

In Labors More Abundant

by Stanley H. Frodsham

The sermon explores the transformative power of grace and faith in the life of a believer, illustrated through personal testimonies and the ministry of Smith Wigglesworth.

Scripture: Daniel 6:14, Matthew 11:28, John 4:34, 1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 11:23, 1 Thessalonians 3:8, 2 Peter 1:3-4

Topics: "Faith And Healing", "Divine Intervention"

Description

Stanley H. Frodsham shares the remarkable life of Smith Wigglesworth, a man who labored abundantly in faith, witnessing countless miracles and experiencing God's power in various nations. Wigglesworth's ministry was marked by a deep trust in God's promises, leading to extraordinary healings and manifestations of God's power, such as restoring sight to the blind and raising the dead. Despite facing challenges and doubts, Wigglesworth's unwavering belief in God's faithfulness allowed him to witness remarkable displays of God's glory, including healing the sick, ministering to thousands, and experiencing divine interventions in response to his prayers.

Transcript

"I labored more abundantly than they all," Paul declared, but he was quick to add, "yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." [1Co 15:10]

Our Greatheart's life, like the apostle's, was "in labors more abundant," [2Co 11:23] but he was quick to acknowledge that it was all of grace and by faith that his labors were accomplished. To him the attitude of faith was not one of strain, of effort, nor of crying and moaning night and day, but just one of laying hold of God's gracious provision, and trusting and resting. He knew God could not fail in his promises. He believed the record that God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness," [2Pe 1:3] and so he laid hold in living faith of the exceeding great and precious promises, and his expectation of an exhibition of God's power was constantly fulfilled.

Once more we will let our Greatheart resume his own story.

God has blessed me in so many ways. I have seen sight restored to persons born blind. I have seen three persons come to life after being dead. All these things that I have passed through only make me to know that Christ's promises concerning the greater works are true, and we must give him all the glory for them.

It was my privilege to labor in India and in Ceylon, and to see God mightily moving there. Probably the high point of the revival was at Colombo. How God blessed!

I was preaching under the anointing of the Spirit and a crowd gathered. They packed the place to suffocation. But the power of God was wonderful. After preaching, and that through an interpreter in a temperature of about 120 degrees, we prayed for about 500 sick people each night.

In that great heat, women would bring their babies. We would sometimes have 50 or more in the meeting, and because the atmosphere was so oppressive they would be crying. I used to say, "Before I preach I will minister to the babies." It was very wonderful: As soon as hands were laid on these babies, to notice the silence, the quietness, the peace, and the order of those meetings! The power of God was there. One man in the midst of this great crowd, who had been blind for a long time, was healed. His eyes were opened instantly. We saw many similar miracles take place.

I cannot understand how God can give to any of his children glory and virtue, but it nevertheless is true that he does. There were thousands of people that could not get into the meeting, but as I passed out through the great crowd the people that could not get inside reached out and touched me, and they were healed. I marvel at the grace of God that it could take place. There is something about believing in God that makes God willing to pass over a million people just to anoint you. I believe God will always turn out to meet you on a special line if you dare to believe him.

I was in one place for only four days, and they were disappointed that I could not stay longer. I said to them, "Can you have a meeting early in the morning, at 8 o'clock?" They said they would. I said, "Tell all the mothers who want their babies to be healed, to come; and all the people over 70." It would have done you good to see 400 mothers coming in at 8 o'clock with their babies, and then to see about 150 old people with their white hair, coming to be healed. In those days there were thousands out to hear the word of God. I believe there were about 3,000 persons crying for mercy at once. It was a great sight.

I arrived one day in Norway at about 9 a.m., and said to my friend who was interpreting for me, "Nobody knows that I am here, so please take me down to the fjords. I would like to relax, because I am so tired." We had a few hours in the sunshine and rested, and then came back. When I returned I found that the street all around the building where I was to speak was filled with every kind of vehicle with wheels on, and these were filled with needy sick. The brother who was to interpret for me ran to the top of the step of the building and said, "What shall we do? The house is full of people." I took off my coat, got into every wheeled vehicle there and prayed for the people. There was great shouting in the street as God healed them; and then I went into the house and God healed them there also.

But that was not all. We sat down to eat, and while we were eating the telephone rang, and the message came: "What shall we do? The town hall is full and there are thousands outside. The police cannot do anything with the crowd." I said, "We will come down as soon as possible." Two policemen got hold of me and pushed me through the crowd. When I got inside that town hall, I never saw anything so packed! I have seen sardines packed--yet these people couldn't have fallen down if they had wanted to! The Spirit of the Lord was upon me. I began to preach. I have forgotten my subject but I knew I was eaten up with the zeal of the Lord.

I cried to God for a message that would be different, that something might happen in that meeting different from anything else. As I was preaching, I heard the voice of God speaking and saying, "If you will ask me, I will give you every soul." I went on preaching and God repeated: "If you will ask me, I will give you every

soul." I knew it was the voice of God, yet I was slow to accept. Then the voice of the Lord came again: "If you will believe and ask me, I will give you every soul." I looked up to Him and said, "All right, Lord, please do it. I ask you, please give me every soul." The breath of the Holy Spirit swept over the whole place and I have never seen anything like it. All over, cries for mercy! I believe that God gave me every soul. That is my conception of Pentecost. Pentecost is believing that after the Holy Ghost comes upon you, you have the power. Do not be afraid to believe. Believe that God makes you a partaker of the divine nature through his great and precious promises. [2Pe 1.4] His own eternal power working in you will bring forth a divine order that can never be surpassed by anything in the world.

Smith Wigglesworth preferred throughout his whole life to be unattached to any religious body. His heart of love went out for all the saints. We have been with him in different towns where he would search out the Salvation Army to be with them at their prayer meeting at 7 a.m., and then he would frequently go to the Episcopal Church to their Holy Communion service at 8 a.m.. On three different occasions he held meetings for Episcopal ministers. If they wanted it, he would put on the surplice and cassock, which they considered a necessity for ministry. One Episcopal minister arranged a tent meeting for him in London--such an innovation was frowned upon by his bishop, but this minister's son had been healed through Mr. Wigglesworth's ministry and he wanted others to be benefited by the same. Incidentally, one time when King George V was sick, this Episcopal minister's wife sent a handkerchief to him that our Greatheart had prayed over, and received a letter of thanks for sending the same.

The Assemblies of God in Great Britain would usually invite him to their annual conference. They wanted all the young men to receive the benefit of his inspirational ministry. He, however, would not attend any of the business sessions, saying, "You carry on, and I will pray for you." And so he would turn aside and give himself to prayer.

Having no denominational affiliation, he had no human backing in his travels, and so he frequently arrived in places with no other recommendation or support than the reputation he had achieved through his ministry. This was especially so in many countries in Europe which he visited after the first World War. He arrived in Switzerland a complete stranger, but God was with him in mighty power. Towns were moved for God and he was constantly invited to return to that land. He had many blessed meetings there.

When he arrived in New Zealand he had just one man to meet him; but thousands were won for God there, being saved, healed, and filled with the Spirit through his few months of ministry. It was stated that it was the greatest spiritual visitation on the North Island, known for more than a century. As a result of his ministry, some 2,000 sat down to "break bread" in one of his Sunday morning meetings in Wellington.

There was no body of people to meet him when he stepped from his ship in Colombo, Ceylon. His arrival was almost unnoticed, but he had not been there many days before the whole district was throbbing with the power of God. Crowds thronged to touch him and scores who stood in his shadow were healed and blessed.

Somehow, his fame usually spread ahead of him, and on one occasion when his ship put in at one of the Pacific islands, he was busy preaching and praying for the sick until the boat departed. He was tireless in his zeal to help the needy.

When he arrived in Palestine the first time, he was a complete stranger, but it was not long before he was preaching the gospel and praying for the sick. On the Mount of Olives he had some blessed services and quite a number were filled with the Holy Spirit as on the day of Pentecost. He aroused the district so

tremendously that the departure of the Jerusalem-Haifa train was delayed so that he could finish his sermon to the people who had gathered to hear him. All the way to Egypt he sat in earnest discussion with influential Christian men, who on arrival at Alexandria took him with them to lunch so that they could continue the conversation about the things of God. About this visit to the Holy Land, he laughingly remarked that he thought he was the first gentile preacher who ever received an offering from the Jews there. God often used him in his journeys on trains and on steamers. He told us:

I remember once I was traveling to Cardiff in south Wales. I had been much in prayer on the journey. The carriage was full of people whom I knew to be unsaved, but there was so much talking and joking I could not get in a word for my Master. As the train was nearing the station, I thought I would wash my hands so I should be ready to go straight to the meeting. I went along the corridor, and as I returned to the carriage, a man jumped up and said, "Sir, you convince me of sin," and fell on his knees there and then. Soon the whole carriage of people were crying out the same way. They said, "Who are you? What are you? You convince us all of sin." It was a great opportunity that God had given me, and you may be sure that I made the best of it. Many souls were born into the kingdom of God in that railway carriage.

On his way to Australia he wrote:

I began quietly to work among the passengers and testify to the power of God, and I found this was very convincing. One was telling another about me, so I got quite an open door. A gentleman and a lady who were very rich occupied a first-class cabin, and their valet and his wife were traveling second-class. We had morning and evening services conducted by the bishop of Bombay and they were very good. After a morning service the bishop and I had a long talk together, and he was very interested in my work.

After the evening service the valet and his wife were seeking me, as the lady was very sick. They had called the doctor, who had pronounced her very ill. The valet had told the lady about me and she desired an interview. She was really very sick and also filled with the principles of Christian Science, and finding these had failed her, she was in great fear. So I told her about the only principle I knew and that principle was Jesus, but she knew nothing about him. I prayed with her, laid hands on her, rebuked the demon in the name of Jesus, and the fever left her at once. This morning she is seeking salvation through the word of God. She is now on deck, full of life, and I had the pleasure of dealing with the valet and his wife about their salvation also.

His son-in-law, James Salter, writes of him:

What a lonely figure he seemed to be on the deck of the giant liner with its thousand passengers when he was leaving for Australia the first time. As the ship left the dock, he lifted his voice repeatedly in a series of hallelujahs, with a clarity and volume I have never heard equaled. He startled his fellow-passengers and caused the captain on his bridge to remark, "That man has lungs of steel!" It was on this ship that he was asked to take part in a concert. He asked to be the last item on the program. The pianist said she could not accompany him when he gave her a hymn-book; but that did not matter. He sang his solo, a hymn exalting Christ. That concert turned into a soul-saving prayer meeting, and the dance scheduled to follow the concert was abandoned.

On one occasion he made a promise to help a young man who was starting a work for God in a new and very difficult district. He was ministering on the Pacific coast, and Mr. and Mrs. James Salter were there helping him. He heard that this young man, who was on the Atlantic coast, was needing him. He did not mind paying out approximately \$500 for railroad fare and Pullman accommodation to get to the Atlantic

coast to fulfill his promise to that young minister. When the first service commenced, in the afternoon, there were just six people present (not counting his own party) in a large auditorium that would accommodate 5,000 people. It was not a very encouraging start, but before the campaign concluded the audiences were filling that huge place and that young man got his chance to start a new assembly.

His zeal sustained him in tropical heat, when he was surrounded by hordes of flies, which hovered around the children with pus-filled eyes, and in the stench of crowds of men and women suffering from nauseating tropical diseases. He could be equally zealous in icy Norway or Finland, preaching and praying for the sick, while one interpreter after another had to drop out owing to fatigue.

He was frequently told, "You cannot hold three meetings a day in this city; the people will not turn out, and even if they do, that is too much for any preacher." But he would hold his three meetings a day, and the people would turn out to hear him, and he would survive such an ordeal for a month at a time. Even in the biggest tent meetings and under the most trying conditions, he maintained his vigor week after week. He proved that the Lord's "yoke is easy, and his burden is light." [Mt 11.30] He delighted to do God's will. His meat was to do the work he believed God had given him, and to fulfill his ministry. [Jn 4.34] The joy of the Lord sustained him all through his life.

He put in more work on Sundays than on any other day. For a number of years he would be in the open-air preaching service until late on Saturday night. He would follow this up with a prayer meeting. But he would be up early on Sunday morning to put things in order at the church for the day's meetings. In the winter-time he would attend to the heating of the building, do much of the dusting of the seats, praying over each one as he dusted it, arrange the table for the communion service, and lead the early morning prayer meeting. In the early days, his wife did most of the preaching as well as entertaining the many folk who constantly filled their home. The Sunday night service always found needy souls and bodies at the altar, and usually it was very late at night before the Wigglesworths got home. After that, the fellowship would continue in the house around a well-filled table until long past midnight.

Out Greatheart and his wife were model spiritual parents, not only bringing converts to birth, but nursing and feeding them on the Word of God, and laboring in prayer that each one might stand complete in all the will of God. Their practical Christianity as well as their precepts, their combination of holy life and godliness, have been the incentive and mainspring to many a young life as he started on his work for God. Christian workers from all over the world praise God for the inspiration that these lives have given them.

Mr. Salter says:

Untiring and indefatigable all through his life, it was only a short time before he died that we noticed any change, and that he made any reference to his age. He arrived home from a convention where he had worked very hard--unusually hard, even for him. We noticed his tired look when we met him at the railway station. That evening in our prayer time he said, "I cannot understand some of these young preachers these days. Fancy a man of my age preaching three times a day and praying for the sick at each service. Some of them will take the afternoon off and go to bed, leaving me to preach. When I was their age I would preach all the day, and then pray and tarry all night with those who were seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit." Thus he wrought with labor and travail night and day, [1Th 3.8] and he labored till the going down of the sun. [Da 6.14]

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