

I Was in the Great Revival

Written by Mary Warburton Booth

Lessons from the 1905 Revival in India

That evening a friend called to see me; she had spent many years in India, she knew the life, she had learnt her lessons and gained her experience. "I was in the Great Revival", she said to me.

"I was here when it broke out in the Khasya Hills. I will tell you about it." And there until midnight we sat and talked of the wonder-working power of the Blood of the Lamb and the Life Giving Spirit sent to revive. She had a great story to tell, and it has made an impression upon me that I never want to forget.

Eagerly she bent forward, and her face lit up, as she began to tell of the wonderful happenings she herself had seen and felt. It was the time of the Welsh Revival, and the weekly mail brought letters telling us how God was using one man to stir the principality; sinners were convicted of sin, whole villages were converted and the Holy Ghost was working in power in every town and village they knew. A hunger and a thirst for God took possession of them. The Mission to which they belonged was a part of the same church in Wales gripped by Revival. It didn't take long for them to realize that this was for them too, and prayer was vital. They felt the power in the letters received and they knew it was of God, and nothing else would satisfy them, but that they should also be in a Revival, and so they gave themselves to prayer.

Pentecost was their need, Pentecost was what they asked for, and it was Pentecost they received. In a little Chapel where a few Christians were gathered for prayer, they suddenly felt an Unseen Power, and all went down in His Presence. Their cries went up as one, and the noise was so great that the heathen in the village ran to see what it was, and a great fear came over them. "What was this power?" they asked. "Why are these men on their faces?" And even while they questioned, they were silenced by the Spirit moving over them, and they cried out to be saved.

The Revival spread; one station after another caught the fire, and the glory of the Lord was revealed. Singing and praying and worshipping God went on through the night and a band of born-again Christians were gathered into the fold. The missionaries were revived, new life came to them, and this missionary friend said to me: "I have never known such glory, wherever we went we saw the work of the Holy Ghost, and we gathered together to tell each other of what we knew. We read about the Revival in Wales, but we experienced it in the Khasya Hills, and never was there such an experience before or since. The fire melted us all together; we saw the Lord and we trod the heavenly way. Oh, it was glory just to walk with Him."

"I went to another station to meet some friends; others arrived at the same time, and I was put into a grass hut, for the house was full. It was the cold weather, and I wondered how I

could keep warm. A hot bottle was put there for me; sleep would not come, but oh the glory that filled my soul! I felt as if I must be in Heaven; the cold night was filled with holy gladness, and I sang unto the Lord in an ecstasy of joy unspeakable, and love inexpressible was mine. I knew I had found Him, and He had found me, and the Holy Ghost had come to immerse me in Himself that I might abide in Christ forever.”

“I got out of bed to kneel before Him in worship and adoration. The clock struck twelve, then one and two, and I lived in the glory; my heart was satisfied and His presence filled the little hut. Before breakfast was served the next morning we sat round the table and sang to Him. All our conversation was of Him. In a very real and intimate way He had come to us. The Welsh Revival had reached US. God had spoken to us, and was speaking through us to others. Every day we heard of those who were being added to the Church. Conviction of sin was very real; repentance and restitution came hand in hand, and we all felt that we had lived for that time, and all my being said, ‘ Glory’.”

“We were there for some days, and then a friend called to see me, and we began to gossip and criticize others. Something was said that was detrimental to another, and as we talked something happened.” The speaker paused, and her voice quivered, “I lost the glory from my soul; it just slipped away, and I stood there after the friend left, feeling as if something was slain within me. I went to my grass hut, but there was no glory. I knelt to pray, and I could only cry. I knelt in an agony of mind. What had I done? Nothing very much, I only joined in conversations that led to gossip, making light of another and with drastic swiftness we took away her good name, and the glory I had received departed from my soul.”

“And then?” I questioned. She shook her head and with a very sad voice answered; “I have never felt the same; that glory has not come back to me.” I was awed by the story, and I felt her agony. Oh, to be a helper. “Thou shall not go up and down as a talebearer,” is written in The Book, and how little we heed it! Is that why we see so little of His glory? I asked myself. Then Psalm 101:5 came to my mind: “He that secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will cut off.” “CUT OFF”? What is this thing that must be handled with such drastic treatment? Slander is falsely accusing another. It is taking away a good name and putting something else there. It generally begins with a bit of gossip, no harm is intended, but gossip leads to criticism, and criticism kills love and creates unkind thoughts and words, and slander is made easy. “Shun gossip, as you shun the Devil,” wrote one who knows what she is talking about, and I remembered her then. We sat in silence for a very long time, and then we knelt to pray. A longing that was inexpressible took hold of me, and I prayed that I might never forget that lesson.

God knows all there is to know about us. He has nothing to find out and He is not deceived by any one of us. When He told us to be holy in all manner of conversation, He meant exactly what He said. It may be that some of us have missed the way because we have not ordered our conversation aright. To be entangled in the yoke of gossip is a snare and a delusion, it is love destroying, time killing, and a power that separates beyond recall, and it had stolen the glory from the friend who sat with me.

Hand clasped hand as we stood at the door. We looked up at the stars, and then she went out into the night. I turned in and began to think it all over. I knew that God had a special reason for letting me hear that story and a solemn responsibility of the truth of life took possession of me. I sat there alone while a long procession of God's children passed before my mind. I saw visions, and heard words, and gathered thoughts that are a sign and a warning. There are no shortcuts in the way of holiness. An unguarded word may send one who seemed safe down a steep incline. A word of slight may take all the heart out of a brave warrior, and a good word withheld may do untold harm when it might be said.

I thought on, and I seemed to hear the whisperings of those people who had seen the miracles of the Savior. Being jealous of His reputation because the Crowds followed Him, they began to gossip. "Who is He?" asked one. "He does that which is not lawful on the Sabbath." "He is a nobody." "Is not this the carpenter's Son?" And as they talked, another joined the group. "He is a friend of publicans and sinners. He is a wine-bibber. He is a bastard." And though they knew His life and heard His words and saw His miracles, they set Him at naught. Who likes to be set at naught? Yet they did it to Him. The leading religious people of the day called Him up and asked Him to explain Himself, but "He answered them nothing."

He understands the suffering caused by unkind criticism. He has led the way of silence in cruel and unjust accusation. He has made a clear cross-marked way for those who would follow Him, and if we are ever tempted to think that we suffer unjustly, one look at Him will silence every murmur, and in reverent awe we shall sing:

"Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus-
Anywhere, everywhere, I will follow on.
Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus,
By the Cross-marked pathway,
Till my journey's done."