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

XXXIX

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

"It is not how long you live, but how you live that counts." Robert Murray McCheyne was a living example of this often neglected truth. At twenty-three years old he was ordained and inducted into the church of St. Peters at Dundee. At thirty years old he finished his course, dying in the spring of 1843. Like John the Baptist and the Saviour Himself, McCheyne ushered in Christ's kingdom in just a few short years. It was during his brief public ministry that Scotland experienced one of its greatest revivals. From 1839-1842 much of Scotland was turned upside down through the Spirit-filled labors of W. C. Burns and Robert Murray McCheyne.

For every time McCheyne directed men to look at their sins he pointed them ten times to look on Jesus. This was the key to his tender and passionate preaching. To him Christ was not just one of many theological concepts in a message, Christ Jesus was the message! McCheyne's power in the pulpit was the result of his intimate knowledge of Jesus. He could boldly say, *"I am better acquainted with Jesus Christ than I am with any man in the world."* Often as he preached the entire congregation was brought to tears. McCheyne's diary and letters describe for us some of these precious meetings. He wrote, *"It was like a pent-up flood breaking forth; tears were streaming from the eyes of many, and some fell on the ground groaning and weeping and crying for mercy."* At other times men and women were so overcome with grief and conviction that they literally had to be carried out of the church - *"In some areas whole congregations were frequently moved as one man, and the voice of the minister was drowned out by the cries of anxious souls."* McCheyne's voice, eyes and gestures spoke of the tenderness of Christ. It was not Robert Murray McCheyne the people saw, it was Jesus. McCheyne declared, *"A man cannot be a faithful minister, until he preaches Christ for Christ's sake - until he gives up striving to attract people to himself and seeks only to attract them to Christ."*

Robert Murray McCheyne

Perhaps more powerful than McCheyne's preaching was his praying. To him the prayer closet was a refuge of fellowship, holiness and intercession. McCheyne's diary and letters are replete with examples of his prayerful life. He wrote, "I *rose early to seek God, and found Him whom my soul loveth. Who would not rise early to meet such company?" "King Jesus is a Good Master. I have had some sweet seasons of communion with the unseen God which I would not give up for thousands worth of gold and silver."* Only a few months before his death McCheyne drew up some considerations concerning *"Reformation in Secret Prayer". "I ought"*, said McCheyne, *"to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God. It is my noblest and most fruitful employment."* It is said that Robert Murray McCheyne had a special place in his church where he would pour over the names on the church role and weep with groans of intercession. Though only a young man, McCheyne possessed that rarest of jewels; a TRUE shepherd's heart. McCheyne fervently labored among the people of Dundee, as if he somehow knew he would soon die. He was a man motivated by eternity. He wrote, *"As I was walking in the fields, the thought came over me with almost overwhelming power, that every one of my flock must soon be in heaven or hell. Oh how I wished that I had a tongue like thunder, that I might make all hear; or that I had a frame like iron, that I might visit every one and say, 'Escape for thy life! Ah sinner! You little know how I fear that you will lay the blame of your damnation at my door.'"*

To love Jesus is to love holiness. Many professing Christians shrink from the message of purity and thus draw back from the Saviour they claim. Robert Murray McCheyne understood the necessity of a holy life. He wrote, *"Study holiness of life. Your whole usefulness depends on this, for your sermons last but an hour or two; your life preaches all the week. If Satan can only make a covetous minister, a lover of praise, and pleasure, he has ruined your ministry. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God. A word spoken by you when your conscience is clear, and your heart is full of God's Spirit is worth ten thousand words spoken in unbelief and sin."* Lying upon his deathbed with a raging fever, McCheyne lifted his hands in prayer, he exclaimed, *"This parish Lord, this people, this whole place."* Robert Murray McCheyne ended his life like he lived it, full of fervent prayer.

References Used -

"Memoir & Remains of R. M. McCheyne" by Andrew Bonar

"Robert Murray McCheyne" by J. A. Stewart

"Our Desperate Need"

by S. B. Shaw

Is it not time to cry aloud and spare not, to lift up our voice like a trumpet, and show the people of God their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins? **Surely the need beside which every other need sinks into insignificance is an old-time revival.**

We are no pessimists. We do not for a moment lose sight of the fact that the foundations of God stand sure. We do not for a moment question that God has His thousands that have not bowed the knee to the world, the flesh, or the devil, nor been swept from their mooring by the present floodtide of false teaching and doctrine. These unite in declaring that the only remedy for the evils we deplore is an old-time revival - a revival brought about by the mighty working of the Spirit of God in awakening and quickening and saving power. Oh for a revival that will turn the professed people of God back from their idols of sin and worldliness to serve the true and living God - back from their *"broken cisterns"* to the *"Fountain of living waters."* A revival in which the Word of God will be preached without compromise or apology in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. A revival that will overthrow sin of every kind, popular as well as unpopular. **A revival that will take every desire for worldly amusements and abolish every ungodly scheme for raising money for the support of the gospel.** A revival that will take the people out of their worldly clubs and societies and secret lodges and put them into the *"secret place of the Most High,"* where they will *"abide under the shadow of the Almighty."*

> "A revival that will take the people out of their worldly clubs and societies and secret lodges and put them into the 'secret place of the Most High,' where they will 'abide under the shadow of the Almighty.'"

A revival that will save the people of God from covetousness and love of the world and all uncleanness of spirit, mind, and body. A revival in which professors of religion will have their eyes opened to see and feel their responsibility for souls, and in which they will confess with broken hearts their former backslidings, their carelessness and indifference. A revival that will unearth and uncover every device of Satan for deceiving souls, whether found in the Church or outside of it, *"For the secret of the Lord is with them that FEAR HIM; and He will show unto them His covenant."* **A revival that will make both the Church and the world to realize the shortness of time and the importance of eternity.** A revival in which judgment light will shine not only on the unsaved but in which God's people will see their duty and realize their opportunity as those that have lost sight of the things of time in the light of the coming judgment. **A revival that will make heaven and hell, living realities by the revelations of the Spirit in harmony with the Word.** A revival in which the sinfulness of sin will be so revealed that instead of excusing and pleading for it, souls will turn from it in utter loathing, and cry out, *"Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death"*. **A revival that will sweep away selfishness and narrowness and all sectarian spirits, and bring those that now spend their time in criticism of each other down on their faces together before the Lord, crying out for the salvation of lost souls.**

A revival that like a tornado will sweep away all the old dried-up sermons, and all the cold formal prayers, and all the lifeless singing, and like a whirlwind will carry everyone that comes in its path heavenward. **A revival that will fill the hearts of saints with holy love, and so burden the hearts of God's ministers that the word of God will be like fire shut up in their bones. (See Jer. 20:9.)** A revival that will help the people to honor God with their substance, and so have their barns filled with plenty. (See Prov. 3:9,10.) A revival that will open the windows of heaven by bringing all God's tithes into His storehouse. A revival that will so fill the saints with love that they will rejoice in the opportunity to give their time and money, and if need be their very lives, for their brethren and for the salvation of a lost world. **A revival in which the presence of God will be so revealed that multitudes will fall under the power of God and cry for mercy as they did on the day of Pentecost.** A revival that has so much of Heaven and so much of God's glory in it that all the world will be compelled to see and feel its mighty influence. A revival that will gloriously defeat the powers of darkness and hell and make earth and heaven ring with shouts of victory over a multitude of souls snatched from the eternal burnings and run for God and heaven - **yea, a revival that will never need to be revived, but that will sweep on like a mighty wave of the sea that nothing can hinder, until time shall be no more!**

For such a revival our heart cries out to God! For such a revival we are ready to watch and toil and pray. For such a revival we believe the blessed Holy Spirit is interceding in many hearts. Such a revival God is able and ready to give. But for this He must be inquired of by His people to do it for them. (See Ezekiel 37.) **May God grant it, not for our sakes, but for His own name's sake and for His own honor and glory! Amen and Amen!** ✞

"The Great Revival In Wales"
by S. B. Shaw

"FEAR NOT, Only Believe"

by Andrew Murray

Do we not know that throughout Scripture a chief element of faith in God is a sense of powerlessness and utter helplessness? I want to speak here on the place faith must have if we are to obtain that deep, intense, living vitality which we are longing for. If we are to appropriate the words, *"Fear not, only believe,"* as really spoken by our Lord to ourselves, we must note well the attitude of the man to whom they were first given.

Jairus was in great trouble. His little daughter was at the point of death. He fell at Christ's feet and begged Him to come and lay His hand on her. Jesus went with him. But all at once there was an interruption by a woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment. Jairus began to fear that they might arrive too late. His worst fears were realized. A messenger met them, saying, *"Your daughter is dead; why trouble the Master any further?"* **It was to such a man in his deep distress, now brought to utter hopelessness, that Christ spoke the words: *"Fear not, only believe."*** The soil had been broken deeply; the heart was prepared to believe. Christ's precious words entered in and took possession. **If we are bearing the burden of a dead or a dying church, if we are going to take part in the work of rousing her and lifting her up into abundant life in Christ, we need a word like this.** It will bring us the joyous assurance, day by day, that Christ is with us, that He will work through us, and that we can count upon Him to give the blessing.

It was to such a man in his deep distress, now brought to utter hopelessness, that Christ spoke the words: "Fear not, only believe."

But we must take the place that Jairus did, falling at Jesus' feet, pleading with Him intensely, graciously, and mightily to do something. Even when the word comes, *"There is no hope, death reigns, all our efforts are in vain,"* we are still to be of good cheer and hold on to His word. ***"Fear not, only believe"* must be our *watchword.* But only, I say it once again, only to the man who waits at Christ's feet in prayer and looks to Him alone.** There we shall learn that throughout all Scripture it is faith, in the midst of seeming impossibility, that waits and claims the fulfillment of the promise.

Think of Abraham, *"who waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform."* It is as we persevere in prayer and take hold of definite promises, and beseech Him greatly to fulfill them, that we shall, in spite of every obstacle, hold fast our confidence to the end. **We may find that as time goes on, as the insight into the deadly state of the Church grows deeper, and as experience teaches us how very hard it is to rouse Christians to the full meaning of, and full surrender to, the claims of Christ, our hearts will often fail us for fear and grow faint.** <u>But if we have made our covenant with Christ that we dare not go back, and are determined to hold on, we shall find that just one word from our Lord hidden in the heart, and lived on day by day, will give strength in time of greatest darkness.</u>

Just think of the Words of Christ in a situation that appeared to man, to be impossible. He had said of the young ruler, *"How hard it is for the rich to enter heaven."* The disciples had said, *"Who then can be saved?"* Christ's answer was, *"With men it is impossible,"* but, He added, *"with God all things are possible."* And elsewhere He said, *"All things are possible to him that believes."* These words are a three-fold cord that cannot be broken.

First, *"With men it is impossible."* It seems easy to say, and yet how difficult to realize it and act it out. **What is it that hinders the Church in this day from falling on its knees and beseeching God by His Holy Spirit to give revival? It is this: Men do not consider that the work they need to do is impossible with man.** They consult and organize and labor, oh so diligently, and yet the members decline by the thousands. They cannot see that the work of winning men to become members of Christ and His Church is a work that God alone can do through men who have yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit. What a day that would be if the Church were to fall down before God and bow in the dust with the Cry: ***"Oh God, it is impossible with man."*** We should then be prepared for the second lesson, *"But not with God - all things are possible with God."* At first sight this word also appears easy

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to accept. We are so sure there is nothing impossible with such a God. And yet, when we ask whether God's servants really believe it, and in the joyful confidence that He is going to do it wait upon Him and expect His working, we soon find out that it is not so. God is so little of a reality to us. **How few men take time with God and secure His holy presence to fill their hearts and strengthen them in their work.**

Oh, all you who are beginning to take the state of the Church to heart and to bear it as a burden before the Lord, do not be surprised if you have found it a hard thing. Fully grasp the truth, *"With God all things are possible."* Learn the lesson of bringing that truth into your daily prayer and your daily work. Let its light shine into your heart, on your sphere of labor, on the Church around you, on the weakest and most hopeless part of the Church, until all your thoughts have this as their keynote: *"But not with God - all things are possible with God."* He is fully able and willing to rouse the Church out of her apathy and lift Christians into the abundant life.

As we look out upon a Church, so weak and faithless, do let us listen to the voice of Jesus as He says. "Fear not, only believe."

But now, comes the third and most difficult lesson: *"All things are possible to him that believes."* It is something great to really believe that all things are possible with God. Yet we may be anxious as to how and when it may come to pass. This word of Christ throws the responsibility on us. It is to him who believes that God makes all things possible. When Christ spoke that word to the father of the epileptic, the man felt his responsibility so deeply, and feared that he might not qualify, that he cried out, *"Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."* And Christ heard that prayer. He is still waiting, even when our hearts shrink back from the thought, *"Is it going to depend upon me whether this mighty God will do the impossible thing? I do not dare bear the heavy burden of such a responsibility."* **He who helped the father of the epileptic boy, He who said to Peter, *"I have prayed for you, that your faith will not fail,"* Jesus Christ, who became man to bring us into fellowship with the omnipotent God, He will give us the confidence to believe that it is God's will,** *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, then you shall ask what you will."* Let us live in fellowship with Christ who spoke these words. He will enable us to receive them until they become the joy and the strength of our heart.

If I have not succeeded in giving a deep impression of the sore need of the Holy Spirit and His power that the state of the Church demands, I should feel that I had failed in my purpose. But I should be still more disappointed if I were to part with the reader without having helped him to the confident assurance that God is able and willing, in answer to prayer, to work revival. He is also willing to fill the hearts of many of His children with a measure of the Holy Spirit such as they have never known. **As we look out upon a Church so weak and faithless, do let us listen to the voice of Jesus as He says. *"Fear not, only believe."***

What I have already said, I say again: The Church around you may be in a dying state, with no possibility of being reached by human effort. I beseech you, Look up to God. **Wait before Him in prayer until stronger desire is stirred in you and your faith rises to link itself to His omnipotence. Believe in the power of our Lord Jesus, and in His tender relationship to you, watching over your faith.** Believe in the power of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, the birthright of the Church. He surrounds you on every side and longs to get possession of you and those for whom you are praying. So let the study of the state of the Church give you a knowledge of God and a trust in Him beyond what you have ever known or thought.

by Andrew Murray
"State of The Church"

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.*

Prayer Times
Friday; 6 to 7am (auditorium) · Saturday; 8-11am (prayer room)

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." *(I John 5:4)*