

The Activity of the Holy Spirit 4

Introduction:

As we continue in this series, I want to recap a little from last weeks sermon...

- 1). The Father made the Plan, the Son Paid for the Plan and the Holy Spirit Activates the Plan
- 2). Before the Church was sent into the world, the Spirit of God was sent into the church
- 3). The Holy Spirit gave the Saints motivation beyond their fears and Divine Demonstration to the world.

The reality is that the Book of Acts continues, there is no end to what the Spirit of God is doing in the churches. We continue to hear of Faceless, fearless hero's of faith that influenced nations by obedience to the Spirit of God.

The first 100 – 500 years of Christianity was very fragile yet, it was not stamped out by the following attempts.

- 1). Religious Persecution – They went everywhere preaching the gospel
- 2). Paganism of the day – The Conviction of the Holy Spirit kept them right
- 3). Traditions of Men – The Holy Spirit activity in lives, mocked tradition with signs, miracles and wonders.

The proof was that The Holy Spirit activity was a alive and well, by the fact of the early writings of historical saints.

Holy Spirit Activity and Missions

Today, I would like to emphasize on the Activity of the Holy Spirit in Historical Missionaries. We hear of great moves of God, or of we know as “Revivals” , “Awakenings”. That shook the foundation of society, changed the course of nations and ratified a whole generation.

As we read into History, it did not come from a famous person, but someone obscure and unknown. But they yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit and the Lord was once again glorified by his strength in one weakness.

These were Christians that were moved by the Holy Spirit to leave the comforts of home and venture into regions beyond. As Jesus was led into the wilderness and Paul to his chains in Jerusalem, many were led into hostile territory to reach the unreachable.

Text: Acts 11:19-26

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.

20 But some **of them were men** from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Here is a record of a great “revival” and beauty of this is that it was begun by un-named from the scattered persecution who obeyed the Holy Spirit to speak to Hellinists, it drew the attention of the Apostles and they enjoyed year of fruitfulness.

The Revival of Antioch was begun by the simple obedient ministry of un-named Christians....

So, we go back to the fact that Supernatural Revivals were begun by Natural, obedient Christians who yielded to the leading of the Holy Spirit

Rom 10:13-18

13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

"Their sound has gone out to all the earth,
And their words to the ends of the world."

Being that we are very mixed group of People of color and origin, I hope to encourage you that the Gospel did not originate in our land, but Holy Ghost filled hero's brought the message of hope to our lands and by that many of us enjoy our salvation today.

Because of the boldness and the leading of the Holy Spirit Many Mighty Men and Women help pave the road of modern civilization.

PATRICK 389 - 461

Patrick was born in Scotland. His father was a Roman Centurion and also a deacon in a local New Testament church. Patrick was captured and taken to Ireland as a slave, but he escaped.

After his conversion to Christ, he studied on the mainland in Gaul and then returned to the heathen tribes in Ireland as a missionary. He began scores of churches and baptized (immersed) thousands of converts. He is largely responsible for the large number of Bible-believing Christians in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and England.

Patrick, his father and his grandfather were proud of the fact that they were not controlled by the Roman church, and that they were responsible only to God. Patrick was later canonized by the Roman church as a political move to control the Irish churches. He was thereafter known as *Saint Patrick*.

Hudson Taylor – Missionary to China

English missionary to China. Founder, China Inland Mission. Spent five years translating the New Testament into the Ningpo dialect. At his death in 1905, there were 205 stations with 849 missionaries, and 125,000 Chinese Christians in the China Inland Mission.

"He must move men through God--by prayer," that was the philosophy of J. Hudson Taylor, first missionary to the interior of China and the founder of the China Inland Mission. And from that December day when as a teenager he heard from Heaven, "Go for Me to China," this young Englishman set out to prove his philosophy. That he did so successfully and miraculously makes for some of the most exciting reading in the records of evangelism.

After his call Taylor first moved from the comforts of his home with his parents and two sisters in beautiful Barnsley of Yorkshire to Drainside, Hull, a poverty-stricken, depressing area named after and notorized by its foul ditch. Taylor had gone there purposely to work for a doctor and accumulate a little medical knowledge, and also to accustom himself to something of the loneliness and dangers of living in a strange land where his only companion would be God.

It was at Drainside Taylor learned one can trust God with his last cent. He had been called out late one night to witness to and pray over a sick woman with starving children. As he tried to pray, his words choked in his mouth because he had in his possession a silver coin that would answer his prayer and alleviate their sufferings somewhat. "Hypocrite!" he heard his heart condemn him. "Telling people about a kind and loving Father in Heaven--*and not prepared to trust Him yourself*, without your money!" He gave them his last coin--only one bowl of porridge between him and poverty! As he ate that last meal he remembered the Scripture, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

The next day he received a package. In it was a gold coin--worth ten times the silver coin. Taylor cried out triumphantly, "That's good interest! Ha! Ha! Invested in God's bank for twelve hours and it brings me this! That's the bank for me!"

Thus at nineteen years of age, Taylor learned he could trust and obey God in every area of his life. There were many lessons to learn, but at the first he learned that a man can take God at His Word. Three years earlier he had taken Christ and trusted Him as his Saviour. At sixteen years of age Taylor had already been disappointed and sated with life. He found the religious life of his parents very dull, although he attended church very dutifully with them. He really desired horses, hunting, luxuries. Alone at home one day he looked for something to read. He picked up a gospel tract and began to read it. At the very same moment seventy miles away his mother was earnestly praying for her son's salvation. That same day Taylor prayed--his first prayer-- and it was answered. He was converted to Christ!

Praying! And answers to prayer! That became the passion of his life. He learned to move men through God by prayer. He asked no man for any material thing. He laid all needs before his Lord. That doctor he had worked for at Drainside had suggested to his young assistant, "Taylor, please do remind me when it is time to pay your salary. I'm so busy, you know, I'm quite likely to forget." And forget he did. But Taylor remembered that in China he would have no one to ask anything of, only God, so he simply asked God to remind the doctor.

Three weeks later the doctor remembered--but only after he had banked his money. Taylor was broke. It was Saturday. He had no money to pay his rent. He had no money for food. He prayed as he worked until ten o'clock, glad he would not have to face his landlady. As he prepared to leave, the doctor surprised him, "What do you think? One of my patients has just come to pay his bill! He's one of my richest patients and he could have paid me by check anytime. Yet, there he is, bringing in the money at ten o'clock on Saturday night." Then he added, "By the way, Taylor, you might as well take these notes. I have no change, but I can give you the balance of your salary next week...Good night!"

Taylor's prayers were answered. He could not only pay his rent, he had money in hand for weeks ahead--but more than that, he had proven again: *God answers prayer and moves men*. He could go on to China!

And he did! There were storms at sea and miraculous deliverances in that five-and-one-half months' journey to China. There was civil war when he landed at Shanghai, rebels holding the city. Fires, famine, fearsome circumstances were fought by the young missionary on his knees and God delivered him. And at the age of twenty-two, eight months a missionary, he also found himself responsible for supplying the needs of newly-arriving missionaries, the Parker family.

Taylor ministered in the river towns, married a wife and saw many miracles in converted Chinese. But on June 25, 1865, he made his move to minister to the millions of China "West of the Mountains, South of the Clouds, North of the Lake"--Inland China. At Brighton, England, on furlough, he opened a bank account: "Ten pounds" (Fifty dollars) in the name of "The China Inland Mission." His initial goal was twenty-four workers. The next May the twenty-four sailed. Then there were seventy more. And another hundred. And finally more than eight hundred missionaries ministered across the far-flung miles of China's interior. Truly this man of faith and fortitude had mastered in the ministry of moving men through God by prayer.

J. Hudson Taylor died in 1905, before the communist takeover of his beloved China. His days were days of extensive and effective evangelism. Multitudes of converted Chinese will rise up in Heaven and call him blessed. And many Christian workers whose lives were challenged and changed by the contagious Christian character of Taylor will follow in their train.

1718-1747

Missionary to the American Indians in New York, New Jersey, and eastern Pennsylvania. Born in Connecticut in 1718, he died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-nine in 1747. Jonathan Edwards preached the funeral sermon and published the diary which David had kept.

By almost every standard known to modern missionary boards, David Brainerd would have been rejected as a missionary candidate. He was tubercular — died of that disease at twenty-nine — and from his youth was frail and sickly. He never finished college, being expelled from Yale for criticizing a professor and for his interest and attendance in meetings of the "New Lights," a religious organization. He was prone to be melancholy and despondent.

Yet this young man, who would have been considered a real risk by any present-day mission board, became a missionary to the American Indians and, in the most real sense, "the pioneer of modern missionary work." Brainerd began his ministry with the Indians in April, 1743, at Kannameek, New York, then ministered in Crossweeksung and Cranberry (near Newark), New Jersey. These were the areas of his greatest successes.

Brainerd's first journey to the Forks of the Delaware to reach that ferocious tribe resulted in a miracle of God that preserved his life and revered him among the Indians as a "Prophet of God." Encamped at the outskirts of the Indian settlement, Brainerd planned to enter the Indian community the next morning to preach to them the Gospel of Christ. Unknown to him, his every move was being watched by warriors who had been sent out to kill him. F.W. Boreham recorded the incident:

But when the braves drew closer to Brainerd's tent, they saw the paleface on his knees. And as he prayed, suddenly a rattlesnake slipped to his side, lifted up its ugly head to strike, flicked its forked tongue almost in his face, and then without any apparent reason, glided swiftly away into the brushwood. "The Great Spirit is with the paleface!" the Indians said; and thus they accorded him a prophet's welcome.

That incident in Brainerd's ministry illustrates more than the many Divine interventions of God in his life--it also illustrates the importance and intensity of prayer in Brainerd's life. Believe it — Brainerd prayed! Read the **Life and Diary of David Brainerd**. On page after page one reads such sentences as:

Wednesday, April 21 ...and God again enabled me to wrestle for numbers of souls, and had much fervency in the sweet duty of intercession...

Lord's Day, April 25. This morning I spent about two hours in secret duties and was enabled more than ordinarily to agonize for immortal souls. Though it was early in the morning and the sun scarcely shined at all, yet my body was quite wet with sweat...

Saturday, December 15. Spent much time in prayer in the woods and seemed raised above the things of this world...

Monday, March 14 ...in the morning was almost continually engaged in ejaculatory prayer...

Thursday, August 4. Was enabled to pray much, through the whole day...

Thursday, November 3. Spent this day in secret fasting, and prayer, from morning till night...

Suffice it to say, it is not surprising to read then of the miraculous interventions of God on Brainerd's behalf, and of the mighty ministry and the unbelievable revivals he experienced among the iniquitous, idolatrous Indians in those short years. A volume such as this prohibits more than only mere mention of some of those supernal, supernatural scenes: "I have now baptized, in all, forty-seven persons of the Indians. Twenty-three adults and twenty-four children...Through rich grace, none of them as yet have been left to disgrace their profession of Christianity by any scandalous or unbelieving behavior" (Nov.. 20, 1743). What pastor or evangelist reading this can say the same?

Lord's Day, December 29 ...After public worship was over, I went to my house, proposing to preach again after a short season of intermission. But they soon came in one after another; with tears in their eyes, to know, "what they should do to be saved..." It was an amazing season of power among them, and seemed as if God had "bowed the heavens and come down..." and that God was about to convert the whole world.

David Livingstone

1813 - 1873

The Pathfinder of Africa

by Eugene Myers Harrison

A YOUNG SCOTSMAN had come to hear an address by a celebrated missionary. Following his conversion several years earlier, the young man had begun to grapple with the question, "What shall I do with my life?" The Great Commission had come to have a singular hold upon his mind. Its majestic syllables had for him a contemporaneous significance:

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 18-20).

"All authority is given unto me." *The same power is available!*

"Go and evangelize all nations." *The same program is operative!*

"Lo, I am with you." *The same Presence is assured!*

The picture embodied in these stupendous words captivated his entire being and fired his soul with a passion which only death could quench. He would go to Africa! He would be a forerunner for Christ in the Dark Continent! He would search out the thousand villages, and other thousands, where no missionary had ever been.

As a young man, Livingstone saw a vision of "the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been" and heard a Voice saying: "Go! Preach the Gospel and explore the unknown continent. Make disciples and open a way for the Gospel." It seemed an impossible assignment, until the Voice added: "You will never be alone and you have nothing to fear. Lo, I am with you all the way." Did the promise hold good? Did the Presence ever fail him?

He was on the bank of the Zambesi River, surrounded by fierce and infuriated savages who threatened to kill him. At any moment spears might come hurtling through the darkness, or perhaps the attack would come at dawn. Opening his tin box and taking out his Bible, he read a precious passage. Let the story be told in his own words as found in his Journal:

January 14, 1856. See, O Lord, how the heathen rise up against me, as they did to Thy Son. I commit my way unto Thee. 'A guilty, weak, and helpless worm, on Thy kind arms I fall.' Oh Jesus, leave me not, forsake me not!

John G Lake – Missionary to Africa

John G Paton 1824-1907

THE APOSTLE OF CHRIST TO THE CANNIBALS OF THE NEW HEBRIDES – South Pacific

In the evening, the missionaries knelt in the mission house in a fervent prayer of consecration of their all to Christ and of petition for the salvation of the cannibals among whom they lived. They solemnly committed themselves to the protecting presence of their Lord, not knowing that even then the house was surrounded by fierce savages, armed with clubs, killing-stones and muskets, determined to slay and eat the foreigners whose God, they believed, had brought disease, hurricanes, and other troubles upon them.

After the worship, the younger missionary stepped out of the door to go to his own house close by. Instantly he was attacked and fell to the ground screaming, "Look out! They are trying to kill us!" Rushing to the door the older missionary shouted to the savages, "Jehovah God sees you and will punish you for trying to murder His servants." Two black men swung their ponderous clubs and struck at him, but missed, whereupon the entire company fled into the bush.

The younger white man was in such a state of excitement that for days he was unable to sleep. In fact, his nervous system was unhinged by the shock of the attack, his mind gave way under the apprehension of being killed and eaten by savages, and in three weeks he died. The older missionary had already survived many such attacks on his life and was destined to survive many more. John G. Paton -- for such was his name -- found in the presence of his Lord the antidote to fear and the assurance that his life was immortal until his work was accomplished. "During the crisis," he says in his Autobiography, "I felt calm and firm of soul, standing erect

and with my whole weight on the promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway.' Precious promise! How often I adore Jesus for it and rejoice in it! Blessed be His name."

The precious promise!
The secret of a calm Soul!
The secret of a joyous heart!
The promise to stand on!
The promise to lean one's whole weight upon!
"Lo, I am with you all the way."

Solomon L. Ginsburg

1867-1927

Firebrand of Brazil

THE PREACHING HALL in Pernambuco was crowded with attentive listeners. One of these was Herculano, a Brazilian of giant proportions. His eyes were riveted on the speaker, who, with impassioned zeal, proclaimed the mighty truths of a majestic text: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

When the service was over, Herculano said, "Missionary, I've never heard anything like this before but I like your message about the cleansing blood of Jesus. *That is what I need.*" When the missionary suggested a visit to his house for the purpose of further discussion, he readily assented and a meeting was arranged for the following day.

The next morning the missionary was informed that it would be an act of extreme recklessness to visit Herculano. Said his informant: "Herculano is a giant in wickedness as well as in size, and is interested, not in Christianity, but in robbing or killing you. Moreover, the district in which he lives is a veritable den of thieves and murderers. Even a policeman will not go there alone and strangers who have ventured to enter have never been heard of again. The missionary knelt in prayer of renewed consecration to his Master, then set out on his journey. At the appointed place Herculano met him and guided him to his small adobe hut. When they reached the place, every living thing vanished in haste. Herculano's wife, children, dogs and cats were terrified at his presence and fled as for their lives.

The missionary sat on an old kerosene box, looked into the bloodshot eyes of his auditor and said: "Although warned that it would probably mean death to come to this place, I have fulfilled my promise. I am here because I am more concerned about your soul than about my own life." Then in simple language he told of the gospel of salvation, of God's love, of Christ's death and of Calvary's cleansing fountain.

"The cleansing blood -- that is what I need!" exclaimed Herculano. But even as he spoke his face blanched and his enormous frame trembled violently. His unregenerate nature was aroused and he was engaged in a fierce conflict. He was struggling with a savage impulse to seize the missionary and strangle him. The missionary was skilled in dealing with souls. He knew that the soul-winner's final resort and most potent weapon is prayer. "I then slipped to my knees," relates he, "and the big giant knelt beside me. Then, with trembling voice and eyes overflowing with tears, I began pleading with God on behalf of this poor soul."

Soon he heard a body fall prostrate to the floor and a choked voice, expressing an agony of sorrow and despair, cried out for mercy and forgiveness: "O God! save a poor, degraded, miserable sinner! Wash me in the cleansing blood of Jesus!" Such was the piteous, continual cry of this man as he rolled in agony on the floor. Finally Herculano rose up, saying he was assured the Lord had heard and saved him. He then related some of the highlights of his career. He was the hired assassin of an influential politician; because of his crimes he had spent seventeen years on Convict Island; recently released, he had gone back to making his living by murder and had already carried out orders to assassinate a man.

*The cleansing blood of Jesus!
That is what I need!
Wash me in the cleansing blood of Jesus!
"The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son,
cleanses us from all sin."*

That was the text that transformed Herculano from a vicious savage to a gentle saint. It was that same stupendous text that wrought a stupendous history in the life of Solomon L. Ginsburg, the Firebrand of Brazil, who was instrumental in Herculano's conversion.