

We Can Have Revival Now Because of God's Infinite Resources Freely Available

by John R. Rice

God's infinite resources, including His grace, the Word of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make revival always possible and sufficient for soul-winning and mass evangelism.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 14:29, Luke 24:49, John 6:9, Romans 8:32, Romans 15:29, 2 Corinthians 10:3, Ephesians 5:18, Hebrews 4:12, James 4:2

Topics: "Divine Resources", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

John R. Rice preaches about the importance of focusing on God's power and resources rather than on circumstances or conditions. He emphasizes the need to trust in God's grace, the power of His Word, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the impact of persistent prayer to bring about revival. By looking at examples like Peter, Andrew, Paul, and the early disciples, he highlights how faith, prayer, and reliance on God's resources can lead to powerful transformations and the salvation of souls.

Transcript

PETER, walking on the water to come to Jesus at His command, saw the wind and waves boisterous and was afraid. He lost his faith and began to sink. His trouble was that he looked at the circumstances instead of the Lord Jesus, the Creator of all the winds and waves.

Andrew, when Jesus wanted to feed the five thousand, said, "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" (John 6:9). Andrew looked at the one boy's lunch of barley biscuits and sardines, and looked at the great multitude of five thousand men, besides women and children, and knew that the boy's lunch was inadequate. But he was looking at the conditions instead of Jesus Christ. So all those who say that the apostasy on the part of Christian people is too great to have a revival, that the voice of atheism among scholars and infidelity in the pulpits is too loud and convincing for us to ever have a revival; those who say that the shrill voice that calls to pleasure with all the competition of radio, television, sports, luxuries, leisure, the theater, the dance, and enticing sin is too clamorous and loud for us to have a revival--such people are looking at conditions instead of at God. They forget the infinite resources which have always made revival possible, the resources abundantly available to all who would win souls according to the will of God.

Hear how Paul had mighty confidence in the resources of God, the spiritual weapons of our warfare! "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (1 Cor. 10:3-5).

Oh, these mighty "weapons of our warfare!" Through God they are mighty, "to the pulling down of strong holds."

Paul had wonderful success in his spiritual warfare, his conquest of men with the gospel. His confidence was not based on any thought that men were easier to reach than they might be in a later generation, nor in any thought that the circumstances made the gospel powerful. No, no! Paul had the infinite resources of an Almighty God at his command, and the weapons of his warfare were mighty to the pulling down of strongholds and casting down imaginations, and bringing men to obedience to Christ.

When Paul contemplated going to Rome, the center of the world, to preach the gospel, he wrote ahead to Christians in this city to say, "And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:29). There was no failure to Paul. Whether at Corinth, or Ephesus, or at Rome, it was all the same. He could write to Corinth: "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (II Cor. 2:14).

What are these mighty spiritual weapons of our warfare? What are these infinite resources of God available to the soul winner, which load the scales always in favor of those who would have revival and are willing to pay the price for it?

I maintain that the infinite grace of God, always loving sinners, grace greater than all their sin; the mighty power of the Word of God when preached and witnessed in the Spirit, "The power of God unto salvation"; the miracle-working energy of the Holy Spirit when He fills and endues Christians; and the power of persistent, prevailing, heart-broken, believing prayer are resources that are absolutely irresistible and make revival possible now or any time and any place in the world where people with holy abandon use these resources!

1. God's Inexhaustible Grace and His Boundless Love for Sinners Make Revival Always Possible

If any one here doubts whether we can now have revivals, as great revivals as were ever given to bless humanity and keep souls out of Hell, let him simply turn in his Bible and find if John 3:16 is still there! God loves this world! Let me say it again, because our hearts are so calloused to the blessed truth that it makes little impression upon us--God loves this world! He loves every sinner in it. The extent of His love is beyond human comprehension. He gave His own perfect Son to be a man, to be tempted as a man, to live a perfect life, to minister among men and then to die a shameful death of agony that men might be saved.

Do you believe that if God had it to do over, He still loves lost men enough to let Jesus die? If it were to be in this generation, not the generation in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago, but this generation, and in our modern world and civilization, with all its wickedness, its pride, its arrogance, its lewdness, its unbelief, its hatred of God and goodness--if it were to be in this generation, I say, would God still give His Son to die? Does the heart of God beat with the same compassion and yearning over lost sinners as it ever did? Do you believe it is still true, just as true as it ever was, that God loves the world with an infinite, boundless

love that would pay any price that is proper and good to keep people out of Hell? Remember that when God gave His Son, He gave everything with Him. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). Is that still the extent and measure and indication of the yearning, compassionate, weeping heart of God who will not stop until He has paid every price that infinite mercy can pay to save sinners and keep them from ruin? I know that it is true! I know that the infinite grace of God is still on the side of revival, on the side of soul-winning, on the side of mass evangelism. And the grace of God, oh, so great, means that revival is possible.

I believe that part of our trouble is that we do not enter into this loving compassion, into this sacrificial giving of God and of Christ, and so, since we do not love men as Moody and Billy Sunday and Wesley and Spurgeon and Finney did, we do not believe that we can have the revivals they had. Oh, for some understanding and some holy union with God and Christ in compassionate love and grace that would save sinners!

Men talk to me about the sin of this world, about the wickedness of mankind, about all the strident clamor that would turn men's minds away from God. Men talk to me about the lawlessness of the age, the pre-occupation with pleasure, the strife between capital and labor, the warring between nations, the increase of divorce and the breakdown in the home, the lack of any authority in the home, and the breakdown of authority everywhere, whether in the laws of the nation, or in parental supervision, even the authority of the Word of God over men's hearts. But do you talk to me of sin? I know something greater than all the sin in the world! "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:20, 21). I am conscious of the all-pervading rot and stench and bent and chaos and suction and lure and malevolence of sin! I find it in all the world about me. I find men depraved, degenerate, fallen, ruined and needing new hearts for the old wicked hearts. They need cleansing, forgiveness, new life for the deadness that is in men. I preach against sin and weep over it. I am ever conscious of it. Yea, I find it even in my own heart and nature. But, oh, thank God that "where sin did abound, grace did much more abound"! Do you talk to me about apostasy, about a falling away in the churches, about the invasion of infidels coming in as wolves in sheep's clothing, claiming to be Christians when they are children of Hell, unregenerate, not believing the Bible, the enemies of historic Christianity who would tear the crown of deity with impious hands from the brow of Jesus Christ? Apostasy? Yes! But where there is such sin, there is the grace of God, greater than all the sin in the hearts of impostors and infidels. It is greater than all the sin in the hearts of drunkards and harlots. It is greater than all the sin in unbelieving Jews, in rite-and-priest-ridden Catholics. The grace of God is enough for sinners everywhere. And then it is more, much more, infinitely more than man's sin can ever require. Oh, the boundless grace and love of God! Where there is such grace, such an outpouring of love and mercy and yearning and atonement, we can have revival!

This is just another way of saying that the cross of Jesus Christ, that Calvary, is so far-reaching, so colossal, such an outpouring of the heart of God for the saving of sinners, that revival is possible, that there is always an answer to sin that is more than enough. How we sin against the love of God and the grace of God when we give sinners up! How we sin against the love and grace of God and the price paid for sin when we give communities and nations up to sin.

Men who think the days of great revival are over have simply forgotten the infinite adequacy of the death of Christ, and the grace of God!

One may feel that all this is true, that God's love, God's grace, the atoning death of Christ, the intent and purpose of God is sufficient for revival, but may feel that he himself is totally inadequate to be used. Many Christians feel that they cannot win souls. Many preachers feel that they cannot be used as instruments in revivals, cannot be used to win hundreds, thousands of sinners. Many feel inadequate to deal with drunkards and harlots, infidels and criminals, hardened old sinners and members of false cults. But again the grace of God is the answer.

Are you weak? Are you encumbered with care and temptation? Is there a sense of utter insufficiency and inadequacy? Does Satan himself send many a messenger of Satan to buffet you? Ah, then let Paul tell you how he solved that problem. Once when he begged God again and again that the thorn in the flesh might be removed so that he could have more power, so that he could be adequate for the burden and ministry laid upon him, God gave him the answer, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." And Paul then gladly accepted the grace needed and said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (11 Cor. 12:9,10). God's grace is sufficient for you, dear Christian, to do all you ought to do, to be all you ought to be, to be a channel of the infinite grace of God to the hearts of sinners. His grace is sufficient!

Never will I forget when early in my first full-time pastorate we came to a seeming impasse. I had started revival services. I had, in my own heart, made this a condition: if the church would ask me to lead in revival services so that I would have a chance to get acquainted with the people and God would have a chance to use me in winning souls and in building up a poor, discouraged, divided congregation, I would accept the pastorate. When they had agreed that I should lead in revival services, we were besieged by days of rain and storm. The pitiful handful of people who came were not expectant but impassive, though kindly. Many had vowed never to again attend the little church where there had been bickering, strife and barrenness. It seemed that even God had turned His face away, and the church building had been struck by lightning and burned to the ground. Now we were meeting in a little board tabernacle, and I had come to the end of my strength.

That morning I walked up the railroad track, anywhere to be alone. I sat disconsolately upon a rock and cried out to God not to let me go back and to face my problems and burdens in the ministry without some assurance that He was with me, that He would give the victory. And I found this blessed passage where Paul learned the secret of grace sufficient for all the weakness, for all the thorns of Satan, all the infirmities, all the persecutions and distresses. God said to me, as He had said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." I rose from there determined to have the strength of God in my weakness. A marvelous revival followed. And, thank God, for many long years I have found that always the grace of God, the marvelous, infinite, matchless grace of God is enough for revival, enough for soul-winning power.

Oh, you who hear and any who may read, do not go on defeated! Do not go on without power! Do not go on without the fruit of souls saved. God's grace is sufficient!

As long as the infinite grace of God is poured out upon mankind, we can have revival. Christians may have His power and may carry His message to sinners, and may see men born again and lives changed, homes changed, communities changed by the grace and power of God! Oh, it is a wonderful gospel that I preach to you today! Grace for the drunkard! Grace for the harlot! Grace for the profane! Grace for the

infidel! I have seen it work. How many drunkards I have seen made sober, how many whoremongers and harlots made pure, how many Catholics, Jews, and members of other false cults and isms have I seen turn to God! I have seen the murderer made into a godly and humble and devoted child of God. I can bear witness that the grace of God is enough for every kind of sin and for every kind of sinner. And that means that we can have revival now.

II. The All-Powerful Word of God Makes Revival Possible Now

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," Paul said by divine inspiration, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The word power here is the Greek word *dunamis*, from which we get our word dynamite. So the gospel Paul preached was the dynamite of God. And, he said, it was not only good for Jews, but good for Greeks. God's mighty Word, as Paul preached it, was as powerful with the learned Greeks as it was with the religious Hebrews. And let us thereby learn a lesson. What this modern, educated race needs is the same old gospel. With all our gadgets, machinery, inventions, with all our luxuries, our proud independence and arrogant unbelief, the gospel of Jesus Christ, preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, is still the answer for man's sin.

In Jeremiah 23:28,29 is this plain word from God:

"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

What is the chaff to the wheat? Not moral essays, not human argument, not personality and magnetic influence; but the mighty Word of God is the preacher's weapon. If a dream is all you have, then tell your dream, but it will not make black hearts white. But if you have the Word of God, then speak it faithfully. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Oh, the living, burning Word of God! Oh, the mighty hammer to break hearts of stone and crush resistance to God!

Heed what the Lord says to us in Hebrews 4:12,13:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

He who preaches the Word of God faithfully and in the power of the Spirit finds it a living and powerful weapon, sharper than any two-edged sword. He finds that the Word of God, so preached or witnessed with the power of the Spirit, pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. That is, it is a revealer and discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. When a man preaches the Word of God in the power of God, every creature who hears finds his soul under the gaze of Almighty God. He finds that his conscience, his motives, his nature are all naked and open before the eyes of the Lord with whom one has to do, when the preacher preaches the Word of God in the power of God! Oh, then, that God would give us a heart to preach the Word of God and believe in that!

I find that the people who do not believe we can have revival now have always a tendency away from absolute faith in the Bible. To Spurgeon, the Bible was word-for-word, in original manuscripts, given of God. He believed in verbal inspiration. So it was with Moody and with Torrey and with Finney. So it was

with all the great evangelists. They preached not merely good things, with the thought from God. They preached, as they were assured, the very words of God! They could say with Paul, "But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words" (I Cor. 2:12, 13 R.V.). God gave the things, the content of the message. He also gave the very words in which they were couched, in the original manuscripts. And preachers who preach the word as burning words which themselves came from God, and preach such Scripture in the power of the Holy Spirit, have seen the mighty working of God's Spirit, in the saving of multitudes.

A few years ago when Evangelist Billy Graham was in England and being greatly blessed of God in revivals, with many being saved, I had a letter from him in which he told me that he had gotten away from the short messages, gotten away from the light approach and the entertainment, and had begun to speak often for an hour or more on sin and Hell and judgment and Christ's second coming. He had begun to learn the mighty power that is in the Word of God itself, when it is preached with boldness.

I have before me now an account from Billy Graham of the blessed revival in Los Angeles where some three thousand people came to Christ late in 1949. My friend and beloved brother, Evangelist Graham, says:

"How foolish I have been so many times. I have worked so hard to build a message, replete with illustrations, with perhaps an experience or two of my own thrown in. True, God blessed those messages in the past.

"But, oh, how He blessed the plain and simple Word of God in this campaign!

"The Scriptures say . . . The Bible says . . . The Scriptures say . . . The Bible says . . .

"I got to the place where I could not preach any of my old sermons. Studying from six to eight hours a day, I received new sermons, burned into my heart by God. I did away with all illustrations. I used from twenty-five to one hundred passages of Scripture each evening. People, I found, cannot stand under the impact of the Word of God. Even the hardest sinner will capitulate."

I am sure that God often wants men to use illustrations, to throw light on the Word of God. I am sure that God wants every gift dedicated to Him in the preaching of the Word. But, oh, may God help us to know that the dynamite of God is in the message itself, from the Word of God. "Is not my word like a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces?" "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

What a divine resource! Thank God, the Bible, the Word of God, is as strong as ever it was, and it can cut to the hardest hearts.

I was in revival services in Washington, D.C. One morning I preached to a great crowd. A Catholic woman was present and was disturbed at my preaching on "Ye Must Be Born Again." She had never before been in a Protestant service. That morning after the service she apologized to me for thinking that this could not be the house of God, that I could not be a messenger of God, nor these people the people of God. She expected God to manifest Himself only in a Catholic church. But she was so disturbed that she asked for

audience with me. To get around any question of her church, and any argument about differences, I simply had her answer to me question after question from II Timothy 2:5,6. She, looking on the Scriptures, answered that there was only one God, that there was only one Mediator between God and men, that this Mediator was not a preacher, not a priest, not the saints, not the Virgin Mary. She looked again to verify it, and tears started in her eyes and her lips trembled as she said, "No! It is not the blessed Virgin." Then I asked her, "Who, then, is the one Mediator, the one Go-Between, the one Peace-Maker between God and man?" She read the answer from the Scripture again, "The Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all . . ." And she was weeping. She soon trusted the Saviour. Then as she wiped her eyes, she said to me, "I never would have believed that if you had not showed it to me in the Bible!" Oh, if we would only believe what the Word of God will do, when preached in faith and power of the Holy Spirit!

Do you remember the blessed promise of Psalm 126:5,6? "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Here is the plain promise of God, never repealed. One who takes the Word of God and sows that Word of God with tears, with contrite, broken hearts, in the hearts of sinners, is certain to see results. He is to return with joy, bringing his sheaves.

Let us, then, sow the Word of God. Sow it broadcast. Sow it here and yonder, and in every way possible get out the gospel. "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters, that send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass" (Isa. 32:20).

We often think of Galatians 6:7,8 as a solemn warning to sinners, and so it is. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." But God adds in the next verse the emphasis that He mainly wants us to see, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

How can one who believes this Scripture, this blessed principle of the law of sowing and reaping the gospel, say we cannot have great mass revivals again? If we sow, we shall reap. If we plant the precious seed of the Word of God and water it with our tears, the blessed Spirit of God will make it sprout in many a heart. We can have revival now because we have the infinite resource, always available, of the all-powerful Word of God. If the Word of God ever comes to its own in our lives, we will have mighty revivals.

III. The Miracle-Working Holy Spirit to Empower Christians and Convict and Regenerate Sinners Makes Revivals Always Possible

When Jesus was talking to His disciples the last time before His crucifixion, that sad and terrible night, one thing burdened Him so that He returned to the subject again and again. In the fourteenth chapter of John He tells the disciples plainly, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do . . ." (John 14:12). He gives them the wonderful promise of answered prayer, that whatsoever they shall ask in His name, He will do it (John 14:13, 14). Then He gives them the blessed secret of the Holy Spirit the Comforter who is to come and abide with them forever. This Comforter is "the Spirit of truth" whom the world cannot receive, and He is to dwell in them (vs. 17). This Comforter, the Holy Spirit, is to teach them all things and bring all things to their remembrance. They are to have perfect peace because of this comforting Holy Spirit dwelling within. How Jesus emphasized the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in a Christian! And then in the fifteenth chapter of John He tells how this work of the Holy

Spirit in Christians, if they fully abide in Him and the Word of God abides in them, shall bring much fruit.

Jesus was crucified, and the third day He rose again and talked often to His disciples. But when He was going away to Heaven, one thing He laid on their hearts more than all others: they were to be His witnesses. They were to carry the gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you," He said, "but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). All would be vain unless they should have a mighty enduement of power from on high. They were not ready to start revival services, not ready for house-to-house visitation, not ready for personal contacts, until they received this supernatural enduement of power.

Again in the first chapter of Acts the command of the Saviour is repeated, that they should "wait for the promise of the Father," the enduement of power from on high. They should "be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." And that did not mean Christ's return, nor the coming of the kingdom or restoration of Israel, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." And those were the last words that Jesus spoke while on earth. Then, "while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:8, 9).

The disciples faithfully waited and prayed. They "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" till the mighty power of God came on the day of Pentecost. They won three thousand souls that day, then continued in the mighty power of God. Throughout the book of Acts the fullness of the Spirit is the one great equipment mentioned for Christian workers. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4. The same crowd was filled with the Spirit again in Acts 4:31, after they had again prayed. Stephen and other deacons were filled with the Holy Ghost. When Paul was converted and had fasted and prayed three days, Ananias came to him "that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 9:17). Barnabas "was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24). When Philip went and preached the gospel in Samaria, and multitudes were saved, then the apostles sent Peter and John there "who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:15). Paul and Barnabas and others fasted and prayed until "the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them... So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed . . ." (Acts 13:2,4). At the first opposition, "Saul, filled with the Holy Ghost," rebuked the sin of Elymas the sorcerer publicly, and Sergius Paulus was wonderfully converted. Oh, those thrilling, thrilling days and years when men did not pretend to preach the gospel nor pretend to try to win souls except they were endued with the mighty power of God!

This is the lost note in our music. This is the lost chord that leaves unsatisfying all our efforts at service.

The Darbyites have come along and taught us that we need not wait on God for power, that it is fanaticism to ask to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. They have told us that we already have all of the Holy Spirit we may have; so men have ceased to wait on God and seek the mighty power of God as did Moody, and Spurgeon, and Finney, and Torrey. And, ceasing to depend on the mighty power of God, they have ceased to have it. And everywhere we have bland, self-assured "Bible teachers" preaching to little groups of saints, but having no drunkards made sober, no harlots made pure, no lives and homes and cities transformed. We cannot have revival without the mighty power of the Holy Spirit. But, thank God, His power is available for those who wait on Him and give themselves wholly to His will.

It is the plain command of God, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). We, too, need exactly what Bible Christians needed. We, too, can have the mighty endowment of power from on high.

We have retreated from fanaticism. We were afraid of "wild fire." And the truth is that, fearing what men would say, we have not thought enough about what God would say. We have gone in human wisdom. We have gone with educated sermons, with entertaining sermons, with doctrinally sound sermons; but, alas, we have gone without the Holy anointing, without the miracle-working, supernatural power of the Holy Spirit!

I do not wonder that the Darbyites say that we are in the last days, that we cannot have any more great revivals. After people are taught that they need not wait on God, that the wonderful events in the book of Acts were given only temporarily, in a transition period, and that such power and manifestations can never be repeated again, I do not wonder that they think we can have no more great revivals. But, oh, thank God, they are wrong! His Spirit and His power are still available.

Some people preach the Word and forget that the Word of God is "the sword of the Spirit." They cannot wield the sword, but the Spirit of God must do so, if the wonder-working results are to follow. Oh, for Holy anointing! Oh, for a supernatural endowment of power! Oh, that men may speak for God as prophets, and our prophecy will be supernatural revelation, a miracle-working message from God!

We can have revival if sinners still tremble under the Word, if the Word of God can make men see their nakedness of soul, their wickedness before God, the impending doom that hunts them down! Men can be saved if they can but be wooed with the entrancing pathos and devotion and love of Christ, revealed by the Holy Spirit.

Yes, we can have revival. The endowment of the Holy Spirit of God makes revival possible for any one who will pay the price for that power.

What set Moody apart? I answer, the power of the Holy Spirit!

What made Billy Sunday powerful? If you think it was baseball slang, and enthusiastic and dramatic gesture and activity in the pulpit, you have foolishly missed the whole point of his ministry. Billy Sunday's message was made powerful by a special anointing of the Holy Spirit. Every time he preached, he opened his Bible at Isaiah 61:1 and placed his manuscript upon that Scripture, to preach the gospel, whatever the sermon. That Scripture says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." And Billy Sunday knew that he had a covenant with God. He preached in the mighty power of God.

If it was a sober, rather matter-of-fact, inexorable logic of R.A. Torrey, or the pungent slang of Billy Sunday, or the tender pathos and vivid illustrations of D.L. Moody, the fundamental power was the same. It was the mighty power of the Spirit of God. They had revival because they were anointed to preach. We can have revival, too, if we be but anointed to preach, if we be but anointed to witness. We can have revival because the Spirit of God is the miracle-worker who is always available for the soul winner's power.

IV. The Resource of Persistent, Heart-Broken, Prevailing, Believing Prayer Makes Revival Always Possible

I trust that all who hear and all who read this lecture are beginning to see that fundamental Christianity naturally provides for blessed, powerful revivals and the winning of multitudes. One who does not win souls is not even a normal Christian. A church that does not have revival is not a normal New Testament church. A preacher who does not have the mighty endowment of power upon him to the saving of sinners, is a backslidden, disobedient and unfaithful preacher, because New Testament Christianity inevitably involves the power of God upon His people and the preaching of His gospel fruitfully.

For example, here is a fundamental of the Christian faith: God answers prayer! Prayer changes things. Prayer moves the hand that moves the world.

Nothing is clearer in the Bible than the fact that certain things happen because people pray which would not happen if they did not pray. Hezekiah, for example, was "sick unto death." God sent Isaiah to tell him frankly, "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live" (Isa. 38:1). But Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed, and God sent back the prophet to say, "I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years" (Isa. 38:5).

James 4:2 plainly says, "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not." The infidel, Harry Emerson Fosdick, says that God is not a Santa Claus, that one of the first things we must learn about prayer is that God does not give things. But I know better, and the Bible clearly says the opposite of that. God is better than any Santa Claus; and while He does not give on any wicked whim, God does answer prayer. I thank God that I know He has sent money in answer to prayer, the exact sum needed in literally dozens of cases. I know from never-to-be-forgotten experience, holy experience that He brought rain in answer to prayer in drought-stricken west Texas when there was no likelihood of rain. The surrounding country remained arid, and when we asked God to send rain within twenty-four hours, He sent it in a five-mile radius in the little town where I preached and where we agreed to pray.

I know that God raised up a woman dying with T.B., sent home from a state sanitorium to die, after years of wasting away. She was healed at once, as far as all of us could see, and in two weeks she was up doing her own housework. She still lives after eighteen years. I say that I can testify that God changes things in answer to prayer. God does things when we pray aright which He would not do if we did not pray aright.

But does not this fundamental doctrine, that God has committed Himself to answer a certain kind of prayer, mean necessarily that we can have a revival if we seek God for it properly? Here prayer is divinely given as a resource for every Christian, a resource that makes revival always possible.

Are conditions wrong for revival? Then prayer can change conditions. Are people wrong for revival? Then prayer can change people. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord" (Prov. 21:1). God can change newspaper editors and writers if He wants to, to give the gospel publicity. God can change hearts of public officials, to make great auditoriums available for rental. God can make Christian people concerned when they are unconcerned, if a few keep on praying. God can restore the backslider, if people mean business and keep on praying. God can change people in answer to prayer.

Is the preaching powerless? But God answers prayer! Let preacher and people wait on God until power is given. Prayer changes things, changes people, changes the weather. Prayer can change self. The weak can be made strong.

It is true that one of the conditions of proper prayer is that it should be in Christ's name. In John 14:13,14 Jesus said: "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

But this condition is fulfilled more easily about soul-winning and revival than about anything else in the world! It may be that a man will want a new car, and cannot honestly say that it is just for Jesus' sake. It may be that one will wish to be raised from a bed of sickness, and his own desire may be the real reason back of the request. All right, friend, pray on, even in such cases. There are other promises that encourage you to pray. But on this matter of keeping people out of Hell, on this matter of saving souls for whom Christ has died, we can more easily come to pray in Jesus' name than about anything else in the world!

Oh, if there is anything in the world that I know about God, I know that He loves sinners. Do I know what Jesus Christ thinks? Do I know what His dear heart desires and craves? Do I know the thing that is most often in His thought? Thank God, I do know! The dear Lord Jesus wants sinners saved.

We learn from I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Jesus said, when He saved Zacchaeus, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

This is what Jesus came into the world for. This is what He died for. If you seek the meaning of His lonely long years away from Heaven and His Father and the angels, then His love for sinners is the answer. If you seek to know why He endured the shameful traitor's kiss on his cheek, the spittle in His face, the scourging of the Roman lash, and the indignities and torture of the cross, then I know, and I can tell you. His dear heart was broken over lost sinners and He wanted them saved. Even in His dying, He could not forbear praying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Now that He is seated on the right hand of God, I know what is in His heart. He told us. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). I know what lights up the face of the Saviour and makes His heart glad even now. Oh, how He rejoices to see souls saved!

How bold I ought to be, then, when I come to pray in Jesus' name about souls being saved. I sometimes, in my prayers, need to say, "If it be Thy will." But I never need to say that when I pray that God, in His own way, will bring a blessed revival, will endue Christians with power and save sinners. That I know is the will of God and the will of Christ.

Don't you see how prayer is a mighty weapon that makes revival inevitable for all who seek God's face as they ought to seek it?

Faith? Faith is often mentioned as a condition of proper prayer. "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). It ought not to be hard for Christians who know God's loving care, to believe that He will give them daily bread and raiment and shelter. How tender are His mercies, and how bountiful His provision! But faith surely ought to come easily when we read all the Scripture has to say about the love of God for sinners and His pleading that we go to win them. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the

word of God," says Romans 10:17. And if you go to the Bible to build your faith, you will surely find it easy to believe that God wants to save sinners, wants to give revival.

Do you want to pray for power? Then how encouraged we are when we find how Jesus insisted that the disciples tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. How it ought to strengthen our faith!

This is why all the great evangelists were mighty men of prayer. Charles G. Finney would frequently feel some lack of power and blessing and would set apart a day of fasting and prayer "for a new baptism of the Holy Ghost," as he was wont to say. Moody sought God unceasingly for two years, until he was mightily endued with power. Dr. R.A. Torrey started the prayer meeting in Moody Church in Chicago and there prayed for two years that God would send a great revival. Then suddenly a committee from Australia came and sought out Torrey, the Bible teacher who had never been much thought of as an evangelist, and Torrey began the mighty campaigns in Australia that led him finally around the world, with hundreds of thousands of souls saved under his great ministry. Torrey learned to pray, so he learned to have revivals. If you want to know the simplicity of Torrey's prayer life and his teaching on prayer, read the little book, *How to Pray* (Moody Colportage Library, \$.39), or *The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power* (Fleming H. Revell).

I do not wonder that we have seen so few revivals, when we have such little praying. May God send upon His people again the spirit of supplication, the spirit of prayer. When people prevail in prayer, God will give mighty revivals.

Is not this His promise in II Chronicles 7:14? "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

You see, prayer is one of those mighty weapons of God which are not carnal, but are mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. If people pray aright, they can have revival. They can have everything else it takes to bring a revival. May the dear Lord Jesus teach us anew to pray.

Let us remind you again in summary, of these four infinite resources of God which make revival always possible. There is first the infinite grace of God, the love of God, the tenderhearted tendency toward forgiveness and mercy that is greater than all the sin in the world. Second, there is the Word of God, living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, like a fire and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces. The Word of God is a mighty weapon that makes revival always possible. Third, there is the miracle-working Spirit of God who is always available to endue and empower Christians and preachers, to convict and regenerate sinners, to stir and convict and change hearts and homes and cities and nations. Oh, may we depend upon Him for revival! I have promised God I would never enter a pulpit to preach again without an enduement of power from on high. And fourth, there is the mighty power of persistent, prevailing, brokenhearted, believing prayer.

When a group takes full advantage of these resources available, they cannot avoid revival. We would be overwhelmed with revival, if we should make full use of these mighty resources. Oh, God can yet save millions in nation-sweeping revivals, if His people will enter into their holy heritage and use their resources, so richly given by a loving God who is disappointed that we do not claim His blessings.

Source:

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