

John Smith

by David Smithers

The sermon highlights the life and ministry of John Smith, a zealous and passionate preacher of the gospel, and emphasizes the importance of prayer and revival in the Church.

Scripture: Matthew 6:6, Luke 18:1, Acts 4:31, 1 Corinthians 16:13, James 5:16

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Revival Preaching"

Description

David Smithers preaches about the passionate prayer life and powerful preaching of John Smith, a zealous revivalist among the Wesleyan Methodists in England. Known for his constant communion with God, Mr. Smith's days were filled with fervent prayer, leading to anointed sermons that brought about deep conviction and manifestations of the Holy Spirit among the congregation. His deep love for lost souls drove him to tears and relentless intercession, echoing the urgent need for men of prayer and conviction in today's complacent Church.

Transcript

John Smith has often been called, "The Man with Calloused Knees". Though his name was quite common, there was nothing common about him. He was distinguished from countless others of the same name by the title of, "John Smith - the Revivalist". Like his father before him, he was respected as a zealous and passionate, preacher of the gospel. He labored among the Wesleyan Methodists in England, beginning in 1816. Like many of God's mighty men of prayer, Mr. Smith's life seemed to be cut short. After only 15 years of faithful service he died at age 37 in the year 1831.

"Constant communion with God was at the foundation of Mr. Smith's great usefulness. In this he was surpassed by none of any age. Whole nights were often given up to prayer." His day often literally revolved around times of travailing prayer. "He arose at four o'clock in the morning, and throwing himself before the mercy-seat, for three hours wrestled with God in mighty prayer. . . Immediately after breakfast and family worship he would again retire with his bible into his study, and spend until near noon in the same hallowed employment. Here unquestionably was the great secret of his power in public prayer and in preaching. The Lord who sees in secret, rewarded him openly. Every sermon was sanctified by prayer."

Often as he prayed he would wrestle with God till a considerable part of the floor of his study was wet with tears. Some may question if such sacrificial praying was really necessary. The worth of these extended seasons of prayer was obvious once Mr. Smith stepped into the pulpit. The following narrative gives us a brief glimpse of John Smith's anointed preaching. "The Spirit of God descended upon the congregation;

the deep attentive silence at the commencement of the discourse was soon interrupted by sobs and moans and followed by loud and piercing cries for mercy as one after another the hearers were pricked to the heart, and the strongholds of Satan were beaten down." At other times as he preached the congregation would suddenly be struck with the reality of Christ's full salvation, and then spontaneously break out in loud shouts of joyful praise and celebration.

"Once towards the close of a meeting when penitents were crying aloud and believers, with scarcely less agony, were seeking a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit, Mr. Smith's powerful voice might still be heard above the blended weeping and rejoicing, calling upon God for a larger blessing, 'a Pentecostal shower.'" Even after the meeting was closed the majority of the people stayed and prayed throughout the night.

Why did Mr. Smith pray and preach so passionately? Because he had entered into His Master's tender love for the lost and the hopeless souls around him. Mr. Calders stated of John Smith's deep love for the lost, "I have seen him come downstairs in the morning, after spending several hours in prayer with his eyes swollen with weeping - he would soon introduce the subject of his anxiety by saying, 'I am a brokenhearted man; yes, indeed I am an unhappy man; not for myself, but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of precious souls, that I cannot live if souls be not saved. Oh, give me souls or else I die!'"

In these days of sin and perversion who can deny that the Church needs men of prayer like John Smith. The only thing worse than the present condition of our country, is that in the midst of it all, is a Church complacent and seeking the path of least resistance. Where are the men who pray and weep for revival? Where are the men who have strong convictions about something other than sports and business? Where are the men who long for perfect holiness and a burning love for Jesus? A man without godly convictions is not a man at all! He is merely dead weight, that drains his family and church of the precious strength they so desperately need. It's time to -"Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, and be strong."
1 Cor. 16:13

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