THE Watchword

"Oh that Thou would rend the heavens, that Thou would come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence. As when the melting fire burns, the fire causes the waters to boil, to make known Thy name to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at Thy presence!" Isaiah 64:1,2

No. 41

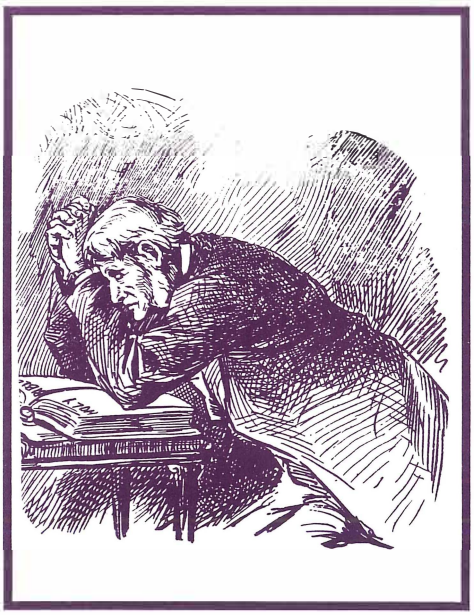
The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage prayer and passion for a true revival of Apostolic Christianity. The following material is offered in the hopes of provoking zeal and providing a vision of what the Church could be if we would fervently pray.

PRAYER MAKES HISTORY

John Smith has often been called, *"The Man with Calloused Knees".* Though his name was quite common, there was nothing common about him. He was distinguished from countless others of the same name by the title of, *"John Smith - the Revivalist".* Like his father before him, he was respected as a zealous and passionate, preacher of the gospel. He labored among the Wesleyan Methodists in England, beginning in 1816. Like many of God's mighty men of prayer, Mr. Smith's life seemed to be cut short. After only 15 years of faithful service he died at age 37 in the year 1831.

"Constant communion with God was at the foundation of Mr. Smith's great usefulness. In this he was surpassed by none of any age. Whole nights were often given up to prayer." His day often literally revolved around times of deep soul travailing prayer. *"He arose at four o'clock in the morning, and throwing himself before the mercy-seat, for three hours wrestled with God in mighty prayer. . . Immediately after breakfast and family worship he would again retire with his bible into his study, and spend until near noon in the same hallowed employment. Here unquestionably was the great secret of his power in public prayer and in preaching. The Lord who sees in secret, rewarded him openly. Every sermon was sanctified by prayer."*

Often as he prayed he would wrestle with God till a considerable part of the floor of his study was wet with tears. Some may question if such sacrificial praying was



John Smith

really necessary. The worth of these extended seasons of prayer was evident once Mr. Smith stepped into the pulpit. The following narrative gives us a brief glimpse of John Smith's anointed preaching. *"The Spirit of God descended upon the congregation; the deep attentive silence at the commencement of the discourse was soon interrupted by sobs and moans and followed by loud and piercing cries for mercy as one after another the hearers were pricked to the heart, and the strongholds of satan were beaten down."* At other times as he preached the congregation would suddenly be struck with the reality of Christ's full salvation, and then spontaneously break out in loud shouts of joyful praise and celebration.

"Once towards the close of a meeting when penitents were crying aloud and believers, with scarcely less agony, were seeking a deeper baptism of the Holy Spirit, Mr. Smith's powerful voice might still be heard above the blended weeping and rejoicing, calling upon God for a larger blessing, 'a Pentecostal shower.'" Even after the meeting was closed the majority of the people stayed and prayed throughout the night.

Why did Mr. Smith pray and preach so passionately? Because he had entered into His Master's tender love for the lost and the hopeless souls around him. Mr. Calders stated of John Smith's deep love for the lost, *"I have seen him come downstairs in the morning, after spending several hours in prayer with his eyes swollen with weeping - he would soon introduce the subject of his anxiety by saying, 'I am a brokenhearted man; yes, indeed I am an unhappy man; not for myself, but on account of others. God has given me such a sight of the value of precious souls, that I cannot live if souls be not saved. Oh, give me souls or else I die!'"*

In these days of sin and perversion who can deny that the Church needs men of prayer like John Smith. The only thing worse than the present condition of our country, is that in the midst of it all, is a Church complacent and seeking the path of least resistance. Where are the men who pray and weep for revival? Where are the men who have strong convictions about something other than sports and business? Where are the men who long for perfect holiness and a burning love for Jesus? A man without godly convictions is not a man at all! He is merely dead weight, that drains his family and church of the precious strength they so desperately need. It's time to -*"BE ON THE ALERT, STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH, ACT LIKE MEN, AND BE STRONG."* 1 Cor. 16:13

References Used-

"Sketches of Wesleyan Preachers"
by Robert A. West

"The Calloused Knees"
by George B. Kulp

UNCTION!

by Leonard Ravenhill

The Cinderella of the Church today is the prayer meeting. This handmaid of the Lord is unloved and unwooed because she is not dripping with pearls of intellectualism, nor glamorous with the silks of philosophy, neither is she enchanting with the tiara of psychology. She wears the homespuns of sincerity and humility and so is not afraid to kneel!

The offense of prayer is that it does not essentially tie in to mental efficiency. That is not to say that prayer is a partner to mental sloth. But in these days, efficiency and smartness are at a premium. Prayer is conditioned to one thing alone, and that is to spirituality. One does not need to be spiritual to preach, that is, to make and deliver sermons of homiletical perfection and exegetical exactitude. By a combination of memory, knowledge, ambition, personality, plus well-lined book shelves, self-confidence and a sense of having arrived - the pulpit is yours almost anywhere these days. Preaching of the type mentioned affects men; prayer affects God. Preaching affects time; prayer affects eternity. The pulpit can be a shop window to display our talents; the closet speaks death to display.

"The Cinderella of the Church Today is the Prayer Meeting. This Handmaid of the Lord is Unloved and Unwooed . . ."

The tragedy of this last hour is that we have too many dead men in the pulpits giving out too many dead sermons to too many dead people. There is a strange thing that I have seen even in the fundamentalist circles: it is preaching without unction. What is unction? I hardly know what it is, but I know what it is not, or at least I know when it is not upon my own soul. Preaching without unction kills instead of giving life. The unctionless preacher is a savor of death unto death. The Word does not live unless the unction is upon the preacher. Preacher, with all thy getting, get unction.

Brethren, we could well manage to be half as intellectual if we were twice as spiritual. Preaching is a spiritual business. A sermon born in the head reaches the head. A sermon born in the heart reaches the heart. A spiritual preacher will under God produce spiritually-minded people. Unction is not a gentle dove beating her wings against the bars outside of the preacher's soul; rather she must be pursued and won. **Unction cannot be learned, only earned by prayer. Unction is God's knighthood for the soldier-preacher who has wrestled in prayer and gained the victory.** Victory is not won in the pulpit by firing intellectual bullets or wisecracks, but in the prayer closet. The meeting is won or lost before the preacher's foot enters the pulpit. Unction is like perfume. Unction is like dynamite. Unction comes not by the medium of the bishop's hands, neither does it mildew when the preacher is cast into prison. Unction will pierce and percolate. It will sweeten and soften. When the hammer of logic and the fire of human zeal fail to open the stony heart, unction will succeed.

What a fever of church building there is just now, yet without unctionized preachers these altars will never see anxious penitents. Suppose that we saw fishing boats with the latest in radar equipment and fishing gear launched month after month and put out to sea only to return without a catch - what excuse would we take for this barrenness? Yet thousands of churches see empty altars week after week and year after year and cover this sterile situation by misapplying the Scripture. "My word . . . shall not return unto me void." Incidentally, this seems to be one of the very few texts that the dispensationalists forgot to tell us was written to the Jews!

The ugly fact is that the altar fires are either out or burning very low. The prayer meeting is dead or dying. **By our attitude to prayer we tell God that what was begun in the Spirit we can finish in the flesh.** What church ever asks its candidating ministers what time they spend in prayer? Ministers who do not spend two hours a day in prayer are not worth a dime a dozen - degrees or no degrees. Where are our unctionized pulpit crusaders? Preachers who should be fishing for men are now too often fishing for compliments from men. Preachers used to sow seed; now they string intellectual pearls.

Away with palsied, powerless preaching which is unmoving because it was born in a tomb instead of a womb and nourished in a fireless, prayerless soul. We may preach and perish but we cannot pray and perish. If God called us to the ministry, then I contend that we should be unctionized. With all thy getting, get unction, lest barren altars be the badge of our unctionless intellectualism.

Reference Used -

"Why Revival Tarries"
by Leonard Ravenhill

"Looking Unto JESUS"

"Looking Unto Jesus, The Author and Finisher of Our Faith." Hebrews 12:2

by Isaac Ambrose

"I determined not to know anything among you, (said Paul), except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." He resolved with himself, before he preached among the Corinthians, that this should be the only point of knowledge that he would profess himself to have skill in; and that in the course of his ministry he would labor to bring them to. This he made the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of his knowledge; *"yea, doubtless, (says he), and I count all things but loss for the excellency of knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Eph. 3:18, Phil. 3:8.*

In this knowledge of Christ, there is an excellency above all other knowledge in the world; there is nothing more pleasing and comfortable, more animating and enlivening, more ravishing and soul contenting; only Christ is the sun and center of all divine revealed truths, we can preach nothing else as the object of our faith, as the necessary element of your soul's salvation, which does not some way or other, either meet in Christ, or refer to Christ; only Christ is the whole of man's happiness, the Sun to enlighten him, the Physician to heal him, the Wall of fire to defend him, the Friend to comfort him, the Pearl to enrich him, the Ark to support him, the Rock to sustain him under the heaviest pressures, *"As a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of waters in a dry place and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:2.* Only Christ is that ladder between earth and heaven, the Mediator between God and man, a mystery, which the angels of heaven desire to pry, and peep, and look into. 1 Pet. 1:12. Here is a blessed subject indeed; who would not be glad to pry into it, to be acquainted with it? ***"This is life eternal, to know God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent." John 17:3.*** Come then, let us look; on this Sun of righteousness: we cannot receive harm but good by such a look; indeed by looking long on the natural sun, we may have our eyes dazzled, and our faces blackened; but by looking unto Jesus Christ, we shall have our eyes clearer, and our faces fairer; if *"the light of the eye rejoice the heart." Prov. 15:30,* how much more, when we have such a blessed object to look upon? As Christ is more excellent than all the world, so this sight transcends all other sights; it is the epitome of a Christian's happiness, the quintessence of evangelical duties, *"Looking unto Jesus."*

In the text we have the act and object. The act in the original is very emphatical, *(aphorontes eis)*, the English does not fully express it; it signifies an averting or drawing off the eye from one object to another; there are two expressions *(apo and eis)*; the one signifies a turning off the eye from all other objects; the other is a fixing of the eye upon one object. So it is both a looking off and a looking on. On what must we look? This is the object, a *"looking unto Jesus"*; a title that denotes His mercy and bounty, as Christ denotes his office and function. I shall not be so curious as to inquire why Jesus , and not Christ is nominated; I suppose the person is aimed at, which implies them both; only this may be observed, that Jesus is the purest gospel-name: Jesus was not the dialect of the Old Testament; the first place that ever we read of this title as given to Christ, is in *Matt. 1:21 - "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."* Some observe that this name Jesus was given Him twice; once till death, Matt. 1:21, and afterwards for ever, Phil. 2:10. The first was a note of His entering into covenant with God, to fulfill the law for us, and to die for our sins; the second was to honor a person, who for His humility was more exalted than any person ever has been, or shall be. First, Jesus was the humble name of His deserving grace; now Jesus is the exalted name of His transcendent glory: at first the Jews did crucify Jesus and His name; and the Apostles did then distrust, whether Jesus was the true Jesus: but now God has raised Him from the dead, and *"has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Phil 2:9,10.* My meaning is not to insist on this name, in contradiction to other names of Christ; He is often called Christ, and Lord and Mediator, and Son of God, and Emmanuel; why? Jesus is all these, Jesus is Christ, as He is the anointed of God; and Jesus is the Lord, as He has dominion over all the world; and Jesus is Mediator, as He is the reconciler of God and man; and Jesus is the Son of God, as He was eternally begotten before all worlds; and Jesus is Emmanuel, as He was incarnate, and so God with us. Only because Jesus signifies Saviour, and this name was given Him upon that very account, *"for He shall save His people from their sins,"* **I shall make this my design to look at Jesus more especially as carrying on the great work of our salvation from first to last. This, indeed, is the glad tidings, the gospel, the gospel privilege, and our gospel-duty, *"Looking unto Jesus"*.**

But first, we must look off all other things, the note is this, we must take our mind off every thing which might divert us in our Christian race from *"looking unto Jesus"*. *(Aphorontes)*, the first word, or first piece of a word in my text, speaks to us this, hands off, or eyes off from anything that stands in the way of Jesus Christ. This

(continued from previous page)

was the Lord's charge to Lot, *"Look not behind thee." Gen 19:17.* He was to renounce and detest the lewdness of Sodom and must not even look towards it. *"At that day shall a man look to His Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel, and he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands." Isa. 17:7,8.* This was the fruit of God's chastisement on Israel, that he should not give a look to the altars, lest they diverted, or draw his eyes from his Maker. *"We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" said Paul, 2 Cor. 4:18.* A Christian's aim is beyond visible things. Oh when a soul comes to know what an eternal God is, and what an eternal Jesus is, and what an eternal crown is; when it knows that great design of Christ to save poor souls and to communicate Himself eternally to such poor creatures, this takes off the edge of its desires as to visible temporal things; Oh what are they in comparison?

The preferring of the world before Christ Himself. This is the height of covetousness, and the height of adultery; what, to make the members of Christ the members of an harlot? **Those admiring thoughts are Christ's, those pains are Christ's, that love is Christ's, that time, that care, that earnestness is Christ's; they are all Christ's and will you give that which is Christ's unto the world? And prefer the world before Christ with His own? What, live as professed prostitutes, that prefer every one before their husbands?** How will this expose you to the scorn of men and angels? At the last day they will come pointing and say, *"This is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches; he is the Gadareen that loved his swine more than Christ Jesus, 'Love not the world,'" said John, 1 John 2:15.* Christ is never precious in a man's apprehension, so long as the world seems glorious to him. **As we begin to relish sweetness in Christ, the world begins to be bitter to us. The more sweetness we taste in the one, the more bitterness we taste in the other.**

But why must we look off every thing that diverts our *"looking unto Jesus"?* Because we cannot look fixedly on Christ, and such things together, and at once; the eye cannot look upwards and downwards at once in a direct line; we cannot seriously mind heaven and earth in one thought, *"No man can serve two masters," Matt. 6:24.* Because, while we look on these things, we cannot see the beauty that is in Christ. Indeed beauty is the attraction of the soul, the soul must see a beauty in that which it is desiring; but our wishing looks on other things make Christ vile and contemptible in our eyes.

> *"Our Christ is a Jealous Christ; He Cannot Endure That We Should Look on Any Other Things, so as to Lust After Them."*

It is according to the very law of marriage, *"Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife," Gen. 2:24.* The Lord Christ marries Himself to the souls of His saints; *"I will betroth thee unto Me forever; I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and mercies:" Hos. 2:19.* And for this cause the soul must forsake all, and cleave unto Christ, as married wives do, we must leave all for our Husband the Lord Jesus; *"Hearken, Oh daughter and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thy own people, and thy father's house," Psa. 45:10.*

Christ is a jealous Christ. Now, jealousy is a passion in the soul, that will not endure any sharing in the object beloved: the woman that hath a jealous husband, must leave all her old companions: **if she cast any amorous looks or glances after them, the husband will be jealous, and He will be jealous. Christians! Our God *"is a jealous God," Exo. 20:5.* Our Christ is a jealous Christ; He cannot endure that we should look on any other things, so as to lust after them.**

Go forth, Oh you daughters of Zion, lay aside all private and earthly affections, and look upon the Glory of CHRIST. If we will behold the great King, Jesus Christ, in His most excellent Glory (a sight able to satisfy the eye, and to ravish the heart) we must come out of our doors, we must come out of ourselves, otherwise we cannot see His GLORY. **We are in ourselves shut up in a dark dungeon, and therefore we are called upon to come forth into the clear light of faith, and with the eyes of faith to behold, in daily meditation, the Glory of Christ Jesus.**

Reference Used -

"Looking Unto Jesus" by Isaac Ambrose

*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)