

Reading: Psalm 138:1-8

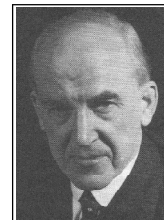
“Plant the good seeds of righteousness, and you will harvest a crop of My love. Plow up the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the Lord, that He may shower righteousness on you!” (Hos 10:12)

The meditation and study of God’s Word has played a vital role in the revivals or restoration movements recorded in the Old Testament. The revival under King Josiah and that under Ezra are examples (2 Ki 22:8-11; Ezra 7:10). Amos prophesied of days of famine, not of bread or water, but of the Word of God (Am 8:11,12). I believe these days are already upon us! We hear only stories and experiences from many pulpits and very little exposition of God’s Word. News of the preacher’s latest overseas trip becomes the body of the sermon. Comparing Scripture with Scripture has become a lost art. People want everything light—light music, light reading and light sermons!

The resurrected Christ missed no opportunity to expound the Scriptures to His disciples. “He expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, beginning at Moses and all the prophets” (Lk 24:27) to the disciples who were on their way to Emmaus. The disciples were waiting for the Holy Spirit, constantly meditating upon the Scriptures. We see Peter explaining to the disciples what was “written” in the Book of Psalms (Acts 1:15-17,20).

I am nobody to judge anyone, but very few “preach the Word” (2 Tim 4:2). Paul’s prediction has come to pass: “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...and will turn their ears away from the truth” (vv 3,4). Preachers have come down to stay at people’s level instead of raising them to the standard of the Scriptures. Because extempore preaching is more popular than expository teaching, even those who are called to be Bible teachers (Eph 4:11) have become mere Gospel preachers. Milk is necessary but how long? No maturity without strong meat! The long-awaited revival will come when God’s Word is given its due place (Isa 66:1,2). The Word is the seed, and the Spirit is the rain (Isa 30:23; Hos 10:12).

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981) was a medical doctor turned Bible teacher without any formal theological training. His preaching was based solely on Scripture and on a systematic study of the Biblical text. He not only stimulated the minds of his listeners, but also strove to satisfy their spiritual needs. Will not God give us again men like Dr. Martyn?



Gracious Heavenly Father, we worship You as the Redeemer and Restorer. Your plan of redemption to bring mankind from total ruin to full restoration is amazing. We thank You for sending Your men down through history as rebuilders. We thank You for the encouraging stories of rebuilding and restoration through Your messengers and men like Ezra and Nehemiah.

Father God, we are miserably backslidden. Our lukewarmness is nauseating. There are neither tears nor fires on our altars. Barrenness has become our badge. We are neither jealous for Your name nor zealous in Your work. Mediocrity and subnormalcy have satisfied us. Joy is cut off from the sanctuary. Formalism and ritualism have become the order of our worship services. Lovelessness and hypocrisy have damaged our relationships. Selfishness has taken the centrestage. Revive us, O God! Bring us back to where we should be.

Dear Lord, we claim Your promise of showers of blessing not only on us but also on the places round about us. We need the latter rain, O God. Our lands are parched. We are longing for times of refreshing from Your presence. Mercy drops are not enough, Lord; we need showers. We need the abundance of rain of Your Holy Spirit. Grant us a personal revival and congregational revival. Let not revival tarry any longer!

O Lord God, we pray for those of us called to preach and teach Your Word. We confess our casualness as the chief reason for the lukewarmness of our congregations. We have not spent enough time with You to hear from You what You want us to tell the people. We have not spent enough time with the Bible to understand and teach Your truths to the people. We have not prayed enough for our congregations for the enlightenment of their eyes to behold Your riches. As shepherds we have failed to feed our sheep in green pastures and lead them to clear waters. We have not warned them enough against the ravenous wolves. Forgive us, Lord, all such numerous failures in fulfilling the ministry You have entrusted us with. Have mercy on us, and visit Your flock again in revival blessing.

Almighty God, we thank You for the glorious promises Your Son has made to the Churches. Make each member of our congregation an overcomer. Let each one go from strength to strength and from victory to victory. We praise You for the exceeding greatness of Your power by which You will grant us more than what we ask or think. We keep our mouths wide open so You might fill it with good. In the Name of Jesus our Lord, Amen!

*(Ezra 1:1-5; Neh 6:15; Rev 3:16; Joel 1:16; Ezek 34:26; Zech 10:1;
Acts 3:19-21; Psa 81:10; 119:18; Eph 1:18; 3:20; Mt 7:15)*