

Revival - Part 5

by Doc Greenway

The Holy Spirit is the agent of revival, and fellowship with Him is a personal, conditional interchange between persons, affected by our actions.

Duration: 1:00:35

Scripture: Luke 24:49, John 4:24, Acts 1:4, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 5:26, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, Hebrews 10:10

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of revival as a demonstration of God's power. He highlights the role of the Holy Spirit as the instrument of this power, referencing Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit. The preacher shares a story about two farmers who were unfamiliar with bananas to illustrate the need for understanding and utilizing the power of the Holy Spirit. The sermon also emphasizes the transformative work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of both unbelievers and believers, particularly in cultivating a desire for holiness and deepening fellowship with God.

Transcript

So far as its spiritual implication is concerned, a revival is Pentecost reenacted, Pentecost repeated. Historically we know that Pentecost cannot be repeated, and yet experientially it is something which is continually recurring in the Christian church and in the world. For God's agent in revival is the Holy Spirit.

Without His presence, there is no revival. Without His ministry, we look in vain for the outpouring of God's power and God's might upon us as the people of God. It follows then that any expectation of revival that we may have ought to be based on a practical and personal understanding of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now up to this point in our studies together, we have been considering various aspects of revival, but tonight I am not so much concerned with revival as such as with the agent in revival. And it does seem to me that it is imperative that we, as God's people, should know more about the Holy Spirit as a person, and more about His work and His ministry, more about His character, more about His desires and His ambitions, if you like, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. More about His absorbing passion for Jesus.

We are inclined to think in terms of power and demonstration when we think of the Holy Spirit, but there is far more to it than this, surely. And I am sure that as we prepare our hearts and our minds before God and look to Him for His revelation, then we shall see that beneath the surface of much that occurs in our

experience, and much that is in the Word of God itself, there are indeed deep strutters that we have not yet understood or comprehended. You know, compared with other subjects in the Church, this subject of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit seems hardly to have been touched in many, many places.

There are many who are practically in the same position, as were the Ephesians, whom Paul questioned on that occasion. You recall it is recorded in the Word of God when he said to them, Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? And their reply was, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. And I suppose that lack of instruction could account for part of this situation.

And isn't it true that in many, many places the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit seems not to be mentioned hardly at all? It reminds me of the old lady in Scotland who was being catechized with a view to Church membership. The examiner asked her the question, How many persons are in the Godhead? And she answered, There be two persons. And the examiner said, Two persons? Woman, there are three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Yes, sir, I can not well, but she said, In all my experience, I have never heard you mention anything but the Father and the Son, never the Holy Spirit at all. And this, I think, is a very sad commentary on the situation as we see it in the Church, even in our day. Of course, it is not by accident, for this is part of the stratagem of Satan for these days, which are indeed the dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

In the dispensation of the Father, his stratagem was to cause the people to go whoring after other gods. He said of their affection and their attention upon the idols that were worshipped by the nations around. And in this way he sought to destroy monotheism in Israel.

In the dispensation of the Son, he changed his tactics. And now he directed the gaze of the people upon a political messiah, someone who would wrest authority from the Roman empire and give it back to the Jews. The result was that they missed the purpose of the Lord in his coming.

In these days, his strategy has changed again. And now it is his desire to cause people to look with suspicion upon anything at all to do with the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. You know how it is.

You mention the Holy Spirit, and at once they say, this tongue's business, or this fanaticism, or else some other choice expression that they have. And you know, they sort of pass it by as though it weren't important, or that it ought not to be considered. And I believe that this is the very truth that God would bring into the forefront in these days, the truth concerning the work and ministry and character and personality and authority of the Holy Spirit.

And so it's not just this Pentecostalism that we are concerned about. Our concern is with preparation for revival and with the fact that God often works not simply by the confluence of circumstances, but always and ever directly by the agency of the Holy Spirit. You know as well as I do that when there is a state of God's people which can only be described as apostate, when there is declension, indifference, when there is compromise with the things of the world, when indeed there is deadness and apathy abounding, it is then that God comes to revive His people because revival presupposes some state like this of declension and backsliding and going away from God.

Nevertheless, I repeat it, whatever general agencies there may be in preparation for revival, the one great mighty agent is the Spirit of God. And without Him it is impossible even to think in terms of revival, for there is no revival apart from the Holy Spirit. You remember Edwin Orr's hymn that makes this very

apparent, O Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee.

Send the revival, start the work in me. How true this is. Revival comes from the Spirit of God.

So we can forget about everything else tonight, forget about revival as such if you wish, but do concentrate with me upon this theme of the Holy Spirit who is the agent in revival. Who is He? What are His desires? What is His purpose? What sort of life does He lead? What is His character like? How are we to develop fellowship with Him? This to me is the important thing and to this point I believe God has been slowly but surely bringing us during our times together in the weeks that are past. Now we have stated already that revival is a demonstration of the outflowing power of God.

And the instrument in this demonstration is, of course, the Holy Spirit. Jesus made this abundantly clear in His specific promise which He gave. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon, epi, upon you.

But tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued, endusasti, clothed upon, with power from on high. Thus Luke 24 and 49. I send the promise.

It's the simple tense here. I send and send and send and send. It's the tense of repetition.

Not that He needs to send the Spirit of God into the church again and again. But upon God's people in the church He will send and send and send and send in a tremendous repetitive action as the need arises because this is the purpose of God and this is the promise of Jesus. So here you have the continuing possibility of revival in the personal presence of the Holy Spirit.

Historically then, Pentecost is a day. But practically it implies a continuing manifestation of God's power from the day of Pentecost until Jesus returns again. Jesus promised that the presence of the Comforter would be permanently abiding in the church.

And so He has never been withdrawn. That He may abide with you forever, said Jesus. And this preposition, with, that He used is meta, identified with, so that He is to be in permanent residence in the church of Jesus Christ.

It is a fact then that the perpetual agent in revival is the Holy Spirit, that He is continually, ceaselessly abiding in the Christian church. He has not been withdrawn and none of us need ever pray with David, take not thy Holy Spirit from me, because Jesus promised He would abide forever. Forever.

Nevertheless, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit with us as believers, this is conditional. And this is affected in certain ways. Now let us ask for a moment, what does fellowship with the Spirit of God really imply? In the first place, it is of course a personal fellowship.

This is because He is a person. You cannot have fellowship with an influence, an emanation, a manifestation of God, an effusion. If you are going to have fellowship, it can only be between persons.

It is an interchange between persons. This is the meaning of fellowship. Therefore, it is a personal fellowship because the Spirit of God is a person and because there is to be an interchange between us as persons if we are having fellowship with Him and if He is having fellowship with us.

Now it is not simply a question of fellowship of the Spirit in the church, but on a far more intimate and incisive basis, the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all here in the benediction. With you, where He finds you, at the point in your experience where you are at the moment, at this point, He is prepared to

enter into fellowship with us as individual believers. We do not have to wait until we are victorious Christians.

We do not have to reach some high standard of spirituality before He deigns to have fellowship with us. But just where He finds us, at that point, He is prepared to have fellowship with us just where He finds us. This point needs to be emphasized, I think, because people have wrong ideas about the willingness of the Holy Spirit to have fellowship with the people of God.

That, of course, is just the starting point. But now, what kind of a person is He? Well, He is not aggressive, but self-effacing in the true sense of the term, in the real meaning of the word. Never advancing His own interests, but always advancing the interests of Jesus Christ.

Never pushing Himself forward into the picture. And I believe that this is a true mark of the Spirit-filled believer, of the Christian who truly knows fellowship with the Spirit of God. You will not find him always pushing himself into the forefront of the picture, but rather, like the Blessed Spirit of God Himself, seeking, yearning, working, striving always to advance the interests of the Lord Jesus Christ, and never His own selfish interests at all.

This, I think, is one of the first things. Graciously and lovingly, He seeks to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, to enthrone Him in the lives of God's people. And He is Christ's sole Advocate with men.

Our Advocate is with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous. The Holy Spirit is Christ's Advocate with men. This, I know, is not new to you, but it needs to be repeated, because sometimes we're inclined to lose sight of this essential truth, this very important fact.

So you see, as Christ's Advocate, He longs to magnify Christ. He wants to mediate Christ. He desires to minister Christ.

This is always His passionate desire, that Christ may be seen, Christ may be magnified, Christ may be spread abroad in the hearts and lives of the people, that Christ and Christ only shall be always in the full front of the picture. This is what the Spirit of God is doing. And therefore, you see, He will not tolerate sin in the lives of God's people, because this surely would not glorify the Lord Jesus Christ.

And whether it is sin against the Spirit, or sin in the general sense, He will not tolerate it, because it is abhorrent to His very nature. And this, I think, underscores one of the first offices of the Spirit of God as the agent of revival. He is the Spirit of conviction.

He is the convicting Spirit, the reproving Spirit, and this in a very real and personal way. Fellowship with Him, then, is not simply personal. It is also conditional, and we must not be guilty of any sins at all against the Spirit of God if we are to develop and cultivate a fellowship with Him.

For instance, we must guard against quenching the Spirit of God. 1 Thessalonians 5:19 has this exhortation, Quench not the Spirit. Don't allow the fire to die down, in other words.

And what will cause a fire to die down? Well, I suppose one thing, and we are conscious of it in these days, would be lack of fuel. If you don't supply the flame, if you don't add fuel to the fire, it will die down. And I am sure this is true concerning the Holy Spirit.

We quench the Spirit, we cause the flame of God to die down in our lives if we do not feed that flame with the fuel of God's Word. If we neglect the study of God's Word, if we refuse to meditate upon God's Word, if we say we have no time to be concerned with the Word of God, then what we are doing is denying the flame the fuel it needs to burn brightly and to keep on glowing with the glow of God. A fire will go out for lack of fuel.

You can be sure of this. How did the psalmist say it? While I mused, the fires burned. While he was meditating upon the Word of God, while he was thinking about what God said to him in his Word, while he was considering it, while he was applying it to his life, while he was doing this, the fires were burning.

My brother, my sister, remember that nothing can ever supersede the written Word of God, that all your experiences, that all your tremendous revelations, that all your mighty manifestations of the Spirit, nothing can ever take the place of the written Word of God. Please remember that. And if you neglect the study of it, then you cause the flame to die down.

A fire, as you know, will not burn in a vacuum. A fire needs air in which to burn. Atmosphere.

And isn't this true, too, that the fire of God's Spirit will die down? There will be a suppressing, a quenching of the flame if we neglect the place of prayer. How true it is that prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air. It's not only the native air for the Christian, it's the native air to the Holy Spirit.

For in this atmosphere, He will burn brightly. Fire will go out for lack of air, and the Spirit of God will die down in your life, and the flame will be suppressed, and the Spirit of God be quenched if you neglect the place of prayer, if you neglect to take time to wait upon God. And fire will die down, too, unless you give it proper attention.

If you forget to rake away the ashes, the fire will die down. You've seen this happen. And how very often a fire dies down because people are content with the burned-out, cold ashes of an experience that once was but is no longer.

Rake away the ashes. Don't be content with a burned-out experience. Don't be simply desirous of talking about the past all the time, about the mighty thing God did ten years ago, or five years ago, or a year ago.

When Jesus comes, He will find us as we are, not as we were. So we need to be careful that the fire burns because we are content to rake away the ashes of the forgotten, the burnt-out experiences, and are seeking always a fresh flame, a glow with God. A fire will die down if you introduce some foreign element.

Water and fire will never mix, will they? I can't help but tell you this one. I was in a prayer meeting in Wales some time ago, quite a long while ago now, in 1950 actually, and I heard a dear man of God. He was a Welshman.

He didn't have very much English, but he had a lot of fire and zeal and fervor. And I remember how he prayed. Everybody in the meeting had been praying about revival and wanting a new revival, and remember the 1904 or 6th revival, Lord, you know, the usual type of thing.

But there he was. Oh God, he said, you know how much we need revival. The church is dead without revival.

We are useless without revival. Oh God, he said, if you can see one single spark of desire for revival, water that spark, Lord. I'm sure the Lord understood what he meant.

But it doesn't work that way very often, does it? You can't introduce some foreign element. And so you can't mix the world and God, self and the Savior, the flesh and the Spirit. There can be no odd mixture here.

If the fire is to burn brightly, you must not introduce some foreign element into it. Now, what does it mean really? If we are unyielding, unresponsive, unwilling to obey the voice of the Spirit, then there is suppression. There is quenching.

There is the dying down of the flame of God in your life and mine. And so it is important that we are not guilty of this sin against the blessed Holy Spirit. Again, in this condition of fellowship, we must guard against grieving the Spirit.

Writing to the Ephesians, Paul says, and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby he was sealed unto the day of redemption. Nothing in our lives that is contrary to his holy character. This is what is intended here.

Because if there is something there which cuts against what he is essentially, the Holy Spirit, then surely this is grieving to him. The presence of unconfessed sin in the lives of God's people is revolting to his essential purity. And how much of this is in Christian experience? Not sins that were forgiven when we came to Christ and accepted him as Savior, but unconfessed sins in the intervening years as it may be.

These things grieve the Spirit of God. For this, you know, is the grief of offended righteousness. With him, sin has to be condemned.

It cannot be condoned, and we cannot cover it up and hope to get by. You can't do that if you are dealing in fellowship with the Spirit of God. I remember hearing of an office worker whose wife was taken seriously ill.

She had to have medical attention, and in the end, surgery. And the accounts mounted up, and he didn't have the money to meet them. And so he did a very foolish thing.

He borrowed some money from the firm without telling anybody, thinking that he could repay it before the auditors came around. But unfortunately for him, the auditors were coming the very next day, he heard. And so he went to the cashier, who was a friend of his, and told him what had happened.

And the cashier looked at him and said, Well, you were very foolish, but never mind. He said, I can cover it for you. I'll cover it.

And the man looked at him and said, There is only one man that can cover it, and I'm going to see him. And he went to see his manager, and he laid the whole thing before the manager. And you know, very often you find understanding at the top, don't you? This manager was sympathetic.

He was understanding. And he said, All right, so long as you repay the money in your own time, we'll forget about it. There was only one who could cover it.

And may we remember, by the grace of God, there is only one who can cover our sin, and that one is God himself. We talk about time healing things, time healing sorrow. Time never heals unconfessed sin.

It simply drives it deeper into the personality, into the life, until it festers and becomes worse and worse as time goes on. If we are conscious tonight of unconfessed sin in our life, let us bring it to the surface. Let us bring it to God.

Let us remember, if we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Unconfessed sin is unforgiven sin. Unforgiven sin is uncleansed sin.

But God has a way and a method whereby he can meet us when we come in humility and confess to him what we have done wrong, and look for his own pardoning grace. For instant confession means instant restoration. This is the glorious thing about it.

And so, you see, we grieve the Spirit of God if there's unconfessed sin in our life. What is sin? Sin is discord. It's a jarring note in the symphony of creation.

Read Psalm 51, the Penitential Psalm, if you want a statement of this. It's a jarring note. It's a discord in the whole of God's creation.

Sin is distortion. It twists the facts, misinterprets the truth, misrepresents the situation. And how can the Spirit of truth abide in fellowship with deception of this kind? Fellowship with the Holy Spirit of God involves accepting his convictions without question, without argument, refusing the wrong, and deliberately, consciously, choosing the right, whatever it may cost.

When I was minister of Draper Memorial Church in Adelaide, South Australia, there was a minister in the city who had been speaking out against sin in no uncertain terms. And his deacons had a meeting with him because they were disturbed. And they said, now, sir, we know that you have to speak and you have to preach about sin, but couldn't you use some other term? You see, you're disturbing the young people in the church.

This is the difficulty, you know. And so the minister reached up to a high little place in his study, out of the way of the children, a high shelf, and took down a bottle that was labeled poison. And he said to them, now, what does this bottle say on the label? They said, poison, that's right.

He said, now, what I propose to do is to change the label and just put there peppermint drops. Do you think it's going to make any difference of what is inside? Yes. They said, no, it wouldn't.

Well, sin is sin, he said, in the sight of God, and I'm going to preach it for all I'm worth as God reveals it. Because until a man knows he's a sinner, he will never look for a savior. And I felt that man had tremendous courage in his situation, but he was quite right.

We have to refuse the wrong. We have to choose the right deliberately, whatever the cost may be. And so there is this grief of offended righteousness that we subject the Holy Spirit to, in our fellowship with him, if we are conscious of sin which has never been confessed and never been dealt with.

And then there is also the grief of thwarted purpose. And here, too, the convicting spirit may be active in your life and mine. Thwarted purpose.

What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit in fellowship with us as believers? Surely it is that our fellowship should be progressive and productive. That it shouldn't just stand still. That we would know him in all those wonderful pictures which are presented, in the emblems of the Spirit, in the titles of the Spirit, for instance.

That we would know this productive life in fellowship through the graces of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit. That we should know him in this area. How many there are who are prepared to say, I am in constant fellowship with the Holy Spirit because I speak with tongue.

To them it means they've arrived. Man, you've only begun. It's only the beginning.

It's only the commencement. There are waters to swim in out there, if only you dare believe it. And this, I think, is what the Spirit of God is trying to show us.

That there can be thwarted purpose, so far as he is concerned, in our lives, if we limit him because of our small vision, our small outlook, and our small expectation. Take the emblems under which the Spirit of God is revealed to us. I know I've spoken about these things in days gone by, when we were meeting in Gordon Peller's home.

But one or two things I'd like to say which I didn't say then. Take the emblems under which the Spirit of God is represented to us. Progressive fellowship demands that we know him in the relationship which these emblems suggest.

Take one only, the anointing oil. We should know him in this relationship. Not simply say, well, the Spirit of God is revealed in the word of God as the anointing oil, full stop.

Not at all. What does it mean? What is it intended to mean in your life and mine? That he is indeed the anointing oil of God? What does it mean? The significant thing about this is that whatever was anointed was separated unto the Lord. Moses took of the anointing oil, and with it he anointed Aaron and his sons, we read, to sanctify or to separate them unto Jehovah.

That's Leviticus chapter 8. Because the oil was upon them, they were henceforth holy to the Lord. They were completely and altogether his possession. They were no longer their own.

And when Paul writes as he does with the Corinthians and tells them, what know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? Ye are bought with a price. It's because of the anointing Holy Spirit which is upon the life of the Christian. As in the Old Testament days, when the heads of Aaron and his sons were anointed, and they were separated wholly, completely unto the Lord, they were sold out of God, this was the intention in the emblem and symbol that was used.

And the head was anointed because their thought life was separated unto God. The breastplate was anointed because their affections were separated unto the Lord. They were anointed a minister, we are told, of Aaron and his sons, it is written, Thou shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify or separate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

That's Exodus 28 and 41. So their ministry belonged to the Lord, to Jehovah exclusively. And we should know a fellowship in the Spirit, and with the Spirit, which produces this personal ministry unto the Lord.

Not serving a church, not serving a group, not serving our friends, certainly not serving ourselves, but serving Him exclusively, serving the Lord. This was the idea in the anointing oil upon the head of the servants of God. What this ministry is, of course, is determined by Him and by no one else.

It may be public ministry of the Word, and then we have to wait on our teaching. It may be private ministry to the needs of others. It may be that He that showeth mercy, that endued with cheerfulness, is where we come in.

And what a tremendous blessing this can be. He who comes with sympathy to sorrow, let him bring God's sunlight in his face, is the translation which I like so very much. Is this a ministry? When Talmadge, the great American preacher, lost his son, there were many who came to sympathize and offer their condolences.

But there was one servant of God. He wasn't a big preacher by any means, not great in the ministry of the Word. But he came and sat where Talmadge was, and reached out his hand, and took his brother's hand in his, and just held it, and didn't say a word, but sat there, full of compassion, full of sympathy, full of overflowing love.

He didn't need to say anything. He was the whole thing. And as he sat there, Talmadge said afterwards, he felt the fountains within begin to break.

And for the first time since his son had died, the wells overflowed, and he found relief and release in the presence of God. What a ministry! The ministry of sympathy, of understanding, of compassion, of love. What a ministry this is! And when it is anointed under the answer which is the Holy Spirit, what a tremendous blessing it can be in the church of the living God.

This too is ministry, you know, as well as prophesying, and interpreting, and having gifts of healing, or miracles, or anything else of that nature. This too is ministry. Let us not forget it.

If we know Him as the anointing oil, then we know the reality of things which are spiritual. And this too is scriptural, isn't it? The same anointing which you have received of Him teaches you of all things and is truth. And so under this relationship with the Spirit of God, we are to be taught the things of God, and we are to have an evaluation of things which are spiritual, which could never be our experience, were it not for developing a fellowship with the Spirit as the anointing oil of God.

This is His particular function under this emblem, under this figure of speech. And you know, there is something so comprehensive about the way in which the Spirit of God will teach you. Eye hath not seen, it is not by human observation, nor ear heard, it is not by human instruction, neither hath it arisen up, it is literally, in the heart of man.

It is not by some natural intuition that God hath revealed His things to those that love Him. Not by these means at all, but by His Spirit. And because He is the anointing which rests upon us, then as John the Apostle reminded his readers, we know all things, and this is knowledge gained by experience.

Do we know progressive fellowship with Him even in this one small facet of His ministry? Do we know Him as the anointing oil? The late Dr. Harry Einstein once came home from seminary, Bible seminary, and found his mother had taken in as a boarder, or really as someone whom she wanted to help, an Irish Christian who was suffering from tuberculosis, and she put him out on a tent on the lawn, and he was quite comfortable. So Harry Einstein took his Bible and went out to have fellowship with him, and began to expound the Word to him, and to teach him things from the Bible, thinking of course that seeing he'd come from Bible seminary, well he probably knew most of it anyhow. And then this dear man of God after a while said, would you mind brother if I expounded the Word just a little bit? And he began to open up the

Scripture.

Einstein forgot about his dinner, forgot about everything. He sat there for a solid hour and listened to this man of God. And when it was all finished and done with, he turned to him and he said, where did you get your training? What Bible college did you attend? He said, none at all.

He said, just a log cabin in Ireland. He said, and in fact he said it was an earthen floor. But he said, the Spirit of God came upon me, and the Spirit of God taught me, and if I know anything at all about the Word of God, he said, this is the reason why.

I would say to you tonight, and I say it very humbly, whatever I've learned in my experience as a Christian, and I've been on the way for quite a long while, it has not been that which has come because of academic attainment and achievement. That I do not regard as being the essential thing. I know from experience that the Holy Spirit of God, blessed be his name as the anointing oil, has taught me more in one hour than I've learned in years by any other means.

And oh, I say to you, if you are prepared to develop and cultivate a fellowship with this blessed agent of revival, if you're willing to take your Bible and go on your knees before him and ask him to be your teacher, he will guide you into all truth. And he will cause you to stand in wonder and amazement at the things he will reveal to you. We need to develop fellowship with the Spirit of God in this way, as well as in all the other ways that are mentioned in the book we call the Bible.

So you see, it's important, isn't it, that we should develop a ministry in fellowship with the Spirit, which is under his divine anointing. Fellowship with the Spirit, then, is intended to be progressive. And as we grow to know him, then we must learn to comprehend him also, not only as the oil, but as the wind or the breath of God penetrating to your inmost being.

Hallelujah. What an experience this is, when it's not just simply the Spirit of God coming upon you, and you have a few shakes and thrills, and you say, oh, I've had a mighty visitation. But the breath of God penetrating to your inmost being, to the very core of your being, to your very God consciousness, making you aware that God is there in the inmost part of your being.

We are to know him as the wind. We are to know him to as the rain in refreshing. Hallelujah.

We are to know him as the fire purging and searing and cleansing and consuming deep within. We are to know him as the clothing covering and protecting us as we journey through life. We are to know him as the dove brooding, tremulous with mother love in our very spirit, producing, creating, bringing to birth that which God intends.

We are to know him as the seal securing us for time and for eternity. We are to know him in all these areas of life and experience, because these emblems, these figures of speech simply represent something of what he is. Fellowship with the Spirit is to be progressive.

And in all these relationships, we need to know him. It is to be progressive fellowship also in the sense of knowing his gifts and graces. Here we are not thinking simply of the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 14, although there are those, of course, who limit their fellowship with the Spirit because they have no faith for these particular gifts.

We said the other evening that a prejudice is a floating opinion without visible means of support. It is very true. I came across one by Dr. Robert Lee that I thought was choice.

Dr. Robert Lee was a great, I think he still is, alive in America, a great Baptist minister. He tells this story of two hillbilly farmers, you know, out in the back lots. They had never seen a train in their lives, but they decided they would have a train journey.

And at last they got to the railway station, and walking along they saw all sorts of things displayed. They had never seen bananas in their lives, but they saw bananas and they bought one each. But the trouble was, you see, they did not know how to eat the thing.

Naturally, they had never seen a banana before, and they got on the train and they still did not know how. And the train was going along and they were still struggling over this, and then suddenly, by accident, one of them got some of the peel off the banana and he saw what was inside. And naturally enough, he just took the peeling off and took one good big bite just as the train went into a tunnel.

And his friend in the corner heard him say anxiously, John, yes, have you touched that thing yet? You haven't bitten it? No. Well, don't. I took one bite.

I'm as blind as a bat, is it? And there are so many people like this, are there not? They're dead scared to take a bite, just in case they may be deceived. But it's all right, you know. It's all right, because if you ask your father for bread, he won't give you a stone.

If you ask him for fish, he won't give you a serpent. No, no, he'll give you the Holy Spirit if you ask him for it. And there's no need to be concerned.

Now, my concern at the moment is about the second list of spiritual gifts found in Romans 12, 6, part of which reads, having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us and so on, he that giveth let him do it with simplicity, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness. Now, progressive fellowship involves a development and an involvement, too, in this type of gift, as well as in the more demonstrative type of gift that is so often quoted as gifts of the Spirit. Again, in progressive fellowship, we need not only to think in terms of the gifts as such, but of the graces or fruit of the Spirit.

This also has to be considered. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Against such there is no law.

Do we develop fellowship with the Spirit in this area of life? Progressive fellowship involves this as well as the demonstrative, ecstatic gifts of the Spirit which we have mentioned already. Just here, you know, we may be guilty of subjecting the Spirit of God to the grief of thwarted purpose. This happens when the Christian decides in favor of the lusts of the flesh rather than of the fruit of the Spirit and the promptings of the Holy Ghost in his life.

This I say then, said Paul, walk in the Spirit, lead the life of the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and he is a contrary one to the other, so that he cannot do the things that he would. It is a grief to the Holy Spirit when the Christian is dominated by the lusts of the flesh.

I am not going to enlarge on this, but I noticed one verse in James, chapter 4 and verse 5, which I thought was very revealing. Listen to it. Do we think that the Scripture saith in vain, the Spirit that dwelleth in us

lusteth to envy? What a statement! Because the Holy Spirit is so jealous that Christ should be magnified in the lives of Christians, because he is so jealous that Christ should have the first place in the Christian's experience, then he is lusting to envy, if anything interferes with this tremendous vision that he has.

The convicting Spirit is as concerned with carnality as he is with iniquity. I am sure that the only way out for us is to be crucified with Christ. As the Apostle Paul says, I am crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Crucified with Christ.

This is the involvement, and this is the implication. With Christ. Therefore you are led as a lamb to the slaughter.

You have no argument. You have no objection. You have no self-justification.

Led as a lamb to the slaughter, if you are crucified with Christ. And if you are saying that you should have your rights, then as we have been reminded more than once, if we had our rights we would be in hell. But God in his merciful grace has delivered us from this terrible plight.

Oh yes, there has to be this crucifixion of the self-life. And what is intended here? Well, self-love must go. Self-pity must be sacrificed.

Self-will must be sacrificed. Think of Peter when he saw the vision from heaven of the four-footed creatures and he heard the command, Arise and eat. Think of Peter saying, Not so, Lord.

You can't put those words together like that. You can't say, Not so, and Lord in the same sentence. If it's Lord, it is so.

There's no argument there cannot be. Self-will has to be sacrificed if we're going to develop a fellowship with the Spirit of God. And I'm sure that as we look to God by his grace, and are prepared to bend to the claims of the Spirit of God in our life and experience, that we will discover again and again that he moves toward us in love and compassion, in understanding, finding us at the point where we are in experience, but never prepared to allow us to remain there.

For the convicting Spirit of God is always exposing sin and bringing to our remembrance the things that grieve the heart of the Eternal God, and is dealing with us in compassion and yet in absolute honesty and righteousness, because he wants us to emerge resplendent in the image of God's own Son. Nothing less than this will ever satisfy the Spirit of God. So self-will must go, and self-pity must go, and self-justification must go.

All has to be sacrificed if we are going to come under the convictions of the Spirit of God and respond to them alive. He is indeed the convicting Spirit, isn't he? How many times has he convicted you in your life? No one else knew about this, just you and God, but it was enough, wasn't it? You know, I've been told by men who went through the revival in Wales that the conviction of the Spirit was so strong in revival that when they came within a mile or two of the place where the revival meeting was being held, sinners were brought under tremendous conviction and they actually knelt down sometimes in the open roadway to give their hearts to God without anybody being near them to lead them to Christ at all. The conviction was so strong.

Listen, my brother, my sister, if we are thinking in terms of revival, if we are considering the possibility of revival in our times, are we truly ready for the convictions of the Eternal Spirit, the one sole agent of revival, to come to grips with our lives? And are we willing and ready and prepared to say yes to him, whatever the cost may be? This, I'm sure, is involved. There was one other thing I wanted to say, but my time has gone. I've said so much on the first point, but I'll just mention it.

He is the transforming Spirit. I would hate to finish on a note where you felt that you're under real conviction only. Thank the Lord there's a way out.

He is a transforming Spirit, and his transforming work is not seen only in the lives of the unsaved when he comes to deal with them, and when they are born again of the Spirit of God. Not only there, but also in the lives of God's own people. What does he bring into our lives? What is the thing that he really impresses upon us as we begin to seek for revival? We've heard it tonight in prayer.

We've heard it mentioned already. A desire for holiness. Isn't it true? The desire for a sanctified, clean, wholesome life before God.

Who does this? The Spirit of God is the one who creates this hunger, this yearning, this longing. He is the one, the transforming Spirit, who brings it to bear upon our lives. I notice that one of the most outstanding verses that he uses is that one in 2 Corinthians 7 and verse 1. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Corinthians 7.1. What a wonderful verse this is for a preacher, isn't it? Look at it. Holiness predicted. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved.

The promises are in the 6th chapter. I will dwell in them. I will walk in them.

I will be their God. They shall be my people, saith the Lord God Almighty. That's the promise.

Holiness predicted. Holiness provided. By what ways does God provide holiness? Sanctified by the Word of God.

That's the informing agent, the informing means. Sanctified by the blood of Christ. That's the cleansing means.

Sanctified by the faith of the believer. That is the appropriating means. And sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

That is the applying means. Holiness provided and holiness perfected, brought to maturity in perfect growth and development to the glory and the praise of the Lord Himself. This is what the Spirit of God strives to create in you and me.

A hunger, a yearning, a longing for a life like this and nothing less than this. He directs our gaze to the Lord Jesus Christ. Until we can say in the language of Scripture, but we all will unveil, face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

A change into the same image from glory to glory, evenness by the Spirit of the Lord. Isn't it lovely? Isn't it wonderful? As we gaze, we grow. And as we grow, we glow.

But there's something happening. This change is going on as the Spirit of God takes our thoughts and our hearts and our minds and our very eyes away from everything else and focuses our whole attention upon Jesus Christ. And as we see Him by a wonderful law of assimilation, we become like Him.

This is the work of the Spirit of God, the work He longs to do in your heart and in your life. In a particular and in a positive way, preceding every revival, there is this deep longing for holiness on the part of God's people. It's a deep-seated desire created by the Holy Spirit.

In the words of Paul to the Ephesians, we are made aware that we must have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. We are not to be involved in some unholy alliance with sin-darkened men, but to come out from among them and be separate. Yes, even if this involves our business life, we are to have nothing to do with sin-tainted practices and sin-poisoned systems and sin-blighted works.

We belong to a different generation. We belong to a new race of beings, twice born, hallelujah, filled with the Spirit of God. We are different.

We march to a different drumbeat. The believer's fellowship is with the Father and with the Son, and he is developing a fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Thank God it is a perpetual and progressive and productive fellowship, a partnership which yields a rich and abiding harvest to the praise and glory of God.

Remember how Paul exhorted the Romans when he said to them in unmistakable terms, the night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off, fling far from you the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. This calls for drastic action, because the time of preparation is passing, because the Lord of glory is coming, because the day of revival is dawning.

Therefore we are to strip off and fling away the encroaching works of darkness and clothe ourselves in the garments of holiness, in the armor of light. In this way we are going to prepare ourselves for an ever-deepening fellowship with the blessed Spirit of God, who is the sole agent in revival. And all the time, and all the way, we will find that he inevitably and infallibly directs our gaze to the loving Savior, not to himself at all, but to Jesus in all his compassion, in all his marvelous love toward us, until we hear him say, the Lord himself say, to you and to me I trust.

Lovest thou me? I left my all, my kingly crown, my heavenly whole for Bethlehem, for Calvary. I left it all for love of thee. Lovest thou me? Lovest thou me? Behold the blood shed by the sinless Son of God.

Go gaze on Calvary's crimson tide. Behold my hands, my feet, my sign. Lovest thou me? Lovest thou me? For thee I died, God, for the sinner crucified.

O soul, what thinkest thou of me? What hast thou done with Calvary? Lovest thou me? This will always be the direction of the Spirit of God. This will always inevitably be the way in which he will lead us, to be confronted with the loving Savior, and to answer the question which is as old as time. Lovest thou me? May God bless his word.

Let us pray. Eternal God, our Heavenly Father, we thank thee and praise thee again for thy marvelous lovingkindness to us, for the strength and grace that thou dost give to us even in the proclamation of thy word. We are deeply conscious of this, O Lord.

We would give thee our thanks this night for thy marvelous sympathy and compassion. We know that thou knowest us better than we know ourselves, and thou knowest the breaking point of human endures. Thou

knowest us, Lord, to the very depth of our being.

And, O, the most wonderful thing is that thou dost love us just the same. May that love fill our hearts tonight and overflow with the glory and praise of thy great name. Amen.

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