

put on express speed and run over them! Every earnest minister has known times when he has felt cold hearts to be as intolerable as the drones in the hive are to the working bees. Careless professors are as much out of place as snow in harvest among truly living Christians. As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes are these sluggards. As well be bound to a dead body as forced into union with lifeless professors; they are a burden, a plague, and an abomination. You turn to one of these cold brethren after a graciously earnest prayer-meeting, and say with holy joy, "What a delightful meeting we have had?" "Yes," he says carelessly and deliberately, as if it were an effort to say so much, "there was a good number of people." How his frostbitten words grate on one's ear! You ask yourself, "Where has the man been! Is he not conscious that the Holy Ghost has been with us?" Does not our Lord speak of these people as being cast out of his mouth, just because he himself is altogether in earnest, and consequently, when he meets with lukewarm people he will not endure them? He says, "I would thou wert cold or hot," either utterly averse to good or in earnest concerning it. It is easy to see his meaning. If you heard an ungodly man blaspheme after an earnest meeting, you would lament it, but you would feel that from such a man it was not a thing to make you vexed, for he has only spoken after his kind, but when you meet with a child of God who is lukewarm, how can you stand that? it is sickening, and makes the inmost spirit feel the horrors of mental nausea.

While a true revival in its essence belongs only to God's people, it always brings with it a blessing for the other sheep who are not yet of the fold. If you drop a stone into a lake the ring widens continually, till the farthest corner of the lake feels the influence. Let the Lord revive a believer, and very soon his family, his friends, his neighbours, receive a share of the benefit; for when a Christian is revived, he prays more fervently for sinners. Longing, loving prayers for sinners, is one of the marks of a revival in the renewed heart. Since the blessing is asked for sinners, the blessing comes from him who hears the prayers of his people; and thus the world gains by revival. Soon the revived Christian speaks concerning Jesus and the gospel; he sows good seed, and God's good seed is never lost, for he has said, "It shall not return unto me void." The good seed is sown in the furrows, and in some sinners' hearts God prepares the soil, so that the seed springs up in a glorious harvest. Thus by the zealous conversation of believers another door of mercy opens to men.

When Christians are revived they live more consistently, they make their homes more holy and more happy, and this leads the ungodly to envy them, and to enquire after their secret. Sinners by God's grace long to be like such cheerful happy saints; their mouths water to feast with them upon their hidden manna, and this is another blessing, for it leads men to seek the Saviour. If an ungodly man steps into a congregation where all the saints are revived he does not go to sleep under the sermon. The minister will not let him do that, for the hearer perceives that the preacher feels what he is preaching, and has a right to be heard. This is a clear gain, for now the man listens with deep emotion; and above all the Holy Spirit's power, which the preacher has received in answer to prayer comes upon the hearer's mind; he is convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement to come, and Christians who are on the watch around him hasten to tell him of the Saviour, and point him to the redeeming blood, so that though the revival, strictly speaking, is with the people of God, yet the result of it no man can limit.