

7. Evangelism and Revival

Training objective:-

To be active in evangelism. To understand the importance of the manifest presence of God as seen in revival. To be active in praying for God's kingdom to come

Study:-

Definitions of 'witnessing', 'gospel' and 'evangelism'

- 'Witnessing' is a term used in the bible for being a witness to the truth about Jesus (the Greek word is 'martyr', because that was commonly the price of witnessing).
- The word 'gospel' is from a Saxon word 'godspel' meaning either 'good news' or 'news of God'.
- The word 'evangelism' means to spread the 'good news'. It comes from the Greek word 'euangellion' used in the Bible for 'good news'. The 'good news' is the message of who Jesus is, and what He has done on our behalf.

Reasons for sharing the Good News

- The command of Jesus - (Matt 28:18-20).
- The need - Jesus had compassion on the crowd 'the harvest is plenty' - (Matt 9:36-38). The reality of Hell - (Luk 13:1-5).
- It reveals which camp we are in - 'whoever acknowledges me before men' - (Lk 12:8).
- As we have freely received we should freely give - (Matt 10:8), 'sharing' our faith - (Philem 6).

Hindrances to an effective witness

- Unfriendliness, lack of concern.
- Jargon, 'super-spirituality', unreality.
- Fear, inadequacies.
- Not knowing what to say, being unprepared - (Col 4:5,6).

Ways we can share Jesus

i) Our words:-

- Our story- What Jesus has done in our lives
- God's story- What Jesus has done on our behalf

ii) Our actions:-

- Demonstrating God's love - (John 13:34,35).
- Demonstrating God's power - (1Cor 2:4; Rom 15:18,19). Get used to regularly offering to pray for the sick, or for people's needs. Seek God for 'words of knowledge' as we tell people about Jesus
- Demonstrating God's holiness - (1Pet 3:13-16).

The main ingredients of the Gospel

The gospel in 3 points:-

- i) **Every person has sinned** - (Rom 3:23). The fall of man.
- ii) **The result of sin is death** - (Rom 6:23). A just God must punish sin.
- iii) **God sent His son to take our punishment** because He loves us - (Rom 5:8; John 3:16). Jesus' resurrection proves that death has been overcome.

The main ingredients in becoming a Christian

- **Believe.** An active belief and acceptance of what Jesus has done for us on the cross. Confessing Jesus before others.
- **Repent.** Conviction, confession and turning from sin, evidenced by deeds. Giving whole life in surrender to Jesus. Being baptised to show this has taken place.
- **Receive.** Allowing God to dwell within you by His Holy Spirit. Having an ongoing relationship with God. Living your life in co-operation with Him, and by His power. Telling others about Jesus.

Definitions of revival

- To revive something that was previously alive. Used regarding the Church when it moves from a spiritual deadness into the life God always intends for it to walk in.
- Revival has a knock-on effect in the community- communities are transformed by the power of God. The fear of God returns to communities.
- Duncan Campbell who was used by God in the Hebridean revival on the island of Lewis in 1949 explained revival in this way 'a community saturated with God'.
- John Arnott, pastor at Airport Vineyard, Toronto-'Revival is a supernatural work of God resulting in an awakened interest in obediently following and obeying the Lord and usually follows a serious period of idolatry and sinfulness on the part of God's people', where 'God invaded the earth with a foretaste of the kingdom of Heaven'

Scriptural examples of revival

- The periods of God's restoration of Israel (7 cycles of sin and restoration) in the book of Judges
- Ezekiel's vision of the revived army of Israel- Ez 37
- Prayer for revival- Hab 3:2; Ps 85:6
- The restoration of Israel and rebuilding after the exile- Ps 126; Ezra 9:8-9
- Revival promised to the nation of Israel before Christ returns- Rom 11:11-12,15, 25-27; Zech 12:10-14; Matt 23:37-39; Rev 7:4
- All nations to respond to the gospel- Matt 24:14; Rev 7:9-10
- The growth of the Church- Acts 2:41,47; 4:4; 9:31

Revival comes from the Holy Spirit

- Life- Ez 37:9-10,14; Ez 47:1-12; John 4:14; 7:37-39
- Power to witness- Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8
- Conviction of sin- John 16:7-11; Acts 2:33,37

Precursors to revival

- Prayer- Matt 6:10; 2Chron 7:14; Acts 1:14; 2:1; 2:42-43; 4:24,31; John 14:12-14; Dan 9:1-19; Is 62:1. The 2 old ladies who prayed for revival in the Hebrides.
- Repentance- 2Chron 7:14; Ps 51:10-11, Josiah's reforms- 2Kings 22-23/2Chron 34-35; Dan 9:1-19. In 1867, an evangelist challenged a young man with the words, "The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man (or woman) who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him." The young man heard that challenge and thought to himself, "I want to be that man!" That young man's name was Dwight L. Moody who went on to preach the Gospel to 100 million people, build a Bible Institute and incite spiritual revival across two nations. Evan Roberts, used by God in the Welsh revival 1904 prayed 'God bend me'- (i.e. enable me to follow God wholeheartedly) before revival broke out in Wales- 100 thousand added to the Church in 1 year!

- Hunger and thirst for, and faith in, the promises of God- Is 55:1

Revival is above and beyond what man can do

- God adds to the church (we must still preach the gospel, but the results are disproportionate to our ability)- Acts 2:47

An excerpt from the testimony of Duncan Campbell concerning the revival that he witnessed in the Hebrides in 1949:

I shall never forget the night that I arrived... We got to the church about quarter to nine to find about 300 people gathered. I would say about 300 people. And I gave an address. Nothing really happened during the service. It was a good meeting. A sense of God, a consciousness of His Spirit moving but nothing beyond that. So I pronounced the benediction and we were leaving the church I would say about a quarter to eleven.

Just as I am walking down the aisle, along with this young deacon who read the Psalm in the barn. He suddenly stood in the aisle and looking up to the heavens he said, "God, You can't fail us. God, You can't fail us. You promised to pour water on the thirsty and floods upon the dry ground - God, You can't fail us!"

Soon He is on his knees in the aisle and he is still praying and then he falls into a trance again. Just then the door opened--it is now eleven o'clock. The door of the church opens and the local blacksmith comes back into the church and says, "Mr. Campbell, something wonderful has happened. Oh, we were praying that God would pour water on the thirsty and floods upon the dry ground and listen, He's done it! He's done it!"

When I went to the door of the church I saw a congregation of approximately 600 people. Six hundred people--where had they come from? What had happened? I believe that that very night God swept in in Pentecostal power - the power of the Holy Ghost. And what happened in the early days of the apostles was happening now in the parish of Barvas.

Over 100 young people were at the dance in the parish hall and they weren't thinking of God or eternity. God was not in all of their thoughts. They were there to have a good night when suddenly the power of God fell upon the dance. The music ceased and in a matter of minutes, the hall was empty. They fled from the hall as a man fleeing from a plague. And they made for the church. They are now standing outside. Oh, yes - they saw lights in the church. That was a house of God and they were going to it and they went. Men and women who had gone to bed rose, dressed, and made for the church. Nothing in the way of publicity... But God took the situation in hand - oh, He became His own publicity agent. A hunger and a thirst gripped the people. 600 of them now are at the church standing outside... And then the doors were opened and the congregation flocked back into the church.

Now the church is crowded--a church to seat over 800 is now packed to capacity. It is now going on towards midnight. I managed to make my way through the crowd along the aisle toward the pulpit. I found a young woman, a teacher in the grammar school, lying prostrate on the floor of the pulpit praying, "Oh, God, is there mercy for me? Oh, God, is there mercy for me? " She was one of those at the dance. But she is now lying on the floor of the pulpit crying to God for mercy.

That meeting continued until 4 o'clock in the morning. So we left them there, and just as I was leaving the church, a young man came to me and said, "Mr. Campbell, I would like

you to go to the police station." I said, "The police station? What's wrong?" "Oh," he said, "There's nothing wrong but there must be at least 400 people gathered around the police station just now."

Now the sergeant there was a God-fearing man. He was in the meeting. But people knew that this was a house that feared God. And next to the police station was the cottage in which the two old women lived. I believe that that had something to do with the magnet, the power that drew men. There was a coach load at that meeting. A coach load had come over 12 miles to be there. Now if anyone would ask them today, why? How did it happen? Who arranged it? They couldn't tell you. But they found themselves grouping together and someone saying, "What about going to Barvas? I don't know, but I have a hunger in my heart to go there." I can't explain it; they couldn't explain it, but God had the situation in hand.

This is revival dear people! This is a sovereign act of God! This is the moving of God's Spirit, I believe in answer to the prevailing prayer of men and women who believed that God was a covenant-keeping God but must be true to His covenant engagement...

That continued for almost 3 years. Until the whole of the island was swept by the mighty power of God.