

The Ways of God and the Great Welsh Revival

We pray for individual, family, church and country-wide revival. The Welsh Revival has always been a challenge in my heart that what God did for Wales, He would do for us in the United States. God raised up Evan Roberts to be the spearhead of the Great Welsh Revival that broke out in 1904. In the first week of revival, 60 responded. In a period of approximately one year, the Evan Roberts team toured Wales and it has been said that 100,000 converts were added to the Welsh Church. An author asked, "What was the secret of this young man's powerful ministry? I'm sure there may be many answers including his upbringing, his Bible reading, his prayer life, etc. Perhaps a concise way of answering the question would be that he was willing to bow to God's Sovereign purpose for his life. This did include being a teacher of a great revival but firstly it meant being willing to let God have His Divine way in Evan's own life. This involved a struggle between Evan's way and God's way and, as at Gethsemane, it meant a conscious choice of 'not my will but Thy will be done.' At Blaenau on Thursday, the 29th of September, 1904 at 9:30 in the morning Evan took that step - one seemingly insignificant step for mankind yet one that led to the greater advancement of the Kingdom of God worldwide."

This is the 117th anniversary of the beginning of the Welsh revival. Although separated by an ocean and over a century, the prescriptions for revival have not really changed. I want to focus on the struggle of Evan's way versus God's way. Even today, it often comes down to this: my ways or God's ways. In our utmost desire to see God bring revival to our church and to our land, I bring before you three pre-suppositional thoughts:

1. GOD'S WAYS ARE INCOMPREHENSIBLY MAGNIFICENT.

Romans 11:33: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The delight that God's ways bring us is beyond definition. Borrowing the primitive expression to describe God's ways, better felt than "telt." I recommend that we, by faith, submit to God's way. The blessings will not follow until first we obey. Psalm 18:30 says, "As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried: He is a buckler to all those that trust in him."

2. GOD'S WAYS ARE TRANSCENDENTLY GLORIOUS.

God tells us in Isaiah 55:9, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

In all our efforts to figure things out, we, by human nature, miss God's greater plan and purpose. When we do our own will and bidding, we have a tendency to miss the mark. God is so high above us, so unlike us in our ponderings, we must learn the key to prayer and meditation that will free the mind of Christ in our nature.

3. GOD'S WAYS MAY BE MAJESTICALLY MERGED WITH OUR WAYS.

As transcendent and lofty as God's ways are, we may, by His grace, lay hold upon His purposes. Deuteronomy 28:9 says, "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways." Our ways are established as we allow the merge of His ways with ours. Joshua 22:5 says, "But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and to cleave unto Him, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul." Notice the wording that Joshua gives us - we are admonished to keep God's commandments and to love Him and cleave to Him with all our hearts. Herein is the key: love God and obey God. Songwriter and author Al Smith said the beginning of the outbreak of God in the midst of His people in the Welsh revival came when a little girl stood to testify, "I love the Lord Jesus with all of my heart." People's hearts were melted as many aligned their ways with God's ways.

4. GOD'S WAYS ARE MIRACULOUSLY TRIGGERED BY REPENTANCE.

Jeremiah 26:13: "Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you." Evan Roberts preached a simple and yet powerful message to Wales. It has been summed up in four parts: 1) Confess all known sin. 2) Deal with and get rid of anything doubtful in your life. 3) Be ready to obey the Holy Spirit instantly. 4) Confess Christ publicly.

Today, I pray a true move of God comes in our midst and may the revival that God gives be lasting and may we be able to say with David, "For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God" (II Samuel 22:22).

- Pastor Pope -