

SPIRIT OF TRUTH

1. Introduction

Historians will eventually write up this century as having witnessed a vast decline in Christianity in the United Kingdom until the nation became largely pagan. An analysis of the causes will reveal that they were various, stemming from the incidence of Higher Criticism of the Bible arising in Germany at the end of the last century, to Darwinism and the effects of two World Wars. But they will overlook one vital cause of the collapse, namely the withdrawing of the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Many in our country today are praying for a revival, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the preaching of the Gospel such as this land and Europe witnessed at the time of the Reformation in the 16th century, when truth shone as a divine light in men's hearts. It was witnessed again in the 17th century in the writings and ministry of the Puritans and Pilgrim Fathers and was seen in the 18th century in the great Evangelical Awakening under George Whitefield and his contemporaries, including Jonathan Edwards in the United States, Daniel Rowlands and Howell Harris in Wales, and in the Cambuslang Revival in Scotland.

The 19th century, while it did not share such a distinct blessing as the three previous centuries, still witnessed that blessing upon many able preachers, and was peculiarly the century when the Gospel went out from this land to the world through the ministry and work of such men as William Carey and James Hudson Taylor, to name but two of the great company who took the Gospel to Africa, India, China, South America and the more remote parts of the world.

The 20th century has been marked by the inroads of modernistic teaching into all sections of Christianity, accompanied by a questioning of orthodox beliefs such as the virgin birth, the resurrection, the deity of Christ, His redemptive work, eternal punishment and many other truths regarded as fundamental by our Christian forebears in former centuries. One outcome of the declension has been the desire of the mainstream churches to bury their differences and find some common ground on which they can unite: some lowest common denominator of agreement. This has produced the Ecumenical Movement with, initially, the British Council of Churches and more recently the organization "Churches Together," aimed at creating local bonds at grass root level as opposed to amalgamation via agreements through Church hierarchies.

Into this scene in the last decade has come the Charismatic Movement, now present in all major denominations, acting as a catalyst to spur on a more rapid Ecumenical union.

The question arises, is this Charismatic Movement the work of the Holy Spirit, the revival that is desired? How does it compare with the outpourings of the Spirit in the 16th, 17th; 18th and 19th centuries in the United Kingdom? How does it compare with the initial Pentecostal outpouring and the work of the apostles in the days after the resurrection of Christ? Do we accept this as the great revival, or the precursor of it, which many discerning Christians feel is vitally necessary in Britain today if our society is not to disintegrate morally, and collapse in a welter of profanity, evil, violence and disorder?

For many, especially within the Charismatic Movement, its development is the “restoration” of Christianity which is desired, and their vision is that it will eventually embrace whole nations and governments, until Christ comes to reign.

Such teaching is known as “reconstructionism” and is widespread in the United States. It uses such terms as “dominion theology” and “kingdom theology.”

In the United Kingdom a Charismatic phenomenon appears outside of churches in various independent groupings, often located in certain towns or areas, numbering membership from hundreds in some places to thousands in others. These congregations generally meet in house groups but gather together perhaps once a month at some assembly point such as a rented school hall or public building. They are well organized and trained and consist of people from every stratum of society.

Within most denominations there are groups of Charismatics who remain there to exert their influence. It is not for them important what beliefs the various denominations hold. These are of secondary importance compared with the Charismatic phenomenon of “the second blessing,” through which it is claimed the individual receives the gifts of the Spirit in tongues, healing, prophecy, words of knowledge, etc.

This “second blessing” (following on from conversion) is the vital hallmark of the Charismatic movement and is centered in the question, “Have you received the Spirit?” leaving open the assumption that the new birth is not *a full* receiving of the benefits of the Spirit. It is said that the reception of “the full gospel” enables the individual to speak in tongues, or to heal, or to prophesy, or to give a word of knowledge. It is also claimed that this gives assurance and ability to discern and understand, gifts which are felt by the Charismatic to be lacking at the time of the new birth.

The Charismatics feel assured that their movement is leading to the revival of the work of the Holy Spirit in the 20th century for which many have been praying. Many churches, previously empty, are now filled (especially Anglican churches) and such is the impact of the movement in the nation that Anglican bishops are becoming concerned that it may prove divisive in the Church of England. It has reached the notice of leader writers in Fleet Street, who have referred to it in their columns and mentioned its connections with the U.S.A. It receives the full blessing of the Roman Catholic Church and has spread widely on the mission field.

The purpose of this study is to examine the Holy Spirit’s work in the light of Scripture. Does Scripture reveal the signs of the apostles (2Co 12:12; Heb 2:1-4) and of Jesus (Act 2:22) as phenomena present throughout all ages in their fullest degree and kind, or were they given for a particular period of time only, with a particular purpose, until the Canon of Scripture was complete (1Co 13:10) after which they ceased (1Co 13:8)? Is there such a phenomenon as “the second blessing?” Does Scripture reveal it? Is such a blessing given to all? Is it within the reach of all to obtain it? Is such a blessing, if it exists, always accompanied by the ability to speak in tongues, heal or prophesy? Further, if the work of the Holy Spirit is known by the fruits of the Spirit (Eph 5:9)—goodness, righteousness, truth etc.—how is it that many Charismatics, after their “second blessing” feel able to remain within churches which hold unscriptural doctrines, such as the Roman Catholic Church?

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (Joh 14:17; 15:26; 16:13) and, as such, reveals Christ who describes Himself as “the way, the truth and the life” (Joh 14:6). Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, states the only source of all truth, “As the truth is in Jesus.” It is nowhere else. Faith beholds “His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Joh 1:14). The Spirit speaks expressly, “What communion hath light with darkness?” (2Co 6:14). “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing” (2Co 6:17). Here is no room for compromise or blending such as is at the root of the Ecumenical Movement and its new local organization in the United Kingdom “Churches Together,” and as is also seen in the Charismatic Movement.

Such questions require an answer, for many are confused and do not know where to stand since the leading denominations in the United Kingdom are now resting doctrinally on shifting sands. A tide of evil, error, confusion and indefiniteness, has swept over the country. The tide of truth has long ago gone out from our shores. The time when most homes in this land possessed a copy of the Bible and Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* is past. Now the nation is held in the grip of ignorance and darkness. If belief is covered by a cloak of sincerity, it is deemed to have a right to be accepted. Multi-faith services take place in the Abbey Church at Westminster. But where is the truth—“As the truth is in Jesus?” (Eph 4:21) A decade of evangelism (1990-99) is in progress, sponsored by Ecumenical interests, which omits the heart of the Gospel, for it shudders at the anathema of Paul in his letter to the Church at Corinth, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema. Maranatha” (1Co 16:22).

The record of Christ’s Apostle John, “He that hath the son hath life; and he that hath not the son of God hath not life,” (1Jo 5:12) is of itself an anathema in the ears of those, who in this decade of evangelism seek to avoid “the offence of the cross” (Gal 5:11). The Gospel, “To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in

him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1Co 8:6), was carried throughout the world in centuries past by Christian missionaries, such as Henry Martyn to the Moslem, William Carey to the Hindu and Buddhist, Hudson Taylor to the Confucian, David Livingstone to Africa, John G. Paton to the cannibals of the Pacific and by many others. Does time now allow us to judge their preaching of the Cross as useless?

The persecution of early Christians in Rome, when thrown to the lions, was a direct result of their inability to blend with Roman pantheism. Equally the Apostle Paul stood firm against Greek pantheism on Mars Hill, when he preached Christ and His resurrection at "the altar of the unknown God." So when the Pope assembles world religious leaders for multi-faith worship at Assisi, who are they worshipping? Does the Holy Spirit call the Church of Christ to join in such worship? Is the Holy Spirit in the Ecumenical Movement? Finally, are professing Christian denominations being brought together by a 20th century outpouring of the Spirit manifested in the supernatural evidences of tongues, healing, prophecy, and casting out of demons?

These are questions which need to be assessed in the light of Scripture. Who is joining whom? The scriptural banner of the Ecumenical Movement, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," leaves many questions unresolved, such as, "What communion hath light with darkness" (2Co 6:14)? Paul's instruction to the Church at Corinth was, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbeliever... What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (2Co 6:14, 16). "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" (2Co 6:15). So in all these amalgamations our search must be to find out the work of the Holy Spirit of Truth.

2. The Work of the Holy Spirit

1. The New Birth

The work of the Holy Spirit is said by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthian Church to be "spiritually discerned." "The natural man [unconverted] receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual [converted] judgeth [spiritually understands] all things, yet he himself is judged [spiritually understood] of no man" (1Co 2:14-15).

Using another example, the Lord Jesus Christ in His meeting with Nicodemus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God... that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth [chooses] and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (Joh 3:6-8). And Paul, in his first letter to the Church at Corinth says, "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1Co 1:21).

The principal work of the Holy Spirit is the new birth, described in Scripture variously as "the new man" (Eph 2:15), "the new creature" (Gal 6:15): "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2Co 5:17); or as in Paul's letter to the Church at Ephesus, "We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph 2:10).

These texts show from Scripture that one truly born again of the Spirit is a "new creature in Christ Jesus." He is "spiritual" or "born of the Spirit," and is able to "spiritually understand all things, yet he himself is understood of no man."

Jesus taught the principle for recognizing the work of the Spirit when He said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Mat 7:14-20). So it is made clear in Scripture that a true Christian must be born again of the Spirit of God and only such persons are able to recognize the work of the Spirit by its fruit.

At the same time there exist in the Church "false prophets," otherwise referred to as "foolish virgins" (Mat 25:2) who carry a lamp, have a religion described elsewhere in Scripture as "sparks of their own kindling" (Isa 50:11), who mingle with those who are born again, do similar things and go to similar places at similar times, but prove in the end to have no oil in their lamps and are as Christ described them "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Mat 7:15). Strange as this may sound, it is essential when dealing with matters that relate to eternity, concerning which it is said, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb 9:27), that the signs marking out this narrow way are clearly seen to be pointing in the right direction towards the strait gate.

"Ye must be born again" (Joh 3:7) was Christ's teaching to Nicodemus and was at the centre of the ministry of George Whitefield (1770), Daniel Rowlands (1790) and many other revival preachers of the 18th century. If the Great Awakening of the 18th century is characterized by one truth, it is characterized by the preaching of the new birth. Looking back over the great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in those times, much stands out as having been proved by

the test of time to have been of the Spirit. Much also, the revival preachers proved, in the course of time, was not “gold, silver or precious stones”, but rather “wood, hay and stubble” (1Co 3:12). The fruit manifests the Holy Spirit’s work. Such must be the principle in every generation, as in the old adage “time will prove;” “judge nothing before its time” (1Co 4:5). So “by their fruits ye shall know them” (Mat 7:20). Fruit is the hallmark of the work of the Spirit.

What then are the fruits of the Spirit? Paul speaks of the call of God (1Co 1:9) which in the preaching of the cross comes with power into the soul (1Co 1:18). He says, “Ye see your calling brethren” (1Co 1:26), which is a vital constituent of the new birth. What is that call? One of its features is seen in his second letter to the Church at Corinth, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you” (2Co 6:17).

The call of God to leave this world of wickedness and follow Him is a constituent part of the new birth. Christ’s prayer before He entered Gethsemane speaks clearly of this fruit of the Spirit in conversion, “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (Joh 17:15-16). Jesus reveals the effect of the call; a separation, not in an outward Pharisaical fashion, but in an inward, tender fear of God; a separation from the company of the godless and from their companionship, since the one born again is no longer “of the world,” but is now a sheep of Christ’s pasture and therefore his company is with Christ’s flock. This allows no mingling. “Touch not,” could not be clearer.

It is a willing separation, “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power” (Psa 110:3), of one who, under the resurrection power of the new birth now says, “I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart” (Psa 119:32). Many questions arise out of this, not least-have we heard the great Shepherd’s voice of love and tenderness and authority and power calling us out of sin, darkness and the world, and have we been given grace to obey it? How important is the beginning! It has such a bearing on the end. “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth to life,” said Christ, “and few there be that find it” (Mat 7:14). It is vital to examine our beginning, to “examine [ourselves] whether [we] be in the faith.” “Prove your own selves” (2Co 13:5), says Paul.

A right beginning commences with the work of the Spirit effectually calling out of nature’s “darkness into [God’s] marvelous light” (1Pe 2:9). The things of the godless world and its company are left behind for ever. While the coming out may be gradual, the final result is a complete separation. The call of God has been effectual, “Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1Jo 2:15). Truth has its own light and reveals that “strait gate and narrow way.” What a mark of true conversion this is! A life that is marked by a full separation from all that is godless, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever” (1Jo 2:16-17).

One who is truly called by the Holy Spirit will not need to enquire what to leave in this separation. It will be clearly shown to such. “They who are not of the world” will be visibly seen in their new company and in the things that have been left behind them. Obedience to the command, “Come out from among them,” will be visible, and the reproach of the cross of Christ will be theirs (Heb 11:26; 13:13), “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Heb 11:25).

As the hallmark of revival in the 18th century under the power of the Spirit was the preaching of the new birth, so the hallmark of the Spirit’s work in the revival of the 17th century was godliness and separation from worldliness in the lives of the Puritans. While no doubt the 17th century revival was tinged with elements of Pharisaism, yet it was pre-eminently the century when this fruit of the Spirit was manifested in the lives of many God-fearing divines and their congregations.

Outstanding in describing this feature of the Spirit’s work is the *Pilgrim’s Progress* of John Bunyan, in which he describes the powerful call of the Holy Spirit in deep, cutting, incisive conviction of sin in his heart, a solemn realization of eternity, his lost condition in the light of eternity, his departure from the City of Destruction (the godless world) and his seeking of the cross of Calvary for the precious blood of Christ to wash away his sin and loose the burden of guilt from his soul. A real, vital knowledge of salvation is found in Bunyan’s *Progress*, portrayed out of his own spiritual experience. History and time cannot date this work of the Spirit and the godly sobriety, reverence, sincerity, and tender fear of God that accompanied it. Here was no lightness. Here was a vast gulf fixed between jocularity, hilarity and foolish nonsense, earthly joy and happiness, and a soul under the solemn weight of eternity, longing for the blood of Christ to wash away its guilt and filth. The work of the Spirit in conviction, in convincing of sin, brought such a soul to Christ, longing to know His blood applied by the Holy Spirit, “The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin” (1Jo 1:7), and to a knowledge of the peace that flowed from the cross of Calvary.

Such a work of the Spirit recalls the 16th century and the Reformation under Martin Luther, when the Spirit’s work was seen in the truth of justification by faith alone: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1); “Peace by the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20).

Now in examining the Spirit's work in the 20th century, can we find it as outlined above? It is not necessary to search far in the Scriptures to find it. The Lord Jesus promised, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth... He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and show it unto you" (Joh 16:13-14). Christ's parable of the vine and the branches (Joh 15:1-8) shows the living union of a soul with Christ; the Spirit's work accomplished in the new birth. Christ is the head and the Church the body (Rom 12:5). It is the Spirit's work to bring about this union of Christ and His Church in time. Paul, speaking of this union to the Corinthian Church wrote, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1Co 1:30).

It is the Spirit's work to accomplish this union, bringing the soul to peace with God through the application of the blessings of Christ in wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Such is a Christian, described in the language of Paul in Ephesians, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1), and again in his letter to the Church at Colosse, "You being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col 2:13). Here is the *primary* work of the Holy Spirit, in the salvation of sinners, manifested in the fruits of a life of prayer, faith, and godly separation from the world; manifested in a Spirit-taught knowledge of sin and the application of the precious blood of Christ to the soul, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... But with the precious blood of Christ" (1Pe 1:18-19).

2. *The Preaching of the Cross*

If we now examine the work of the Spirit in the new birth, it is seen to be through what the Apostle Paul describes as "the foolishness of preaching" (1Co 1:21). The final words of the Gospel according to Mark are, "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mar 16:20). When Jesus sent out His twelve disciples, Luke says, "They departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where" (Luk 9:6). Luke also states, Christ "Sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick" (Luk 9:2). From these Scriptures, it is plain that the primary commission of the Lord Jesus to His disciples was to *preach*. Paul's instruction to Timothy was simple, "Preach the word" (2Ti 4:2), and the Word was Christ (Joh 1:14).

This gospel order is much lost sight of today. There was a time in our country when powerful preachers, anointed by the Holy Spirit, preached in our cities, towns and villages, and thousands were called out of nature's darkness by the power of the Spirit in the new birth. The invincible grace of God the Holy Spirit brought about conversion by the resurrection power of Christ. But where is such preaching today? Preaching does not solely consist of setting forth Scriptural doctrine, though that is a vital part of it. Preaching must essentially be the work of one who has had given to him by the Holy Spirit a divine commission. Preaching is not the work of every member of the body of Christ. The new birth does not come through water baptism; it comes primarily through the God-ordained means which the Apostle Paul described as "the foolishness of preaching." It is of no use to seek revival in our country today through any other means than the preaching of men ordained by God to this sacred office, and sent by Him. Such receive an anointing of the Holy Spirit with unction, dew, power and authority, and their ministry alone will be used in revival.

The Apostle Paul asks pertinent questions regarding this subject in his letter to the church at Rome. He first states a truth, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom 10:13). Then he asks,

1) "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" A faithless, unconverted soul cannot call on God. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is" (Heb 11:6).

2) "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Where there is no new birth, there is no faith and no hearing ear such as Christ spoke of, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mat 13:9).

3) "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Christ said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear" (Mat 13:16). He spoke to Peter after he answered the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" with the words, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," and said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat 16:15-17). This revelation was the outcome of "the gift of faith" (Eph 2:8), given in the moment of the new birth.

4) Now if preachers are to be the principal instruments in God's hands for this work of the new birth, then the apostle asks, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" There is clearly no preaching that is powerfully, constantly blessed of God the Holy Spirit, except from the heart and lips of one who is sent of God for this work. All other preaching is in vain.

As Paul said of the office of the High Priest, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb 5:4), and as the Lord told Jeremiah the prophet, "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee;

and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer 1:5), so Paul clearly shows that regarding the office of the ministry in the Church, “No man taketh this honor unto himself” but he that is ordained, or (as he says) is sent by God to the nations. “How shall they preach except they be sent?” has this answer, “They cannot preach except they are sent.” This reveals that to preach with “power from on high,” with the anointing of the Holy Spirit, is confined to those who have been sent by God the Holy Spirit to the great work of the ministry, remarkably described as “the foolishness of preaching” (1Co 1:21).

Paul goes on to describe his own ministry, for he was so clearly sent (Christ to Ananias, “Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name [preach] before the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel” (Act 9:15) as, “My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (1Co 2:4-5). Paul in this instance says, “I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling” (1Co 2:3), and yet his preaching was with power. He describes his speech as “contemptible” (2Co 10:10), and says in 2 Corinthians 11:6, “Though I be rude in speech,” and in 1 Corinthians 2:1, “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech,” yet he spoke with divine power as a sent-servant of Jesus Christ, and referred to those things which God had revealed to him by His Spirit (1Co 2:10). He was a sent-servant of Jesus Christ, preaching out of the revealed knowledge of Christ in his heart, revealed by the Holy Spirit of Truth. What authority he had!

Those born again of the Spirit under such a God-sent, powerful evangelist, “attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul” (Act 16:14). In the account of Paul’s ministry regarding Lydia, whom he met by the river at Philippi, we see that the sent-servant of God had been obedient to the voice of his Master regarding where he should preach. Forbidden to preach the Word in Asia and Bythinia, he had eventually been led to Macedonia. What success met him there by the river at the time of prayer. Here is an example of the power of the Spirit attending preaching, “Lydia... whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul” (Act 16:14).

So it is in every case, a divine commission gives a divine authority to a man sent by the Holy Spirit. “Whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go...” (Isa 6:8-9). Such is the command to all true ministers of Christ. Solemn for those who go unsent. There can be no prosperity attending their ministry, no divine blessing. In the case of Jeremiah, while his ministry apparently had no success, and he died in Egypt, yet God was justified by it. One man’s ministry may be of “life unto life” and another’s of “death unto death,” and, says the Apostle Paul, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2Co 2:16). Then he goes on to add, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life” (2Co 3:5-6).

The apostle saw his ministry as given by God the Holy Spirit and adds, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (2Co 4:7). His was not a ministry of the letter, not a mere intellectual knowledge acquired by academic study, as his knowledge had been as a Pharisee. The foundation of his ministry, and its authority, stemmed from what he described as, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2Co 4:6). Or as he says in 1 Corinthians 15:8, “Last of all he was seen of me: also as one born out of due time.” A light had shone in his heart on the road to Damascus, and Christ had been seen of him by faith. He had heard His voice and preached out of a personal knowledge and sight of Him. So it is with every sent-servant of Christ today: “My sheep hear My voice,” is as true of them as it was of the Apostle Paul. Such is the case of all God’s servants, ministers of the Gospel, whether He sends them as pastors or under the command, “Do the work of an evangelist” (2Ti 4:5).

Let us not then lose sight of the office of the ministry today, of its character and importance in any future revival. The vital work in revival is the new birth. The ordained instruments for that, in the Lord’s hand, are His sent-servants, divinely commissioned by Him and taught by Him. The work is His, “The government shall be upon his shoulder” (Isa 9:6). He anoints and He directs those whom He has sent and their work He blesses with divinely appointed success. This must be the foundation of any future revival, an anointing, an outpouring of God the Holy Spirit on the preaching of the Gospel by those sent by Him, commissioned by Him, to this great work.

3. The Spirit of Prayer

There is also another aspect of the work of the Spirit in revival: that is prayer, prayer given by God the Holy Spirit. “I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them” (Eze 36:37), is a timeless divine principle found in Christ’s own words, “Ask and ye shall receive” (Joh 16:24). The Lord gives blessings in answer to wrestling prayer (importunity), not least the outpouring of the Spirit upon His Church in revival. Such prayer must be in accordance with His will, as He taught His disciples, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” and in the writings of the Apostle John, “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he

heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1Jo 5:14-15).

Such prayer is given by the Spirit, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom 8:26). Such seek divine leading. They know the "secret place of the most high" (Psa 91:1), and obey the command of Christ, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Mat 6:6). Equally they know the force of united prayer as Christ said, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mat 18:19-20). John Bunyan in his work, "A Discourse Touching Prayer" (1662), says that, "Prayer is a sincere, a sensible, an affectionate pouring out of the soul to God through Christ; by the strength or assistance of the Spirit: for such things as God has promised, or according to His Word; for the good of the Church; with submission in faith to the will of God" (Prayer, John Bunyan. p.13. BOT edition. 1965). In the Gospel according to Luke, Christ speaking of the man who would not rise to give his friend three loaves says, "Yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you," and He went on to say, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luk 11:8-13). Here is the power of the Holy Spirit directly associated with prayer.

Prior to many revivals in England in past centuries, the major factor which lay at the root of the revival was the force of united prayer. Daniel's prayer in Chapter 9 of his book is a scriptural example of the work of the Holy Spirit in divinely indicted prayer, in confession, repentance, and submission to the Lord's will, pleading for His own Name's sake (Dan 9:19), and in accordance with His will (Dan 9:2), for the restoration of Jerusalem. Such prayer cannot embrace amalgamations with error. It is a desire for the light of truth to be manifested by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit of Truth in the preaching of the Gospel. The mighty miracle that is desired in such prayer is the new birth. When given, it is manifested in the sinner coming to acknowledge of the guilt, filth, darkness and corruption of his old nature and abhorring himself in dust and ashes. This is repentance, godly sorrow for sin, so lacking as an evident fruit of the Spirit today. Yet it is a vital part of salvation, as a guilty sinner is brought under the weight of sin to seek the good physician, Christ, for healing from the leprosy of sin. "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Luk 5:31-32). Christ obviously here referred to the self-righteous, and to sinners convinced of their sin by the Holy Spirit.

When, then, a prayer is made for the power of the Holy Spirit in revival, it is that light and conviction may come to sinners, that they may realize their lost condition eternally before God, know His wrath against their sin and flee from their sins to the cross of Calvary, there to experience what Bunyan's Pilgrim experienced in the loss of his load of sin, forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ.

4. *The Sanctifying Work of the Spirit*

The question now arises, where are the mighty preachers of the calibre of Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield and Daniel Rowlands? Where are the godly lives and godly living of such men as Samuel Rutherford and Robert Murray McCheyne? Where are the prayer meetings and prayers for revival which have characterized former awakenings?

The godly living of the Scottish Highlands, the Welsh Valleys and the English countryside with their chapels in every village, has long since gone. The new generation of young Christians is reared on Arminian or semi-Arminian theology. They say they have given their souls to the Lord but appear not to know what it means to feel lost and weighed down under guilt. Who can speak in these days of the precious blood of Christ washing their soul from sin (1Jo 1:7)? The spiritual experience of the Pilgrim in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, losing his burden of sin at the Cross and receiving pardon, a robe of righteousness and the sealing of the Spirit, is meaningless to many. Where is there today in the churches true separation from the godless world? How many young professing Christians there are, who see little wrong in a wide range of worldly entertainments and pleasures, while professing to be saved. The new birth in all its power in conviction of sin is sadly lacking. Separation from worldliness, in its scriptural definition as known by the godly Puritans, is a way too narrow for many. Where is the evidence in life, conduct and conversation, of the fruits of the new birth as the Lord Jesus prayed for them before he entered the garden of Gethsemane, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth" (Joh 17:19)?

Christ prayed for sanctification for His disciples and His Church that they might be "in the world but not of it." "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (Joh 17:16). Defective views of the holiness, glory, and majesty of God, result in a dangerous freedom to wander in worldliness with impunity. But a sense of the wrath of God, as Moses and Elijah knew it on Sinai (Horeb), will bring about the same separation that Moses knew in the court of Pharaoh when he "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" (Heb 11:24) and chose "rather to suffer affliction

tion with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Heb 11:25), and esteemed “the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward” (Heb 11:26), and forsook Egypt “not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing him who is invisible” (Heb 11:27). Here was true sanctification and obedience to the command, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate... touch not the unclean thing” (2Co 6:17). This is what is needed today, a mighty work of the Holy Spirit in revival, bringing the power of God in conviction and condemnation into the hearts of sinners, such that they cry out in a lost and ruined condition, “What must I do to be saved?” (Act 16:30).

Then, as is seen in Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, there will be a coming to the Lord Jesus Christ with a burden of sin and an experience of the application of redemption, the blood of Christ applied with power to the conscience, “The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin” (1Jo 1:7). Then the robe of righteousness of Christ will be given to the sinner by imputation, and sealed in his heart by the Spirit, or as Paul says in his second letter to the Church at Corinth, the “earnest” of the Spirit. “God, who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (2Co 1:22). This earnest of the Spirit is spoken of in 2 Corinthians 5:5. It is described in Ephesians 1:13 as, “In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” It is spoken of later in Ephesians 4:30 as a sealing “unto the day of redemption.” This is not a “second blessing.” This is the fruit of the work of the new birth in which the convicted sinner is brought by the blessed Spirit to the Cross, there sweetly to enter into the words of William Cowper in his hymn, “There is a fountain filled with blood,”

*“The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Washed all my sins away.”*

Here is the vital blessing which follows conviction, (the second part of John Murray’s book *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*) redemption applied. But where is such an experience today?

This was the experience of Saul of Tarsus when Ananias came to him after three days in Damascus. He was “filled with the Holy Ghost” and rose and was baptized, “and straightway he preached Christ” (Act 9:9-20). Such a baptism of the Spirit after conversion was not a “second blessing.” It was the Holy Spirit continuing His work in the soul. In Christ’s own day, before His Ascension “the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified” (Joh 7:39). But when He was glorified, then the Spirit was poured out upon His disciples, as He had promised after His resurrection, “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Act 1:5). This related to Jesus’ return to glory and was seen on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2:1-4, in fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Joe 2:28-30; Act 2:17).

This work of the Holy Spirit has been identical in all generations ever since the Lord Jesus Christ returned to glory. It was seen in the case of the centurion, Cornelius, who lived in Caesarea. Under divine direction, Peter came to Caesarea and preached in his house, and under his ministry the Holy Spirit was received in the fulfillment of Christ’s promise. The blessing of pardon was known in his heart. The centurion was already converted. Now he was brought to experience the application of the peace-speaking blood of Christ (Eph 2:13). It was part of the continuous work of the Spirit, a blessing known by all real Christians; the atoning blood and righteousness of Christ, the sealing of the Spirit, producing in the soul a sweet measure of assurance and hope.

3. Gifts in the Early Church

1. Tongues

At the time of the Spirit’s outpouring in Pentecostal days, there was given the special gifts or signs of an apostle. As the Lord Jesus Himself was “a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs” (Act 2:22), so His apostles were given such gifts (Act 2:43; Mar 16:20). Paul, in his second letter to the Church at Corinth said, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you” (2Co 12:12; Rom 15:19). The gifts they were given were remarkable. They spoke in many foreign languages spontaneously by divine gift (Act 2:4-11). Since when has a group of uneducated fishermen spoken fluently in at least sixteen different languages? It has never been repeated.

Paul, in his first letter to the Church at Corinth, mentions these Pentecostal tongues (or languages): “divers [different] kinds of tongues” and goes on to mention “the interpretation of tongues” (1Co 12:10), or language translation. Nothing very extraordinary when one knows both languages well but singularly miraculous when one language is totally unknown. Asking the question, “Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” Paul shows that it was a gift limited to some only, notably the apostles.

Then he speaks of “the tongues of men and of angels” (1Co 13:1). In the dawn of creation there was one language, the language used by God to speak with Adam and Eve in the Garden and spoken of in Genesis 11.1, “The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.” This language, which God used to speak with Adam and all generations until Noah and his sons, was “confounded” by God at Babel, when the Lord “scattered” mankind. Ever after, the human race was divided by many languages (Gen 11:7-9).

When in the following generations God spoke to His people, as with Moses or Elijah or Samuel or the prophets, then it is clear that there were no interpreters, and God or an angel spoke in the language which that person understood. So in Jesus’ day, when the voice from heaven spoke, “This is my beloved son” (Mat 17:5), the disciples understood “in their own language,” and similarly when the Lord Jesus spoke to Saul on the road to Damascus, He spoke in the language Saul understood. The Lord speaks today from heaven by the power of the Holy Spirit in conversion to all the nations of the world in their own language. So the language of angels and of the Holy Spirit is as it was at Pentecost, “Every man heard in his own tongue” (Act 2:8). The language spoken prior to Babel was removed from the earth and is unknown today. The language of the saints as they sing united from every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, in the realms of glory, “Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev 1:5), will be given to the saints to speak when they enter glory, just as miraculously as the apostles were given the power to speak languages hitherto unknown to them, at Pentecost. That language is reserved for heaven and is, and has been, consequently unknown on this earth. The angels who have spoken to God’s children have spoken to them in a language they already knew, there being no need for an interpreter.

These languages or tongues are spoken of in 1 Corinthians 14, where the apostle, quoting from Isaiah 28:11-12, speaks of “other tongues and other lips” (1Co 14:21), and says, “Tongues [language] are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not” (1Co 14:22). This chapter also refers to those who “speak in an unknown tongue” (1Co 14:13-14). The word “unknown” is an insertion of the translators and is not in the original Greek. It was inserted to make clear that the language was either previously unknown to the speaker or was a language unknown to some of his hearers, who spoke other languages. It was not a language totally unknown to any member of the human race. There is not a single record in Scripture, nor one single example in the Bible, of any special language of angels. Every Biblical record of God or angels speaking to men and women shows the language used to have been the native language of the one addressed. Scripture is silent about the language of angels. So the reference Paul makes to praying in a foreign language (1Co 14:2), “He that speaketh in an unknown tongue [language], speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him,” is one praying in a language unknown to those listening. Finally Paul says, “Tongues [languages], shall cease” (1Co 13:8), that is when the world ceases and the heavens depart on fire.

History shows that the gift of tongues (languages) given to the apostles has totally vanished from the earth. No longer do Christians have the ability to speak or pray fluently in foreign languages, which they have not previously learnt. It is in no way a gift present in the Church today. It was given alone to the early Church and has not appeared in any generation since.

2. Healing and Miracles

A further special gift given by God as a sign of the apostles, “God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will” (Heb 2:4), was healing and miracles.

From the time that Peter and John healed the lame man at the gate Beautiful in the temple at Jerusalem (Act 3:1-11), there followed under the anointing of the Holy Spirit many such miracles. A striking record occurs in Acts 5:15-16, where even the shadow of Peter, in passing by the sick, produced healing. In Acts 9, there follows the healing of Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, and the remarkable raising from the dead of Tabitha, called Dorcas (Act 9:40), an event witnessed by her many friends and widely reported in Joppa.

Then Luke records, in Acts 12, Peter’s imprisonment in Judea at the hands of Herod, and his miraculous deliverance from a heavily guarded, military prison in answer to the prayers of his fellow Christians. He was asleep, bound with chains, between two soldiers. In the presence of the angel of God, his chains fell off, and he passed through a triple-gate system, each of which opened before him. On Paul’s first missionary journey we read of the miraculous, temporary blinding of Elymas, who opposed the preaching of the Gospel before the Roman Deputy, Sergius Paulus, at Pathos in Cyprus. This was followed at Lystra in Asia Minor (Turkey) by the healing of the man crippled from birth, who had never walked, but at Paul’s command, “He leaped up and walked” (Act 14:10). In Acts 19 Luke records special miracles that Paul wrought when the sick were healed by being touched by personal possessions of Paul, such as his handkerchief. This reminds us of the healing power of Peter’s shadow. On Paul’s third missionary journey there is recorded the raising from the dead of Eutychus after he had been killed, falling from the third storey of a building. These healings and miracles are examples of the kind of divine miracles that the Holy Ghost enabled the apostles to perform.

It is quite clear that in degree and kind, such miracles have never been repeated since the times of the apostles. These miracles and acts of healing had two divine characteristics. They were perfect, and they were the instantaneous work of God. They were not partial healings. They all have the identical hallmarks of the Lord Jesus Christ's healing work. Never again in the centuries of the history of the Christian Church have men been able to do exactly the same as the apostles with identical results. This does not rule out the fact that sometimes in answer to prayer, God has seen fit sovereignly to heal people, as is recorded in Mrs. Hudson Taylor's biography of the Chinese Confucian scholar, Pastor Hsi, who had been a victim of opium addiction and had been converted through the prayers of the Methodist missionary, David Hill. That account reveals the mighty power of the Holy Spirit in delivering Hsi from opium addiction. Equally sovereignly, we read of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, speaking of a weakness which the Lord gave him, a thorn in the flesh, which he asked the Lord three times to remove. But the Lord answered him, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2Co 12:9). Never again did he ask the Lord to remove it. He suffered under it all his days, saying, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (v. 9), adding the divine principle, "For when I am weak, then am I strong" (2Co 12:10).

This establishes divine sovereignty regarding healing, and shows us that the Lord uses bodily ailments in the path of sanctification. Paul's thorn in the flesh was not a chastisement for any sin, but rather a counterbalance to a sweet revelation of heaven which the Lord had given him (2Co 12:1-5).

The Lord is still able and willing to heal today in answer to earnest, fervent prayer. Let us be equally willing to know that when it is not His will to answer our prayers, then we should be like Paul, who submitted to his God, and gloried in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him (2Co 12:9). While all sickness stems from the Fall of man in Adam and is common to all mankind, and while Christ by His death redeemed the body and soul of His people, yet it is not His intention to save His people from natural death nor to heal and deliver them from every bodily ailment. To teach such and try to accomplish it, with the best will in the world, is only in many cases to fly in the face of divine sovereignty, to bring shame upon God's Church, sorrow into the lives of those waiting to be healed, casting doubt on God's power, and giving the cause of failure as lack of faith on the part of those seeking to be healed, when this is not so.

When Pastor Hsi prayed for healing in his ministry, with simple faith anointing with oil (Jam 5:14), seeking the same blessing as he had known in his own experience, also at the same time, using available medicines, he learnt, (and it is the great hallmark of the reality of his work), that sometimes the Lord saw fit to answer his prayers, but at other times He did not. Such a work of the Lord is sovereign and sacred, whether healed or unhealed.

Jesus often counseled those He healed to tell no man, but go and bow before His Father in gratitude and return to give thanks. There is no doubt that today such things as cancer may be healed in answer to prayer; yet many times it is fatal and no amount of prayer can heal it, any more than such earnest prayer could save the life of the early Charismatic, Edward Irving. (*The Life of Edward Irving*. Arnold Dallimore. B.O.T.)

The Scriptures clearly show that divine sovereignty reigns, and sickness as well as healing can be and is used by God to His glory, but He is sovereign. While there is a measure of healing in the Church today in answer to prayer, the gifts which the apostles had by far excelled anything that has ever been known in the Church since.

3. Prophecy and Divine Direction

a. Prophecy

Prophecy is a consistent feature of Old and New Testament Scriptures. Throughout the pages of the Old Testament there are constant, detailed references to the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such an example is the Psalmist David's word, "They pierced my hands and my feet" (Psa 22:16) and, "They parted my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture" (Psa 22:18), these two events being referred to as "the Scripture being fulfilled" by Matthew (Mat 27:35) and John (Joh 19:24).

This is one example of many Scriptures of the Old Testament being fulfilled. Such was the content of the Lord Jesus' sermon on the road to Emmaus when, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luk 24:27). So we see the Lord, going back to the first prophecy of Scripture regarding Himself, the seed of the woman (the incarnate Son of God) would bruise Satan's head, and Satan would bruise His (Jesus') heel: "It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen 3:15), and undoubtedly coming to the prophet Isaiah, who recorded Christ's virgin birth (Isa 7:14), His incarnation (Isa 9:6-7), His miracles (Isa 35:5-6), and His sufferings and substitutionary sacrifice (Isa 53). Not only were Isaiah's prophecies a most glorious opening up of gospel truth, but also historically he made reference by name to Cyrus, the Persian king, two hundred years before he was born (Isa 44:28; 45:1), and prophesied his use by God to enable Jerusalem to be rebuilt (Isa 44:28).

Other prophets in the Old Testament included Jeremiah, Daniel and the minor prophets. This is but a brief survey of the mighty, divine activity of prophecy throughout the Old Testament, some of which has yet to be fulfilled.

In the New Testament, the Lord Jesus was the greatest of all the prophets, and spoke of His own death and resurrection, of laying down His life that He might take it again, and extensively of His second coming (Mat 24). He told Peter that he (Peter) would deny Him and revealed His knowledge of events past, present, and to come, on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah, and Peter, James and John, as He spoke together with them of His death.

When we come to look at the prophetic utterances of the Lord's disciples and the Apostle Paul, the book of the Revelation of John stands out as a profound prophecy, much of which is still hidden in its full meaning. Paul in his letters to Timothy refers to the "last times" (1Ti 4:1-3; 2Ti 3:1-5) and what they will be like, and in his letter to the Thessalonian Christians, he refers to the second coming of Christ and the condition of the Church at that time (2Th 2:3-4). In his letter to the Corinthian and Thessalonian Christians, Paul prophesied the resurrection of the dead (1Co 15:35-58; 1Th 4:13-18). Equally the Apostle Peter prophesied the Second Coming of Christ, as coming suddenly, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2Pe 3:10-11). In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter gave a description of the end of the world, quoting the prophet Joel (Act 2:19-20; Joe 2:30-31), similar to the Lord Jesus' own prophecy regarding His Second Coming recorded in Matthew chapter 24, and including the words, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mat 24:35).

Now these are but a few examples in the Old and New Testaments of divine prophecy. It is clear that such prophecy was used in the making of the Canon of Scripture, and that all that the Lord intended was then revealed. In the Revelation, the final book of Scripture prophecy, a solemn warning was given by the Apostle John regarding tampering with prophecy, when he wrote, "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book" (Rev 22:18-19).

If such applies to the Book of the Revelation, we can be certain it applies to all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. Never again will there be a need for prophets in the Church to reveal the truth. That is finished forever, and any additions (which cannot have the authority of inspired Scripture) must inevitably be the work of false prophets. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself warned of false prophets, "Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many" (Mat 24:11). The Apostle Peter spoke of them when he said, "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies..." (2Pe 1:20-21; 2:1). And John the Apostle writes, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1Jo 4:1).

Additions to the Scriptures which are common today include the Roman Catholic Church's declaration of the immaculate (sinless) conception of the virgin Mary, namely that the virgin Mary herself was born without sin; and her ascension to heaven; and the title given to her by the Roman Catholic Church as Queen of heaven and co-redeemer with Christ. Equally, the Roman Catholic Church has taken from the uninspired apocryphal Jewish addition to the Old Testament Scriptures (the Apocrypha) the practice of prayers for the dead, together with the concept of purgatory, none of which has any place in the inspired Canon of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

If today it is thought necessary to resurrect the office of prophet in the Church, it is quite clear that it is an office for which the Church has no use. All is now revealed. No new Scripture truth remains to be revealed. This fact has been consistently recognized by the Church in all ages. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2Ti 3:16) and the Church is accordingly, "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph 2:20). "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1Co 3:11) revealed in the Scripture, and revealed by the Spirit in the soul.

b. Divine Direction

It cannot be denied that the Lord directs His people. Samuel, in being sent to Bethlehem to anoint David king, was directed by God past all David's brothers to hear the words, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he" (1Sa 16:12). Elijah was directed by God to go to Zarephath to find a widow woman there (1Ki 17:9). The Apostle Paul was forbidden by the Spirit to go and preach the Gospel in Asia and Bithynia, but directed in a vision to go over into Macedonia, where he eventually came to Philippi and was the means in the Lord's hand of the conversion of Lydia (Act 16:6-15). The Lord showed the Apostle Paul that he must go to Rome and told him in the Mediterranean storm, when all seemed lost, that he would be brought before Caesar and none who were sailing with him would be drowned (Act 27:23-25).

The Lord still guides Christians today. Hudson Taylor heard the divine direction, “Go to China,” and so have many other missionaries who have been directed by the Lord to their life’s work, such as William Carey, who was sent to India. Divine direction is not necessarily a voice spoken from heaven directly into the soul. Sometimes it is as when the Apostle Paul was given clear direction on the road to Damascus, “Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Act 9:6). Equally, Ananias was given a divine direction to go to Saul, and told, “Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Act 9:15).

At other times the Lord calls Christians to act prayerfully and confirms it in their hearts afterwards. Clear Scripture regarding divine direction is found in the Proverbs, “Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established” (Pro 16:3). No time scale is promised by the Lord. The Christian prayerfully ventures, praying to be kept from any mistake seeking divine direction; and many weeks, months, or even years later are able to look back and to know that it was a right decision which was made in the fear of the Lord. “Thy thoughts shall be established.”

Sometimes, as Christians well know, God commands them to, “Stand still,” as Moses commanded Israel at the Red Sea (Exo 14:13). At other times they enter into the experience, “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left” (Isa 30:21). Such experience is the fulfillment of the Lord’s Word, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (Joh 10:27). Such experience was typified in the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, which led ancient Israel by day and night (Exo 13:21).

But such divine leading can be abused. As seen in the characters of Scripture such as Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Paul, or in recent times, Hudson Taylor, such powerful divine direction came only rarely, mainly at major turning points in their lives, and certainly not every hour, every day or every month. A word supposedly given for every minor activity or small decision in life, every turning of the street corner is unknown in Scripture. It is clear that as they preach His Word, God’s servants desire to have their subject and text firmly laid in their hearts by the Lord; though often they may have doubt about their text while at other times it may be clearly revealed to them. The key to all right guidance is to lay it in prayer before the Lord, asking with the Psalmist David, “Teach me thy way O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies” (Psa 27:11).

There is frequently much confusion in the minds of those seeking guidance as to whether a particular “way” is of the Lord or not, and so there is a strong desire (not always satisfied by the Lord) for a clear word, such as the Lord’s words to Cyrus, “I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight” (Isa 45:2). Such words, when spoken by the Holy Spirit into the heart, bring peace, comfort, and a sense of the Lord’s approbation. Such was Naomi’s direction in faith to Ruth, “Sit still my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall” (Rut 3:18). This was a blessed waiting in faith for the Lord to act, after which all the glory was His.

Because a particular way of God’s dealing with Christians may be abused by them, that way is not invalidated; and, as Bunyan shows, some may walk mistakenly in “by-path meadows” and have to re-trace their steps, yet in the general progress and direction of divine guidance it will be true of them as in the Lord’s merciful hands, “He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation” (Psa 107:7), and they will have cause at the end of life’s journey to reiterate the truth, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28).

Sanctified teaching will eventually reveal that many things that they thought were His will, were not (Isa 55:8-9); and many things they thought were not His will, will eventually be found to have been His will. The lot of all who are truly taught of the Spirit and humbly brought into God-exalting views of their ignorance and His wisdom is beautifully expressed in William Cowper’s hymn,

*“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.
“Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.
“Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.”*

Humility and prayer; total submission to the Lord's will; a tender fear of God; a realization of His wisdom and our ignorance; an entrance into the Scripture, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa 55:9), will give a sobering view of divine guidance and less confidence than some are apt to exhibit in this subject.

4. The Continuance of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Scripture shows that John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb and that Zacharias, Mary, Simeon and Anna, were filled with the Holy Ghost. There is however a particular gift or effusion of the Holy Ghost distinguishable from this. The Lord Jesus speaks of it in these words, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)" (Joh 7:38-39).

Bishop Christopher Wordsworth says in his Greek New Testament on this passage, "The waters could not flow from the Rock, which is Christ, till the Rock had been smitten." This outpouring of the Spirit came on the disciples at Pentecost after Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension to Heaven, giving the gifts of the Spirit in the early Church. These gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, and the offices in the Church are given in 1 Corinthians 12:28-30. They are also recorded in a more abbreviated form in Romans 12:6-8. These were the particular gifts given in the early Church after Christ's ascension, not before. They were given by the Holy Spirit to individuals. To one was given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another the ability to heal, to another the ability to work miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another the ability to speak various languages, (different kinds of tongues), to another the ability to interpret (translate) (1Co 12:8-10). No one person had all the gifts, as Paul shows when he asks the question, "Have all gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" (1Co 12:30). And the answer was that all did not heal, or speak in languages, or interpret.

This receiving of gifts in the early Church is recorded in Acts 19:1-7, when the Apostle Paul came to Ephesus and met disciples of John and asked them whether, having believed, they had received the Holy Spirit (Act 19:2). When he heard they had not, he baptized them in the name of Jesus, laid hands on them and they spoke with tongues (languages) and prophesied. In Ephesians 1:13 we read of those who, having believed, "were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," that promise being referred to by the Lord Jesus after His resurrection and before His ascension: "Behold I send the promise of my father upon you" (Luk 24:49), and again in Joel 2:28 and in Acts 2:17. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit promised by the prophet Joel and by the Lord Jesus ("power from on high," Luk 24:49) was a peculiar outpouring upon the early Church. The Lord set in the Church in those early days, apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues (languages) (1Co 12:28).

Scripture reveals quite clearly that when the apostles died, John being the last, they were not replaced by new apostles comparable with the replacement of Judas Iscariot. As the Christian Church was established around the Mediterranean, these particular gifts were gradually withdrawn. The great days of miracles and the exceptional powers of healing, speaking in tongues (languages), and such gifts were withdrawn. This happened at the same time as the Canon of Scripture was finally built up to its completion. Never were there again in the Church such mighty men as the apostles. The power of the Holy Spirit in the office of the ministry, the preaching of the Gospel, and the conversion of men and women remained, but with the departure of the early apostles, "the signs of the apostles" also departed.

Church history confirms this throughout the centuries following, and while men rose like Saint Augustine of Hippo and the early Christian Fathers, there were many errors and inconsistencies among them. Great and godly men wrote books, as Saint Augustine of Hippo wrote his *City of God*. The Church produced many great theologians as the centuries passed. At the Reformation, men of the caliber of Luther and Calvin expounded the Scriptures and Europe witnessed a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But even that revival, and others which followed, lacked the definitive characteristic of the great era of the apostles and the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit which had been given to found the Christian Church. Nothing has ever appeared in the Christian Church since that period to match or parallel the gifts then given to the apostles.

While there have been claims to miracles, healing, prophecies or speaking in tongues (languages) in generations since Pentecost and right up to the present day, an examination of the evidence shows that the miracles of Jesus, such as the raising from the dead of Jairus' daughter, the widow of Nain's son and Lazarus; the calming of the storm on Galilee and the walking on the water; the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand; the cleansing of the lepers; the healing of the blind, deaf and dumb; the healing of Malchus' severed ear; the turning of the water into wine and many other similar miracles, have been unparalleled in their nature and extent. It is significant that while Peter and Paul occasionally raised the dead and healed many sick, no mention ever occurs again in Scripture of walking on the water. Nor did Paul attempt to calm the storm in the Mediterranean in his journey to Rome for trial before Caesar. These mighty

acts were reserved for the presence and Word of the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who Himself created all things.

Similarly in every generation since Pentecost, the ability to speak fluently in other languages (as spoken by the apostles at Pentecost) has been noticeably absent, as has been the healing of the blind, deaf, dumb, lame, and lepers, comparable to the acts of Jesus and His apostles. If healing were to take place today on such a scale in our hospitals, and were authenticated by the medical profession, then it would certainly make headline news. But we do not have such headline news; only discussion as to whether claims to such healings are genuine. While there are striking answers to prayer, and healing is not totally unknown, yet it remains true that on the scale, degree, and magnitude of the apostolic blessing, such gifts are withdrawn from the Church, and only to the apostles was given the power merely to pass by and heal with a shadow, or for the sick to touch an apostle's handkerchief and be healed. Whoever walked around our hospitals healing whole wards of patients!

Equally, the striking gifts of prophecy in the early Church regarding major events such as the first and second coming of Christ, and the Lord's work regarding the return of the Jews to Israel and their conversion, (Rom 11:23; 2Co 3:16) and similar prophecies centuries ahead of their time, were reserved to the prophets and apostles, and are unrepeatable, unique to the early Church, closely connected to the formation of the Canon of Scripture. While the Lord may give Christians guidance and divine leading as He did to Hudson Taylor to go to China, yet He did not give Hudson Taylor any clear knowledge of the future or the extent of the future expansion of the China Inland Mission. That man of God ventured in faith, taking hundreds of missionaries, dependent upon the Lord to help him supply their needs and use his ministry to the salvation of souls. The great power of the work of men like William Carey and Hudson Taylor was the power of the Spirit in the preaching of the Word of God, and the distribution of the Scriptures in the native languages. These men learnt the languages of India and China. No special gifts of languages was given to them. Carey laboriously translated the Scriptures into over thirty Indian dialects, and waited six years for his first convert. In his ministry there were no gifts of prophecy or tongues or healings. Yet the Lord used him mightily.

Such is the revival we should be seeking today: the Holy Spirit's outpouring on the preaching of the Gospel and the same blessing on the spread of Scripture in the languages of the world. The "power evangelism" of signs and wonders, healing, prophecy, and tongues (languages), was the exclusive hallmark of the early Church. The Lord's command to His disciples in Mark 16:15-16 was clear, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following" (Mar 16:20). These signs were the vast number of conversions at Pentecost, and it is similar signs that we need today; a revival such as Whitefield witnessed under his own ministry in the 18th century, which preserved this country from a catastrophe similar to that witnessed in France in the Revolution of 1789. Our country is becoming utterly lawless and godless, and nothing short of a revival under the power of the Spirit can halt the decline.

5. Conclusion

In considering the great Revivals of the Reformation, the Puritan Era of the 17th century, the Evangelical Awakening in the 18th century in Britain and America, and the 19th century Missionary Awakening in Africa, India, China and elsewhere, their one great hallmark was a return to the truth, and to the propagation of truth—"As the truth is in Jesus" (Eph 4:21). The leaders of all these movements separated from error; this is undeniable. While Hudson Taylor had an ecumenical spirit denominationally, he had no such spirit when it crossed the frontiers of the vital truth of the Gospel, such as the new birth. So we do not see any of these men blending with Roman Catholicism or liberalism. They obeyed the Scriptures, came out and were separate.

What a stark contrast is this to the Charismatic Movement today, which finds its "second blessing" and gift of "tongues" a bridge that forms a link with Roman Catholicism and those of other denominations who have liberal theological views. While the Ecumenical Movement, the joining together of all the major denominations at the expense of truth, goes forward, many Christians are unable to go with the mixing of faiths, and find themselves quite unable to acquiesce in such events as the Commonwealth multi-faith services attended by the Queen in Westminster Abbey. They do not accept that this Ecumenical Movement, first of denominations, and then of religions, can possibly be the work of the Holy Spirit of Truth. So there is a remnant left who feel the need "to come out and be separate." To them truth, as revealed in the Scripture, is of far greater importance than a "second blessing" or the gifts of the Spirit, which supposedly transcend truth and allow a mingling with such solemn errors as the Roman Catholic mass and the worship of the virgin Mary, as if these were merely minor errors, instead of the soul-destroying errors that the Reformers knew them to be.

The godly in the nation prayerfully anticipate another revival; a revival of preaching and a revival of truth, a revival of similar caliber and content to those that have taken place in this country in the last four centuries; a revival of the doctrine of justification by faith; a revival of godliness in a clear-cut separation of Christians from the world that lies in wickedness; a revival of powerful preaching with the anointing of the Holy Spirit such as was witnessed in the 18th century in the great Evangelical Awakening, when thousands were born again of the Spirit of God and the doctrine of the new birth was faithfully preached by men sent of God to preach; a revival of a burden of prayer for the salvation of souls and the spread of the truth of the Gospel.

Such a revival, which moves a whole nation and is written up in history by later generations, has not yet taken place. There may well be a cloud the size of a man's hand appearing on the horizon, but the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our godless and evil nation has not yet taken place. Nor do we expect it to come as a result of any signs or wonders or miracles, for as Christ said in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luk 16), "If they hear not Moses and the prophets" (that is the Scriptures) "neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luk 16:31).

The Lord's great purpose in the 20th century is to save men through the "foolishness of preaching" (1Co 1:21) under the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is for divinely sent ministers (Rom 10:15) that we should now be praying, rather than abandoning the great office of the ministry in favor of relying on "signs and wonders" to bring sinners to Christ. We look not for a second Pentecost. The gifts of the prophets and apostles were for the foundation of the Church, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph 2:20). We need no other foundation. No building needs more than one foundation. But we look for the power of the Spirit to "come down" as Charles Wesley wrote in his hymn:

*"Spirit of Truth, come down,
Reveal the things of God;
O make to us the Godhead known,
And witness with the blood.

"No man can truly say
That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless Thou take the veil away,
And breathe the living Word.

"Then, only then, we feel
Our interest in His blood;
And cry with joy unspeakable,
'Thou art my Lord, my God!"

"O that the world might know
The all-atoning Lamb!
Spirit of Faith, descend and show
The virtue of His name.

"Inspire the living faith,
Which whoso'er receives,
The witness in himself he hath,
And savingly believes."*

The new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Joh 3:6). "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (Joh 3:7). This is the blessing for which the Church waits; the divine revelation of Christ in the hearts of men and women, of which Christ said to Peter in answer to his confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mat 16:16), "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat 16:17). It is for such results attending the powerful preaching of the Gospel by those ministers sent by God to proclaim it, that the Church waits.

Such a work of the Spirit will separate from all error and heresy and form the national awakening, for which we wait today, which will constitute the sole remedy to the moral collapse of this nation, which we are now witnessing.

