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A REVIVED CHURCH.

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How many mourn the low state of vital godliness in the Church? How many are anxious and troubled touching the lack of real faith and true prayer and zealous effort for the of the rescue lost, in the congregations of God's people? How many seem to have an adequate idea of what it is to be a Christian? And notwithstanding these things, we expect blessing, and we may even be amazed when it does not come. Now let us recall just what the Church of Christ is to be, and by implication, what every one professing godliness is to be. The Church is to be the Light of the world, shining on its darkness and dispelling it. How? By what she is, in her life, in her activities, in her thoughts, in her regnant principles, in her immortal and victorious hope. What the sun is in the physical sphere, the Church is to be in the moral and spiritual sphere. The Church is to be the Salt of the Earth, at once preserving it from corruption and vivifying it. The Church is to be the Body of Christ, doing the work He would have done had He remained here among men. He, the head of the Church, is seated on the right hand of God, while, we, the body are left here to represent His character, and breathe His Spirit, and do His work. The world is to see in us something of Christ. Each of us is to express some feature in our life. Some grace, that in Christ's life, shone in Him, is to shine in us. Some quality of His nature is to find embodiment in our nature. We are in a measure to reproduce Christ before the eyes of men, and in the life of men. As He was, so are we to be in the world. While He was here, He said "I am the light of the world"—but now He says to us "Ye are the light of the world." He took our place of humiliation, and condemnation, now we are to take His place of honor and son-service. He thoroughly identified Himself with us for the enduring of the penalty of sin, now we are thoroughly to identify ourselves with Him for the leading of men out of the prison houses of sin. And so Christ says to His own Church, "As my Father hath sent me so send I you."

Now, is the Church what it ought to be? Is its supreme object the salvation of sinful and lost men? Does it, with all its heart and soul and strength, seek to represent Christ in the world? Does it prefer this before everything else? Is it really alive to its mission? Does its sublime commission come home to its heart? Is it attentive to the voice of Christ Jesus, and is it stirred by it? Does it really follow him?

Ah! is not every question like a dagger in the heart? Where is the "glorious Church" to-day? Is it not weltering in cares and troubles and worldliness? Is it not honoring God with the lips while its heart is unsundered to him? Is it not busy in the effort to do an utterly impossible thing—Serve God and mammon? What Church to-day really girds itself to do its legitimate work in a thorough and all round way? Where shall we find it? So far as we know, nowhere. Everywhere the Church is far, exceedingly far below the standard of Christ. And alas, often, when it wants revival, it has it done by proxy. When it wants quickening it employs the wrong means, and secures only an orange-scent result. A result that brings with it deadness, where there ought to be renewed and exultant life. Aye, triumphant and conquering life.

The Church is under obligation to maintain a vigorous and irresistible spiritual life in itself, and so Christ says "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in Me."

But now in its exhausted condition through the weeds of worldliness taking away its strength, how can it be revived? By a return to Christ, and an attentive obedience to all He enjoins. There must be a keen realization of the fact that we ourselves are saved by grace. And in the grace of God we shall act. The Lord

uses saved men to save the world. He calls a saved congregation to save its community. But the lament arises, "Oh how can we do anything while we are so dead? How can we as a congregation move till we are revived? Let this fact be thought of:—A revived church begins with revived individuals—That may be with one, or with two, or with a small group of three or four or six. Samuel Rutherford in his letters speaks of women—single women, who kept life in the places where they lived. And so is it everywhere. There are elect souls who keep life in congregations, even though that be but a spark. Men or women who feel the burden of souls, who sigh and cry for the sins of the people, who are baptised with the Spirit to such a degree that they must do something for the Spiritual and Eternal good of others. It will not do to wait till all are ready to move. When we kindle a fire what do we do? Do we not get the dry wood first. We apply the match to that that will burn, and keep adding fuel till we have a core of heat that will consume even the green wood that sobs and weeps as it burns. So must we do in the church. We must use that that is ready, and be careful not to put out the fire utterly by overhauling it with green wood. And here a word to the exercised individuals. Act in the Spirit as he leads you. Obey his motions. Go where he directs. If he sends you to speak to an unsaved one, go, in a prayerful, humble, dependant mood. If he inclines you to ask another, or it may be, others, to unite with you in prayer for revival, obey. If he calls you to days of special waiting upon God, yield yourself to the holy work of Christlike intercession.

Charles Spurgeon, quotes an incident from the life of C. G. Finney of world-wide fame, to this effect. A blacksmith, an aged man, living in a godless community, where the church was nearly run out,—a man of so stammering a tongue that it was painful to hear him speak as he was at his work in his shop alone, his mind became greatly exercised about the state of the church, and of the impenitent. His agony became so great, that he was induced to lay aside his work, lock the shop door, and spend the afternoon in prayer. He prevailed, and on the Sabbath called in the minister and desired him to appoint a Conference meeting. After some hesitation, the minister consented, observing, however, that he feared but few would attend. He appointed it the same evening at a large private house. When evening came, more assembled than could be accommodated in the house. All were silent for a time, until one sinner broke out in tears, and said, if any could pray, he begged him to pray for him. Another followed, and another, and still another, until it was found that persons from every quarter of the town were under deep convictions. And what was remarkable, was that they all dated their conviction, at the hour when the old man was praying in his shop. A powerful revival followed. Then this old stammering man prevailed, and as a prince, had power with God. The wonderful year of grace in Ireland—1859—began with an appeal to a young man to do "something more" for God. "Could you not, said the Rev. Mr. Moore, gather at least six of your careless neighbors, either parents or children to your own house, or some other convenient place on the Sabbath, and spend an hour with them reading and searching the Word of God. The young man hesitated for a moment, but promised to try. From that trial made in faith, originated the Tannyslake Sunday School, and in connection with it, two years subsequently a prayer meeting, which yielded some of the first fruits of the great awakening." When we read such an account, we cry, "O for this something more." More believing prayer and work as Christ directs: (Oh for this individual effort—leading to the union of men whose hearts the Lord has touched. Then would the mountain flow down at the presence of the Lord. What have single men done? John Davidson, of Prestonpans, alone overthrew the General Assembly of 1596 concerning the necessity of reforming the many prevalent corruptions of the church and the country, which being fervently heard stirred the land to repentance and confession of sin. David Dickson, in 1625 at Stewarthon; John Livingstone, in 1630 at Shotts; Mr. McCulloch in 1742 at Cambuslang; James Robb in May of the same year at Kilsyth, each enjoyed a wonderful season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord in answer to sound, faithful preaching. In 1839 Kilsyth was again blessed, and the fire lighted there spread over the most part of Scotland. May God light a great fire in our land and the church stand forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible as an army with banners.