

~Other Speakers M-R: Old Paths Magazine - Issue 17:

LIKE THE PROPHET JEREMIAH, Charles G. Finney was anointed of God to "root out" and to "plant" in the Lord's vineyard, (Jer. 1:10). He was a man of intense prayer, purity and passion. "Emptied of self, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. His sermons were chain lightning, flashing conviction into the hearts of the stoutest skeptics. Simple as a child in his utterances, he sometimes startled his hearers by his unique prayers."

He could thunder the judgments of God upon sin with great liberty and power and then offer the mercy of the gospel with tenderness and tears. Without question he was a prophetic voice to 19th century America. His ministry consistently produced revivals, even in areas considered hardened and unreceptive to the gospel. Finney's autobiography is filled with accounts of powerful manifestations of the Spirit. On one occasion when Finney was preaching in a school house, "suddenly an awful solemnity fell upon the assembly and the congregation fell from their seats, crying for mercy." Finney said, "If I had had a sword in each hand I could not have cut them off as fast as they fell. I think the whole congregation was on their knees or prostrated in two minutes." The crying and weeping of the people was so loud that Finney's exhortation of Christ's mercy could not even be heard.

"Finney seemed so anointed with the Holy Spirit that people were often brought under conviction of sin just by looking at him. When holding meetings at Utica, New York, he visited a large factory. At the sight of him one of the workers, and then another, and then another broke down and wept under a sense of their sins, and finally so many were sobbing and weeping that the machinery had to be stopped while Finney pointed them to Christ."

Finney seems to have had the power of impressing the conscience of men with the necessity of holy living in such a manner as produced lasting results. "Over eighty-five in every hundred persons professing conversion to Christ in Finney's meetings remained true to God. Whereas seventy percent of those professing Christ in meetings of even so great an evangelist as Moody afterward became backsliders."