

Enthusiasm and Full Salvation

by Catherine Booth

The sermon emphasizes the importance of whole-hearted surrender to God and the role of enthusiasm in experiencing the fullness of the blessing.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Acts 2:4, Romans 12:11, Hebrews 12:1, James 4:8

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Full Salvation"

Description

Catherine Booth passionately speaks about the power of whole-hearted surrender to God, emphasizing the need for enthusiasm and genuine feelings in religion. She highlights that the Salvation Army's strength lies in their unwavering commitment to God, rather than just in their enthusiasm or beliefs. Catherine urges the audience to make a complete consecration to God, to clear out any obstacles hindering the fullness of God's blessings, and to actively seek holiness and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

(An address delivered in Exeter Hall)

REFERRING to the hymn which had just been sung, Mrs. Booth said:

What a meeting, indeed! What a meeting, when I trust there will be tens of thousands of blood-washed souls there to greet us as instrumental in setting on foot an organisation which reached them, and picked them up, and washed them, and sanctified and lifted them to glory--tens of thousands of English, and Irish, and French, and American, and, we hope, bye-and-bye, German and Russian--all the world--what a meeting that will be! Oh! I do give God thanks. My heart is swelling with unspeakable gratitude for that glorious telegram (referring to the news received from Paris). That telegram is the earnest of thousands of souls. You may say, 'How do you know?' Because the Holy Ghost had begun to work in France just the same as He is working in England, and the careless, the infidel, the atheist, the sensual, and the devilish were beginning to bow at the feet of Jesus with broken hearts, and seek for His mercy and salvation. That was only the beginning; and, now, as our dear friend, Mr. Denny, has said, perhaps it will do us good. I know it will do us good in the end. It has called forth a great deal more prayer, faith, expectation, and travail of soul than would have been called forth without it. And now, when the door is opened again, the Holy Ghost will come down in power, and we shall hear grand and glorious things. Oh! praise the Lord; and every day remember France, and plead with God for the opening of the windows of Heaven and the pouring out of a great blessing on that country.

I was thinking, as I was sitting here, what is to be the end of this day's meeting? We have had some enthusiasm; and why not? Why should we be enthusiastic in everything but religion? Can you give me any reason for that? If there is any subject calculated to move our souls to their very centres, and to call out the enthusiasm of our nature, surely it is religion, if it be the real thing. Why should we not be enthusiastic? I have never seen a good reason yet. Why should we not shout and sing the praises of our King, as we expect to do it in glory? Why should not a man cry out, and groan, and be in anguish of soul, as the Psalmist says, as if he were crying out of the belly of hell when he is convinced of sin, and realises his danger, and is expecting, unless God have mercy, to be damned? Why should he not roar for the disquietude of his spirit as much as David did? Is there anything unphilosophical in it? Is there anything contrary to the laws of mind in it? Is there anything that you would not allow under any great pressure of calamity, or realisation of danger, or grief? Why should we not have this demonstration in soul matters? They had it under the old dispensation. We read again and again that when the people came together after a time of relapse, and backsliding, and infidelity, when God sent some flaming, burning prophet amongst them, and they were gathered on the sides of Carmel or elsewhere, that, on some occasions, the weeping, and, on other occasions, the rejoicing was so great that they made the very ground tremble, and almost rent the heavens with the sound of their crying and rejoicing.

We are told, on one occasion, that the noise was heard afar off, and, on another, that it was as the sound of many waters. Would to God we could get men, now-a-days, so concerned about their sins and their souls that they should thus cry out. It would be a happy day for religion and for England if it were so. If these things are realities, I contend that this is the most sane, rational, and philosophical way of dealing with them; and I say that the ordinary, cold, heartless, formal way (and, if it is not so, it has that appearance) is unscriptural.

Somebody was talking to me about having so much feeling in religion. I said, 'My dear friend, what do you think God gave you feeling for?' Some people seem to think it is a mistake that we have feelings. Our feelings play a very important part in all our social relations. Why would you exclude them from religion? David expressed his feelings, and was so carried away by them that he called on all creation to praise the Lord, the hills and trees to clap their hands and be glad. Get the right kind of religion, and it will make you feel. If you have not the right kind of feeling, I am afraid you have not the right kind of religion. The Lord help you! Well, we have some enthusiasm, and when our enthusiasm dies, I am afraid we shall die, too. Nevertheless, the power of The Salvation Army is not in its enthusiasm; neither does it consist in certain views of truth, or in certain feelings about truth. No! no! But it consists in whole-hearted, thorough, out-and-out surrender to God; and that, with or without feeling, is the right thing, and that is the secret of our power. That is the religion of the Salvation Army. We have glorious feelings as the outcome; but the feeling is not the religion--the feeling is not the holiness. Holiness is the spring and source of the enthusiasm. Hence our power with the masses of the people.

How is it that wherever we go as an organisation these signs and wonders are wrought? Somebody said, "It is a strange thing; see what has been done at So-and-so, and So-and-so, and So-and-so. They had all tried, and you send a couple of lads or lasses, and you have the town in an uproar at once. What is it? What is the secret? Will you answer the question?" Well, it is whole-hearted, determined abandonment of everything for the King's sake. That is it. It is going in, as the Apostles went in, determined to win souls, determined to set up the Kingdom of Jesus Christ at all costs. That is the source of our power, and if you get that, you will have power, and if you don't get that, it matters not what else you have. I want you reasonably and calmly to see that this holiness is a real, definite, blessing; that it is a level on to which the

great mass of the professing Christians of this generation have not come, or even scarcely looked up. It is a high level, but it is a level on to which every one of you can come, if you will, tonight. You have heard enough about it. You are convinced you may have it. Will you have it? The Lord is sitting there; He is looking at you, and He is saying, 'What is all this stir about? What is all this talk, this singing, and this praying about? Here I am. What do you want Me to do? I am ready to do it.' And you say, 'Lord, I want Thee to cleanse my heart from sin, and to fill me with the Holy Ghost, and to enable me to be whole-hearted and thorough in Thy service, and to go and win souls for Thee.' 'Very well,' the Lord says, 'I am ready to come into the temple if you will clear out the rubbish. Are you willing for Me to come in? I am waiting to come in as a Refiner; but you must make a straight way for My feet. You must pick out the stones, and throw out the rubbish, and make Me a straight path.'

Will you make Him a straight path? Will you trample under foot that accursed thing which has so long kept the fullness of the blessing from you? Will you give up arguing about it and trying to make out that it is not a stumbling-block, when you know it is? How many will? With all the light of the day's teaching, with what I am sure the Holy Ghost has revealed and is revealing now to your souls, with all the glory that He is putting before you, and the power for usefulness and happiness, will you make this full consecration? I wish we could find out those who are thus prepared to come forward. The light of the Spirit is on you: will you act? WILL YOU ACT? If you go away without coming, you will be worse than before. Every spark of light you get without obeying it, leaves your soul darker. Every time you come up to the verge of the kingdom and don't go over, the less the probability that you ever will. I know people who have been going up and down for more than forty years, like the Israelites, and it is a question if they ever go in. You have come near again tonight. Will you go over? You can tell the Lord without telling us, though we would like to know and see you put your foot over the border into this Canaan of peace and power. Will you put your foot over? Who will? Who will? Will you stand up and raise your voices to the Lord and ask Him? In response to this appeal, a very large proportion of the meeting stood up, and the glory of the Lord fell on numbers.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/catherine-booth/enthusiasm-and-full-salvation/>

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