added to the churches. There were more children born than there were nurses to tend them. The establishing of the converts became the greatest need, which if not met would be the most dangerous weakness of the Revival. As enthusiasm abated, there were bound to be many who had depended more on feelings, and not yet learned to have their faith solidly based on the word of God. The devil took advantage of this, some became cold and indifferent, and the spiritual conflict began. Those like Rees Howells, young in the Spirit though they were, but at least a bit more advanced than the converts in the Revival, were needed to be intercessors and teachers, to take the burden of the new-born babes, and pray and lead them on. But these young intercessors soon began to find how mighty is the enemy of souls, and that a conflict, not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of the darkness of this world, cannot be fought with carnal weapons. They needed what they themselves had not yet received, the indument of the Holy Ghost for service. As Rees Howells said later: "The intercession of the Holy Ghost for the saints in this present evil world must be made through believers filled with the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 8:27).

It was this that brought him and others to feel their need of the fullness. Nothing had been lacking in the joy and satisfaction which Rees had found in the Saviour for his own personal life, but he did not know the secret of power for service. "Many blamed the young converts for backsliding," he said, "but we blamed ourselves, because we were not in a position to pray them through to victory. Oh, the tragedy, to be helpless in front of the enemy, when he was sifting young converts like wheat! In Isaiah 59 we read that God saw there was no man," and wondered that there was no interces-

sor, and this. was just our case. Many of us felt the need of being "endued with power from on High". We were in the same position as those disciples, whom the Lord told to tarry until they were endued. The record goes on to say that "they worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy". They had the joy before they had the power, so that joy was no proof of that indument of the Spirit. We had that same joy in the Revival, in the knowledge of a risen Christ and the assurance of eternal life "unspeakable joy" but at the same time we felt the lack of power for service.