

The Church In The Wilderness

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(Selected from "No Uncertain Sound"; complete in 20 pages)

(Acts 7:38)

The Church of Jesus Christ is not in the woods or the wilderness. It never has been and never will be. The church in the wilderness is modern denominational dynasties. This is not meant to be a blanket indictment of denominations, for God has raised up various groups at crucial times in history to give birth to revival and mighty warriors of the cross.

John Wesley said, "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid, lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case, unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out." Wesley's fears were not without foundation as we well know. The churches that were born in revival fires and true to the Word of God were invincible until they became preoccupied with the details of organization and machinery, or isolated themselves from society.

However, when the leadership of such groups became preoccupied with the mechanics of organization, they became blind, leaders of the blind, and they fall into the ditch of formality or fanaticism. On the other hand the church of Jesus Christ is on the Highway of Holiness, she follows the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.

The Church is the creation of the Holy Spirit, and owes her life from first to last to the Holy Spirit. The wilderness experience results when the work and leadership of the Holy Spirit is relegated to human hands. There are three distinct instances that illustrate the tragedy of mere human leadership. Israel started her wilderness wanderings at Kadesh Barnea when she rejected God's clear leading to enter Canaan and listened to the leaders of the majority report.

Rejecting holiness of heart is the first step to the repudiation of Holy Spirit leadership and the beginning of unending circles. The Galatians, having made a good start in the Spirit, end up in a dark trackless wilderness of Legalism, following men instead of God. Likewise the Corinthians followed men to their own confusion. When will we learn to trust the unaided leadership of the Holy Spirit? The jungle wilderness we are in today as churches is the direct result of too much leaning on human understanding, listening over much to Ph.D.'s, Bishops, and educators instead of the voice of the Holy Spirit.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL WILDERNESS

We are in an *Ecclesiastical Wilderness*. We are going round and round in unending circles, always vowing to have found the way out during some camp, convention or conference, yet, re-traveling the same territory again and again. Mergers—twenty-eight of them are in denominational hoppers, program after program is planned and promoted, yet the ruts get deeper and larger.

The *Ecclesiastical Wilderness* is seen in the *centralization of power*. The concentration of authority in the hands of a few to lord it over God's heritage has always marked the first step toward wilderness wandering. When churches are born in the fire and fervency of their first love, disciplines, manuals and handbooks are small, consisting of a few pages of exhortations to holy living and the general practices of the Christian life. The mechanics, and machinery are conspicuous by their absence. A copy of the 1845 Methodist discipline has but a few pages compared with the one used at the present time. A fifty-year

comparison of your handbook will reveal the same thing. It is not the section on Christian love and life that has developed, but the portion dealing with property, finances, promotion and the subservience of the minister to a central authority. As the centralization of power increases in the hands of a few, the voice of the prophet crying out against such encroachments to personal and spiritual liberty must be silenced or nullified. Therefore, devious methods are used to produce or secure “approved men” or “safe men.” This condition is not a peculiar peeve of the writer alone. Mr. B. E. Hutchinson, Vice President of Chrysler Corporation said, “Holy Writ is a record of what the prophets and not what the Sanhedrin had to say”. The Editor of Christian Economics in enlarging upon this statement had this to say.”

That pungent remark carries a message for our times. This is an age dominated by committees and organizations in which the free expression of private opinion carries little weight. Individual insights are pooled and reduced to the level of a common denominator and then widely circulated.

“Ministers may, and of course do, preach their convictions, but the widely publicized documents of the church come from boards, committees, groups and councils.

“If Moses had taken a committee with him to the heights of Sinai, could God have conveyed to all its members the insights of the Ten Commandments, or would not some of them have failed to agree, and have insisted on watering down that great document or adding a minority report?

“What would have been the result if Christ had appointed a committee to draw up the Sermon on the Mount or if Paul had appointed a drafting committee to prepare the Pauline Epistles? What group ever could have given us the spiritual illumination of St. John’s Gospel?

“The great pronouncements of Elijah, Isaiah and other prophets did not come from conferences. Could a committee have agreed upon the 95 theses of Martin Luther?” The lawgivers, prophets, sages and philosophers of history have been individuals and not committees. What is the lesson for us as we consider this fact of history?

“To us, it is that we dare not silence the voices of individuals who seek to speak their insights, by always subjecting what they say to the adulterating process of sifting it through committee. Boards and Councils we must have to carry on organized work, but we must be careful not to use them as instrumentalities for blunting the message and diluting the vision of our prophets and seers.

“Prophets communicate to us great religious truths. Councils reduce them to creeds. Individuals inspire us; councils and committees prescribe limitations and control us. We must have both but we must be careful not to limit the clear vision of the individual prophet by the myopia of the committee. Too much organization can deaden inspiration and institutionalize it to the point of destroying its dynamic power. Busy church bureaucrats may build a web that deadens or silences the most prophetic voices among us.

“As it is wise strictly to limit the powers and functions of secular government, so it is equally wise in church organization watchfully to keep the bureaucracy carefully limited in scope and power. Let it never overshadow the gifted souls into whose east windows come flooding new inspirations and fresh messages from God.”. This *Ecclesiastical Wilderness* is further evident in the *multiplication of programs*. Out of church headquarters flows a stream of promotional material long enough to belt the world and deep enough to smother the members. Poster, after poster, letter after letter, scheme after scheme, and all are after money, money, money.

We are creating a complex Frankenstienian Monster that will hang us in our own bureaucratic red tape. Many, if not all of the plans are commendable, the goals desirable but if half of that effort were directed toward Holy Ghost revival, we would have the desires of our heart and a harvest of souls to implement the work.

The *Ecclesiastical Wilderness* always includes the *glorification of personalities*. Doctors, Bishops, and Arm Chair Generals increase more and more as we go deeper in the woods.

Suave personality salesmen are employed to “put over” the program. Loyalty to denominational program and personalities is almost expected to supercede loyalty to the Word and Spirit of God. Organized ecclesiasticism prefers putty and policy men to principal and prayer men. There is a great demand for men who are wise enough to make a judicious compromise of principle, blind enough to see no dangers, and dumb enough to sound no alarm. Christ, Paul, Luther and Wesley would be as unwelcome in the midst of the church today as then. A corrupt ecclesiasticism in the Protestant Episcopal Church of England looked with disfavor upon the Wesleys’ who when banned from the pulpits of denominational respectability preached from their father’s tombstone or start a “store front” church.

Methodism looked with disfavor upon William Booth who forsook respectable Methodism to preach on the street corners to the outcasts.

The history of organized ecclesiasticism, while having many noble accomplishments to its credit, is also full of many instances when it was blind to the leadership of the Spirit of God. Its attitude since the days of the prophets has been one of almost continuous disapproval and condemnation of the men whom God has raised up to point out its sins and call it back to God, forcing many men to break relationship held dear, and forcing them to go out under the stars, like Abraham, not knowing where they were going, but going with God.

Too often organized denominationalism discourages that honest thinking, frank expression, and unyielding devotion to principle which accompanies real loyalty to the Word of God. Organized denominationalism loves to praise the dead prophets but it seldom has any enthusiasm for living prophets who like the prophets of old rebuke them for their sins. (Independence of the Local Church page 36-37 by Chester E. Tulga, D.D.)

The New Testament portrays the church as an army and each believer a militant warrior of the cross, yet we are in danger of having more Arm Chair Generals than combat soldiers. No one will deny that capable leadership is vital to the work of the Lord. However, when so much emphasis is laid upon man and men and so very little upon God and the Holy Spirit, we have the undoubted evidence of our failure to conquer. The story is told of a great evangelist endeavoring to foster revival in a certain town. The meeting was well organized and well advertized. Everywhere huge bill boards proclaimed his presence and heralded his past victories and told of great success in other fields.

Yet, there was little evidence of Divine favor. While in prayer the Holy Spirit enlightened him that, since he was doing all the work, securing all the results and was willing to take all the glory, he could not expect the supernatural presence of God. This great man humbly confessed his error to the Lord and commanded that all pictures and advertisements be removed. Then he publicly confessed the error. Needless to say, God came in old-time power.

Leadership that gives its first loyalty to the Word of God above all earthly pressures or treasures begets followers that will push the battle to the very gates of hell. Men of the Asbury stamp will produce followers who will fight side by side with them up to the cannon’s mouth. One example of humble, dedicated, unworldly leadership is worth innumerable programs and crusades. The sainted apostle gives the order of loyalty, “Follow me as I follow Christ”. Multitudes of God’s holy children are ready to follow to the ends of the earth, to the last dollar, to the last ounce of strength, that kind of leadership under the Holy Spirit. With such leadership, individuals are instruments to be used of God, not tools to be employed for personal aggrandizement.

The pressing problem to conscientious ministers is, Can I be 100 per cent loyal to Christ and the church of my choice? Many things a church promotes, programs, or expects of her ministers are foreign to the methods and gospel of Christ. If loyalty to organization means muzzle-mouthed silence on her sins, what other course is left but treason to the Lord? The glib sale of New Testament standards of gospel preaching, piety, sacrifice and service give Shylock the appearance of a benefactor. In the light of the treasonable attitude of much of organized religion toward Bible standards of separation from the world

Benedict Arnold and Judas Iscariot were pikers. Make no mistake, dear friend, our first loyalty is to Christ and His Word. No pope, priest, prelate, or presiding officer supersedes the Word of God and its Christ. Our first loyalty is love to Christ, above all others, beyond all others, superseding all others. Christ is first in our loyalty, because He is first in our love.

AN EDUCATIONAL WILDERNESS

As if the *ecclesiastical wilderness* were not sufficient we have an *educational wilderness* that has given seed, root, and branch to the strange wilderness in which we find ourselves. Every thoughtful student of history knows that most great moves away from the simplicity of the gospel and the fundamentals of the faith in the various churches have had their beginnings in the school systems.

The founding fathers of any church you care to mention never intended that the educational tail should wag the denominational dog. Our educational institutions exercise such tremendous influence upon the whole lump of church life that in the process of time they leaven the whole lump. On occasions this has been wonderful, the school being the fountain head for revival and missionary vision. But all too often and in the majority of cases we have the strange spectacle of the school men dominating the life of the church, altering its doctrine, diluting its standards, and crippling its effectiveness. Though the process is long and slow the results are almost inevitable. The spiritual vision, vigor, and victory of founding fathers is altered, abridged and offered upon the altar of accreditation or scholasticism.

If my word is doubted study the history of Oberlin, Harvard, Yale, and innumerable other schools that could be mentioned. However, if we went too far in our catalogue we would invariably move much nearer to our own doorsteps. To refresh your memory, Oberlin College started by the greatest evangelist of his day or perhaps any day since the Apostle Paul, started as a focal point where pentecostal fire fell, started as an incubator for revival and revivalists, started as a training school for soldiers of the cross, now it's a hot bed of atheism, modernism and godlessness. The same campus that saw President Finney sacrifice and pray for its founding and for the glory of Christ, saw the Christ of God crucified a short time ago in the effigy of a pig. Blasphemous indeed, but there are countless others who have started on the same path of apostacy. The steps are smaller, the print is different but it's the same path and it leads to the same place. Compromise is the first step to modernism.

We have but to judge our work by our product. Each June young men and women are run out of our school assembly lines twisted doctrinally, starved spiritually, stunted emotionally and married to a liability. All individuality has been erased, differences in standards, convictions and personal principles have been pretty well eradicated. They are now acclimated, adjusted, and adjudged to be safe, sane, and scriptural. No revolutions of revival will follow their footsteps. Rather they will go out as super-salesmen to peddle their peculiar brand of anemic denominationalism, playing the part of a wise promoter, politician or social climber. They will soon be members of the Lions Club, speaking at Rotary gatherings and asking Jehovah's blessing on the Home Coming Fair and Circus.

To find the *purpose of a school* go back to the neglected pages of its history as recorded in the book of information. Devout men and women purposed to give their children the opportunity of the Spirit's revelation first hand from the hearts and minds of men who had dedicated themselves to God for the express purpose of transmitting to another generation the knowledge of the divine will and way. Such teachers and parents sought to safeguard the spiritual heritage of their children by teaching the standards of true piety under conditions that were conducive to their spiritual, emotional and mental well being.

Such schools were to teach, preach, defend and protect the doctrines of the church; never was it to be the task of the school to alter, formulate, or change them. Students in such training were not preparing for success. The true standard of success was a dedication to death; if need be, to preach and propagate the

great message of Redemption..Those students studying to be doctors or teachers were as dedicated to the task of saving the lost as those preparing for the ministry.

Success was not their goal, but service to those who needed them. Medicine was not a short cut to fame and fortune but a near route to the heart of lost souls. The class room was more than a ladder for social climbers, it was an incubator for high moral principles on impressionable lives. Success was measured in conversions to Christ, not cash in the bank. God forbid that any parent would send his boy or girl to college to prepare for success as the world knows it. The cross, once regarded as the epitome of failure, is now the loftiest symbol of success. The test of an education is not how long one lives but how well, not how much did one make, but how much did he give.

Preserving the purpose of the school is one of the most grave problems facing the church world. The shifting pattern of a godless society and secular education dazzles the eyes of unspiritual educators in church school systems. The world system having established a pattern or standard for its own product, fools church educators into measuring their product by the world's standard of success. So anxious are church school educators for the world's approval on their program and product, that they invite the godless accrediting associations to criticize our standards and methods. The school that would gain or retain its approval must follow their dictates. The evolutionary process never ends until the church school is moulded to the image of the godless, modernistic, atheistic university. An educator must be dead in deed to secular pressure, popular appeal, and the promise of financial aid from corporation giants, to pursue a contrary course.

In all fairness we must say that some schools have cooperated with the various accrediting associations and maintained a measure of loyalty to their original purpose. But evolution is very much in evidence, it is but a matter of time before the inevitable happens. One time they were devoted one hundred per cent to the training of young people for the ministry or mission field, now but twenty or twenty-five per cent of their effort is to prepare young lives for work in the Master's vineyard. Denominational leaders decry the fact that an insufficient number of ministers come from the schools to pastor the churches. The men who permitted the original school charters to be changed from Bible School to Liberal Arts, can blame this tragedy on their own short sightedness. There never has been and never will be an acceptable substitute for Bible Schools. The best atmosphere to prepare young men and women for the work of God is a red hot, spirit filled school with a Bible centered, Christ centered, Holy Ghost honoring curriculum and faculty.

The faculty is the heart of the school. They hold the key to the success or failure of the product turned out of the institution. Students will never rise higher than the spiritual average of the faculty. Dr. C. J. Pike writing in the Herald of Holiness said, "In the first place the whole tone of the school will rise or fall with the faculty. There is no place for an unsanctified member in that body, no not one. Such an one becomes a focal point around which carnal students can find a place to congregate. At that focal point the festering begins. Next the administration must see to it that an atmosphere is created which makes it uncomfortable, very uncomfortable for the indifferent student to remain in that group. This is best accomplished not by nagging but by such possession of profession by all that the spiritual laggard either gets in the clear or gets out. Finally then with the strongest possible emphasis may we state that there is nothing more contemptible than a so-called holiness school which has departed from its calling". The good Doctor has pin-pointed the issue with unusual clarity. Would to God more could or would see as clearly as he.

The perpetual *peril of a school* is seen in its evolution. The first generation, prays, pays, sacrifices and spares no effort to get an institution of learning started where the principles and practices of a holy life can be taught and caught. The second generation spends much time, money and effort to expand the influence, to build impressive buildings, become accredited, and increase the enrollment.

The third generation abandons the "old fogey" ideas, standards, and ideals of the first generation, gladly accepts the modern plant and program of the second generation and takes it from there on the road of modernism, liberalism and godlessness. If the institution started as a Bible School the first step is to make it a College of Liberal Arts.

When eventually the College of Liberal Arts is sufficiently recognized, and the plant and other phases of scholastic and social life will permit, they will strive for the ultimate goal that of Seminary or University. The old land marks, the old standards, the original purpose to train young men and women to live godly and useful lives for Christ and His kingdom are abandoned and forgotten. True, in the spacious, modernized office will be the pictures of one or two bewhiskered old men or long gowned ladies of pious mien. Other than these tokens of yesteryear, nothing remains.

The president of one of our greatest universities said that he traced the decline of the Church to the shift of emphasis from theology to other subjects such as religious education, social studies, church management, leadership, etc. Schools that started as missionary training homes and Bible schools are now so far advanced in preparing young people for the work of the Lord that a graduation certificate for the ministry can be received with as little as four semester hours of Bible Study in four years. We need not be puzzled that these four year wonders know little about holiness doctrine, Bible theology and the Word of God. Too many times they have been brainwashed of all old time standards and convictions by professors who are as cunning in destroying old time holiness standards in young minds as Chinese or Russian Communists were in destroying loyalty to God and country. From the schools they invade the pulpits and official life of the church with weapons forged in the mind of a liberal faculty with no love to God, no regard for the church, and no affectionate concern for the students. They work slowly but surely, for they are molding the most important resource of the church, her youth.

Prayer, much prayer, is needed for the present school program.

Thank God for every school that has a dedicated, godly, unworldly faculty. They merit the financial and moral support of God's people. Insist that the fundamentals of the doctrine of holiness are caught from the faculty as well as taught by them. Any church which will not make a sincere effort to strengthen the spiritual quality of the faculty should not expect your support. A school that places the scholastic above the spiritual does not need your money and does not want your prayers. A school where the athletic, scholastic, and social are predominant is an unsafe school for your boy or girl. Parents will do well to look beyond the lovely expensive school catalog, and statement of standards found in the brochure.

No school will be ideal but there are a few who are striving to prepare men and women for the work of life, for the glory of God. No school, regardless of its faculty and other resources, can remake an ill-tempered, unstable, undisciplined, unspanked, spoiled teenager into the image of godliness. Too many parents expect others to do in a few short weeks or months what they failed to do in eighteen or twenty years. Such parents will stand without excuse in the judgment.

AN EVANGELISTIC EVANGELISM

An *Evangelistic Wilderness* is the natural consequence of the *Educational Wilderness*. The seeds of our evangelistic chaos are sown in our educational institutions. The result is a *defective evangelism*. How defective is present evangelism? Just how deep and thorough are the present city-wide meetings and highly organized, so-called revivals? Do people really get converted? Are lives really changed? Can we with our background of radical repentance be satisfied with a general prayer and the signing of a card? With emphasis on the social and human, can we be satisfied with so few apparent fruits of repentance?

Someone has said, "The real virtues of one age readily become the spurious virtues of the succeeding age." The withering blast the Saviour unleashed upon the Pharisees is classic in this respect. They garnished the tombs of those their fathers had killed and at the same time PERSECUTING those who followed in their illustrious path. Now that the pendulum has swung from a period of skepticism to that of faith in God, conflict no longer rages over "Can I believe?" but "What shall I believe?" A resurgence of religion is sweeping America and many parts of Europe. Evidence of this is discernible on every side.

Consider these facts. The President of the United States opens his cabinet meetings with a silent prayer. Special rooms for prayer and meditation are set up in the Capitol in Washington and in the headquarters of the UN in New York City. Our Sunday Schools are bulging with 35,400,000 children. Americans are giving to their churches and synagogues at a rate surpassing \$3,000,000,000 a year.

Evangelistic preachers command larger audiences than those that gather for major sporting events. Drive-in theaters have been taken over in many communities for Sunday morning services. You can come with your picnic baskets, golf clubs, and swimming suits, thus avoiding losing time for an afternoon of fun. Religious books of various flavors and overtones appear on best-seller lists week after *week*. *Such as, I Believe, The Man Up-Stairs, Count Your Blessings* and *Open Up Your Heart* have been Juke box song hits. You can hear the Chuck Wagon Gang or the Ink Spots jazzing up an old hymn or grinding out a new monstrosity nearly any hour of the day. Sixty per cent of our people are church members compared with but nineteen per cent in 1870. The Words, Under God, have been added to our Pledge of Allegiance. The Post Office has issued a new red, white and blue stamp bearing the motto "IN GOD WE TRUST." Bible schools, colleges and seminaries are crowded with young men and women studying for the ministry or the mission field. Missionary boards are raising more money than ever before. Some churches are giving as much as 25 per cent of their net income to missions. Surveys reveal that Radio stations are broadcasting the gospel 9,000 hours a week over 2,800 stations "I'VE GOT RELIGION" is the latest American slogan. It would appear from the above revelation that as a nation "righteousness should cover the land as the waters cover the sea."

But it is not so. The resurgence of religion is but a veneer of a self righteous generation whose god is their belly and whose glory is their shame. Dr. A. W. Tozer tells of a night club comedian testifying that he became a \$1,000 a week success after praying to a statue and promising to give generously of his income to humanitarian purposes.

Consider the fact that while we have 105,000,000 church members only 21,000,000 are regular church attenders. That means that 135,000,000 do not attend regular services. Someone has said concerning the church members:

5 per cent do not exist
10 per cent cannot be found
50 per cent never attend S.S.
75 per cent never hold office
20 per cent never pray
25 per cent never read the Bible
60 per cent never go Sunday night
80 per cent never go to prayer meetings
30 per cent never attend church
40 per cent never give to any cause
70 per cent never give to missions
90 per cent never have family worship
AND . . . 95 per cent NEVER WIN A SOUL TO CHRIST.

It is difficult to comprehend a more tragic picture than this. The Laodicean Church was a blaze of fire compared to this. WHO IS TO BLAME? The responsibility for this spurious resurgence of religion may be attributed to many factors. It may be the result of fear in the age of atomic fission, *a parallel to fox hole religion.*

Thus the popularity of such "humanistic hodge-podge" as Norman Vincent Peal's or Fulton J. Sheen's. Or it may have resulted from selfishness and a desire for security. As James Pike Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine has said: "In the realm of personal religion there is a tendency to seek to use God as one of a number of resources to enable us to get what we want and enjoy life as we would. True religion puts God first and us second; its true prayer is, "Thy will be done with our help; let my will be done with thy help."

Another has said, "Much of this apparent revival of religious interest seems to place the emphasis on using God for our own purpose of success, of health, of freedom from burdens and strain. The heart of true religion has to do with offering ourselves to God."

But back of these possibilities lies a more significant factor. The failure of the church to utilize the God given, Spirit inspired, heaven ordained ministry of intercessory prayer. *We live in the book of Numbers rather than the Acts of the Holy Ghost*. New Methods and programs for reaching the unchurched have increased our church rolls at a fabulous rate. Such gains are superficial unless each addition was characterized by the supernatural. Our understanding of the plan of God, our own experience of Grace is such, the measure of our light and the depth of our convictions are such, that we cannot be content with superficiality. Our members must be active in the cause of Christ, each one a soldier, fully armed and at the battle's front. Such recruits in this battle can only be had by the use of THE NEW TESTAMENT METHODS. As the late L. W. Sturk, General Supt. of the Pilgrim Holiness Church said in his address to the General Board, "We cannot hope to win this battle by worldly compromise. There are areas in which there can be no compromise. We have too much light to fall in with certain popular methods. God has given us a way that is fully supported by the Scripture and from which we cannot with a good conscience deviate."

Can any doubt that intercession is that method? The annals of revival are replete with documented evidence that God grants true revival in response to true intercession. Our danger is to become as superficial and shallow as our Calvinistic friends who have degenerated sonship with God to a mere believism or friendly nod to the Almighty. Sunday services that cater to mere Sunday School religion giving the rest of the day for selfish and worldly pursuits is now a part of much of our church world. Unconsciously we follow the well-trodden paths of Catholicism, *get your religion out of the way, early in the day*. A sort of "enjoy yourself" attitude.

The truth is that the unchurched in our Sunday services are aware of little or no constraining influence. With the end of the Superintendent's benediction they flow out of our doors in an endless stream, feeling they have served God, pleased the preacher, and now have the rest of the day to themselves to do as they please. Rarely do we see them again on Sunday night. A prayer influence alone will do the job of convicting them of sin, righteousness and judgment.

The product of evangelism is defective only because EVANGELISM IS SICK. A sick, anemic Evangelism is the patient of denominational leaders, preachers, and Doctors of Divinity.

Likewise she is the parent of a weak spineless believism. The bobbed haired, jewel bedecked, worldly minded converts belie her diseased constitution. This condition is the topic most frequently discussed in conferences and conventions. Innumerable resolutions, programs, plans, and promises are made to revive the former enthusiasm and health that evangelism once displayed.

Needless to say, no expense has been spared in the effort to save the patient. The latest methods, means, and measures known to the ecclesiastical Doctors have been employed. Specialists from the fields of education and promotion have been called in for consultation. The Specialists have analyzed, criticized and prescribed without success. Numerous treatments, transfusions, and adjustments have been tried, but the patient fails to rally. It is apparent that something besides Vaseline or Cloverine is needed.

For instance, a steady transfusion of propaganda and publicity has been tried to bring back that certain atmosphere that she has carried, but the results are more like the carnival than Calvary. The crowd technique has been tried times without number, only for the Chief of Staff to find they have the masses without the Master. Dr. Enter Tain Em and his aide, Sister Dish Rattler, have tried repeated shots of religious movies, refreshments, and recreation, but no improvement has been noticed. It appears that it will take more than food, fun, and fellowship to restore her former vigor.

Dr. I Am Neutral, specialist in nauseating neutrality, has placed the patient on a steady diet of positive preaching with disappointing results. Dr. Crack Em has suggested a series of adjustments in doctrine, standards, and attitudes, in addition to a special course in psychology. But these have all been devoid of satisfactory results. They have given no life. These quack doctors and their remedies have been a waste of

time and money. The question naturally comes, “If these eminent ones, with their know-how, their machinery, and their resources, have failed to restore the patient, evangelism, to health, and vigor, what will she respond to?”

A minority have called for a menu of fasting, prayer, obedience, and old-fashioned Gospel preaching. Dr. A. W. Tozer seems to understand her need when he says, “Too many religious leaders are overlooking the fact that the faith of Christ makes no concessions, accepts no compromise, allows no terms, and makes no deals. Christ offers Himself to men as Lord and Saviour and receives returning sinners only when they turn against themselves and come fully to God’s side. Fallen man escapes the judgment of the world as Lot escaped the destruction of Sodom—by forsaking it altogether, not by adjusting to it. The current vogue in religion never says, ‘Thou shalt not;’ that would be negative thinking and contrary to best psychology. It does not command men; it smiles, cajoles, and suggests, and ends by letting man have his own way.”

To better understand this, let us review evangelism’s early beginnings. Evangelism is the child of revival. It is a misconception of the highest magnitude to believe that evangelism is to get the church to be a little busier. Evangelism is more than action—it is unction; it is more than activity—it is the Holy Ghost anointing. As L. W. Northrup, Free Methodist Chairman of the Committee of Evangelism, observed, “We must be revived. A forward movement without a revival at the center is a backward movement. It is a delusion—it contradicts divine revelation. We will have clamor without conviction, feasting without fasting, planning without prayer. . . .

Trying to put a church together without a revival is working with a rope of sand. Without a revival a church will be dead, carnal, stubborn. This latent incapacity for spiritual things persists in a church which has been formed by the art of men, rather than born of the Spirit in revival fires. Only the revival church bears the stamp of God. Only the revival church loves revival—but on it she thrives, she thrills, she lives.”

Revival alone will give evangelism that dynamic strength to fulfill her mission. “Evangelism, the activity of making Christ known and loved,” is the primary occupation of the church; in fact, it is the only justification for her existence. “Winning men to Christ is not a part of the program of the church; it is the only activity of the church. To accomplish this mission in the world, the fires of revival must be kindled here. Individual and congregational revival must precede world evangelism.

The fire of evangelism does not start at the top, planned and programmed; it begins spontaneously in the grass roots and goes up. It is useless to criticize the head, arms, and legs for immobility, when the heart is nigh dead. Orders issued and resolutions on church extension will be feebly carried out by the various arms of the church until the heart beats strong and true. The size of the brain and the brawn of the arms are of no use when the heart is weak or dead. The heart is everything. Intercessory prayer and unquestioned obedience is the heart of revival evangelism. This sickness is unto death unless we find a remedy. The remedy will not come out of denominational apothecaries, or from the bulging brief cases of professional pill-pushers. The formula will never be compounded in educational dispensaries, or conference or convention x-ray rooms. It will take more than a little soothing syrup, Hadacol, or One-a-Day Brand Vitamins. There is no patent medicine, handy tablets, or self-help exercises that will invigorate sick evangelism.

If evangelism ever recovers her health, vision, and vigor we must follow the directions of the Divine Physician carefully. The tried and true prescription is hundreds of years old, but careful application of the patient to the directions is guaranteed to restore youthfulness and health. It is not difficult to find. The pages of Holy Writ give the same prescription over and over again. Take 2 Chron. 7:14. for instance—“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 heal their land.” Joel gave Israel the cure in their day, “Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord. . . . Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain. . . .

Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God. . . . Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar.”

Here is the promised cure, “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm. . . . And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you.”

It appears that the main ingredients in the prescription necessary to restore a healthy, vibrant evangelism are:

1. Humility of spirit.
2. Tears of contrition.
3. Confession of sins.
4. Fasting of sleep and food.
5. Expectancy of faith.

Brethren, we are in no place to fix responsibility for this condition. Who among us can point a finger or cast a stone? Our own fruitlessness stands as a silent witness against us. The question is not, “Who is to blame?” The question is, “Brethren, will we take our medicine?” Will we take it long enough, strong enough, and often enough to do us good? Are we going to prescribe for others what we will take ourselves? Are we going to put the medicine back in our theological medicine chests to gather dust, or are we going to practice what we preach? Brethren, will we take our medicine? If we would have the picture in sharp focus let us study the term EVANGELISM. Let us strip it of all glamorization and behold its simple beauty.

Evangelism! Who can adequately define it? Definitions seem as cold as the calculating minds that produced them. Its nature is such that it defies analysis or definition. Samson must have had it when he sent the fiery foxes into the standing grain of the Philistines. He possessed the nature of it when he prayed his final prayer for strength and pulled the temple upon his head and the heads of God’s enemies. Shamgar had a touch of it when the ox goad became a lethal weapon in his hand. God’s Word is replete with similar instances of its mysterious moves and manifestations. Whatever may be said about it, this much we know, it is indispensable and imperative in the life of the church in every age. We have no cut and dried definition, but perhaps in a small way we can point out what it is and what it is not.

Evangelism is not organization nor machinery in high gear. It is not ecclesiasticism plus enthusiasm, neither is it education at its best, nor denominational loyalty on fire. Evangelism is more than a crusade for certain goals or gains in membership. This fiery force is more than a crusade against certain forms of vice; it is more than morality outraged. Evangelism is not dramatics, but the Divine dynamic. Religious movies cannot produce it nor can human personalities portray it, any more than can the Mississippi be dammed up with corn cobs. True evangelism transcends the mass meeting and reaches the masses. It promotes no personality but Christ, and has no support but the Holy Ghost. It needs no promotional agent to keep it going nor wonder-boy preachers to hold the converts.

Evangelism operates without special radio or T.V. hook-ups to spread the Word, traveling from heart to heart with a speed greater than light. Evangelism is primarily of the heart rather than of the head, and deals with natures rather than with notions. Evangelism is not the product of one church to the exclusion of others. Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, or a humble mission, may know the honor of its presence. Evangelism is the Holy Spirit in unhindered operation in human personality. Sammy Morris or John Wesley—the white or the black—can find a place in its program of passion.

The birth of evangelism takes place when Zion travails. It makes no difference if the place of its birth be as lowly as the stable of the Master. Invariably this event takes place when the pains of discontent are at their zenith. Never has it been born in arrogant, haughty cathedrals or of denominational drafting boards or convention agendas. But the humble haystack, the wayside barn, or some other secret place has witnessed the birth innumerable times. Intercession and humility are its parents. Spirit born, it needs no human hand to steady it, no trained intellect to guide it nor a press agent to promote it. Evangelism is more than emotion, although both are inseparable companions.

Evangelism's fire warms the cold, melts the frozen, rouses the indifferent, and purifies their dross. The slum-dwellers and the down-and-outers are acquainted with it, the immoral and illiterate are soon its friends, and true intellectuals rejoice at its coming. Only an educated ignoramus would think of its enthusiasm as wild fire or fanaticism. None but Ecclesiastical icicles would see it as a danger or threat to their own program. On the other hand, true preachers of the Word see it as the only answer to godless communism and modernism.

Evangelism is God the Father's answer to the groan of a distressed and dying world. It is the sacrifice of Christ the Son for its sins, and the ceaseless wooing of the Holy Spirit for its salvation. Evangelism in the highest sense of the word is the Triune God in full pursuit of lost man. In still another sense it is the pounding of a preacher's heart, in the deep hours of the night, on behalf of a luke-warm and careless church. It is the unceasing hunger of his soul for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon a valley full of bones. Evangelism is the minister employing the language of sighs, sobs, and tears—a vocabulary Webster never heard, nor could define. Have you ever seen the Shepherd combing the highways and hedges in breathless pursuit of the lost and straying? That is evangelism. Did you ever see the keeper of the vineyard on guard against the little foxes that would spoil the vine? That is evangelism. Perhaps you saw the good soldier, alone at his post, doing battle with the powers of hell and darkness on the battle field of Man-Soul? That is evangelism.

Evangelism is the family altar on fire, the lonely parent on his knees in the bleak hours of the morning, wrestling for the safety and salvation of a wayward child. It may be the concern of a class leader over his careless ones, or the persistency of a Sunday School teacher tracking down an absentee. Again it may be the missionary president visiting the sick and sorrowing, or the Young People's Society calling at the County Home, putting the emphasis on the spiritual rather than the social. Youth with its militant tread, and high and holy purpose to make known the high standards and ideals of God's Word, have always proved that Bible evangelism is not provincial but Pentecostal. Evangelism is love focused on others. Self-love is destructive, but evangelism is love geared to the great sacrificial heart of God doing and dying for others. A faith that worketh by love is evangelism at white heat. The hours are not too long, wages are not too small, and the Master is not too hard. This passion to see the lost won to Christ becomes the over-matterer motive, and very purpose for one's life and ministry. It is the master passion of the heart, and all else is made to bend or conform to its demands. It is this, and this alone, that will save ourselves and those that hear us. Do we have it?

How It Got There

1. *A Misconception of Her Mission.* The road leading to wilderness wandering appears to be anything but a cow path or gypsy trail. It is an eight lane super highway with a deceptive downgrade and heavy traffic all moving in the same direction. A few caution lights or highway patrolmen are sighted, but these are completely ignored. It is the route of judicious compromise. Apparent success beckons on every side, and sign posts point toward cherished goals on the denominational road. Influence, power and money are promised at the end of the road. Numerical strength, denominational prestige and statistical increases to please the promoters seem to be only a few compromise miles away. From a satanic force, a dull mind, or a clouded vision the church is led to believe, this is "the road to success." Make bread of your gospel stones, transform the hard qualities of the gospel into something more palatable for the masses.

Encourage the social and the recreational in your program and soon the route of least resistance will be clogged with the rich, cultured and influential coming to your side. Soon senators, governors, Hollywood divorcees, crooks and criminals in various stages of remorse or reform will lend “dash” and “color” to your efforts. With the influence of such lush personalities, the Hollywood or Yankee Stadium technique will fill the pews, congest the coffers, and convert the community.

Will such a compromise succeed? Of course it will. It is exactly what a carnal worldling desires: a Hollywood atmosphere in the family pew, religious entertainment without the box office price, T.V. entertainment personalities with ecclesiastical promotion, religion without revival, Christ without the cross and Pentecost without the noise and persecution.

Such methods are being used in certain sections of the fundamental camp. We can guarantee success on this line. They are sure to get larger and more influential. They are sure to confuse millions, convert but few, and damn the rest. Such methods will not only fill the church but hell as well. We guarantee they will stand before God with the blood of an innumerable host upon their garb and the cries of the lost in their ears. The church is never a greater foe to the unevangelized than when she has *misconceived her mission*.

The mission of the church is pure and simple. It is not to grow big, rich, or influential, but to serve the spiritual needs of the community. If those of wealth and influence are likewise spiritual so much the better to serve the purpose of Christ for the evangelization of the world. This mission could be stated in the following manner:

- (a.) the reclamation of human derelicts,
- (b.) the sanctification of believers,
- (c.) the perpetuation of revival.

This is the true mission and purpose of the church. She may engage in many other enterprises more showy and profitable but whatever diverts her from this task will stand to condemn her at last. She is not to save her soul and something else, she is to save her soul and nothing else.

The human flotsam and jetsam cast out upon the sea of life must be the immediate object of the churches' redeeming power. No man is too lost to be found, no man is too far down to be reached, none is so filthy but he can be cleansed. When the church loses confidence in that message and mission invariably other methods are used and the so-called “better class” of people becomes the object of her program. The church that becomes “too nice” for the hard and sometimes dirty work of salvaging the devil's derelicts is too foul with her own self righteousness to get to heaven. The church which is preoccupied with T.V. programs, social enterprises and recreational duties is too dead to hear the trumpet blast.

2. *A Misdirection of Her Energies.* A comparison of the First Century Church and the Twentieth Century Church leaves no doubt as to the limited assets of the first and the limitless assets of the other. Yet despite our tremendous resources we are doing little or nothing by comparison. That band of 120 unlettered, unhonored, unsung, unsponsored, unwanted soldiers of Jesus Christ set the then known world on fire. No weapon could stop them, no purge could silence them, no prison could hold them for long. They turned the world right side up and had riots or revivals and sometimes both. Caesar's household was invaded and captives taken even there for the Lord Jesus Christ. No town too distant, no people too hostile, the high and the low, the rich and poor, intellectuals and illiterates, all felt the impact of their lives and knew the heat of their fire. A Ph.D. is not necessary to know that somewhere there has been a misdirection of energies, a mis-appropriation of economic, intellectual, and youthful resources.

This misdirection of energies by the church is most quickly seen by the use and abuse of the resources of her youth. Learn what a church is doing with and to its youth, the candidates for the ministry and mission fields, and you will soon know the road as well as the destination of that church. We seem to be wise above what is written. The first century church tarried in the upper room until baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. This was their single qualification. The other assets are good but without this one they are but dead sticks, they give no life. Now, twenty centuries later, we have superseded first century fire with jet age methods. Instead of insisting that candidates for the ministry or mission field be fire filled, we demand that they attend schools that specialize in church management, religious education, psychology

and positive thinking. They are taught the latest in visual education, how to run an athletic program and to preach without offense. Many are trained for promoters, publicity agents, and financiers. When the church loses the glory, she makes flunkies of her pastors and promoters of her prophets.

For years the holiness churches have taken a definite stand against the shallow social and recreational religion as practiced by much of the nominal church world. Yet in the last few years we have seen a decisive swing in that direction. What was once darkness and error is now light and truth. Twenty years ago it was testimonial to a back-slidden church, now it is evidence of progress and positive thinking, twenty years ago it was evidence of spiritual harlotry, today it is holiness promotion, twenty years ago such a social minister would have been relieved of his pulpit, today he is applauded and elevated. The following is an abbreviated description of the activities of a so-called holiness gathering as one promotional paper reports: The hall was brightly decorated with gaily colored ribbon streamers and arranged with booths like a County Fair. The booth with the most attractive decoration received a prize. After a lovely dinner, time was spent in game and recreation.

Sister Blank won the bean guessing contest. The report continues telling of the contests won by the preachers and their members. The burning issue among this group is “can they beat another group of so-called holiness people in a game of soft ball?” The burning question was not how could they more effectively pray, or more effectively win the lost, or how could they more effectively serve God, but the burning question was could they beat their opposition in soft ball.

With the rise of social parties, social gatherings, eating, drinking, fooling, and playing has come a sudden drop in the depth, breadth and effectiveness of revival. The Social Sallies are driving the Praying Marys out of our midst with their weiner sticks. The crowd that can clown and carry on at a “gathering” or party is the same element that is opposed to a little noise or shouting in the camp meeting or church. They defend themselves by saying it isn’t their nature. The divine nature imparted would make them alive to God when He comes. Their defiance too often is a confession of a need.

Beverly Carradine battled this same thing in the Methodist Church sixty years ago yet his message is as new as cellophane. “This whole idea of entertaining the people at God’s House comes from Satan, and is one of the most subtle and dangerous of all his movements upon and against Christianity. He knows that if Christ is held up before the people and men look steadily at him they will be saved. Hence his idea is to divert their church from doing this wise and heavenly and powerful thing. He whispers that Christ alone is not enough to draw souls; that it takes Christ and jokes, Christ and lecture, Christ and entertainments, (Christ and religious movies). As he discovers his success in blinding the church he becomes more aggressive, and whispers again that if the naked cross is held up, the simple strict holy life of Jesus be insisted on then all young people will be driven away.

That young people have to be amused and old people entertained. So he tempts, and so he succeeds in side tracking the church. He has switched her off from the blessed heavenly employment of crying ‘Behold the Lamb of God’ and she is now part lyceum, part theater, and part kitchen. I look in vain all through the scriptures, for the slightest authority or command in any direction. It is not there. Read Paul’s direction to Timothy—is the entertainment idea in those solemn, tearful injunctions? Read Christ’s last charge to Peter about his sheep and lambs. Is there anything about entertaining and amusing them? Is it ‘go ye into all the world and entertain them?’ Nothing of the kind.”

It would seem to me that if the recreation and social life were so indispensable to the life of the church and the spreading of the gospel, there would be some specific instructions from the Lord or certainly from the Apostle Paul.

Charles G. Finney, greatest evangelist since the Apostle Paul and authority on revivals, wrote in the following manner to preachers if they wanted to convert no one. “Encourage church sociables, and attend them yourself, because they tend so strongly to levity as to compromise Christian dignity and sobriety, thus paralyze the power of your preaching. Encourage the cultivation of the social in so many ways as to divert the attention of yourself and your church members from the infinite guilt and danger of the unconverted among you. In those sociables talk a little about religion, but avoid any serious appeal to the heart and conscience of those who attend, lest you should discourage their attendance, always

remembering that they do not go to sociables to be earnestly dealt with in regard to their relations to God. In this way you will effectually so employ yourself and your church members as that your preaching will not convert anybody.”

Revival meetings are now reduced in length to ten days at the most or in a more progressive group one or two week-end revivals per year. All nights of prayer, days of fasting and praying, and weeks of prayer are memories to which an occasional lip service may be rendered. The social, recreational or supper room in holiness churches is well filled for the occasion, but the prayer room, small to begin with easily accommodates the 18 or 20 faithful few. Dismissal must be by nine o'clock sharp for preaching or prayer, but social activities last till late and no one complains. We are all out for the social and all in for the spiritual, we are up physically for entertainment and all fagged out for revival.

Boundless energy is seen every where for personal gratification and enjoyment, anemic ambition blights our efforts for others. Our energies are sadly misdirected because of the misconception of our mission.

A Misplaced Emphasis. The inevitable results—An institutional religion is fast becoming a reality in holiness ranks. Not by preachment or purpose, but subtly we are drifting into the age old fallacy that to be a second or third generation holiness church attender is tantamount of salvation. Heaven is a sure thing if you are a good moral fellow, a member of the church and doing a few religious chores.

Statistics likewise receive great attention when the church has misplaced her emphasis. Various schemes and methods are used to make the church “grow on paper.” Innumerable modifications, alterations and adulterations to the conditions of membership take place making it easier, or more convenient to recruit to our membership those who would not pay the price before. New smokers, chewers, lodge members, jewel bedecked Jezebels are taken in on one level or another of our membership to hold them until converted. Little wonder that we are swamped with worldly Sunday School teachers, church officers and members of official boards; membership standards mean little or nothing in many places.

In recruiting additions to the church roll we have recruited those who are mutinous at heart. They are not soldiers of Jesus Christ in full harmony with the will of God as revealed in the Bible. They are Social Sallies who will eventually remodel the church emphasis and program to suit the carnality of a depraved heart. In such recruiting, without radical repentance and conversion, we recruit a mutiny.

Unless great caution is exercised here we will follow the well beaten path of apostasy. Woe be to the pastor in some quarters who fails to bring a large increase in members and money to lay as a sacrifice to the God of statistics at the annual gathering. His future, and that of his family, all depend on the regularity and size of his statistical obligation. The temptation to the minister under such pressure is to mute his message, stifle the spirit, and compromise his convictions. A nauseating neutrality perfumes his ministry and he becomes a so called “middle of the road man.”—The editor of *Christian Economics* pin-points the problem in an editorial THE FALLACY OF THE MIDDLE WAY.

“A belief has developed that there is something sacred about keeping in the “middle-of-the-road” as between the right and the left. Less effort is being made currently to determine what is right and what is wrong, and more emphasis is being placed on the desirability of steering a course between the two. Apparently a certain virtue attaches to being neither right nor wrong but in between. “This is a curious development. Upon close examination it will be seen to reflect an attitude of mind that is less interested in finding the truth than in compromising, apparently with the hope of keeping everybody happy. Compromises are sometimes necessary but not as between right and wrong, not as between truth and error. If compromises are accepted under these latter conditions they themselves also are errors.”

If one group says twelve times twelve is 144 and another group contends that it is 160, why not try to discover the facts rather than assume the correctness of a middle course that twelve times twelve is 152. The middle ground philosophy is an absurdity—a plausible course to the unthinking who are not willing to bestir themselves in an effort to find the facts and are eager to appear tolerant and compromising in the hope of retaining popularity in all quarters. “One might believe in the law of gravity, another might deny it. It is extremely important to ascertain the facts before one adopts a so-called middle course by stepping off a cliff in the expectation that his fall will stop when he is half way to the bottom.

Who Is Right?

“What middle course can one adopt with reference to the Ten Commandments? There are those who believe in their absolute validity—that they are the laws of God. There are others who maintain that they are a matter of custom and usage. We need to determine who is right and not to try to find a middle course as between living by these standards and disregarding them. “When administering relief work in Europe we had a British citizen, his wife and their two children in our employ in Spain. When conditions became difficult, for reasons of safety the children were taken home to England. The British Advisory Committee decided that a wife’s place was with her husband. They also decided that a mother’s place was with her children. They therefore adopted the middle course of assigning the wife and mother to our relief operations in France. By adopting this middle course, she could be with neither her husband in Spain nor her children in England. The “middle way” is not half right and half wrong. It is all wrong.

Find the Truth

“What we need is a resolute determination in all quarters to find the right course of action and then to adopt it, and not to go wobbling down the middle-of-the-road, comforting ourselves that we are at least half right. If truth lies on one side of the road or the other we are certainly wrong if we stay in the middle. Let’s try very hard to find out on which side the truth lies and then take our stand with other brave men who have been equally diligent in ascertaining the facts.

“One man in Des Moines says that Minneapolis lies to the north, another says to the west. The middle-of-the-roader, therefore, sets out toward the northwest and never finds it. He should have ascertained the facts before adopting his middle-of-the-road action.” The Sunday School department can be administered all out of proportion and used as an excellent method for personal promotion and publicity. Here is a wonderful opportunity for evangelism, but honesty demands the facts. Many churches are all Sunday School. Following the class periods a great exodus takes place. As much as a half of the Sunday School going to picnics, pleasure or other past time. A good rule to measure the spiritual impact of your Sunday School growth is to compare it with prayer meeting growth. If the growth of the one keeps pace with the other, your Sunday School emphasis is evangelistic and not spurious. I know of a number of Sunday Schools where this is true. If you double the Sunday School you should likewise double the prayer meeting. Someone has said, attendance at the Sunday morning service shows the popularity of the Church, attendance Sunday night the popularity of the pastor, attendance prayer meeting night the popularity of God.

The church with the baptism of the Holy Ghost fire will have a proper conception of her purpose and mission, a profitable investment of her energies and permanent results from a Christ centered emphasis.

The Way Out

A multitude of voices are shouting instructions and telling us this is the way out. Innumerable sign posts and directions have been suggested and insisted upon. But what is the way out of the legalistic and ecclesiastic wilderness?

A Holiness Reformation is advocated by some. It is argued that this is needed to save the churches from the drift toward worldliness and compromise. This would be accomplished with more preaching on externals and various types of legislation to plug the holes and draw the line. Needless to say there is some merit in this suggestion. There is much looseness among us and a growing tendency toward the world. Shallowness and superficiality is evident everywhere. Shocking immodesty and blatant worldliness is apparent from the pew to the parsonage. We are heartsick at the Hollywood influence in our midst. The fashion plates in the pew took the Paris street walkers for their pattern. Our lips must not be silent on this evil plague spreading its cancerous roots in our beloved Zion. But it will take more than reformation and legislation.

Reformation may save an idea, preserve a doctrine, or perpetuate a ritual, but it will never give birth to revival. Revival will bring all that reformation desired but reformation alone is a dead stick, it gives no life. Reformation is an element of revival but it is not revival. Reformation without revival produces legalism and Phariseeism of darkest hue. Reformers without revival are blind leaders of the blind, their converts seven fold more a child of hell than before and all lost in the slough of legalism. Reformation of dress, deportment and doctrine are necessary but must be realized by a Holy Ghost revival.

Revival alone is the way out of the wilderness. None can deny the facts of this message. You may not agree with all the deductions, but you will agree that we as churches are going round and round in unending circles. Sometimes the circles are larger, sometimes smaller, but they are still unending. The rut may be narrower or wider but it is none the less deep. We have tried many other ways out, each one promising deliverance from the entangling jungle, but we are still lost in confusion. Revival will not be born on a denominational drafting board or in a crusade committee. Revival will be born in the hearts of men and women committed to the whole program of the Holy Ghost. Luther with his 95 Theses was the man in his day. His defiance of a corrupt and decadent church sparked the reformation. Wesley with a heart fired by the Holy Ghost set all England ablaze and started fires around the world. Finney, Rees, Knapp, Roberts and others experienced personal revival that revolutionized their own hearts and lives. In so doing they revitalized those to whom they ministered. Revival must be caught not taught. Revival is a spirit not a system. Pentecost is not static but dynamic.

God's devout people everywhere, regardless of color, nationality or denominational affiliation are crying for revival. No one denomination will give birth to revival. All true revivals have been interdenominational. It is my opinion that there is insufficient spiritual strength or vitality in anyone church regardless of its membership to give birth to true revival. However, I sincerely believe that whenever, and wherever a group of God's "little people" band themselves together by prayer, fasting, and obedience to II Chronicles 7:14, God will grant them the desire of their hearts.

The undeniable conditions mentioned in this message are not set forth to humiliate or criticize the weaknesses of anyone.

We share a common responsibility for the tragic lukewarmness of our day. Who among us can throw the first stone? Our own fruitlessness and barrenness is a monumental witness against us. The only way out is revival. Will we confess our carelessness, prayerlessness, bigotry, evil speaking, fussing, politicking, compromise, worldliness, denominational pride, evil surmising and suspicion? Will we pray, fast, separate from the world, ask forgiveness, apologize, and make straight the crooked paths? If we will we are on the way out of the woods and will soon be on the "highway of holiness."

This is the way out, will we take it?

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