

Spirit-Anointed Revival Leaders

David Feddes

Anointing in Acts

- They were all filled with the Holy Spirit... (Acts 2:4)
- Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them... (Acts 4:8)
- They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:31)

Anointing in Acts

- Pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom (Acts 6:3)
- They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5)
- Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith (Acts 11:24)

Anointing in Acts

- Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 9:17)
- Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him... (Acts 13:9)

Anointing in Acts

“Filled with the Spirit” can mean:

- A life governed and controlled by the Spirit, as Jesus was
- A targeted empowerment for a specific challenge or task

Revival comes through a Spirit-ruled person who also has empowerment to launch a major movement.

Martin Luther (1515)

Then I grasped that the righteousness of God is the righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning. This passage became to me a gate to heaven.

John Wesley

(May 24, 1738)

About a quarter before nine while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for my salvation, and an assurance was given to me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

Jonathan Edwards (1737)

Once, as I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension.

Jonathan Edwards (1737)

This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception, which continued as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud.

Jonathan Edwards (1737)

I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity.

George Whitefield

(November 5, 1740)

I then began to pray and to give an exhortation. In about six minutes one cried out, “He is come! He is come!” and could scarcely sustain the manifestation of Jesus to his soul. But having heard the crying of others for the like favour obliged me to stop, and I prayed over them as I saw their agonies and distress increase.

George Whitefield

(November 5, 1740)

My own soul was so full that I retired and wept before the Lord, and had a deep sense of my own vileness, and the sovereignty and greatness of God's everlasting love. Most of the people spent the remainder of the night in prayer and praising God. It was a night much to be remembered.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

I was not much occupied either on Monday or Tuesday; and had opportunity to read my Bible and engage in prayer most of the time... My convictions increased; but still it seemed as if my heart grew harder... At an early hour I started for the office. But just before I arrived at the office, [it was] as if an inward voice said to me, “What are you waiting for? Did you not promise to give your heart to God? And what are you trying to do? Are you endeavoring to work out a righteousness of your own?”

Charles G. Finney (1821)

Just at this point the whole question of Gospel salvation opened to my mind in a manner most marvelous to me at the time. I think I then saw, as clearly as I ever have in my life, the reality and fullness of the atonement of Christ. I saw that his work was a finished work; and that instead of having, or needing, any righteousness of my own to recommend me to God, I had to submit myself to the righteousness of God through Christ.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

Salvation, it seemed to me, instead of being a thing to be wrought out, by my own works, was a thing to be found entirely in the Lord Jesus Christ, who presented himself before me as my God and my Saviour. Without being distinctly aware of it, I had stopped in the street right where the inward voice seemed to arrest me. How long I remained in that position I cannot say. But after this distinct revelation had stood for some little time before my mind, the question seemed to be put, "Will you accept it now, to-day?" I replied, "Yes; I will accept it to-day, or I will die in the attempt."

Charles G. Finney (1821)

Instead of going to the office, I turned and bent my course toward the woods, feeling that I must be alone, and away from all human eyes and ears, so that I could pour out my prayer to God... An overwhelming sense of my wickedness ... took such powerful possession of me, that I cried at the top of my voice... The sin appeared awful, infinite. It broke me down before the Lord.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

Just at that point this passage of Scripture seemed to drop into my mind with a flood of light: “Then shall ye go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. Then shall ye seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” I instantly seized hold of this with my heart. I had intellectually believed the Bible before; but never had the truth been in my mind, that faith was a voluntary trust instead of an intellectual state.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

I walked quietly toward the village; and so perfectly quiet was my mind that it seemed as if all nature listened... But all sense of sin, all consciousness of present sin or guilt, had departed from me. The repose of my mind was unspeakably great. I never can describe it in words. The thought of God was sweet to my mind, and the most profound spiritual tranquility had taken full possession of me. This was a great mystery; but it did not distress or perplex me.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

I went to my dinner, and found I had no appetite to eat. I then went to the office... There was no fire, and no light, in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face... He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at his feet.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

It seemed to me a reality, that he stood before me, and I fell down at his feet and poured out my soul to him. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed his feet with my tears; and yet I had no distinct impression that I touched him, that I recollect. I must have continued in this state for a good while... I returned to the front office...

Charles G. Finney (1821)

As I turned and was about to take a seat... the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out unutterable gushings of my heart. These waves came over me, and over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out, "I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me." I said, "Lord, I cannot bear any more;" yet I had no fear of death.

Charles G. Finney (1821)

In this state I was taught the doctrine of justification by faith, as a present experience... I could now see and understand what was meant by the passage, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ... my heart was so full of love that it overflowed. My cup ran over with blessing and with love.

Dwight L. Moody (1872)

Dwight L. Moody was a Christian man who seemed to be quite effective in telling others about Christ. Moody had a big Sunday school and spoke to good-sized congregation.

Whenever he spoke, he noticed two women praying for him. They came up to him after a service and said, "We have been praying for you." Moody asked, "Why do you not pray for the people?" They answered, "You need power." "I need power?" Moody said to himself, "I thought I had power."

Dwight L. Moody (1872)

Their earnest talk about the anointing for special service set me thinking. I asked them to come and we got down on our knees. They poured out their hearts that I might receive the anointing of the Holy Ghost and there came a great hunger into my soul, I knew not what it was. I began to cry as never before, the hunger increased. I really felt that I did not want to live any longer if I could not have this power for service. I kept on crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit.

Dwight L. Moody (1872)

One day in the City of New York—oh! what a day, I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it. It is almost too sacred an experience to name. I can only say, God revealed Himself to me, and I had such an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different; I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not now be placed back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world—it would be small dust in the balance.

Dwight L. Moody (1872)

- Without higher education, founded three schools
- Without theological training, reshaped Victorian-era Christianity
- Without radio or television, reached 100 million people.

Welsh Revival



While I was on my knees, I was caught up into space, without time or place—communing with God. Before then I had only a God at a distance. I was frightened that night, never afterwards.

(Evan Roberts, 1902)

Welsh Revival (Sept. 29, 1904)

Evan Roberts: I felt a living force come into my bosom. It held my breath, and my legs shivered... The living force grew and grew, and I was almost bursting... I would have burst if I had not prayed. What boiled me over was that verse, "God commending His Love." I fell on my knees with my arms over the seat in front of me, and the tears and perspiration flowed freely. I thought blood was gushing forth.

Welsh Revival (Sept. 29, 1904)

For about two minutes it was fearful. I cried, "Bend me! Bend me! Bend us!" Then, "Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!" and Mrs. Davies said, "Oh wonderful grace!" "Yes," I said, "Oh, wonderful grace!!" What bent me was God commending His love, and I not seeing anything in it to commend. After I was bent a wave of peace came over me. Oh wonderful, this is life! You've heard it said of joy being felt by men to the tips of their fingers. Yes, it is literally true. (Evan Roberts)

Revival is exceptional

Sometimes the Holy Spirit works in unusual ways through unusual people. But we must be in tune with the Spirit's ordinary ways.

1. Gradual and quiet, not just sudden and spectacular
2. Steady spiritual disciplines, not just instant empowerments
3. Organization, not just ecstasy or impulse
4. Biblical instruction, not just special visions

Beyond one experience

The Holy Spirit does at least three things in healthy revival:

1. Reforms teaching to be more biblical
2. Renews life to be more Christ-like
3. Recharges power to be more effective

A revival leader must watch doctrine and life closely (1 Timothy 4:16), not assume that an experience of power means he will always be right and holy. Doctrine and life matter most.

Depending on prayer

When we depend upon organizations,
we get what organizations can do;
when we depend upon education,
we get what education can do;
when we depend upon man,
we get what man can do;
but when we depend upon prayer,
we get what God can do.

(A. C. Dixon)