

THE Watchword

*"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen;
All day and night they will never keep silent
You who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourselves,
And give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth."*

Isaiah 62:6-7

XXVIII

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage prayer and passion for a true revival of Apostolic Christianity.

The following material is offered in the hopes of provoking zeal and providing a vision of what the church could be if we would fervently pray.

PRAYER MAKES HISTORY

In every generation God has had a remnant that strived to restore true Christianity according to the Apostolic pattern. 17th century Germany was the home of just such a people known as the Pietist. The Pietist yearned and prayed to see the Church restored to Her original purity and power.

The vision and dreams of these earnest Christians found a prophetic voice in the ministry of Philip Jacob Spener. Spener, considered the father of pietism, was a man of both vision and practical direction. Over 300 years ago Spener had a good understanding of the churches needs and how to mend them. Concepts that are today considered new and innovative in many Christian circles were laid out long ago by the old German prophet.

Philip Jacob Spener, like most 17th century pietist, was a Lutheran. Spener had become deeply concerned that the teachings of Luther had produced a church only half reformed. Germany was filled with professing Christians who had been instructed in the academics of salvation by faith, but yet lacked the holy fruit of faith. Spener saw that many were void of any trace of loving fear and devotion for the Lord. A spirit of presumption had come into the church, causing many to take the grace of God for granted.

In 1670 Spener began to bring together small groups of believers who, like himself, were not satisfied with a lifeless religion. They met for the pur-



Philip Jacob Spener

pose of Bible study, prayer and for the watching over of one another. *"Before long these meetings were being conducted throughout the city. Persons of like interests in spiritual edification gravitated together to form cells that promoted Christian piety and earnest devotion."* Spener did not consider these meetings as a new church but as an extension of the Reformation within the reformation churches. But they did encourage the creation of "cell groups," that is little churches, within the Church. *"Pietists in the Netherlands were the first to use the term 'huis Kerk' or house church for their renewal meetings."* In these meetings Spener found expression for the burdens of his heart. With great zeal he preached repentance, declaring the apostasy of the Bride of Christ from her first love. *"He consistently heralded a message that emphasized the Biblical command for holy character and holy living."*

Spener was also a bold advocate of the Lutheran doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. Pietist felt that laymen had not been given sufficient opportuni-

ties in the Church. In the home meetings all believers were allowed to express their heart and ask questions. Spener taught that, *"believers are not passive in spiritual matters, but have a responsibility for building one another up in the faith."* As a result of Spener's revival efforts, he was severely maligned and persecuted. He was literally driven across Germany. As Spener traveled from city to city new house churches sprang up, reviving the dry and formal Lutheran church.

Without a doubt, Philip Jacob Spener is one of the great, though forgotten, revivalist of the Church. Although forgotten, Spener has touched us all through those he personally influenced. It was Spener's apprentice, Francke who inspired the famous George Muller to provide for orphans through simple faith and prayer. He also impacted the young Count Zinzendorf with his powerful teaching and vision of a restored Apostolic Church. Count Zinzendorf in turn led the great Moravian Mission effort to evangelize the world. Included in those won to Christ by the Moravians were John and Charles Wesley. Spener's ministry has truly impacted the world we live in.

The goal of all Spener's efforts was to have the Church of his day reflect the early Christian community. Whom among us is willing to follow Spener's example in seeking to restore such a Church? Are we willing to strip ourselves of our man pleasing traditions and half reformed ways? Such a willingness will cost us much more than we realize, yet in the end it will leave us with fewer regrets.

References Used

"Exploring Evangelism"
by Mendell Taylor

"Accounts of Revival"
by John Gillies

"And When They Were ALONE,

He expounded all things to His disciples." Mark 4:34.

If you would confide in a friend and really open up your heart, you wait until such a time as your friend can take time to come apart and be alone with you. So they who would know the secret and hidden things of God and have Him "*expound all things,*" must find time to be alone with Him. Such is the philosophy of love; **while there may be the throbbing heart, and some expressions of affection in the presence of the multitudes, the hour of true bliss is when the doors are closed and the curtains drawn.** It is there that love finds her opportunity for expression, and the confiding heart gives forth its secrets. The intensity of love demands the secret interview and longs for an opportunity of being alone with the object of its love. We read of "*the secret place of the Most High*" (Ps. 91:1), and "*the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him*" (Ps. 25:14). So we can see plainly the Lord has secrets and a secret place for His children. How beautiful it is to feel and know that one is permitted to come into "*the secret place of the Most High.*" Visitors and strangers come into reception halls and parlors, but only they who are in most intimate relations known to be tried and true can come into the secret places. What is the meaning of a secret place, but the shutting out of all that might intrude or detract; to be left alone with the object of its love? **Again we say, the deepest expressions of mutual affection, confidence and pleasure are not in public assemblies, in hurried greetings and mere social relations, but in the "secret place," alone and unobserved.**

It is exactly so in our relations to Jesus. **Men and women who fail to take time to be much "alone" in the "secret place" with Jesus, are never deeply spiritual and are compelled to get their news concerning the kingdom second-hand.** They know simply what the preacher or some one else tells them; they are ever running after men - the newest preacher and the latest evangelist - to get some more news, second-hand, concerning the King's business. But they who have learned the "*secret*" of being much alone with Him in the secret Place, get the secrets of the Lord directly from the King himself and so are not dependent on the newspapers for the latest news. **No amount of religious activities or service can make up for the lack of secret communion and fellowship with God.** Joseph and Mary had been engaged in the worship and service of the Temple when they lost Jesus, and traveled a whole day's journey "*supposing Him to have been in the company*" before they discovered they had lost Him. One may become so absorbed with religious work and duties, so hurried and preoccupied that there is no time for secret prayer, and being alone with Him and the Word, and become lean in soul and backslide while thus engaged in the work of the "*Temple*".

by C. W. Ruth

"QUENCH not the Spirit"

Often men quench the Spirit by casting off fear and restraining prayer. **Restraining prayer always quenches the Spirit.** It is wonderful to see how naturally and earnestly the Spirit leads us to pray. If we were really led by the Spirit, we should be drawn many times a day to secret prayer, and should be continually lifting up our hearts in silent petitions whenever the mind unbends itself from other pressing occupations. The Spirit in the hearts of saints is preeminently a spirit of prayer, **and of course to restrain prayer always quenches the Spirit.**

Some of you, perhaps, have been in this very case. You have once had the spirit of prayer - now you have none of it. You have no more enjoyment in prayer, you have no groaning and agonizing over the state of the church and of sinners. And if this spirit of prayer is gone, where are you now? Alas, you have quenched the Spirit of God, you have put out His light and repelled His influences from your soul. **When an individual or a people have quenched the Spirit, they are in the utmost danger of being given up to some delusion that will bring them by a short route to destruction.**

Many take entirely false ground who maintain that if a religious movement is the work of God, it can not be resisted. For example, I have often seen cases where persons would stop a revival, and then say "*It was not a real revival, for if it had been it would not have stopped.*" Let a man adopt the opinion that he can not stop the work of God in his own soul; nothing can be more perilous. **Let a people adopt the notion that revivals**

come and go without our agency and by the agency of God only, and it will bring perfect ruin on them. There never was a revival that could exist three days under such a delusion. The solemn truth is that the Spirit is easily quenched. An immense responsibility pertains to revivals. There is always fearful danger lest the Spirit should be resisted.

by Charles G. Finney

the Morning Watch

**Daily Prayer
Times at Western Hills Church
Monday thru Friday;
6 to 7am (auditorium)
Saturday; 8-11am (prayer room)**

Devotion

The Heart of Prayer

by E. M. Bounds

Devotion is the particular frame of mind found in one entirely devoted to God. It is the spirit of reverence, of awe, of godly fear. It is a state of heart which appears before God in prayer and worship. It is foreign to everything like lightness of spirit, and is opposed to levity and noise and bluster. Devotion dwells in the realm of quietness and is still before God. It is serious, thoughtful, meditative. Devotion belongs to the inner life and lives in the closet, but also appears in the public services of the sanctuary. It is a part of the very spirit of true worship and is of the nature of the spirit of prayer.

Devotion belongs to the devout man, whose thoughts and feelings are devoted to God. Such a man has a mind given up wholly to the Christian life and possesses a strong affection for God and an ardent love for his house. Cornelius was "a devout man, one that feared God with all His house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed always." "Devout men carried Stephen to his burial." "One Ananias, a devout man, according to the law," was sent unto Saul when he was blind, to tell him what the Lord would have him do. God can wonderfully use such men, for devout men are His chosen agents in carrying forward His plans.

Prayer promotes the spirit of devotion, while devotion is favorable to the best praying. Devotion furthers prayer and helps to drive prayer home to the object which it seeks. **Prayer thrives in the atmosphere of true devotion.** It is easy to pray when in the spirit of devotion. The attitude of mind and the state of heart implied in devotion make prayer effectual in reaching the throne of grace. **God dwells where the spirit of devotion resides. All the graces of the Spirit are nourished and grow well in the environment created by devotion.** Indeed, these graces grow nowhere else but here. The absence of a devotional spirit means death to the graces born in a renewed heart. True worship finds congeniality in the atmosphere made by a spirit of devotion. While prayer is helpful to devotion, at the same time devotion reacts on prayer, and helps us to pray.

Devotion engages the heart in prayer. **It is not an easy task for the lips to try to pray while the heart is absent from it.** The charge which God at one time made against his ancient Israel was that they honored him with their lips, while their hearts were far from him.

The very essence of prayer is the spirit of devotion. Without devotion prayer is an empty form, a vain round of words. Sad to say, much of this kind of prayer prevails, today, in the church. **This is a busy age,**

bustling and active, and this bustling spirit has invaded the church of God. Its religious performances are many. The church works at religion with the order, precision and force of real machinery. But too often it works with the heartlessness of the machine. There is much of the treadmill movement in our ceaseless round and routine of religious doings. **We pray without praying. We sing without singing with the Spirit. We have music without the praise of God being in it.** We go to church by habit, and come home all too gladly when the benediction is pronounced. We read our accustomed chapter in the Bible, and feel quite relieved when the task is done. We say our prayers by rote, as a schoolboy recites



his lesson, and are not sorry when the Amen is uttered. Christianity has to do with everything but our hearts. It engages our hands and feet; it takes hold of our voices; it lays its hands on our money; it affects even the postures of our bodies, but it does not take hold of our affections, our desires, our zeal, and make us serious, desperately in earnest, and cause us to be quiet and worshipful in the presence of God.

Why all these sad defects in our piety? Why this modern perversion of the true nature of the religion of Jesus Christ? Why is the modern type of Christianity so much like a jewel-case with the precious jewels gone? **The great lack of the modern Church is the spirit of devotion.** We hear sermons in the same spirit with which we listen to a lecture or hear a speech. We visit

(continued on next page)

the house of God just as if it were a common place, on a level with the theater, the lecture-room or the forum. **We handle sacred things just as if they were the things of the world.** We need to put the spirit of devotion into Monday's business, as well as in Sunday's worship. We need the spirit of devotion to remind us of the presence of God, to be always doing the will of God, to direct all things always to the glory of God.

The spirit of devotion puts God in all things. It puts God not merely in our praying and church-going, but in all the concerns of life. "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The spirit of devotion makes the common things of earth sacred and the little things great. With this spirit of devotion, we go to business on Monday directed by the very same influence and inspired by the same influences by which we went to church on Sunday. The spirit of devotion makes a Sabbath out of Saturday, and transforms the shop and the office into a temple of God.

The spirit of devotion prevents Christianity from being a thin veneer and puts it into the very life and being of our souls. It ceases to be doing a mere work, and becomes a heart, sending its rich blood through every artery and beating with the pulsations of vigorous and radiant life. The ardor of devotion is in prayer. In the fourth chapter of

Revelation, verse eight, we read: "And they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." The inspiration and center of their rapturous devotion is the holiness of God. That holiness of God claims their attention, inflames their devotion. There is nothing cold, nothing dull, nothing wearisome about them or their heavenly worship. "They rest not day nor night." What zeal! What unfainting ardor and ceaseless rapture! *The ministry of prayer, if it be anything worthy of the name, is a ministry of ardor, a ministry of unwearied and intense longing after God and after his holiness.*

The spirit of devotion pervades the saints in heaven and characterizes the worship of heaven's angelic intelligences. **No devotionless creatures are in that heavenly world.** God is there, and His very presence begets the spirit of reverence, of awe, and of real fear. **If we would be partakers with them after death, we must first learn the spirit of devotion on earth before we get there.** These living creatures, in their restless, tireless attitude after God and their devotion to His holiness, are the perfect symbols and manifestations of true prayer and its ardor. Prayer must be aflame. Its ardor must consume. Prayer without fervor is as a sun without light or heat, or as a flower without beauty or fragrance. A soul devoted to God is a fervent soul, and prayer is the creature of that flame.

He only can truly pray who is all aglow for holiness, for God, and for heaven.

Activity is not strength. Work is not zeal. Moving about is not devotion. Activity often is the unrecognized symptom of spiritual weakness. It may be hurtful to piety when made the substitute for real devotion in worship. The colt is much more active than its mother, but she is the wheel-horse of the team, pulling the load without noise or bluster or show. The child is more active than the father, who may be bearing the rule and burdens of an empire on his heart and shoulders. Enthusiasm is more active than faith, though enthusiasm cannot remove mountains nor call into action any of the omnipotent forces which faith can command.

Activity is often at the expense of more solid, useful elements, and generally to the total neglect of prayer. To be too busy with God's work to commune with God, to be busy with doing church work without taking time to talk to God about His work, is the highway to backsliding, and many people have walked therein to the hurt of their immortal souls.

by E. M. Bounds
from "The Essentials of Prayer"

ALWAYS REMEMBER

A truly prayerful and consecrated life unto God can only be established by faith.

It is by trusting in the finished work of Christ that we are empowered to produce the fruit of love and righteousness.

*"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith."
(1 John 5:4)*

The Watchword is a free monthly publication designed to awaken the Church to her need for humility, repentance and revival. We gratefully welcome your prayers and financial support as the Holy Spirit leads. Please feel free to make copies of the Watchword for your family, friends and ministry use.

Hidden In Him Prayer Watch