

## Spiritual Revival, the Want of the Church

A Sermon

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Delivered by

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NOTE: This edition of this sermon is taken from an earlier published edition of Spurgeon's 1856 message. The sermon that appears in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, vol. 44, was edited and abbreviated somewhat. For [The Spurgeon Archive](#) edition we have restored the fuller text of the earlier published edition, while retaining a few of the editorial refinements of the *Met Tab* edition.

"O Lord, revive thy work."—Habakkuk 3:2.

All true religion is the work of God: it is pre-eminently so. If he should select out of his works that which he esteems most of all, he would select true religion. He regards the work of grace as being even more glorious than the works of nature; and he is, therefore, especially careful that it shall always be known, so that if any one dare to deny it, they shall do so in the teeth of repeated testimonies to the contrary, that God is indeed the author of salvation in the world and in the hearts of men, and that religion is the effect of grace, and is the work of God. I believe the Eternal might sooner forgive the sin of ascribing the creation of the heavens and of the earth to an idol, than that of ascribing the works of grace to the efforts of the flesh, or to any thing else but God. It is a sin of the greatest magnitude to suppose that there is aught in the heart which can be acceptable unto God, save that which God himself has first created there. When I deny God's work in creating the sun, I deny one truth; but when I deny that he works grace in the heart, I deny a hundred truths in one; for in the denial of that one great truth, that God is the author of good in the souls of men, I have denied all the doctrines which make up the great articles of faith, and have run in the very teeth of the whole testimony of sacred Scripture. I trust, beloved, that many of us have been taught, that if there be any thing in our souls which can carry us to heaven, it is God's work, and, moreover, that if there be aught that is good and excellent found in his church, it is entirely God's work, from first to last. We firmly believe that it is God who quickens the soul which was dead, positively "dead in trespasses and sins;" that it is God who maintains the life of that soul, and God who consummates and perfects that life in the home of the blessed, in the land of the hereafter. We ascribe nothing to man, but all to God. We dare not for a moment think that the conversion of the soul is effected either by its own effort or by the efforts of others; we conceive that there are means and agencies employed, but that the work is, both alpha and omega, wholly the Lord's. We think, therefore, that we are right in applying the text to the work of divine grace, both in the heart and in the church at large; and we think we

can have no subject more appropriate for our consideration than the text. "O Lord, revive thy work!"

First, beloved, trusting that the Spirit of God will help me, I shall endeavor to apply the text *to our own souls personally*, and then *to the state of the Church at large*, for it well needs that the Lord should revive his work in its midst.

I. First, then, to OUR OWN SOULS PERSONALLY.

In this matter, we should begin at home. We too often flog the church, when the whip should be laid on our own shoulders. We drag the church, like a colossal culprit, to the altar; we bind her, and try to execute her at once; we bind her hands fast, and tear off thongfull after thongfull of her quivering flesh—finding fault with her where there is none, and magnifying her little errors; while we too often forget ourselves. Let us, therefore, commence with ourselves, remembering that we are part of the church, and that our own want of revival is in some measure the cause of that want in the church at large. Now, I directly charge the great majority of professing Christians—and I take the charge to myself also—with a need of a revival of piety in these days. I shall lay the charge before you very peremptorily, because I think I have abundant grounds to prove it. I believe that the mass of Christian men in this age need a revival, and my reasons are these:

In the first place, look *at the conduct and conversation* of too many who profess to be the children of God. It ill becomes any man who occupies the sacred place of a pulpit to flatter his hearers, and I shall not attempt to do so. The evil lies with too many of you who unite yourselves with Christian churches, and in practically protesting against your profession. It has become very common now-a-days to join a church; go where you may you find professing Christians who sit down at some Lord's table or another; but are there fewer cheats than there used to be? Are there less frauds committed? Do we find morality more extensive? Do we find vice entirely at an end? No, we do not. The age is as immoral as any that preceded it; there is still as much sin, although it is more cloaked and hidden. The outside of the sepulcher may be whiter; but within, the bones are just as rotten as before. Society is not one whit improved. Those men who, in our popular magazines, give us a true picture of the state of London life, are to be believed and credited, for they do not stretch the truth—they have no motive for so doing; and the picture which they give of morality of this great city is certainly appalling. It is a huge criminal, full of sin; and I say this, that if all the profession in London were true profession, it would not be nearly such a wicked place as it is; it could not be, by any manner of means.

My brethren, it is well known—and who dares deny it that is not too partial, and who will not speak willful falsehood?—it is well known that it is not in these days a sufficient guaranty even of a man's honesty, that he is a member of a church. It is a hard thing for Christian ministers to say, but we must say it, and if friends say it not, enemies will; and better that the truth should be spoken in our own midst, that men may see that we are ashamed of it, than that they should hear us impudently deny what we must confess to be true! O sirs, the lives of too many members of Christian churches give us grave cause to suspect that there is none of the life of godliness in them all! Why that reaching after money, why that covetousness, why that following of the crafts and devices of a wicked world, why that clutching here and clutching there, that grinding of the faces of the poor, that stamping down of the workman, and such like things, if men are truly what they profess to be? God in heaven knows that what I speak is true, and too many here know it themselves. If they be Christians, at least they want revival; if there be life in them, it is but a spark that is covered up with heaps of ashes; it needs to be fanned, ay, and it needs to be stirred also, that, haply, some of the ashes may be removed and the spark may have place to live.

The Church as a whole needs revival in the persons of its members. The members of Christian churches are not what once they were. It is fashionable to be religious now; persecution is taken away; and ah! I had almost said, the gates of the church were taken away with it. The church has, with few exceptions, no gates now; persons come in, and go out of it, just as they would march through St. Paul's cathedral, and make it a very place of traffic, instead of regarding it as a select and sacred spot, to be apportioned to the holy of the Lord, and to the excellent of the earth, in whom is God's delight. If this be not true, you know how to treat it; you need not confess to sin you have not committed; but if it be true, and true in your case, O! humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God; ask him to search and try you, that if you be not his child you may be helped to renounce your profession, lest it should be to you but the gaudy pageantry of death, and mere tinsel and gewgaw in which to go to hell. If you be his, ask that he may give you more grace, that you may renounce these faults and follies, and turn into him with full purpose of heart, as the effect of a revived godliness in your soul.

Again, where the *conduct* of professing Christians is consistent, let me ask the question, Does not *the conversation* of many a professor lead us either to doubt the truthfulness of his piety, or else to pray that his piety may be revived? Have you noticed the conversation of too many who think themselves Christians? You might live with them from the first of January to the end of December, and you would never be tired of religion for what you would hear of it. They scarcely mention the name of Jesus Christ at all. On Sabbath afternoon all the ministers are talked over, faults are found with this one and the other, and all kinds of conversation take place, which they call religious, because it is concerning religious places. But do they ever—

"Talk of all he did, and said,  
and suffer'd for us here below;  
The path he mark'd for us to tread,  
And whet he's doing for us now"?

Do you often hear the salutation addressed to you by your brother Christian, "Friend, how doth thy soul prosper?" When we step into each other's houses, do we begin to talk concerning the cause and truth of God? Do you think that God would now stoop from heaven to listen to the conversation of his church, as once he did, when it was said, "The Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name?" I solemnly declare, as the result of thorough, and, I trust, impartial observation, that the conversation of Christians, while it can not be condemned on the score of morality, must almost invariably be condemned on the score of Christianity. We talk too little about our Lord and Master.

That ugly word "sectarianism" has crept into our midst, and we must say nothing about Christ, because we are afraid of being called sectarians. I am a sectarian, and hope to be so until I die, and to glory in it; for I can not see, now-a-days, that a man can be a Christian, thoroughly in earnest, without winning for himself the title. Why, we must not talk of this doctrine, because perhaps such a one disbelieves it; we must not notice such and such a truth in Scripture, because such and such a friend doubts or denies it; and so we drop all the great and grand topics which used to be the staple commodities of godly talk, and begin to speak of any thing else, because we feel that we can agree better on worldly things than we can on spiritual. Is not that the truth? and is it not a sad sin with some of us, that we have need to pray unto God, "O Lord, revive thy work in my soul, that my conversation may be more Christlike, seasoned with salt, and kept by the

Holy Spirit?"

And yet a third remark here. There are some whose conduct is all that we could wish, whose conversation is for the most part unctuous with the gospel, and savory of truth; but even they will confess to a third charge, which I must now sorrowfully bring against them and against myself, namely, that there is *too little real communion with Jesus Christ*. If, thanks to divine grace, we are enabled to keep our conduct tolerably consistent, and our lives unblemished, yet how much have we to cry out against ourselves, from a lack of that holy fellowship with Jesus which is the high mark of the true child of God! Brethren, let me ask some of you how long it is since you have had a love-visit from Jesus Christ—how long since you could say, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies?" How long is it since "he brought you into his banqueting house, and his banner over you was love?" Perhaps some of you will be able to say, "It was but this morning that I saw him; I beheld his face with joy, and was ravished with his countenance." But I fear the greatest part of you will have to say, "Ah, sir, for months I have been without the shinings of his countenance." What have you been doing, then, and what has been your way of life? Have you been groaning every day? Have you been weeping every minute? "No!" Then you ought to have been. I can not understand how your piety can be of any very brilliant order, if you can live without the sunlight of Christ, and yet be happy.

Christians will sometimes lose the realization of Jesus; the connection between themselves and Christ will at times be severed, as to their own conscious enjoyment of it; but they will always groan and cry when they lose their Jesus. What! is Christ thy Brother, and does he live in thine house, and yet thou hast not spoken to him for a month? I fear there is little love between thee and thy Brother, for thou hast had no conversation with him for so long. What! is Christ the Husband of his church, and has she had no fellowship with him for all this time? Brethren, let me not condemn you, let me not even judge you, but let your conscience speak. Mine shall, and so shall yours. Have we not too much forgotten Christ? Have we not lived too much without him? Have we not been contented with the world, instead of desiring Christ? Have we been, all of us, like that little ewe lamb that did drink out of the master's cup, and feed from his table? Have we not rather been content to stray upon the mountains, feeding anywhere but at home? I fear many of the troubles of our heart spring from want of communion with Jesus. Not many of us are the kind of men who, living with Jesus, his secrets must know. O! no; we live too much without the light of his countenance; and are too happy when he is gone from us. Let us, each of us, then, for I am sure we have each of us need, in some measure, put up the prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work!" Ah! methinks I hear one professor saying, "Sir, I need no revival in my heart; I am every thing I wish to be." Down on your knees, my brethren! down on your knees for him! He is the man that most needs to be prayed for. He says that he needs no revival in his soul; but he needs a revival of his humility, at any rate. If he supposes that he is all that he ought to be, and if he knows that he is all he wishes to be, he has very mean notions of what a Christian is, or of what a Christian should be, and very unjust ideas of himself. Those are in the best condition who, while they know they want reviving, yet feel their condition and groan under it, and pray to the Lord to revive them.

Now, I think I have in some degree substantiated my charge, I fear with too strong arguments; and now let me notice, that the text has something in it which I trust that each of us has. Here is not only an evil implied in these words—"O Lord, revive thy work;" but there is an evil evidently felt. You see Habakkuk knew how to groan about it. "O Lord," said he, "revive thy work!" Ah! we many of us want revival, but few of us feel that we want it. It is a blessed sign of life within, when we know how to groan over our departures from the living God. It is easy to

find by hundreds those that have departed, but you must count those by ones who know how to groan over their departure. The true believer, however, when he discovers that he needs revival, will not be happy; he will begin at once that incessant and continuous strain of cries and groans which will at last prevail with God, and bring the blessing of revival down. He will, days and nights in succession, cry, "O Lord revive thy work!"

Let me mention some groaning times, which will always occur to the Christian who needs revival. I am sure he will always groan, *when he looks upon what the Lord did for him of old*. When he recollects the Mizars and the Hermons, and those places where the Lord appeared of old to him, saying, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love," I know he will never look back to them without tears. If he is what he should be as a Christian, or if he thinks he is not in a right condition, he will always weep when he remembers God's loving-kindness of old. O! whenever the soul has lost fellowship with Jesus, it can not bear to think of the "chariots of Aminadab;" it can not endure to think of "the banqueting house," for it hath not been there so long; and when it does think of it, it says,

"Where is the blessedness I knew  
When first I saw the Lord?  
Where is the soul-refreshing view  
Of Jesus and his Word?

"What peaceful hours I then enjoy'd!  
How sweet their memory still!  
But now I find an aching void  
The world can never fill."

When one who is in this state hears a sermon which relates the glorious experience of the believer who is in a healthy state, he will put his hand upon his heart, and say, "Ah! such was my experience once; but those happy days are gone. My sun is set; those stars which once lit up my darkness are all quenched; O! that I might again behold him; O! that I might once more see his face; O! for those sweet visits from on high; O! for the grapes of Eschol once more." And by the rivers of Babylon you will sit down and weep. You will weep, when you remember your goings up to Zion—when the Lord was precious to you, when he laid bare his heart, and was pleased also to fill your heart with the fullness of his love. Such times will be groaning times, when you remember "the years of the right hand of the Most High."

Again, to a Christian who wants revival, *ordinances* will be also groaning times. He will go up to the house of God; but he will say of himself when he comes away, "Ah! how changed! When I once went with the multitude that kept holy day every word was precious. When the song ascended my soul had wings, and up it flew to its nest among the stars; when the prayer was offered, I could devoutly say, 'Amen;' but now the preacher preaches as he did before; my brethren are as profited as once they were; but the sermon is dry to me, and dull. I find no fault with the preacher; I know the fault is in myself. The song is just the same—as sweet the melody, as pure the harmony; but ah! my heart is heavy; my harp strings are broken, and I can not sing;" and the Christian will return from those blessed means of grace, sighing and sobbing, because he knows he wants revival. More especially at the Lord's Supper he will think, when he sits at the table, "O! what seasons I once had here! In breaking the bread and drinking the wine my Master

was present." He will bethink himself how his soul was even carried to the seventh heaven, and the house was made "the very house of God and the gate of heaven." "But now," he says, "it is bread, dry bread to me; it is wine, tasteless wine, with none of the sweetness of paradise in it; I drink, but all in vain. No thoughts of Christ. My heart will not rise; my soul can not heave a thought half way to him!" And then the Christian will begin to groan again—"O Lord revive thy work!"

But I shall not detain you upon that subject. Those of you who know that you are in Christ, but feel that you are not in a desirable condition, because you do not love him enough and have not faith in him which you desire to have, I would just ask you this: Do you groan over it? Can you groan now? When you feel your heart is empty, is it "an aching void?" When you feel that your garments are stained, can you wash those garments with tears? When you think your Lord is gone, can you hang out the black flag of sorrow, and cry, "O my Jesus! O my Jesus! art thou gone?" If thou canst, then I bid thee do it. Do it, do it; and may God be pleased to give thee grace to continue to do it, until a happier era shall dawn in the reviving of thy soul!

And remark, in the last place, upon this point, that the soul, when it is really brought to feel its own sad estate, because of its declension and departure from God, *is never content without turning its groanings into prayer*, and without addressing the prayer to the right quarter: "O Lord, revive thy work!" Some of you, perhaps, will say, "Sir, I feel my need of revival; I intend to set to work this very afternoon, as soon as I shall retire from this place, to revive my soul." Do not say it; and, above all things, do not try to do it, for you never will do it. Make no resolutions as to what you will do; your resolutions will as certainly be broken as they are made, and your broken resolutions will but increase the number of your sins. I exhort you, instead of trying to revive yourself, to offer prayers. Say not, "I will revive myself," but cry, "O Lord, revive *thy* works!" And let me solemnly tell thee, thou hast not yet felt what it is to decline, thou dost not yet know how sad is thine estate, otherwise thou wouldest not talk of reviving thyself. If thou didst know thy own position, thou wouldest as soon expect to see the wounded soldier on the battle-field heal himself without medicine, or convey himself to the hospital when his limbs are shot away, as thou wouldest expect to revive thyself without the help of God. I bid thee not do any thing, nor seek to do any thing, until first of all thou hast addressed Jehovah himself by mighty prayer—until thou hast cried out, "O Lord, revive thy work!" Remember, he that first made you must keep you alive; and he that has kept you alive must restore more life to you. He that has preserved you from going down to the pit, when your feet have been sliding, can alone set you again upon a rock, and establish your goings. Begin, then, by humbling yourself—giving up all hope of reviving yourself as a Christian, but beginning at once with firm prayer and earnest supplication to God: "O Lord, what I can not do, do thou! O Lord, revive thy work!"

Christian brethren, I leave these matters with you. Give them the attention they deserve. If I have erred, and in aught judged you too harshly, God shall forgive me, for I have meant it honestly. But if I have spoken truly, lay it to your hearts, and turn your houses into a "Bochim." Weep men apart, and women apart, husbands apart, and wives apart. Weep, weep, my brethren: "It is a sad thing to depart from the living God." Weep, and may he bring you back to Zion, that you may one day return like Israel, not with weeping, but with songs of everlasting joy!

II. And now I come to the second part of the subject, upon which I must be more brief. In THE CHURCH ITSELF, taken as a body, this prayer ought to be one incessant and solemn litany: "O Lord, revive thy work!"

In the present era there is *a sad decline of the vitality of godliness*. This age has become too much the age of form, instead of the age of life. I date the hour of life from this day one hundred

years ago when the first stone was laid of this building in which we now worship God. Then was the day of life divine, and of power, sent down from on high. God had clothed Whitefield with power: he was preaching with a majesty and a might of which one could scarcely think mortal could ever be capable; not because he was any thing in himself, but because his Master girded him with might. After Whitefield there was a succession of great and holy men. But now, sirs, we have fallen upon the dregs of time. *Men* are the rarest things in all this world; we have not many left now. We have no men in government hardly, to conduct our politics, and scarcely any men in religion. We have the *things* that perform their duties, as they are called; we have the good, and, perhaps, the honest things, who in the regular routine go on like pack-horses with their bells, for ever in the old style; but men who dare to be singular, because to be singular is generally to be right in a wicked world, are not very many in this age. Compared with the puritanic times even where are our divines? Could we marshal together our Howes and our Charnocks? Could we gather together such names as I could mention about fifty at a time? I trow not. Nor could we bring together such a galaxy of grace and talent as that which immediately followed Whitefield. Think of Rowland Hill, Newton, Toplady, Doddridge, and numbers of others whom time would fail me to mention. They are gone, they are gone; their venerated dust sleeps in the earth; and where are their successors? Ask where, and the echo shall reply, "Where?" There are none. Successors of them, where are they? God hath not yet raised them up, or, if he have, you have not yet found out where they are.

There is, nowadays, much preaching, and what is it? O Lord, help thy servant to preach, and teach him by thy Spirit what to say." Then out comes the manuscript, and they read it. A pure insult to Almighty God! We have preaching, but it is of this order. It is not preaching at all. It is speaking very beautifully and very finely, possibly eloquently, in some sense of the word; but where is the right down preaching, such as Whitefield's? Have you ever read one of his sermons? You will not think him eloquent; you can not think him so. His expressions were rough, frequently very coarse and unconnected; there was very much declamation about him; it was a great part, indeed, of his speech. But where lay his eloquence? Not in the words you read, but in the tone in which he delivered them, and in the earnestness with which he felt them, and in the tears which ran down his cheeks, and in the pouring out of his soul. The reason why he was eloquent was just what the word means. He was eloquent, because he spoke right out from his heart—from the innermost depths of the man. You could see when he spoke that he meant what he said. He did not speak as a trade, or as a mere machine, but he preached what he felt to be the truth, and what he could not help preaching. When you heard him preach, you could not help feeling that he was a man who would die if he could not preach, and with all his might call to men and say, "Come! come! come to Jesus Christ, and believe on him!"

Now, that is just the lack of these times. Where, where is earnestness now? It is neither in pulpit nor yet in pew, in such a measure as we desire it; and it is a sad, sad age, when earnestness is scoffed at, and when that very zeal which ought to be the prominent characteristic of the pulpit is regarded as enthusiasm and fanaticism. I ask God to make us all such fanatics as most men laugh at—to make us all just such enthusiasts as many despise. We reckon it the greatest fanaticism in the world to go to hell, the greatest enthusiasm upon earth to love sin better than righteousness; and we think those neither fanatics nor enthusiasts who seek to obey God rather than man, and follow Christ in all his ways. We repeat, that one sad proof that the church wants revival is the absence of that death-like, solemn earnestness which was once seen in Christian pulpits.

*The absence of sound doctrine* is another proof of our want of revival. Do you know who

are called Antinomians now, who are called "hypers," who are laughed at, who are rejected as being unsound in the faith? Why, the men that once were the orthodox are now the heretics. We can turn back to the records of our Puritan fathers, to the articles of the Church of England, to the preaching of Whitefield, and we can say of that preaching, it is the very thing we love; and the doctrines which were then uttered are—and we dare to say it everywhere—the very self-same doctrines that he proclaimed. But because we choose to proclaim them, we are thought singular and strange; and the reason is, because sound doctrine hath to a great degree ceased. It began in this way. First of all the truths were fully believed, but the angles were a little taken off. The minister believed election, but he did not use the word, for fear it should in some degree disturb the equanimity of the deacon in the green pew in the corner. He believed that all men were depraved, but he did not say it positively, because if he did, there was a lady who had subscribed so much to the chapel—she would not come again; so that while he did believe it, and did say it in some sense, he rounded it a little. Afterward it came to this. Ministers said, "We believe these doctrines, but we do not think them profitable to preach to the people. They are quite true: free grace is true; the great doctrines of grace that were preached by Christ, by Paul, by Augustine, by Calvin, and down to this age by their successors, are true; but they had better be kept back—they must be very cautiously dealt with; they are very high and dreadful doctrines, and they must not be preached; we believe them but we dare not speak them out." After that it came to something worse. They said within themselves, "Well, if these doctrines will not do for us to preach, perhaps they are not true at all;" and going one step further, they said they dare not preach them. They did not actually say it, perhaps, but they began just to hint that they were not true; then they went one step further, giving us something which they said was the truth; and then they would cast us out of the synagogue, as if they were the rightful owners of it, and we were the intruders. So they have passed on from bad to worse; and if you read the standard divinity of this age, and the standard divinity of Whitefield's day, you will find that the two can not by any possibility stand together. We have got a "new theology." New theology? Why, it is any thing but a *Theology*; it is an ology which hath cast out God utterly and entirely, and enthroned man, as it is the doctrine of man, and not the doctrine of the everlasting God. We want a revival of sound doctrine once more in the midst of the land.

And the church at large, may be, wants *a revival of downright earnestness in its members*. Ye are not the men to fight the Lord's battles yet. Ye have not the earnestness, the zeal, which once the children of God had. Your forefathers were oaken men; ye are willow men. Our people, what are they many of them? Strong in doctrine when they are with strong doctrine men; but they waver when they get with others, and they change as often as they change their company; they are sometimes one thing, and sometimes another. They are not the men to go to the stake and die; they are not the men that know how to die daily, and so are ready for death when it comes.

Look at our prayer-meetings, with here and there a bright exception. Go in. There are six women; scarcely ever enough members come to pray four times. Look at them. Prayer-meetings they are called; *spare* meetings they ought to be called, for sparsely enough they are attended. And very few there are that go to our fellowship-meetings, or to any other meetings that we have to help one another in the fear of the Lord. Are they attended at all? I would like to see a newspaper printed somewhere, containing a list of all the persons that went to those meetings during the week in any of our chapels. Ah! my friends, if they should comprise all the Christians in London, you might find that a chapel or two would hold them all. There are few enough that go. We have not earnestness, we have not life, as we once had; if we had, we should be called

worse names than we are; we should have viler epithets thrown at us, if we were more true to our Master; we should not have all things quite so comfortable, if we served God better. We are getting the church to be an institution of our land—an honorable institution. Ah! some think it a grand thing when the church becomes an honorable institution! Methinks it shows the church has swerved, when she begins to be very honorable in the eyes of the world. She must still be cast out, she must still be called evil, and still be despised, until that day shall come, when her Lord shall honor her because she has honored him—shall honor her, even in this world, in the day of his appearing.

Beloved, do you think it is true that the church wants reviving? Yes, or no? "No," you say, "not to the extent that you suppose. *We* think the church is in a good condition. We are not among those who cry, "The former days were better than these." Perhaps; you are not: you may be far wiser than we are, and therefore you are able to see those various sings of goodness which are to us so small that we are not able to discover them. You may suppose that the church is in a good condition; if so, of course you can not sympathize with me in preaching from such a text, and urging you to use such a prayer. But there are others of you who are frequently prone to cry, "The church wants reviving." Let me bid you, instead of grumbling at your minister, instead of finding fault with the different parts of the church, to cry, "O Lord revive thy work!" "O!" says one, "if we had another minister. O! if we had another kind of worship. O! if we had a different sort of preaching." Just as if that were all! It is, "O if the lord would come into the hearts of the men you have got. O! if he would make the forms you do use full of power." You do not want fresh ways of fresh machinery; you want the life in what you have. There is an engine on a railway; a train has to be moved. "Bring another engine," says one, "and another, and another." The engines are brought, but the train does not move at all. Light the fire, and get the steam up, that is what you want; not fresh engines. We do not want fresh ministers, or fresh plans, or fresh ways, though many might be invented, to make the church better; we only want life in what we have got. Given, the very man who has emptied your chapel; given, the self-same person that brought your prayer-meeting low; God can make the chapel crowded to the doors yet, and give thousands of souls to that very man. It is not a new man that is wanted; it is the life of God in him. Do not be crying out for something new; it will no more succeed, of itself, than what you have. Cry, "O Lord, revive thy work!"

I have noticed in different churches, that the minister has thought first of this contrivance, then of that. He tried one plan, and thought that would succeed; then he tried another; that was not it. Keep to the old plan, but get life in it. We do not want anything new; "the old is better"—let us keep to it. But we want life in the old. "O!" men cry, "we have nothing but the shell; they are going to give us a new shell." No, sirs, we will keep the old one, but we will have the life in the shell too; we will have the old thing; but we must, or else we will throw thee old away, have the life in the old. O! that God would give us life. The church wants fresh revivals. O! for the days of Cambuslang again, when Whitefield preached with power. O! for the days when in this place hundreds were converted sometimes under Whitefield's sermons. It has been know that two thousand credible cases of conversion have happened under one solitary discourse. O! for the age when eyes should be strained, and ears should be ready to receive the word of God, and when men should drink in the word of life, as it is indeed, the very water of life, which God gives to dying souls! O! for the age of deep feeling—the age of deep, thorough-going earnestness! Let us ask God for it; let us plead with him for it. Perhaps he has the man, or the men, somewhere, who will shake the world yet; perhaps even now he is about to pour forth a mighty influence upon

men, which shall make the church as wonderful in this age, as it ever was in any age that has passed. God grant it, for Christ's sake! Amen.