

~Other Speakers S-Z: Classic Christian Writings:

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

We live in times when souls are more exposed to danger than at any previous period of church history. One needs to read only a few passages on the state of the church at the end of this age to come to this conclusion. "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof...ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 Tim. 3:1-8; see vs. 13-17).

No exposition of the above is necessary. Every thoughtful Christian (and especially pastors of churches) knows definitely how difficult it is to bring the people of God to walk in "newness of life" so that the power of Christ might rest upon them, and that out from them the Word of God in power might awaken, convict, and convert multitudes. The enemy has come in "like a flood," but the Lord will, upon the repentance and obedience of His people, "lift up a standard against him" (Isa. 59:19). The times are difficult, but God is mightier than all the principalities and powers of hell.

Let us turn to God, fellow ministers and Christians, on this Watch Night, as did Wesley and Whitefield and their brethren in the days of spiritual decadence, in 1739, when on the last night of that year, God began to revive His work in what is now known as "The Great Awakening." He is the God of the PRESENT, as of the past. He will hear still, and answer grandly, the prayers of right-living people.

It must be a work of God, effected by the Spirit, in keeping with the Word. And if it is such a work of God, it will have its usual marks. "Return, O Lord, how long? And let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it" (Psa. 90:13-17).

Let ministers who long for a spiritual awakening among their people observe the counsel given in Proverbs 16:1 and in 1 Timothy 4:16. The following pertinent suggestions may be of some value:

Enter into God's presence with praise and thanksgiving.
Meditate on Scriptures appropriate to the need for revival.
Face up to the spiritual state of God's people.
Consider the world situation.
Take a glimpse at the cause of God on mission fields.
Pray in the Spirit for the kind of revival wanted by the Spirit.
End grandly with a song of faith, hope, and love.
Expect God to give you a blessed New Year.