

## **A Passion for Christ-Exalting Power**

Martyn Lloyd-Jones on the *Need for Revival and Baptism with the Holy Spirit* - 30 January, 1991

In July, 1959 Martyn Lloyd-Jones and his wife Bethan were on vacation in Wales. They attended a little chapel for a Sunday morning prayer meeting and Lloyd-Jones asked them, 'Would you like me to give a word this morning?' The people hesitated because it was his vacation and they didn't want to presume on his energy. but his wife said, 'Let him, preaching is his life'. It was a true statement. In the preface to his powerful book, *Preaching and Preachers*, he said, 'Preaching has been my life's work ... to me the work of preaching is the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called.

Many called him the last of the Calvinistic Methodist preachers because he combined Calvin's love for truth and sound reformed doctrine with the fire and passion of the eighteenth-century Methodist revival. For thirty years he preached from the pulpit at Westminster Chapel in London. Usually that meant three different sermons each weekend, Friday evening, and Sunday morning and evening. At the end of his career he remarked, 'I can say quite honestly that I would not cross the road to listen to myself preaching'.

But that was not the way others felt. When J. I. Packer was a 22-year-old student he heard Lloyd-Jones preach each Sunday evening during the school year of 1948-1949. He said that he had 'never heard such preaching.' It came to him 'with the force of electric shock, bringing to at least one of his listeners more of a sense of God than any other man' he had known.

Many of us have felt this shock even through the written form of Lloyd-Jones' sermons. I recall very distinctly hearing George Verwer say at Urbana '67 that Lloyd-Jones' two volumes on the Sermon on the Mount were the greatest thing he had ever read. I bought the books and read them in the summer of 1968 between college and seminary. The impact was unforgettable. Not since I was a little boy sitting under the preaching of my father, had I been so moved by what J. I. Packer called 'the greatness and weight of spiritual issues'. This was the effect he has had, and continues to have on thousands. By some he was called simply the 'greatest preacher this century'.

### **A Sketch of His Life**

His path to Westminster was unique. He was born in Cardiff, Wales, December 20, 1899. He moved to London with his family when he was 14 and went to Medical School St. Bartholomew's (teaching) Hospital where he received his M.D. in 1921 and became Sir Thomas Horder's chief clinical assistant. The well-known Horder described Lloyd-Jones as 'the most acute thinker that I ever knew'.

Between 1921 and 1923 he underwent a profound conversion. It was so life-changing that it brought with it a passion to preach that completely outweighed his call as a physician. He felt a deep yearning to return to his native Wales and preach. His first sermon there was in April 1925 and the note he sounded was the recurrent theme of his life: Wales did not need more talk about social action, it needed 'a great spiritual awakening.' This theme of revival and power and real vitality remained his lifelong passion.

He was called as the pastor of Bethlehem Forward Movement Mission Church in Sandfields, Aberavon in 1926, and the next year married one of his former fellow medical students, Bethan Phillips on January 8. In the course of their life together they had two daughters, Elizabeth and Ann.

His preaching became known across Britain and in America. It was popular, crystal clear, doctrinally sound, logical and on fire. In 1937 he preached in Philadelphia and G. Campbell Morgan happened to be there. He was so impressed that he felt compelled to see Lloyd-Jones as his associate at Westminster Chapel in London.

At the time Lloyd-Jones was being considered as the president of the Calvinistic Methodist College in Bala in North Wales. So he temporarily refused Westminster's call to be a permanent member of the staff. But the college turned him down. His main supporter on the board of the college had missed the train and couldn't support his call to the presidency. And so he accepted Westminster's call and stayed there 29 years until his retirement in 1968.

I can't help but pause and give thanks for the disappointments and reversals and setbacks in our lives that God uses to put us just where he wants us. How different modern Evangelicalism in Britain would

have been had Martyn Lloyd-Jones not preached in London for 30 years. How different my own life may have been had I not read his sermons in the summer of 1968! Praise God for missed trains and other so-called accidents!

Lloyd-Jones and G. Campbell Morgan were joint ministers until Morgan's retirement in 1943. Then Lloyd-Jones was the sole preaching pastor for almost 30 years. In 1947 the Sunday morning attendance was about 1,500 and the Sunday evening attendance 2,000 as people were drawn to the clarity and power and doctrinal depth of his preaching. He wore a somber black Geneva gown and used no gimmicks or jokes. Like Jonathan Edwards two hundred years before, he held audiences by the sheer weight and intensity of his vision of truth.

He became ill in 1968 and took it as a sign to retire and devote himself more to writing. He continued this for about twelve years and then died peacefully in his sleep on March 1, 1981.

### **Revival Is a Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

From the beginning to the end the life of Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a cry for depth in two areas—depth in Biblical doctrine and depth in vital spiritual experience. Light and heat. Logic and fire. Word and Spirit. Again and again he would be fighting on two fronts: on the one hand against dead, formal, institutional intellectualism, and on the other hand against superficial, glib, entertainment-oriented, man-centred emotionalism. He saw the world in a desperate condition without Christ and without hope; and a church with no power to change it. One wing of the church was straining out intellectual gnats and the other was swallowing the camels of evangelical compromise or careless charismatic teaching. For Lloyd-Jones the only hope was historic, God-centred revival.

What I would like to do with you this morning is meditate on the meaning of revival in Lloyd-Jones' preaching—or more specifically, I want to understand what sort of power he was seeking, and what he expected it to look like when it came, and how he thought we should seek it.

Lloyd-Jones has done more than any other man in this century, I think, to restore the historic meaning of the word revival.

A revival is a miracle ... something that can only be explained as the direct ... intervention of God ... Men can produce evangelistic campaigns, but they cannot and never have produced a revival.

But for Lloyd-Jones it was a great tragedy that the whole deeper understanding of revival, as a sovereign outpouring of the Holy Spirit, had been lost by the time he took up the subject in 1959 at the 100th anniversary of the Welsh Revival. 'During the last seventy, to eighty years,' he said, 'this whole notion of a visitation, a baptism of God's Spirit upon the Church, has gone'.

He gave several reasons why. But he says that the most important theological reason for the prevailing indifference to revival was the view that the Holy Spirit was given once for all on the Day of Pentecost, so that He cannot be poured out again, and prayer for revival is therefore wrong and needless. This is where Lloyd-Jones begins to part ways with some standard evangelical interpretations of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He emphatically rejected the common view that equates the spiritual baptism of Acts 2 and **1 Corinthians 12:13**. He describes the view he rejects like this:

Yes, [Acts 2] was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But we all get that now, and it is unconscious, we are not aware of it, it happens to us the moment we believe and we are regenerated. It is just that act of God which incorporates us into the Body of Christ. That is the baptism of the Spirit. So it is no use your praying for for some other baptism of the Spirit, or asking God to pour out His Spirit upon the church ... It is not surprising that, as that kind of preaching has gained currency, people have stopped praying for revival'.

When a reformed theologian like Klaas Runia opposed Pentecostalism, Lloyd-Jones agreed that the insistence on tongues and the 'claiming' of gifts was wrong, but he was just as disturbed by Runia's concept of the baptism of the Spirit. He wrote to him and said,

I still feel that you really do not allow for revival. You show this where you say, 'Read all the passages that speak of the Holy Spirit and the Church. It is always: Become what you are, ALL of you.' If it is simply a question of 'Become what you are' and nothing more, then how can one pray for revival, and indeed how does one account for the revivals in the history of the church?

Revival is when the Spirit comes down, is poured out. Lloyd-Jones is crystal clear on how he thinks baptism with the Holy Spirit relates to regeneration.

Here is the first principle ... I am asserting that you can be a believer, that you can have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, and still not be baptised with the Holy Spirit ... The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that is done by the Lord Jesus Christ not by the Holy Spirit ... Our being baptised into the body of Christ is the work of the Spirit [that's the point of **1 Cor. 12:13**], as regeneration is his work, but this is something entirely different; this is Christ's baptising us with the Holy Spirit. And I am suggesting that this is something which is therefore obviously distinct from and separate from becoming a Christian, being regenerate, having the Holy Spirit dwelling within you.

He laments that by identifying the baptism of the Holy Spirit with regeneration the whole thing is made non-experimental and unconscious. This is not the way it was experienced in the books of Acts. So he spoke with strong words about such a view:

Those people who say that [baptism with the Holy Spirit] happens to everybody at regeneration seem to me not only to be denying the New Testament but to be definitely quenching the Spirit'.

### **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit Gives Exceptional Assurance and Joy**

He believes that this view discourages us from seeking what the church so desperately needs today. 'The greatest need at the present time,' he says, 'is for Christian people who are assured of their salvation'—which is given in a special way through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He distinguishes between the 'customary assurance' of the child of God, and what he calls 'unusual assurance' or 'full assurance' that comes with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

When Christians are baptised by the Holy Spirit, they have a sense of the power and presence of God that they have never known before—and this is the greatest possible form of assurance.

The baptism of the Spirit is a new fresh manifestation of God to the soul. You have an overwhelming knowledge given to you of God's love to you in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ... This is the greatest and most essential characteristic of the baptism with the Spirit. It is experiential. It is undeniable. There is an immediacy that goes beyond ordinary experience. It fills with overwhelming joy. It turns advocates of Christ into witnesses of what they have seen and heard.

He illustrates the difference between steady-state, customary Christian experience and the experience of baptism with the Spirit by telling a story from Thomas Goodwin.

A man and his little child [are] walking down the road and they are walking hand in hand, and the child knows that he is the child of his father, and he knows that his father loves him, and he rejoices in that, and he is happy in it. There is no uncertainty about it all, but suddenly the father, moved by some impulse, takes hold of the child and picks him up, fondles him in his arms, kisses him, embraces him, showers his love upon him, and then he puts him down again and they go on walking together.

That is it! The child knew before that his father loved him, and he knew that he was his child. But oh! the loving embrace, this extra outpouring of love, this unusual manifestation of it—that is the kind of thing. The Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God'.

When Jesus baptises a person with the Holy Spirit, Lloyd-Jones says, the person is 'carried not only from doubt to belief but to certainty, to awareness of the presence and the glory of God.

This is what Lloyd-Jones means by revival:

The difference between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and a revival is simply one of the number of people affected. I would define a revival as a large number, a group of people, being baptised by the Holy Spirit at the same time; or the Holy Spirit falling upon, coming upon a number of people assembled together. It can happen in a district, it can happen in a country.

### **Baptism With the Holy Spirit is an Authentication of the Gospel**

And when it happens it is visible. It is not just a quiet subjective experience in the church. Things happen that make the world sit up and take notice. This is what was so important to Lloyd-Jones. He felt almost overwhelmed by the corruption of the world and the weakness of the church. And believed that the only hope was something stunning.

The Christian church today is failing, and failing lamentably. It is not enough even to be orthodox. You must, of course, be orthodox, otherwise you have not got a message ... We need authority and we need authentication ... Is it not clear that we are living in an age when we need some special authentication—in other words, we need revival.

So revival, for Lloyd-Jones was a kind of power demonstration that would authenticate the truth of the gospel to a desperately hardened world. His description of that world from 25 years ago sounds amazingly current:

We are not only confronted by materialism, worldliness, indifference, hardness, and callousness—but we are also hearing more and more ... about certain manifestations of the powers of evil and the reality of evil spirits. It is not merely sin that is constituting a problem in this country today. There is also a recrudescence of black magic and devil worship and the powers of darkness as well as drug taking and some of the things it leads to. This is why I believe we are in urgent need of some manifestation, some demonstration, of the power of the Holy Spirit.

He cautions that we must not think only of revival. He warns against being too interested in the exceptional and unusual. Don't despise the day of small things, he says. Don't despise the regular work of the church and the regular work of the Spirit.

But I get the distinct impression that Lloyd-Jones was increasingly disillusioned with the 'regular' and the 'customary' and the 'usual' as his ministry came to a close at Westminster. Doesn't it sound like that when he says,

[We] can produce a number of converts, thank God for that, and that goes on regularly in evangelical churches every Sunday. But the need today is much too great for that. The need today is for an authentication of God, of the supernatural, of the spiritual, of the eternal, and this can only be answered by God graciously hearing our cry and shedding forth again his Spirit upon us and filling us as he kept filling the early church.

What is needed is some mighty demonstration of the power of God, some enactment of the Almighty, that will compel people to pay attention, and to look, and to listen. And the history of all the revivals of the past indicates so clearly that that is invariably the effect of revival, without any exception at all. That is why I am calling attention to revival. That is why I am urging you to pray for this. When God acts, he can do more in a minute that man with his organising can do in fifty years.

What lies so heavily on Lloyd-Jones' heart is that the name of God be vindicated and his glory manifested in the world. 'We should be anxious,' he says, 'to see something happening that will arrest the nations, all the peoples, and cause them to stop and think again'. That is what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is all about.

The purpose, the main function of the baptism with the Holy Spirit, is ... to enable God's people to witness in such a manner that it becomes a phenomenon and people are arrested and are attracted.

Now here is where spiritual gifts come in—things like healing and miracles and prophecy and tongues, the whole area of signs and wonders. Lloyd Jones is addressing power evangelism long before John Wimber.

He says that spiritual gifts are a part of the authenticating work of revival and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Extraordinary spiritual gifts, he says, result from the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Then he says that this question is very important at the present time for this reason: 'We need some supernatural authentication of our message'.

Joel, and the other prophets who also spoke of it, indicated that in the age which was to come, and which came with the Lord Jesus Christ and the baptism with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, there should be some unusual authentication of the message.

At this point reformed people get nervous because they feel that the power of the word of God is being compromised. Is not the gospel the power of God unto salvation? Is not the spoken word, empowered by the Holy Spirit, sufficient? 'Jews demand signs, Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified ... the power of God ...' (1 Cor. 1:22-23).

Things are not that simple. And the issue here is not contemporary claims; the issue is that the Scripture show signs and wonders functioning in the New Testament along side the greatest preaching that will ever be. And evidently Peter and Paul and Stephen and Philip did not think that the attestation of signs and wonders compromised the integrity and power of the word of God. (Mark 16:20; Acts 14:3; Heb. 2:4).

Lloyd-Jones is deeply impressed by this fact, and says, 'If the apostles were incapable of being true witnesses without unusual power, who are we to claim that we can be witnesses without such power?' And when he said that he did not just mean the power of the word. He meant the power manifest in extraordinary spiritual gifts. Here's the evidence:

[Before Pentecost the apostles] were not yet fit to be witnesses ... [They] had been with the Lord during the three years of his ministry. They had heard his sermons, they had seen his miracles, they had seen him crucified on the cross, they had seen him dead and buried, and they had seen him after he had risen literally in the body from the grave. These were men who had been with im in the upper room at Jerusalem after his resurrection and to whom he had expounded the Scriptures, and yet it is to these men he says that they must tarry at Jerusalem until they are endued with power from on high. The special purpose, the specific purpose of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is to enable us to witness, to bear testimony, and one of the ways in which that happens is through the giving of spiritual gifts.

My own answer to the question how the power of the word and the authenticating function of signs and wonders fit together is this. The Bible teaches that the gospel preached is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:23). It also teaches that the demand for signs in the presence of God's word is the mark of an evil and adulterous generation (Matt. 16:4; 1 Cor. 1:22). But the Bible also says that Paul and Barnabas 'remained a long time [in Iconium] speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands' (Acts 14:3; cf. Heb. 2:4; Mark 16:20). So signs and wonders were God's attesting witness to the spoken word of the gospel.

Could we not then say, in putting all this together, that signs and wonders function in relation to the word of God, as striking, wakening, channels for the self-authenticating glory of Christ in the gospel? Signs and wonders do not save. They do not transform the heart. Only the glory of Christ seen in the gospel has the power to do that (2 Cor. 3:18-4:6). But evidently, God chooses at times to use signs and wonders along side his regenerating word to win a hearing and to shatter the shell of disinterest and cynicism and false religion, and help the fallen heart fix its gaze on the gospel.

### **Martyn Lloyd-Jones Was Not a Warfieldian Cessationist**

Clearly, from what we have seen, Lloyd-Jones was not what we call a cessationist. In fact he came out very strongly against the Warfield kind of cessationism. In 1969 he wrote against 'A Memorandum on Faith Healing' put out by the Christian Medical Fellowship in England which relied explicitly on Warfield's arguments that the sign gifts (like healing) were 'accompaniments of apostleship' and therefore invalid for today since the apostles were once for all.

I think it is quite without scriptural warrant to say that all these gifts ended with the apostles or the Apostolic Era. I believe there have been undoubted miracles since then.

When he speaks of the need for revival power and for the baptism of the Spirit and for a mighty attestation for the word of God today, it is clear that he has in mind the same sort of thing that happened in the life of the apostles.

It is perfectly clear that in New Testament times, the gospel was authenticated in this way by signs, wonders and miracles of various characters and descriptions ... Was it only meant to be true of the early church? ... The Scriptures never anywhere say that these things were only temporary—never! There is no such statement anywhere.

He deals with the cessationist arguments and concludes that they are based on conjectures and arguments from silence in order to justify a particular prejudice. 'To hold such a view,' he says, 'is simply to quench the Spirit'.

Beyond that he says that there is good historical evidence that many of these gifts persisted for several centuries, and that they have been manifested from time to time since the Reformation. For example,

he credits the record of John Welsh, the son-in-law of John Knox for having done many amazing things and actually raising someone from the dead. And there is evidence from Protestant Reformers that some had a genuine gift of prophecy. For example he says that Alexander Peden, one of the Scottish Covenanters, gave accurate literal prophecies of things that subsequently took place.

### **Martin Lloyd-Jones' Personal Experiences of Unusual Power**

Lloyd-Jones had enough extraordinary experiences of his own to make him know that he had better be open to what the sovereign God might do. For example, Stacy Woods describes the physical effect of one of Lloyd-Jones' sermons.

In an extraordinary way, the presence of God was in that Church. I personally felt as if a hand were pushing me through the pew. At the end of the sermon for some reason or the other the organ did not play, the Doctor went off into the vestry and everyone sat completely still without moving. It must have been almost ten minutes before people seemed to find the strength to get up and, without speaking to one another, quietly leave the Church. Never have I witnessed or experienced such preaching with such fantastic reaction on the part of the congregation.

Another illustration comes from his earlier days at Sandfields. A woman who had been a well-known spirit-medium attended his church one evening. She later testified after her conversion:

The moment I entered your chapel and sat down on a seat amongst the people, I was conscious of a supernatural power. I was conscious of the same sort of supernatural power I was accustomed to in our spiritist meetings, but there was one big difference; I had the feeling that the power in your chapel was a clean power'.

Several times in his life he had a kind of prophetic premonition that went beyond the ordinary. On January 19, 1940 he wrote to the wife of a friend, Douglas Johnson, who had suffered a coronary occlusion.

I have a very definite and unmistakable consciousness of the fact of [Douglas'] complete and entire recovery. That kind of thing, as he will know, is not common with me. I report it because it is so very definite.

This illustrates the point he makes about God's personal communication to his children. He gives Philip's being led to the chariot in Acts 8 and Paul and Barnabas being sent out in Acts 13 as Biblical examples of such direct communication from the Lord, then says,

there is no question but that God's people can look for and expect 'leadings', 'guidance', indications of what they are meant to do ... Men have been told by the Holy Spirit to do something; they knew it was the Holy Spirit speaking to them; and it transpired that it obviously was his leading. It seems clear to me that if we deny such a possibility we are again guilty of quenching the Spirit.

Lloyd-Jones knew from the Bible and from history and from his own experience that the extraordinary working of the Spirit defied precise categorisation. He said, 'the ways in which the blessing comes are almost endless. We must be careful lest we restrict them or lest we try to systematize them over much, or, still worse, lest we mechanise them'.

### **Martin Lloyd-Jones' Criticisms of the Pentecostalism He Knew**

These are remarkable teachings coming from the main spokesman for the reformed cause in Britain in the last generation. He helped found a publishing house (Banner of Truth Trust) that has consistently put forward cessationist, Warfield-like thinking on spiritual gifts. And lest you think Lloyd-Jones was a full-blown charismatic incognito let me mention some things that gave him balance and made him disenchanted with Pentecostals and charismatics as he knew them.

1. He insisted that revival have a sound doctrinal basis. And from what he saw there was a minimisation of doctrine almost everywhere that unity and renewal were being claimed. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and revival will be shallow and short-lived without deeper doctrinal roots than the charismatic tree seems to have.
2. Charismatics put too much stress on what they do and not enough emphasis on the freedom and sovereignty of the Spirit, to come and go on his own terms. 'Spiritual gifts,' he says, 'are always controlled by the Holy Spirit. They are given, and one does not know when they are going to be given'.



You can pray for the baptism of the Spirit, but that does not guarantee that it happens ... It is in his control. He is the Lord. He is a sovereign Lord and he does it in his own time and in his own way.

3. Charismatics sometimes insist on tongues as a sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit which of course he rejects.

It seems to be that the teaching of the Scripture itself, plus the evidence of the history of the church, establishes the fact that the baptism with the Spirit is not always accompanied by particular gifts.

4. But even more often most charismatics claim to be able to speak in tongues whenever they want to. This, he argues is clearly against what Paul says in **1 Cor. 14:18**, 'I thank God I speak in tongues more than you all.' If he and they could speak in tongues any time they chose, then there would be no point in thanking God that the blessing of tongues is more often given to him than to them.

5. Too often, experiences are sought for their own sake rather than for the sake of empowerment for witness and for the glory of Christ.

The aim is not to have experiences in themselves but to empower for outreach and making Christ known ...

We must test anything that claims to be a movement of the Spirit in terms of its evangelistic power ...

The supreme test of anything that claims to be the work of the Holy Spirit is **John 16:14**—'He shall glorify me'.

6. Charismatics can easily fall into the mistake of assuming that if a person has powerful gifts that person is thus a good person and is fit to lead and teach. This is not true. Lloyd-Jones is aware that baptism with the Holy Spirit and the possession of gifts does not certify one's moral fitness to minister or speak for God. The spiritual condition at Corinth, in terms of sanctification, was low and yet there was much evidence of divine power.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit is primarily and essentially a baptism with power ... [But] there is no direct connection between the baptism with the Holy Spirit and sanctification ... It is something that can be isolated, whereas sanctification is a continuing and a continuous process.

7. Charismatics characteristically tend to be more interested in subjective impressions and unusual giftings than in the exposition of Scripture. Be suspicious, he says, of any claim to a 'fresh revelation of truth'. (In view of what he said above concerning how the Holy Spirit speaks today in guidance, he cannot mean here that all direct communication from God is ruled out.)

8. Charismatics sometimes encourage people to give up control of their reason and to let themselves go. Lloyd-Jones disagrees. 'We must never let ourselves go'. A blank mind is not advocated in the Scriptures. The glory of Christianity is what we can 'at one and the same time ... be gripped and lifted up by the Spirit and still be in control' (see **1 Cor. 14:32**). We must always be in a position to test all things, since Satan and hypnotism can imitate the most remarkable things.

### **Martin Lloyd-Jones' Warnings to Spirit-Quenching Formalists**

But having said all that, by way of warning and balance, Lloyd-Jones comes back to the strong affirmation of openness to the supernatural demonstration of power that the world needs so badly. Of those who sit back and point their finger at the charismatic excesses of good people he says, 'God have mercy upon them! God have mercy upon them! It is better to be too credulous than to be carnal and to be smug and dead'.

He even describes how many people quench the Spirit through fear of the unusual or supernatural.

This has often happened: in a meeting ... you begins to be afraid as to what is going to happen and to say, 'If I do this what will take place?' That is quenching the Spirit. It is resisting his general movement upon your spirit. You feel his gracious influence, and then you hesitate and are uncertain or you are frightened. That is quenching the Spirit.

Certain people by nature are afraid of the supernatural, of the unusual, of disorder. You can be so afraid of disorder, so concerned about discipline and decorum and control, that you become guilty of what the Scripture calls 'quenching the Spirit'.

### **How does Lloyd-Jones Counsel Us to Seek the Baptism of the Spirit?**

This is all very remarkable it seems to me. Lloyd-Jones' vision of Spirit-baptised life is a different Biblical synthesis than exists in the evangelical church or the charismatic movement. One may very legitimately ask if he is unwittingly articulating an agenda for the so-called Third Wave of the Spirit.

So in my mind there is a real sense of urgency in asking, 'What is his counsel to us as we navigate between uncritical, and unbiblical gullibility on the one side and Spirit-quenching resistance on the other?'

His basic counsel is this: 'You cannot do anything about being baptised with the Spirit except to ask for it. You cannot do anything to produce it'. Nevertheless you should labor in prayer to attain it. We must be patient and not set time limits on the Lord. He cites Dwight L. Moody and R.A. Torrey and A.J. Gordon and A.T. Pierson as ones who sought the baptism of the Spirit pleading for a long time. In fact Lloyd-Jones had a special liking for Moody's repeated prayer: 'O God, prepare my heart and baptise me with the Holy Ghost power'.

But it seems that there is more that we can do than only pray. If a prepared heart is important then there are means of grace besides prayer that cleanse the heart and conform it more and more to Christ. One thinks of meditation on the Scriptures and exhortation from fellow Christians and mortification of sin along the lines of Romans six and so on.

But not only that, Lloyd-Jones teaches that the Spirit can be quenched by certain forms of barren institutionalisation. Concerning the deadness of formal churches he says,

It is not that God withdrew, it is that the church in her 'wisdom' and cleverness became institutionalised, quenched the Spirit, and made the manifestations of the power of the Spirit well-nigh impossible.

Now that is a powerful statement from one who believes in the sovereignty of the Spirit—that certain forms of institutionalisation can make the manifestations of the Spirit's power 'well-nigh impossible.' If the Spirit in his sovereignty suffers himself to be hindered and quenched, as Lloyd-Jones (and the apostle Paul!) says, then it is not entirely accurate to say that there is nothing we can do to open the way for his coming. It is only that we cannot constrain him to come. Or to put it another way, while it seems we cannot make the Spirit come in power, we can do things that usually keep him from coming.

### **Did He Practice What He Preached?**

This leads to one final crucial question that gets right to the heart of the issue of application: Did Lloyd-Jones practice what he preached? Or to ask it another way, 'Did he make way for the Spirit, or did he possibly and partially quench the Spirit in his own church?'

In view of what he said about certain forms of institutionalisation that make the manifestation of the Spirit's power 'well-nigh impossible', we should ask whether there were forms of institutionalisation at Westminster Chapel that hindered the manifestation of the Spirit? And if certain kinds of 'institutionalisation' can quench the Spirit, one wonders if certain uses of music and certain forms of service and kinds of attitude and personality do not hinder Him as well.

There are at least five aspects of life at Westminster chapel that make me wonder if Lloyd-Jones practically followed through on his revival principles.

1. His biographer, Iain Murray says that the 'experience meetings' of the 18th century had disappeared in the churches of England and there was need for change. But did Lloyd-Jones make significant changes that gave any real open context for the exercise of the spiritual gifts? Iain Murray tells us that the audience in Westminster Chapel was an anonymous group of listeners. 'These were days when strangers did not commonly greet one another in church'.



One wonders if Lloyd-Jones took significant steps to turn that tide. Did he labour, for example, to create a small group network in his church where people could minister to one another in a context perhaps less institutionally restrictive on the Spirit.

2. He said, 'I never trained a single convert how to approach others but they did so ....' Is this typical of his distance from practical hands-on interaction with his people at a level where their participation could be encouraged?

Did Lloyd-Jones really seek the kind of involvement with his people through which the manifestations like those that came through the apostles could flow? The apostles had significant hands-on ministry it seems. Without involvement from the pastor and some risk-taking on his part one can hardly expect the people to take steps to avoid quenching the Spirit, especially when they regularly hear overwhelming and austere cautions about charismatic excesses. Ordinary people interpret long and complex warnings and cautions as a red light on new experience.

3. His grandson, Christopher Catherwood says, 'He had a special dislike for certain kinds of emotive music'. And he himself said,

[The Spirit] does not need ... our help with all our singing and all our preliminaries and working up of emotions ... If the Spirit is Lord—and he is—he does not need these helps, and anything that tries to help the Spirit to produce a result is a contradiction of New Testament teaching.

This dislike for emotive music and the so called 'preliminaries' of the worship service seems to show an austere and suspicious attitude toward emotion and the music that may evoke it for the common people. This could have easily acted as an inhibition on the freedom of the congregation to express the joy of the Holy Spirit.

Could not music be in the same category as the reading of a good book, which Lloyd-Jones said was a perfectly legitimate aid in stirring up the emotions to desire more of the Spirit? Only music would seem to be even more legitimate, since it not only helps to stir up holy desire, but also gives vent to true expressions of desire and love. Not only that, music would seem to have more Biblical warrant as an aid in seeking the fullness of God in worship (cf. [Eph. 5:19](#)).

4. He seemed not to be willing to be involved in the nitty gritty of cultivating a prayer movement. I am not sure of this but Murray records a really surprising observation from 1959: 'A few in 1959 were so absorbed with revival that they organised all-night prayer meetings and looked for ML-J's support. They did not get it'. Yet he was known to pray for extended time with some. Did he really live out his principle that the one thing you can do with zeal and labor to seek a revival is to pray for it?

5. Did he ever come to terms with [1 Cor. 14:1](#)? 'Make love your aim and earnestly desire spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.' How can this be squared with the following statement?

It is always right to seek the fullness of the Spirit—we are exhorted to do so. But the gifts of the Spirit are to be left in the hands of the Holy Spirit himself.

[1 Corinthians 14:1](#) specifically says to seek not just fullness in general, but the gifts of the Spirit in particular. So Lloyd-Jones' statement seems to say the opposite. Was this attitude to the gifts a kind of quenching of the manifestation of power? Again he says,

We must not seek phenomena and strange experiences. What we must seek is the manifestation of God's glory and his power and his might ... We must leave it to God, in his sovereign wisdom, to decide whether to grant these occasional concomitants or not.

Surely he is right that we must not be preoccupied with the outer forms of things—like bodily healing instead of spiritual life. But could the apostles really have prayed without expressing longing for the signs and wonders which proved so helpful in attesting to the word of grace ([Act 14:3](#); [Heb. 2:4](#); [Mark 16:20](#))? Did they in fact not pray in [Acts 4:30](#) that God would perform signs and wonders and specifically that he would stretch out his hand to heal? And Lloyd-Jones himself says that the phenomena are extremely valuable and needed.

'Does it not seem clear and obvious that in this way God is calling attention to himself and his own work by unusual phenomena? There is nothing that attracts such attention as this kind of thing, and it is used of God in the extension of his kingdom to attract, to call the attention of people.

Surely in view of [1 Corinthians 14:1](#) and [Acts 4:30](#) and Lloyd-Jones' own estimation of the gifts and phenomena of the Spirit, the answer is not to forsake praying for signs and wonders but to make it a matter of right motive and good balance with all the other important things in Scripture.

That balance and motive are fairly well expressed in one of his many beautiful closing exhortations, and I use it to close this message:

Let us together decide to beseech him, to plead with him to do this again. Not that we may have the experience or the excitement, but that his mighty hand may be known and his great name may be glorified and magnified among the people.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/biographies/a-passion-for-christ-exalting-power>

**Joan Bakewell Interviews Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vbydx95tVQ>