

Revival - Part 6

by Doc Greenway

Doc Greenway's sermon emphasizes the necessity of knowing and partnering with the Holy Spirit for true revival and spiritual vitality in the Church and individual lives.

Duration: 1:01:27

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 3:8, Acts 1:5-6, Acts 1:14, Acts 2:38, Romans 11:33

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, highlighting that His judgments and ways are beyond human comprehension. The mystery of the Holy Spirit's movings and workings is also discussed, acknowledging that while they may be beyond our understanding, we can still have faith and trust in God's faithfulness. The motive of the Spirit is explored, emphasizing the importance of leaving the outworking of His purpose to Him. The sermon concludes by highlighting the transformative power of God's Spirit in the lives of believers, using the example of a dramatic conversion to illustrate the marvelous transformation that can occur when we are dead in sins but are quickened and saved by God's grace.

Transcript

As we said last Tuesday evening, in all the vast areas of church life today, there is probably the greatest undiscovered province lies within the area of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit. And so just as we did last Tuesday evening, instead of looking at revival as such, we want to look at the Holy Spirit who is the agent in revival, and attempt by the grace of God and by the guidance of the Spirit to see something of what his ministry and fellowship should mean to us as believers. If he is the sole agent in revival, then it is important that we should know him, not simply know about his work and ministry, not know about the manifestation of the Spirit in the wondrous gifts that he gives to his church, but to know him as a person.

To know him in the sense of having fellowship with him, as we have fellowship one with the other. To know the kind of life that he leads, to know the sort of disposition that he has, and above all else, to know his absorbing passion, which is to magnify and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. I suppose that most church-going folk today have learned to think of God in terms of fatherhood.

And they think of him in this way quite naturally, God is the Father. Many have thought of Jesus Christ in terms of saviourhood, and they believe him to be the saviour of the world. Perhaps not their own saviour, but at least that he died on Calvary, and soon they will be remembering this great fact.

But when it comes to the Holy Spirit and his work, well, their testimony is not quite so strong, and their word is not quite so sure. Because here, somehow, they're on strange ground. I'm speaking now, of course, in general terms.

To some, the Holy Spirit is simply a sweet influence that has come to be imparted. To others, he is an emanation from God, whatever that might mean. To yet others, he's an outflowing force.

To yet other people, he's an impersonal power. But somehow, so many seem to fall short of the mark of what he really is, because the Holy Spirit is a person. At the season of Pentecost, it is the custom of the Church to recall the fact that he came.

But his coming is simply historically recognized. So far as his coming experientially is concerned, well, I'm very much afraid this is a different matter. I suppose that many are prepared to agree that his presence in the Church is valid, but I don't think it's very vital.

At least, it doesn't appear to be in some places. Certainly, the Spirit of God is here as some wondrous influence, but you can't pinpoint his work. You can't sort of signify by any definite or positive demonstration what it is he is doing in the midst of the people.

And I'm sure this is all wrong. God never intended that this should be at all. After all, the results of this indifferent attitude to what the Holy Spirit is trying to do and who the Holy Spirit is, results in many who are twice born, but compared with the early Church, they're only half alive.

They have never known the Spirit of God in any personal and powerful sense of the word. And I'm sure that this attitude is what God wants to correct. After all, the work of the Church in its administration is so vast, it demands a universal intelligence to control it, and a universal presence to pervade it and to preside over it.

And therefore, it demands the presence of the Holy Spirit as the sole administrator of the affairs of Christ in his Church from the day of Pentecost until the day when Jesus returns again. In this so-called dispensation of the Holy Spirit, then, he is the sole administrator. He is the absolute dictator, if you like.

So it's an important thing that we should understand something of what it is he is seeking to do in our lives, in our day, and in our times. You remember Jesus said, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. The context there shows that the Jews who were censoring the work of Jesus were actually passing judgment on the work of the Father at the same time.

They were doing it automatically. And I don't think it's too much to say that in just the same way, if we discredit the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we automatically disparage the work of the Father and of the Son, because the Father and the Son are behind the sending of the Holy Spirit into the Christian Church. So if we discount his ministry, we are actually disparaging the ministry of the Father and of the Son of God.

A Church which is actively engaged in self-appointed programs and tragically devoid of spiritual power is, in my way of thinking, a truly pathetic sight. But you know, partnership with the Spirit of God can change all this. This is the glorious thing about it.

It need not be this way at all. For if we are engaged in partnership, in communion, in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, then we soon discover that this displaces our human impotence with his divine omnipotence, that somehow our natural ignorance gives way to his intelligence, and our conscious sinfulness is

cleansed away by his essential holiness. And what is more to the point, our self-sufficiency is dethroned by God's absolute efficiency.

And surely this makes all the difference in the world, not only in the Church, but in the life of the believer. John Hyde, on his way to the mission field, received a cablegram from some of his praying friends. And the substance of it was that they were praying that you may submit to the major partnership of the Holy Spirit.

And he was affronted. He thought his life was given over to God. And he was annoyed.

But by and by he was humbled. And eventually he sought God about this matter. And he became the famous praying Hyde, a mighty man of God.

It was when the Spirit of God came into his life as the major partner that it made all the difference. And when the Spirit of God comes into the Christian Church and is recognized as the major partner in everything, that's what makes all the difference. Revival, I think, is a living proof that a Church which is prepared to accept the absolute dictatorship of the Holy Spirit cannot long remain a weak and vacillating thing, but soon becomes like an army with banners marching on to victory.

And isn't this what we want? Isn't this the thing for which we are longing? Don't you feel deep in your heart a hunger and a yearning to see God moving in this way? His way of moving may not be according to your plan and purpose, but when he moves in sovereign ways, then his Church is suddenly revived and quickened. And then you see something of the eternal purpose of God being outworked in the sphere of time. Now, that's why I'm laying the emphasis so strongly and squarely on our need for a progressive fellowship and partnership with the Spirit of God, which means that we walk in the Spirit, we pray in the Spirit, we sing in the Spirit.

Yes, we live in the Spirit. In other words, in a partnership which is real to us. It may not be real to other people.

They may not be able to appreciate it, but to us it's everything in the world, because it's something personally, in our own experience, a living partnership with the Holy Spirit whom we recognize as being the one in control. To begin each day with a consciousness that you spread your day before him and you say to him, O Holy Spirit of God, take over in my life today. Guide my footsteps, guide my hands, guide my tongue.

Yes, control my affections. Do with me what you would do, but be to me more than I can even ask or imagine. What wonderful days our days would be, would they not? Now, this is something of what is happening here.

I understand there was an occasion when Andrew Carnegie, the great millionaire, was visited by a young businessman, wanted some assistance. And in the course of conversation, Carnegie said to him, Well, what are your assets, young man? Unfortunately, sir, he said, I have none at all. Well, he said, I'm afraid we don't do business on that basis in this office.

But I like your style and I want to help you. You come with me. So he took him downstairs and down to the pavement, the sidewalk, as they say in America.

And linking his arm in the arm of the young man, he walked up and down, up and down for about half an hour talking to him. Then he shook hands with him and went on his way. Immediately, the young fellow was surrounded by businessmen who were only too anxious and willing to help him all they could.

Because of what he was, not at all, but because of the person that he was walking with. There's nothing in us. There's nothing in me.

I recognize it. But the one with whom we walk, the Spirit of God, if we are in his companionship, if we are engaged in partnership with him, then all of heaven waits to pour out blessing upon our lives. This is the thought behind being in partnership and fellowship with the eternal Spirit of God.

For into this common pool, he brings all his marvelous abilities, all his riches, all his divine and inexhaustible equipment. And into this pool, we bring simply our yielded personality. As we have said over and over again, not our ability but our availability.

He's got all the ability. What he wants from us is the availability that he might come and possess us and so use us that our lives may make some impact upon the lives of other people. This is fellowship as I conceive it to be.

And so the person we walk with, fellowship with a comforter, then is to be cultivated. And it makes demands upon us. It is to be cultivated because certain things are observed in our lives.

Now last Tuesday, we mentioned some of these things. We said we must not sin against the Holy Spirit. We must not quench the Spirit by neglecting the study of God's Word, which is fuel for the flame.

Or by neglecting prayer, the atmosphere in which the fire of God burns. In other words, if we are to maintain the vital glow in our fellowship with the Spirit, we must not neglect the place of prayer and waiting upon God. There's so many people, they'll try everything.

When everything has failed, then as a last resort, they'll try prayer. I heard two ladies talking at the end of a church service on one occasion. They were talking quite quietly one to the other, but I could overhear what they were saying.

One was saying, yes, I had a terrible problem, she said. Well, she said, it was so serious, I even prayed. Well, I mean, you can imagine.

It must have been awful. It was so serious, I even prayed. We can allow the fire to die down in our fellowship with the Spirit of God.

We can quench the Holy Spirit, too, by allowing the fire to be neglected by the building up of the ashes of burned-out experiences, which are cold and dead anyhow. Forgetting that we have to have an up-to-date fellowship and experience with the living Spirit of God. We touched on some of these things last Tuesday, so I don't want to enlarge upon them, but simply to make the connection between what we said then and what I want to try and say tonight.

We can cause the flame of God to die down in our lives by superimposing some foreign element. Try to mix the world and God. Try to mix self and the Saviour.

Try to mix the flesh and the Spirit. It just can't be done. Never the two angels meet.

And if you attempt to act in this way, then the fire dies down and we must not grieve the Spirit of God, subjecting Him to the grief of offended righteousness, simply because of sin unconfessed in our lives very often. Or if it is not sin unconfessed, then it may be sin which we know God has forgiven, but which we can't forgive ourselves. How many people are in this trap in Christian living? They know they have failed.

They know they have sinned. They have confessed their sin to God. They know God has forgiven them.

They can't forgive themselves for having failed, for having sinned in this way. And this can be a grief to the Holy Spirit, the grief of offended righteousness, because we are doubting His ability to forgive and to cleanse and to remove. And there is also the grief of thwarted purpose, when we choose self instead of the Spirit and we sow to the flesh and sow of the flesh reap corruption.

This too can be a grief to the Spirit of God. And there is the grief of slighted love, when He moves toward us, wooing us by His overtures of love and sympathy and kindness and understanding and patience and loving kindness. And we are found repulsing that advance that He makes, sometimes through ignorance, often through indifference, because we cannot somehow respond to His overtures of love toward us.

This too is a way of grieving the Spirit of God. And the awful thing is, you see, that these sins are committed not by unsaved people, but by Christian people, churchgoing people, people who profess to love the Lord. This is the awful thing about it.

We must be so very careful then that we do not quench the Spirit of God, we do not grieve the Spirit of God, we do not resist the Spirit of God, we do not tempt the Spirit of God, we do not lie to the Spirit of God in anything that we do or say. But that in this fellowship we have one with the other. There is an absolute flow in freedom, in understanding, in sympathy, that sense of belonging that comes.

What a wonderful thing this is. And it is to this end that God, I believe, is trying to bring us. But you see, not only must this fellowship be a personal thing, but as we try to show, it must also be a progressive fellowship.

Progressive in the sense that we must know the Spirit of God under all the emblems and symbols and figures of speech by which He is presented. Because God condescends through our human limitation to use picture language in order to explain to us what the Holy Spirit is like. Last Tuesday night we had a look at one of these emblems just briefly, the oil of anointing.

And I said then that there is need also to know Him as the wind or breath of God penetrating and invigorating and life imparting. We must know Him as the dove brooding, tremulous with mother love, with all His creative power and ability. We must know Him as the clothing protecting and securing us in the midst of an alien world.

We must know Him as the fire purging, cleansing, consuming deep within our lives. We must know Him in this way too. We must know Him as the rain, as the rivers, as the dew in all His marvelous refreshing.

We are to know Him and know a relationship with Him under all these figures of speech. And when you've come to an end of these, if ever you do, there are all the titles of the Spirit of God, twenty-four of them. And there are all the prepositions of the Spirit of God, all to be known and comprehended in this sense of progressive fellowship which we are to have with Him.

It's endless. It's boundless. When people are concerned about speaking with tongues or prophesying or having some demonstration or some tremendous revelation which half of it is only imagination, and they think they've arrived, how foolish it is when God has so much to give us, so much to empower simply through our fellowship, developing and being cultivated with the blessed Holy Spirit of God.

You must forgive me if I feel strongly on issues like this. I feel strongly because I see so many of God's dear people being robbed of the very best, the highest, the choices that God could give because they are being fobbed off with what is demonstrative only, which will only end in the course of time in disappointment and frustration. I'm not against a hearty shout for the Lord if you've got something worth shouting about.

I'm not against that. I'm not against dancing if this is what the Spirit of God ordains, but I'm very much against those demonstrations which begin in the flesh with a hope that they'd end in the Spirit. I'm against that sort of thing, very much so.

And I've seen a lot of it, and I know it for what it's worth. But believe me, to know the Spirit of God as a person, to know His tenderness, His sympathy, His understanding, His compassion, His love, to know Him as a person, this to me is far more important than having any one of the ecstatic gifts that are mentioned in the Book of God. It's more important because it's going to last longer.

Sometimes I wish I didn't feel as strongly as I do about these things, but there it is. So tonight, I want to move on with you a little bit and think of the Holy Spirit tonight as the wind of God, as the breath of God. In Hebrew, the word ruach is used.

In Greek, the word pneuma is used, for Spirit. And literally, it just means the wind. So the wind of God, the breath of God, if you like.

And let us say, first of all, that as the wind, the Spirit is invigorating, life imparting. And to see this as Jesus presented it, we have to go back to the third chapter of John and to spend a little time with Nicodemus in his conversation with Jesus and how Jesus dealt with him. We're not looking at this simply from the standpoint of what it means to be born again, but trying to find the lessons concerning the Holy Spirit Himself under this figure of speech, that by so doing, we may learn how to walk with Him and how to commune with Him and how to have fellowship with Him as the breath of God, just as we saw it was possible to have fellowship with Him as the anointing oil of God.

This then is our purpose. John 3, in verse 3, Jesus answered and said unto him, that is Nicodemus, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. So, rebirth is an imperative necessity.

That's the first thing. The man himself must be changed. I hope we all agree with this.

It's not a question of changing the environment and therefore changing the man. One Quaint or Welsh preacher used to say, in explaining what he meant here, you may put a pig in a parlour, but it doesn't make him a gentleman. And I can recall one of the cities in the old country, I think it was Birmingham, where they decided to raise all the slum dwellings and shift the slum dwellers and put them into new houses which the council had built.

And this was going to be a tremendous thing. And within six months the new houses were slums. They had changed the environment, but they hadn't changed the people.

And so Jesus makes it very, very clear here that rebirth is an imperative necessity. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? So he reduces the whole spiritual implication to the level of human logic. And isn't this what is going on all the time? It's like a Christian I know who was talking to a college professor about the redemptive work of Christ.

And the college professor said, Well, I'm sorry, I can't accept this. It offends my intelligence. Within three months he came back to see the Christian.

He said, I must accept this. I need forgiveness. And isn't this so? You may not be able to understand and comprehend all that is involved in the redemptive work of Christ, but every living person needs forgiveness.

Forgiveness of sin. And the only one who can give forgiveness of sin is God Himself. And He gives forgiveness because Jesus died and arose again, delivered for our offenses, raised again for our justification.

This is the gospel, isn't it? And so Nicodemus reduces it to this level of human logic. But notice how Jesus persists in driving home His point. Verse 5, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into 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 thee, he must be born again. Don't be amazed at this.

The only way into the kingdom is by being born again. And when we recognize this, what a difference this makes in our life. I can remember how religious I was.

I have often said this. It was a pity I had to be saved, really. I was so good.

But the night that I found Christ as my Savior, to my amazement, I entered into a new world, a new dimension altogether. It was all so different. Somehow, this being born again, that changed my life completely.

I remember once traveling to Ireland and on board the little vessel going across from Stanrath, a land. I remember a man saying to me that on the trip prior to this, the Salvation Army last was on board. And she had walked up to an Anglican bishop.

She didn't know he was an Anglican bishop. She knew he was a minister. She walked right up to him and said, Excuse me, sir.

She said, Are you born again? And he pulled himself up to his full height, which wasn't very high. And he said, My dear young lady, he said, I am a bishop of the Anglican church. Oh, she said, Don't let that stand in your way.

And then Jesus uses an illustration, a very positive one, which underlines the ministry of the Holy Spirit as the quickener, the invigorator, the imparter of life. Verse 8, The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof. But canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth.

So is every one that is born of the Spirit. Rotherham's literal translation reads, The Spirit where it pleaseth doth breathe, and the sound thereof thou hearest. But knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth.

Thus is every one born of the Spirit. Now, what lessons does this teach us about the Holy Spirit as the wind of God? First of all, we are shown the absolute mastery of the Holy Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth.

The word is philo, where it wills. The breath goes and breathes where it wills. So it establishes the Holy Spirit's mastery.

He is the absolute dictator. And you can't have fellowship with Him on any other basis. He is the one in control.

And so His supreme sovereignty is established here in this statement by Jesus. Is it a question of spiritual gifts? He divideth severally, as He will will ye. Is it a matter of membership in the Church? He hath set the members as it hath pleased Him.

Is it a question of being commissioned? The Holy Ghost said, Separate unto me, Barnabas and Saul, and so on. So all the way through, you see, He is the dictator, and what He says has to go. It must be so if He commands it.

It must be so if He requires it. We cannot therefore expect to control the Holy Spirit. But we must expect that He will control us.

You can't organize Him, but He can organize you. And when He does this, remember, His dealings are never unreasonable. But they are super reasonable.

And there is a difference. Just as I always say the coming of the Holy Spirit upon a person is not unnatural, it is supernatural. God always intended it should be so.

He designed our bodies to be temples of the Holy Spirit. So when the Spirit of God comes, it's not unnatural, it's supernatural. And the mastery of the Spirit of God in His absolute dictatorship is never unreasonable, but it is super reasonable.

We mentioned in the beginning of this series, Elijah being sustained by a widow woman, and she a Gentile. Now that was super reasonable. When Ruth and I, during our married life, our early days, were in a little bit of financial difficulty, I remember we were praying about this and asking the Lord to supply our needs.

We had no idea at all as to how He would do it. But you know how He did it? He caused a missionary couple on a missionary field to send to our support. And that was humbling.

We felt that we should be the ones supporting them, but they felt led of the Spirit of God under His dictatorship, under His guidance, to send to our support. And month after month after month, we received support from that mission field. Unreasonable? Super reasonable.

We got to the place where we overcame our own feelings in the matter and recognized that this was something which God was doing. God is no man's debtor and you can never outgive Him. I've proved this and I trust you've proved it.

And when He does come to meet our need, it's through so many unexpected sources that you're caused to stand in wonder, love, and praise, and just worship Him for what He has so marvelously done, knowing your need when perhaps no one else knew or if they knew, they just didn't care. God has His own way. It

almost reminds me of a man I heard praying once.

He was quite an intellectual, but in his prayer he said, paradoxical as it may appear unto thee, O Lord. And I often thought of those days, you know, it seemed so paradoxical and yet it was God's way. The breath goes where it will.

So here you have divine sovereignty present. This is what happened, you know, in the revival in Wales. The breath goes where it will.

The breath of God went into that little Christian endeavor meeting. The breath of God ended into a young woman. She stood to her feet.

The breath of God controlling her caused her to say, I love Jesus Christ with all my heart. And the deluge was outpoured and the revival began. The breath goes where it will.

It is divine sovereignty in the movements of the Spirit of God. And we have to accept this if we are going to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit of God. He's in charge, not you at all.

He's the dictator. He's the controller. He is the one who has absolute sovereignty and mastery in your life.

If you want fellowship, it's on this basis, on no other. Secondly, we are shown the positive manifestation of the Spirit. Thou hearest the sound thereof.

Though unseen, you may sense His presence. There's a reality about His work which cannot be denied by any honest thinking person. He is present.

You hear the sound thereof. And I think especially in conversion and especially in those dramatic conversions, surely no one could ever deny the miracle of the presence of the pervading, life-changing Spirit of God. His old Meryl Trotter on his way to commit suicide with sugar bags wrapped around his feet because he had no shoes.

And as he is on his way, he passes the Water Street Mission and hears the sound of singing and went in, and because it was warm, sat in the back seat and promptly fell asleep to be awakened by the voice of the preacher saying, and God is calling to you, my brethren, saying, I love you and I want you to be saved. And he awoke and went forward. Well, what a hopeless situation, you'd say.

You know that Meryl Trotter lived to see the day when he was voted the most respected citizen in that city. This is the kind of thing the Spirit of God is able to do because he is sovereign and because also there's a positive manifestation when he moves and works. And you know, you sense, you feel he's present, though you cannot see him at all.

This is what Jesus taught about the Spirit. I know that not everyone is capable of registering his presence. I understand this.

Jesus said it, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. The world can't receive him. Three kinds of men, aren't there? There is the natural man, there's the carnal man, there's the spiritual man, the natural man, the psychicos man, the man of the soul, and the carnal man.

Well, he's the psychicos man, the man of the flesh. And there's the spiritual man, the pneumaticos man, the man in whom the Spirit of God is having his right of way. The first fellow, the natural man, has never

been touched by the converting and regenerating Spirit of God.

And so he's in the realm of the soul. He's a soulish fellow. And in the realm of the soul, he has no knowledge of the things of the Spirit.

They are foolishness unto him. And so you will see that even though the Spirit of God may be manifestly present to those who are spiritual, he may be done at the South Poles as far as many are concerned, even though they are in the meeting. They never register because they're not in that sphere, in that initiation, in that realm at all.

So Jesus understood this and I believe he taught it quite plainly and clearly. Now, there was a positive manifestation, surely, at Pentecost, wasn't there? And there came a sound from heaven as of a... Thank God it's from the right direction, wasn't it? There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind. And it filled all the place where they were assembled together.

But, you know, there was a preparation for that positive manifestation of the wind at Pentecost. It came upon a prepared people, a preparation for Pentecost was marked by expectancy to begin with. These all continued in obedience of the command, Tarihi.

And the word continued, proskatharautas. It's a strong word. It means to have strength towards something.

It's continuing without cessation. They were determined they would obey their Lord. And in this determination, in this being strong toward the fulfillment of the command, in this preparation, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind.

I'm sure there is a connection between the two things. This preparation was also marked by unity. They were all with one accord.

And that was a marvelous thing. Thomas in his doubting, Peter in his impetuosity, John and James and all the rest of them, so different with all their idiosyncrasies and funniosities. And yet they were made one, amalgamated, blended, made of one accord.

How wonderful this is. You see, they were looking for the kingdom to be restored. When wilt thou restore unto us the kingdom, they said.

And Jesus said, He shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost that many days hence. Art thou at this time going to restore the kingdom? They couldn't take it in. But here they were at last, brought into a place of one accord.

And an accord, a unity, which was marked by fervency. They continued with all with one accord in prayer. Now, this wasn't the kind of prayer that you sometimes hear in revival prayer meetings, when there's dead silence for a long time and then somebody ventures to pray a few words.

And then just before it's time to finish, everybody seems to pray through. And that's the end of the prayer meeting. Not at all.

This word prayer is different. This is the word prosuchy. And it means intense intercession on fire.

The word use of the fervent, effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man. They continued in prayer. They laid hold of God.

They believed God. They trusted He would fulfill His word. They expected God to move.

And in this kind of praying, they laid themselves wide open for the visitation of the winds of God to come into the midst of them. My brothers and sisters in Christ, we must remember that there is a necessary preparation where we are concerned too, if we are to see revival in our day. You know, this rushing mighty wind is very important, isn't it? I wish there was more time to deal with word by word.

But rushing. This word rushing means that which carries everything before it. Bearing before it.

The word mighty is mighty in manifestation. Manifestly mighty. And so the rushing mighty wind, doesn't it paint a picture for you? This illimitable power on the move in the early church.

This is what they experienced on the day of Pentecost. And I've heard ministers of my own acquaintance, older men much than I am, really, or I was at the time, who were able to say that during the days of the great revival in Wales, they often heard the sound of a mighty rushing wind. They could hear it coming in the distance.

And they'd get on their knees and they'd wait before God. And suddenly it would come in and come swishing and moving and rushing around the room where they were. And then out again.

And there was dead silence until they found themselves lit up in the Spirit. This is revival. Hallelujah.

And we are going to say that we believe for revival in our day. Well, the rushing mighty wind may be part of the demonstration of God when He comes. We do not know.

He is the dictator, as we have said. He is the controller. He is the one who has His hand upon every single thing.

Now, I'm sure it's the purpose of God that the working of the Holy Spirit should be seen in transformed lives. I believe not simply where the unsaved are concerned, but where we are concerned, too. Certainly where the unsaved person is concerned, when he comes to the Lord and accepts Christ as Saviour, then that experience through which he passes is spoken of as a new creation.

I love this term. Not a new creature, please. A new creation.

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new.

What a tremendous field of opportunity and possibility is open here. New potentials, new talents, new abilities and new personality reconstructed on the image of God's Son. It's all here.

It's all possible within this area of the Spirit's moving. Surely a new creation. I remember a man in the village eight miles from my home.

He was what we call a dunce at school. He wasn't intelligent at all. He could hardly read or write.

But God laid it upon his heart one day to give himself unreservedly to the Spirit of God, and he did that. And you know, the Spirit of God so took hold of that man, he remade him, gave him a new personality. It's

the only way I can describe it.

And he became a linguist. He went out to the mission field and was one of the most successful men in that area of mission work that had ever been known. This same person.

I knew him personally. He could hardly talk to you in the days that I knew him. God can do marvelous things when the Spirit of the Lord is allowed to have his right of way.

Not only transforming the life from within and changing the very being of the person, but transforming the countenance, too. You know, they used to call one of the servants of God, Judson of Burma it was, Mr. Glory Face. Because wherever he went, his face was radiating the glory of God.

Why not? Why not? If we may never have a face that glows with the glory of God, God give us lives that glow with an inward glow of his presence. Because, you see, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. God can do marvelous things by and through the Spirit in this area of life changing.

We have to dare to believe for this. Again, you know, this change wrought in the sinner by the regenerating wind of God is described as a quickening. Writing of this in Ephesians chapter 2, And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in times past he walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, among whom all, we all had our conversation in times past in the fulfilling of the lusts of our flesh and of our mind and were by nature the children of that.

Isn't this how it goes, you know? What a tremendous picture it is. What a gloomy past. Dead in trespasses and sins.

Controlled by the prince of the power of the air. Walking according to the course of this world. What a terrible thing.

But God, weary, but God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ by grace he hath saved and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ. What a marvelous transformation. And this for people who were dead, separated from God in trespasses and in sin.

If the winds of God, if the breath of God can accomplish this, then surely we can say, thou hearest the sound thereof. Hallelujah. Thou hearest the sound thereof.

You can see the positive manifestation of his working in the lives of God's people, can't you? Ruth and I often say, what marvelous friends we've got. How lovely it is to be in their company. We may not have so very many, but what we have are so marvelous.

There's something about their lives, something that God has done in them that make them the choicest people imaginable. They may not be recorded in who's who down here, but they know what's what and thank God they're in the Lamb's Book of Life. It's a marvelous thing to know that God can do this sort of thing by his regenerating, by his quickening, by his life imparting, by his creative Holy Spirit in fellowship with the people of God.

We must dare to believe a great thing. Thou hearest the sound thereof. The third lesson we are taught concerns the mystery of the Spirit.

Thou canst not tell whence it cometh. We can no more explain the mystery of the new birth than we can fathom the mystery of conception and natural birth. It is just as impossible.

We have to confess, I know not how the Spirit moves convincing men of sin. And so it is with all the movements of the Holy Spirit. They're all shrouded in mystery.

And there's an element of mystery about them beyond our understanding, beyond our comprehension. And this is rightly so. After all, if we understood everything, how could we possibly walk by faith and not by sight? As we've often said during our times in our brother Gordon Pellers' home, faith is never called to understand.

Faith is called to stand. That's all. And if faith is prepared to stand, someday faith will understand.

But if you're going to wait until you understand before you're prepared to stand, brother, you'll never stand and you'll never understand. This is God's way of working. And so with the mystery of the Spirit, thou canst not tell whence it cometh.

It's so with all the movements of the Spirit. I must confess, an open confession is good for the soul. But I've often found it difficult to obey the Spirit of God in relation to people.

I've been able to obey Him in relation to study and prayer and all the rest of it, but not in relation to persons. And I can recall a time right here in Hamilton in a prayer meeting. I was kneeling.

A young lad was kneeling alongside the seat away from me. There were several present. As I knelt there, the Spirit of God said to me, go and lay your hands on David T. Parry.

And I didn't want to. I didn't believe, but was anything going to come out of it? And so immediately I said, yes, but if I lay hands on him and nothing happens, then I'm going to look a fool, aren't I? And after all, I'm his principal. He's my student, one of my students.

And he's not going to have much confidence in me if nothing happens, is he? And I had the whole thing worked out. I wasted an awful lot of time in explaining to the Lord why I couldn't do it. And then in the end, the Lord said, well, you've got to do it anyhow.

So I got up from my knees. I walked across to where David was kneeling. I laid my hands on his head and I said, oh God, I'm sure you want David in your service.

Now fill him with your mighty Spirit. And the Spirit of God fell upon him. He stood to his feet.

He raised up his hands. He was glorifying God and speaking in tongues and magnifying the Lord. I remember he had to go to work that morning and he was riding on his bicycle and the bicycle was going this way and that way and every other way.

But he was praising the Lord. And you know, up until that time, David couldn't say very much. I think God will remember David before he.

But he's a mighty man of God now amongst the Maori people. You see, it would have been so easy for me to have kept on arguing and reasoning until I got to the place where I could really understand that God didn't want me there. He wanted not my understanding, but my obedience.

Though my brother, my sister in Christ, this is always the case. Not your comprehension, but your willingness. Not your ability to know, but your willingness to do.

That's all. And therefore, his movements will remain in the realm of the mysterious. Remember how Paul writes to the Corinthians, For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.

For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. He has it all in his control. Writing to the Romans, you remember he said, Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. The mystery of the Holy Spirit's movings and workings are beyond our human comprehension. But thank God, they're not beyond our human ability to lay hold by faith and believe God.

Trust him in the midst of everything and then discover his faithfulness, which never fails. The fourth lesson we learn concerns the motive of the Spirit. Nor whither it goeth.

In progressive fellowship, we have to learn to leave the outworking of the purpose and the motive to him. The foresight is always his. Sometimes the backsight is ours.

And we can be wise after the event. But the foresight is always his. The Holy Spirit never performs an emergency act.

The Holy Spirit is never guilty of an afterthought. The Holy Spirit always has full thought and full sight. Because he knows the end from the beginning.

And he knoweth the way that we take. What a marvelous purpose and plan this is, isn't it? And how beautifully it works out if we allow the Spirit of God to have his right of way. The motive of the Spirit.

We know not whither it goeth. Ah yes, Hudson Taylor was sure it was Africa. But the Spirit of God said, No, it's China.

Justin was all set to go to India. But the Spirit of God said, Ah no, Burma. And Kerry was all prepared for Africa.

But the Spirit of God said, No, not Africa, India. And has the Spirit of God been talking to you like this? Have you heard his voice speaking personally and directly to you? Telling you what it is he wants you to do? And have you been attempting to understand and comprehend the motive, to see the purpose before you permit yourself to enter into this area of progressive fellowship with him? Even though the way is obscure to you, it's perfectly clear to him. Not till the loom is silent and the shuttles cease to fly will God unroll the canvas and explain the reason why the dark threads were as needful in the weaver's skillful hand as the threads of gold and silver in the pattern he had planned.

Not till then, but believe that he loves, he cares, he understands. And by and through his eternal Spirit, he is working out a motive in your life which is beautiful beyond your comprehension. It's mysterious to you, but not to him.

And because he knows our human limitations, then like Elijah the prophet did in the case of the Shunammite's son, he is prepared to identify himself with us. You know the story? When the dead child was brought in, the prophet stretched his hands upon the child's hands, put his mouth at the child's mouth,

put his forage at the child's forage, stretched himself out upon the child and breathed, and behold, the child lived. How wonderful the Holy Spirit is in this condescension to contract himself to our limitations, to accommodate himself to our failures, to our misunderstandings, to our wrong concepts.

How wonderful it is that he's prepared in this way to come until at last he can breathe again the eternal breath and we live and we can give God thanks and praise for his marvelous loving kindness to us. The Holy Spirit accommodating himself. There's one important reference in the Gospels to the spiritus breath that I must touch on.

It's in John 20 and verse 22, when the resurrected Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples and said, Peace be unto you. As my father hath sent me, so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit.

Breathe entusau. It's used as the impartation of life. As in the beginning, God breathed upon men and he became a living soul.

Breathe the breath of lives is the literal translation. On them, into them. Suggesting a penetration, conveying life to them.

And he said, Receive ye the Holy Spirit. Labete is the verb. It's in the aorist tense, in the imperative mood.

It's something that happened right then. Receive ye the Holy Spirit. But the objection is sometimes raised.

How could the Holy Spirit have been given to them in the light of John 7 and verse 39? For the Holy Spirit was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified. The question is, when was he glorified? Were there two ascensions? One is resurrection day. One from the Mount of Olives.

In John 13 and verse 31, you'll read, Now is the Son of Man glorified. None. Now.

The process is beginning now. John 13, 32, God shall straightway glorify him. Use this immediately.

So that after Judas had done his work, immediately the process of glorifying the Lord began. Now remember this. That on the great day of atonement, no one was allowed to touch the garments of the high priest which had been sanctified before he went into the holy of holies to sprinkle the mercy seat.

When he came out, having sprinkled the Ark of the Covenant, having sprinkled the golden incense altar, the table of showbread, the golden lampstand, outside with the laver of brass, and then sprinkled with blood the altar of sacrifice, then they could touch him. Don't you see on the morning of his resurrection day, in John 20 and 17, when Mary went to touch him, he said, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my father. But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend, about to ascend unto my father and your father and to my God and your God.

Touch me not, I am not yet ascended. But on the evening of the same day, in Luke 24, 39, Handle me and see. Somewhere between the morning and the evening of that resurrection day, in order to fulfill the Levitical type, he must have entered into the presence of God, there symbolically to sprinkle the mercy seat.

And then he was able to return and stand among his disciples and say, Peace be unto you. Handle me and see. You know, the psalmist, he had a vision of these two ascensions.

Psalm 24, verses 7 to 9, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle, ascending through the hosts of darkness, dragging them aside from himself, pushing them hither and thither as he went up through the powers of evil and the forces of darkness, right up into the Father's presence. But notice again, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts. He is the King of glory as he ascends from the Mount of Olives with the hosts of the Lord surrounding him. Yes, the psalmist had this vision.

And so in the upper room, in John 20, in verse 22, the breath came in penetration to quicken these disciples, to impart life so that they were born of the Spirit. But on the day of Pentecost, they were baptized with the Spirit and with power according to the purpose and the promise of Jesus. My time has gone.

I pray that God will bless his word to our hearts. The penetration by the Spirit of God is life imparting. It is invigorating.

And I believe that the Spirit of God wants us to know him in this relationship that just as the Apostle Paul prayed in the second Ephesian prayer, as he looked upon the church in Ephesus and saw their need and asked God that he would grant them according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, made strong with might upon manifested might through his Spirit penetrating through their inmost being to their God consciousness. And this penetration of the eternal Spirit to their very God consciousness prepares the way for the next prayer that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith and this prepares for the next prayer that ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge and the next prayer that ye might be filled unto all the fullness of God from that first penetration by the eternal Spirit to the inmost part of their being. There is the motivating force.

There is the birthplace of your life of all the rest that is to come. And I am sure that when God by his Spirit is allowed to penetrate to the inmost part of our being like the breath of God then in that God conscious part there will be something created which will affect our soul life affect our relationship with the world around us affect us as beings, as Christians so that with Paul we shall be able to say with exultation now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly of all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages unto the age of ages Amen and Amen May God bless his work

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/27/SID27122.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/doc-greenway/revival-part-6/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net