

Revival and Reformation: Guided by the Spirit

Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 2:8-10, Acts:10:33

Introduction:

The purpose of any revival and reformation at this time in history is to complete the work of the gospel. The church looks forward to the Philadelphian revival which has already begun with the message God has sent in 1888, the additional light of the Character of God message and all the advancing light since that time.

Important Bible facts:

1. Jesus Christ, The eternal Son of God, took man's nature but did not sin. He was "made to be sin for us ..." 2 Corinthians 5: 21. It follows then that mankind is not born sinners but sinning is a choice. When an individual sins it is a conscious choice rather than an unconquerable force.
2. Sin and not God is the enemy. Could God have declared that He was good and righteous and therefore solve the sin problem? Was there another way to "save the world" John 4:14 apart from the cross? No. Sin and rebellion must be put down by Love and love is not just declared but demonstrated particularly under the most difficult situations. The bible is clear

that death is the enemy of God 1 Corinthians 15:26 and when sin is finished it produces death, James 1:15. Sin is the enemy. The principle of sin is self Isaiah 14:12-14. Mankind's greatest enemy is self.

3. Our good works are not meritorious but all the glory goes to God. The scripture says in Galatians 6:14 that Christians are to glory in the cross. In Ephesians 2:8-10 the bible is clear that the good works were created in Christ. Good works do not add or subtract from salvation but they are the natural result of "abiding in Christ." John 15: 5.

Guided by the Spirit

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work at our camp-meetings. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow his blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has

promised to grant us his blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the word. But when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God's word, with the manifestations of his Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our camp-meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home will be prepared to exert a healthful influence in the churches. Signs of the Times May 17th, 1883.

Guided by the Word of God

⁶³ It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. John 6:63 KJV

⁶³ The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you— they are full of the Spirit[a] and life. John 6:63 NIV

All true revivals and lasting reforms were always and only based on the inspired word of God. It means that for the church watching and waiting before the second coming of Christ they too will have the word of God for every reform.

Cornelius a Devout Man

¹⁰ There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, ² A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. ³ He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. ⁴ And when he looked

on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. ⁵ And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: ⁶ He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. ⁷ And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; ⁸ And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Peter's Vision

⁹ On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: ¹⁰ And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, ¹¹ And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: ¹² Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. ¹⁴ But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. ¹⁵ And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. ¹⁶ This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Directed of God

¹⁷ Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from

Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, ¹⁸ And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. ¹⁹ While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. ²⁰ Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. ²¹ Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?²² And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee. ²³ Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴ And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea.

A Golden Opportunity

And Cornelius waited for them, and he had called together his kinsmen and near friends. ²⁵ And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. ²⁶ But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. ²⁷ And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. ²⁸ And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ²⁹ Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

³⁰ And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ³¹ And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. ³² Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. ³³ Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

The Fruit of the Spirit's Working

³⁴ Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ³⁵ But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. ³⁶ The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) ³⁷ That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; ³⁸ How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: ⁴⁰ Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; ⁴¹ Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded

us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. ⁴³ To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. ⁴⁴ While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. ⁴⁵ And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, ⁴⁷ Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

talents, however small, the Holy Spirit takes the things of God, and presents them anew to the mind. He makes the neglected Word to be a vivifying agency. Through the Spirit, it is quick and powerful upon human minds, not because of the smartness, the educational power of the human agency, but because the divine power works with the human, and to the divine belongs all the credit.—The Home Missionary, November 1, 1893.

Important Principles

1. From Acts chapter 10 the scripture is clear that the Holy Spirit was directing all the movements in the conversion of Cornelius and his household.
2. Both Peter and Cornelius were led by the Spirit of God to understand important principles. Peter learned that God is no respecter of persons and Cornelius learned the truth of the crucified and risen Saviour.
3. Faithfulness to the promptings of the Spirit of God produced the blessed results.

Appeal

The Holy Spirit's office is to bring decidedly to your minds the important, vital truths. Is this extra endowment to be bound up in a napkin and hidden in the earth? No, no, it is to be put out to the exchangers; and as man uses his

Yours in the work of Revival and Reformation

Elder Ryan Griffith

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