

*“Pentecostal Outpourings:  
Revival in the Reformed Tradition”*  
**A Review**

Charles R. Biggs  
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary  
Th.M.

Presented to Dr. Michael A. G. Haykin  
CH865: Revival in the Reformed Tradition  
Summer 2017

## CH865 Th.M.: Revival in the Reformed Tradition

### Review: *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition*

Charles R. Biggs

Should there be anything controversial about having the words “Pentecostal” and Reformed” in the same title of a book consisting of Reformed scholars teaching on the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in revival? Perhaps this is the reason for the profound title? Though the term “Pentecostal” has abused this term to a large degree, the description is actually a biblical term that should be used more often by scholars, pastors, and laypersons in the Reformed tradition. “Pentecostal” simply refers to Christ, the source of all benefits and blessings for His Church who as the resurrected-ascended Lord, continues to work in and through His church by His Spirit to the ends of the earth (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:31-41). Let us consider as Reformed folks who are committed to a Christocentric emphasis on the Person and Work of Christ, that “Pentecostal” describes this glorious reality. “Pentecostal” first and foremost refers to the Source of all power and blessings on God’s people as the Ascended-Enthroned Christ continues His work to the ends of the world.

*Pentecostal Outpourings* is an outstanding book of essays by various scholars, pastors and teachers in the Reformed Tradition.<sup>1</sup> The intention of the authors of the book is clearly given in the introduction. That is *to promote the knowledge of God, the gospel of Christ, and the great outpourings of the Spirit through a variety of Reformed authors reflecting and applying historical and biblical lessons for today’s Christian leader.*<sup>2</sup> The book begins with a definition of true revival. What are genuine revivals? *Revivals are genuine movements or outpourings of the Spirit upon the Church when God does a might work above His normal working through the ordinary (yet extraordinary!) work through the means of grace.* Revival can be confused with “revivalism” but it should not be. Revival refers to the genuine work of God’s Spirit in contrast to the counterfeit work of man in “revivalism”.<sup>3</sup> To use a popular distinction: Revival is prayed down, through humility and faithfulness to God’s means of grace in the Church; Revivalism is worked up, through the plans and powers of man to produce certain quantifiable results.<sup>4</sup> As Eifion Evans wrote,

---

<sup>1</sup> Smart, Robert Davis, Haykin Michael A. G., and Clary Ian Hugh, eds. *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016). Note: I used the Kindle version of this book. Location numbers rather than page numbers will be used in footnotes if I’m referring to Kindle version.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, x.

<sup>3</sup> Kindle Loc. 2787.

<sup>4</sup> Kindle Loc. 1239.

revivalism tends to deny “God’s sovereignty and providential order”, and the essentially “inward nature of regeneration and substitutes an outward profession or response for the evidence of a transformed lifestyle.”<sup>5</sup>

Though there are misunderstandings, and have been in church history, true and genuine revival ought to be sought out by those in the Reformed tradition. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981) commented that “there is no subject which is of greater importance to the Christian church at the present time than that of revival. It should be the theme of our constant meditation, preaching and prayers.”<sup>6</sup> The book defines revival specifically as the time when the “presence of God’s Spirit was experienced by His people in a particularly powerful way.”<sup>7</sup> Additionally, a genuine revival represents

---

*The powerful work of the Holy Spirit in which there is recovered a new awareness of the holiness of God among His people. This heightened knowledge brings in a new season of the conviction of sin, which, in turn, leads to heartrending repentance. This lowly humility ushers in an awakened love for Christ. Believers begin to pursue personal holiness. Love for other believers intensifies. The gospel spreads like wildfire. Sinners are brought to faith in Christ, and the church is enlarged and empowered.*<sup>8</sup>

---

For some Reformed preachers, the three terms “revival, awakening, and reformation” were used interchangeably.<sup>9</sup> Though most often referred to as a revival, this book makes clear that the same work of the Spirit can also be termed an awakening or a further reformation. When God’s Spirit works, sinners are revived or awakened to the presence of a holy God and their realization of their sin. This initial conviction can lead to true conversion, and the good and persevering fruits of reformation in the church and in culture.<sup>10</sup> And for these genuine revivals, even the most unusual men were used to accomplish God’s great work (even those thought as “madmen”<sup>11</sup>).<sup>12</sup> Because the outpouring was of God’s Spirit, according to God’s divine sovereignty and perfect timing, the person used by God was not as important, as the Christ who was revealed powerfully by the Spirit. It is important to note that a revival is foremost

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>6</sup> Smart, Robert Davis, Haykin Michael A. G., and Clary Ian Hugh, eds. *Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2016), vii, from foreword by Steve Lawson.

<sup>7</sup> Kindle Loc. 707.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vii.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>12</sup> Kindle Loc. 771.

the “sovereign, extraordinary, saving activity of the Holy Spirit and is characterized by an intense sense of God’s presence.”<sup>13</sup>

However, in these times of revival, it is not the opposition to the revivals that were as problematic as the so-called “friends” of the revival. One tremendous problem of revivals is always the counterfeiting of the Spirit’s holy work.<sup>14</sup> Revivals have been criticized in church history because personal testimony time could replace the preaching of God’s Word, and sound, biblical exposition.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, revivals can be too “emotionally driven” and downplay the good of denominational distinctions, “watering down” theological truths.<sup>16</sup> It is important to note that pietistic spirituality is (can be) a fruit of doctrinal/expositional preaching, but if it becomes central, it tends to focus all on experience and emotion.<sup>17</sup> These are dangers of revival, and the counterfeiting of it, that Reformed folks must be concerned with and aware of.

The first essay in this fine book is by Eifion Evans, entitled “*The Power of Heaven in the Word of Life*”: Welsh Calvinistic Methodism and Revival”. An important part of understanding the Welsh revivals is to understand that the Welsh Methodists were strong Calvinists.<sup>18</sup> This revival was parochial, it started from within the Anglican communion. Two important leaders were used by God in this revival, **Daniel Rowland** (1713-1790) and **Howel Harris** (1714-1773).<sup>19</sup> These Anglican heirs of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritans were profoundly used by God to bring about what has come to be known as the First Great Awakening in North America. In fact, it was through the writings of many of the Puritans that these preachers were first made aware of God’s sovereign grace in salvation, and their own need for the grace of God in Christ.<sup>20</sup> The Sovereign Spirit was pleased to equip these two men through their faithful preaching of the word. The enjoyed an “uncommon success” in their preaching, both in terms of “power and extent”.<sup>21</sup> The rationalism, Deism and legalism that had affected these communions gave way to a spiritual light and illumination, and understanding of God as Father, and liberty to live for Christ in the power of His Spirit.<sup>22</sup> These revivals engaged the hearts of God’s people, and not merely their minds; their were Gospel, holy

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>14</sup> Kindle Loc. 806.

<sup>15</sup> Kindle Loc. 1128.

<sup>16</sup> Kindle Loc. 1144, 1216.

<sup>17</sup> Kindle Loc. 1222.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

fruits that were produced because of the change in nature and of heart through the working of God's Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

In the second essay, Ian Hugh Clary shows how the Holy Spirit "melted the ice of a long winter" by focusing on "**Revival and Irish Dissent**".<sup>24</sup> This chapter is focuses on those moments in Irish Protestant history when the "presence of God's Spirit was experienced by His people in a particularly powerful way".<sup>25</sup> The focus of this chapter is primarily on God's use of a "madman" named **James Glendinning**.<sup>26</sup> He started preaching in Ireland in 1625, but was characterized as "anything but intellectually gifted". Ministers in the area had started monthly meetings to instruct people in the basics of the gospel. Glendinning was excluded from the meetings because of his deficient gifts, and for his questionable character. "Crazy James Glendinning's" preaching, however, was used by God to this revival new Ulster and this has been called the "**Six Mile Water Revival**".<sup>27</sup> One minister humorously observed of him, "God had used a madman to bring a revival!"<sup>28</sup> Though the revival was from God, it was accompanied with difficulties. There were negative responses from the Roman Catholic clergy, as well as from fellow Protestants.<sup>29</sup>

One important concern was the problem of counterfeiting of true revival.<sup>30</sup> Physical reactions during a genuine revival should not necessarily be suspect, but there can be a man-centered emotionalism that arises and threatens the reputation of the work of God's Spirit.<sup>31</sup> Though this was a short-lived revival of God's Spirit, it marked the longer reality of Irish dissent and Irish Presbyterianism.<sup>32</sup> Ultimately, this revival brought about a "renewed interest in mission", and to a later awakening in Ulster in 1859.<sup>33</sup> This later revival was greatly and negatively influenced by Charles Finney's revivalistic methods that were being used in America of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The success of this Ulster Revival encouraged the people to a deeper walk with God in holiness, and to lay-led Bible meetings.<sup>34</sup> In comparing these two revivals, one is tempted to describe one revival as more genuine, and the other one in Ulster as too man-centered, and

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>24</sup> Kindle Loc. 701.

<sup>25</sup> Kindle Loc. 701.

<sup>26</sup> Kindle Loc. 746.

<sup>27</sup> Kindle Loc. 746-54.

<sup>28</sup> Kindle Loc. 772.

<sup>29</sup> Kindle Loc. 798.

<sup>30</sup> Kindle Loc. 806.

<sup>31</sup> Kindle Loc. 814.

<sup>32</sup> Kindle Loc. 865-74.

<sup>33</sup> Kindle Loc. 1023, 1032ff.

<sup>34</sup> Kindle Loc. 1128.

emotionalistic. The revival in 1625 was the work of God's Spirit empowered through an unlikely man and the people became more dedicated to Christ, His Word, confessional identity. The Ulster awakening was much broader doctrinally and confessionally, and this blurred the good lines of distinction and boundary between denominations.<sup>35</sup> Genuine revivals promote a Christ-centered, faithfulness to God's Word, and necessarily makes clearer confessional boundaries. The first of these revivals accomplished that, the latter did not, actually caused the "growth of theological laxity within Irish Dissent".<sup>36</sup>

The next chapter is on the **Calvinistic Baptists** in what has been termed the "**Long Eighteenth Century**".<sup>37</sup> Calvinist Baptists are Reformed in soteriology, congregationalist in church government, and promote believer's baptism.<sup>38</sup> Dr. Michael Haykin demonstrates how phenomenally and exponentially the Baptist communion grew from just roughly 130 churches in 1640 to around three hundred congregations by 1689. This was during a time when the worship of churches apart from the Anglican communion was forbidden because of the Clarendon Code.<sup>39</sup> Though the Baptist churches were in a state of declension, particularly with the First Great Awakening with the Wesley's, Whitefield, and Edwards being in the historical background. Many within the eighteenth century among the Calvinistic Baptists were willing to regard this Evangelical Revival as a genuine work of God, primarily because in their estimation it did not "issue in 'true gospel churches'".<sup>40</sup> Their concern was: "How could God work in an outward form, namely the Anglican Church, that was not a New Testament like church?" in their estimation.<sup>41</sup>

The most important Baptist theologian of the late eighteenth century in this revival of Calvinist Baptists was **Andrew Fuller** (1754-1815). Fuller was very particularly influential in the formation of a missions society that was known for sending the great missionary, William Cary to India.<sup>42</sup> In fact, Dr. Haykin demonstrates that there is a "direct line from the publication of *'Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation'* to Fuller's wholehearted involvement in the formation of the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen in 1792".<sup>43</sup> Another important Calvinistic Baptist was **John Sutcliff**, particularly in his influence on praying for revival. Influenced by Jonathan Edwards, Sutcliff believed that prayer was the primary means through which God brought this fresh revival upon the

---

<sup>35</sup> Kindle Loc. 1241.

<sup>36</sup> Kindle Loc. 1249.

<sup>37</sup> Kindle Loc. 1604.

<sup>38</sup> Kindle Loc. 1604.

<sup>39</sup> Kindle Loc. 1604.

<sup>40</sup> Kindle Loc. 1706.

<sup>41</sup> Kindle Loc. 1715.

<sup>42</sup> Kindle Loc. 1954ff.

<sup>43</sup> Kindle Loc. 1945-54.

Calvinistic Baptists, and on both ministers and churches, the Spirit worked mightily.<sup>44</sup> Sutcliff believed with Edwards that “A life of faith will ever be a life of prayer”, and encouraged the churches to pray for the Spirit of revival.<sup>45</sup> Sutcliff wrote:

---

*The grand object of prayer is to be that the Holy Spirit may be poured down on our ministers and churches, that sinners may be converted, the saints edified, the interest of religion revived, and the name of God glorified.... Prayer, because it is a weapon common to all who are friends of truth and holiness, is one sphere in which Christians can present a fully united front against Satan.*<sup>46</sup>

---

What is most interesting (and encouraging?!) is that when the passionately praying man, Sutcliff, died, he said to Fuller, “I wish I had prayed more”.<sup>47</sup>

What is a **Scottish Presbyterian perspective on revival**? The next essay takes up this topic, beginning with Professor Donald Macleod’s caution about revival: “The pre-occupation with revival which prevails in some quarters is...dangerous” and he goes on to argue that “whatever the importance of revival, biblically and historically, our duty is reformation.”<sup>48</sup> Typical of good Scottish Presbyterians, there is caution uttered about revival, before revival is described. Ian Campbell demonstrates in his essay that there is no uniquely Scottish Presbyterian perspective on revival.<sup>49</sup> Scottish Presbyterianism was founded on the theology of John Calvin as it was ministered through John Knox in the sixteenth century. Revival occurred in the Scottish Presbyterian churches during times of communion seasons. These were a “protracted series of services in a congregation centering on the Sunday morning communion service.”<sup>50</sup>

In 1630, there was a revival at Kirk O’ Shotts near Glasgow. A man named **John Howe** was used of God to be a faithful preacher who demonstrated the work of the Spirit in power.<sup>51</sup> Another revival was in Cambuslang, near Glasgow in 1742 through the powerful ministry of **William MacCulloch** (1691-1771).<sup>52</sup> There had been an interest in the North American revivals through correspondence, particularly in the influential ministry of Jonathan Edwards. In fact, George Whitefield came and preached in Cambuslang

---

<sup>44</sup> Kindle Loc. 1997-2035.

<sup>45</sup> Kindle Loc. 2031.

<sup>46</sup> Kindle Loc. 2049, 2109.

<sup>47</sup> Kindle Loc. 2160.

<sup>48</sup> Kindle Loc. 2404.

<sup>49</sup> Kindle Loc. 2413.

<sup>50</sup> Kindle Loc. 2440.

<sup>51</sup> Kindle Loc. 2465.

<sup>52</sup> Kindle Loc. 2427.

and the revival spread to parishes all around Glasgow. Though there were dangers of fanaticism, this seemed to have been a genuine revival of God.<sup>53</sup> Another important man used of God was **John MacDonald** (1779-1849) who experienced a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit during his time at Edinburgh, which made his preaching “more warmhearted and zealous”.<sup>54</sup> It is important to note who God grants a minister a revival, as the man is anointed and sharpened as God’s instrument, so the Spirit is pleased to use the minister to influence others. MacDonald’s preaching was described as “deeply scriptural, deeply theological, unashamedly federalistic, and overtly spiritual”.<sup>55</sup>

When speaking of Scottish Presbyterians of the eighteenth century, who could not include **Thomas Chalmers** (1780-1847)?<sup>56</sup> Chalmers has been remembered as one of the greatest churchmen and pulpiteers of his time. Though settled in a ministry in Glasgow, God granted him great notoriety. He was used by God to particularly bring the gospel to the overlooked poor. Revival meant that from within church life, deacons in congregations should assist the poor. The people of God were to be faithful in both Word and deed.<sup>57</sup> From this pastoral work, Chalmers would go on to influence subsequent generations of Presbyterian ministers and theologians as he took the professorship of theology at Edinburgh in 1827.<sup>58</sup> This influence would contribute to many doctrinally sound ministers and gospel preaching ministers in Scotland, and would eventually lead the faithful preachers to begin the Free Church of Scotland because of a wholehearted commitment to the Gospel of Jesus, and the embracing of the need for genuine revival in the churches.<sup>59</sup> What can be learned from the revivals in Scottish Presbyterianism is that genuine revival will be a heightening of “normal Christianity”; there is “little that is new in revival”.<sup>60</sup> This means that folks will more deeply appreciate the preaching of the Word of God, and take part in the means of grace that God has provided for the church. While there is a change in the degree of power, there is not a change in the means that God has given to His Church.<sup>61</sup>

**Duncan Campbell** (1898-1972) was used by God in Lewis, known as the “Lewis Revival” (from 1949-52).<sup>62</sup> The twelve characteristics of this more recent revival were a “spiritual atmosphere, liveliness,

---

<sup>53</sup> Kindle Loc. 2499.

<sup>54</sup> Kindle Loc. 2525.

<sup>55</sup> Kindle Loc. 2579.

<sup>56</sup> Kindle Loc. 2588.

<sup>57</sup> Kindle Loc. 2596-2605.

<sup>58</sup> Kindle Loc. 2605.

<sup>59</sup> Kindle Loc. 2614.

<sup>60</sup> Kindle Loc. 2726, 2795.

<sup>61</sup> Kindle Loc. 2726.

<sup>62</sup> Kindle Loc. 2735.



spiritual sensitivity, no sense of time, the guidance of the Holy Spirit in preaching, conviction of sin, fearless preaching, physical manifestations, opposition, perceiving the word of God as a sword, expectancy, and singing.<sup>63</sup> In these revivals, as in most of them, there was debate and disagreement, but the common factor in genuine revival is *a faithfulness to the centrality of the preaching of God's Word* [my emphasis].<sup>64</sup> Ian Campbell concludes his excellent essay with lessons the church can learn from the Scottish Revivals. 1. God alone can bless His Gospel (1 Cor. 3:6).<sup>65</sup> 2. Revival is always, by its very nature, extraordinary, and therefore not normative.<sup>66</sup> God blesses the regular teaching and preaching of His Word with an extraordinary work of the Spirit. "There can...be no substitute for the careful, precise, exegetical, and theological preaching of God's Word. Revival must never be viewed as an alternative to the regular means of grace."<sup>67</sup> 3. Revival teaches us that we are all servants—nothing more, nothing less. We are called to pray and wait upon God. 4. Revival waiting is not an option for us. We must pray, and wait upon God's good pleasure. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to be awakened and to enjoy the fullness of what Christ has secured for believers in His life, death, resurrection and ascension.

Robert Davis Smart's essay on **"Edward's Revival Instinct and Apologetic in American Presbyterianism"** begins with the important and pointed question: *"What Presbyterian today is their who prays for the outpouring of God's Spirit?"*<sup>68</sup> Jonathan Edwards was mightily used by God's Spirit as a minister of the First Great Awakening in North America. Edwards' instinct was "simply to prayerfully seek and expect from God 'outpourings of the Holy Spirit' as the central means of spreading Christianity until the Consummation" writes Dr. Smart.<sup>69</sup> Edwards is remembered for defending revival on two fronts: the rejection of fanaticism (or "friends" of revival) and anti-revivalism (those suspect of all revivals, or opposers of revival). Edwards' revival theology influence American Presbyterians initially, but this has faded over time to some degree.<sup>70</sup> Edwards' revival theology was to encourage ministers and churches to seek God for more "outpourings of the Spirit", and to defend this as Presbyterian credenda (something believed and confessed) and agenda (something done, lived out).<sup>71</sup> Revival narratives of early 19<sup>th</sup> century "emphasized orderliness and the powerful effects of God's Spirit on the lives of their people," particularly

---

<sup>63</sup> Kindle Loc. 2743.

<sup>64</sup> Kindle Loc. 2761.

<sup>65</sup> Kindle Loc. 2856.

<sup>66</sup> Kindle Loc. 2783.

<sup>67</sup> Kindle Loc. 2890.

<sup>68</sup> Kindle Loc. 3545.

<sup>69</sup> Kindle Loc. 3116.

<sup>70</sup> Kindle Loc. 3185ff.

<sup>71</sup> Kindle Loc. 3150.

in light of the criticism that fanatical manifestations of revival were receiving.<sup>72</sup> One American Presbyterian influenced by Edwards' theology of revival, **James McGready**, encouraged for members of congregations and ministers to make solemn covenants to pray for the outpouring of God's Spirit.<sup>73</sup> Yet Presbyterianism overall on the frontier was "handicapped by rigidity of both its creed and polity. Dr. Smart notes that the numerous frontier controversies and divisions were largely the result of the lack of elasticity in Presbyterianism."<sup>74</sup> In fact, it was the excess and emotionalism in some of the so-called revivals that caused the Presbyterians to split between Old and New School divisions in 1837.<sup>75</sup> Old School side Presbyterians were inclined to regard both "Edwards and later Edwardeans as largely mistaken in their view of revival in the church."<sup>76</sup> The **Old School Presbyterians** were concerned about the movement that occurred between true revival morphing into city organizing and marketing and celebrities using revival techniques outside the authority of regional presbyteries and incorporating a mixture of theologies and an element of entertainment.<sup>77</sup> Though Edwards was quite conservative in his understanding of genuine revival, and he was right to defend it, nevertheless, there is still much disagreement in American Presbyterianism over revival.

In Chapter 6, Peter Beck focuses attention on two very prominent Congregationalists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, **Jonathan Edwards** (1703-1758) and **Asahel Nettleton** (1783-1844). Edwards' magnitude of importance on revivals "eludes adequate description" as one writer put it.<sup>78</sup> As Martyn Lloyd-Jones summarized, Edwards was "preeminently the theologian of the revival."<sup>79</sup> Edwards, like his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, the Spirit of God must be poured out on God's people, or "Religion will not revive".<sup>80</sup> Edwards lived in a world "full of revivalistic expectations", and that revival came in 1734, in Edwards' small town of Northampton, Massachusetts. Edwards was faithfully preaching on justification by faith alone, and God blessed it immensely with revival. In 1737, Edwards wrote "A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God".<sup>81</sup> This revival was short-lived, but it stimulated Edwards to pray for more revival, and it encouraged him and the people to a committed heavenly mindedness.<sup>82</sup> Though there were

---

<sup>72</sup> Kindle Loc. 3238.

<sup>73</sup> Kindle Loc. 3264.

<sup>74</sup> Kindle Loc. 3316.

<sup>75</sup> Kindle Loc. 3342.

<sup>76</sup> Kindle Loc. 3376.

<sup>77</sup> Kindle Loc. 3484.

<sup>78</sup> Kindle Loc. 3921.

<sup>79</sup> Kindle Loc. 3931.

<sup>80</sup> Kindle Loc. 3968.

<sup>81</sup> Kindle Loc. 4006.

<sup>82</sup> Kindle Loc. 4034.

critics of what became known as the Great Awakening, Edwards became the primary defendant and apologist for the revival. As he wrote in response to the first revival, it was “surprising” because it was all because of God’s good pleasure to bless in this way, and not something organized and worked up by man. In defending revivals, Edwards wrote that a true revival can be recognized by a few important characteristics: 1. True revival makes much of Jesus Christ; 2. It operates against Satan, the world and the flesh; 3. There is a higher regard for Scripture and preaching; 4. The Spirit of truth witnesses to genuine revival’s validity; 5. A change of heart evidences itself in love to God and others (this has societal and cultural implications).<sup>83</sup> Edwards rightly warned critics of genuine revival when he said, “to oppose a genuine revival is to oppose God Himself”.<sup>84</sup> Prayer is of utmost importance for revival. Edwards wrote:

---

*When God is about to bestow some great blessing on His church, it is often His manner in the first place, so to order things in His providence as to show His church their great need of it, and to bring ‘em into distress for want of it, and so put them upon earnestly crying to ‘em for it.*<sup>85</sup>

---

Another great man of God used by the Spirit in revival was the “preacher of revival” Asahel Nettleton. Nettleton is often in the shadows of Edwards and Whitefield, eclipsed by their prominence, but God used this man greatly.<sup>86</sup> Those who sat under Nettleton’s preaching would be greatly convicted of their need of Christ. In a time with the doctrine of original sin was being undermined by many prominent theologians and preachers, Nettleton was faithful to preach this foundation tenet of orthodoxy. Nettleton was sensitive to the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>87</sup> In defense of revivals, Nettleton said that he knew that it was not revival that produced false conversions, “but false theology”.<sup>88</sup> One important example we can imitate in Nettleton’s life is that the great doctrines of the faith can, and should be preached with great effect in awakening sinners. The experiential truth of Nettleton’s ministry was that sound doctrine and a lively, faith-filled life of fruitfulness will always go together in times of true revival.<sup>89</sup>

In chapter 7, Tom J. Nettles focuses attention on the subject of “**Baptist Revivals in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**”. He begins by saying that “Baptists survive only if they live in the mode of revival. They depend solely on conversion for the origination of church membership and upon a life of consistent

---

<sup>83</sup> Kindle Loc. 4099.

<sup>84</sup> Kindle Loc. 4109.

<sup>85</sup> Kindle Loc. 4147.

<sup>86</sup> Kindle Loc. 4239ff.

<sup>87</sup> Kindle Loc. 4267.

<sup>88</sup> Kindle Loc. 4343.

<sup>89</sup> Kindle Loc. 4352.

holiness for its maintenance.<sup>90</sup> There was phenomenal growth due to revival between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries for Baptists. From 56 churches to 41,629. All produced by revivals of God.<sup>91</sup> The Association of Baptist Churches between 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were committed confessionally to 1689 London Baptist Confession.<sup>92</sup> They believed firmly that “orthodox without godliness had no attraction for the churches of the association, but any pretension to spirituality aside from orthodoxy rang just as hollow.”<sup>93</sup> The association encouraged prayer and striving after godliness to please God and to depend upon God for an outpouring of His Spirit. They set aside once a month for days of prayer and fasting, dependence upon God, and crying to Him for revival.<sup>94</sup>

For the Reformed Baptists, the primary means for revival are prayer and the Gospel preached.<sup>95</sup> For Baptists, there are a few things that characterize genuine revival: 1. Order: There will be little noise and confusion in times of true revival; 2. The Gospel is preached; 3. Converts have a deep sense of depravity and sin committed against a holy God; 4. Genuine revival had a visible manifestation in society/culture.<sup>96</sup> **Francis Wayland** spoke for all Baptists on the errors of revival: “Common errors often attached to revival excitement...included reliance on mere means instead of the Spirit of God; a tendency to give emphasis to language, ideas, and means that have no biblical warrant; a tendency to spiritual pride.”<sup>97</sup> Unfortunately, the history of the Baptists is similar to others who have experienced true revival: devolution and declension into revivalism. **Revivalism** proponents tend to not give due prominence to sin and repentance; they failed to preach the terrors of God’s law; they emphasized the human side of salvation, asserting man’s ability to believe more than the sovereignty and graciousness of God in salvation.<sup>98</sup>

The final essay is by Dr. Joel R. Beeke on “**Revival and the Dutch Reformed Church in Eighteenth-Century America**”. Two decades prior to Edwards and Whitefield, God used the Dutch Reformed minister **Theodore Jacobus Frelinghuysen** (1691-1747) to call sinners to Christ.<sup>99</sup> The roots of the Dutch Reformed revival was what scholars define the “Nadere Reformatie” or the “**Dutch Further Reformation**”. As a

---

<sup>90</sup> Kindle Loc. 4594.

<sup>91</sup> Kindle Loc. 4602.

<sup>92</sup> Kindle Loc. 4665ff.

<sup>93</sup> Kindle Loc. 4702.

<sup>94</sup> Kindle Loc. 4711.

<sup>95</sup> Kindle Loc. 4919.

<sup>96</sup> Kindle Loc. 4910ff.

<sup>97</sup> Kindle Loc. 5020ff.

<sup>98</sup> Kindle Loc. 5184.

<sup>99</sup> Kindle Loc. 5385.

movement of “Dutch Puritanism” this movement or revival of God’s Spirit was a “reaction to the declension or absence of a living faith” that “made both the personal experience of faith and godliness matters of central importance.”<sup>100</sup> As with other genuine revivals, this effected the larger culture and society at large. Frelinghuysen focused on discriminatory preaching, commanding the people that you “must be born again”. He focused on regeneration and repentance, asking listeners to examine themselves for evidences of the new birth.<sup>101</sup> What can be said generally of the “Nadere Reformatie” can be said of Frelinghuysen specifically; he stressed orthodox, biblical beliefs and warm, personal spirituality resulting in vital, practical obedience.<sup>102</sup> He was so committed to biblical regeneration that this caused quite a bit of controversy for him, particularly as he fenced the table of the Lord’s Supper from the unconverted.<sup>103</sup> Despite the criticisms, Frelinghuysen continued faithful, and God used Him in a powerful way to bring revival to the Dutch Reformed congregations in America. There were other Dutch ministers used by God, but none as noteworthy as Frelinghuysen.

Dr. Beeke ends his essay on lessons that we can learn from this revival. 1. Sound doctrine is essential for God’s people. Revival does not come by abandoning our doctrine and confession, particularly our Reformed theology, but by being faithful to it. 2. Revival includes earnest preaching to the lost; it is discriminatory, not assuming that all are born again, and that all should not be treated as if they are born again. 3. Revival takes courage. We must pray for revival, and prayerfully put on the whole armor of God. Satan hates revival, and he hates those instruments of God that would be used by His Spirit to awaken His Church. 4. Revival can flourish in established churches. This is the natural, organic home of revival. “Choose local” we might say with regards to revival. Revival doesn’t happen in extraordinary ministries, but in the faithful use of the ordinary means of grace. 5. Revival includes peacemaking. We are to be forgiven and forgiving of others. We should be humble and meek if being used by God, and seek to pursue peace with others, even when they disagree. 6. Above all, revival stresses love for Christ. *“At the heart of revival is love—the love of God, love for Christ, and love for lost sinners. Love is the sweet flame of true Christian zeal,”* said Jonathan Edwards.<sup>104</sup>

In conclusion, I agree with the main points and theological-practical thrust of the book. We ought to pray for revival as Reformed folks. In fact, without true and genuine revival, we can never be continually

---

<sup>100</sup> Kindle Loc. 5402.

<sup>101</sup> Kindle Loc. 5500.

<sup>102</sup> Kindle Loc. 5402.

<sup>103</sup> Kindle Loc. 5517.

<sup>104</sup> Kindle Loc. 5740.

reforming as we necessarily need to be doing! The main points of this book that I think are most important are that Reformation and genuine revival should be part of the Reformed church experience in general, and part of the local congregation's expectations and hopes specifically. We must watch and pray as God's people *for revival*. We must seek God for outpourings of His Spirit, while remaining ever faithful to the preaching of God's Word, and the means of grace He has provided His church graciously to accomplish the mission He has given to us. Reformation will come through revival as we pray that God's Spirit would be pleased to grant us His power and grace.

One thing that should be noted in all of these samplings of revivals from different groups within God's Church. ***They all are utterly dependent upon the preaching of the Word and prayer as the primary means that God has given to be blessed and experience revival in His good timing.*** Genuine revivals will always be characterized by faith and prayer, and particularly faith in prayer, and more particularly faithful prayer to God for the Sovereign working of God's Spirit. True revival will never depend upon techniques and the self-centered works of men. There are also dangers that we should beware of. There are always counterfeits that Satan uses in times when the Spirit is truly awakening His church. We must avoid a "working up" or man-centered way of producing a revival, or revivalism. There can be bodily reactions in genuine revival, but these are not necessary, and they should not be excessive leading to emotionalism. The reactions and experiences, like the revival itself, must always be tethered to God's holy, breathed-out Word. We must see to it that genuine revival never devolves into revivalism.

As Robert Davis Smart concludes, let us prayerfully and discerningly keep these lessons in mind. Reformed churches desire to be concerned about doctrine and life. Though Pentecostalism and revivalism are biblical aberrations and errors, we do not want to react to these terms of "Pentecostal" and "revival", and thus to prejudice ourselves against, or oppose the legitimate and *genuine work of God's Spirit*. Let us seek a true Christian experience and desire the pure fruits of the Holy Spirit as we live out our lives. Let us be thankful to God for revival, as we wait upon the LORD through faithful ministry and prayer.

CRB