

Transcription of Journal Extracts published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine

On the Work of God in Keighley Circuit, Yorkshire.

Should you think that by giving publicity to the following extract, the glory of God, and the good of your numerous readers will be promoted: its early insertion in your widely-circulated Miscellany, will oblige, Your servant for Christ's sake, JOHN BOWES.

CHAPTER. I.

Proceedings from November 5, to the 26th 1825.

Saturday evening, Nov. 5. I attended a fellowship-meeting at Keighley; (we hold one every Saturday night) a few persons expressed their determination, to seek entire holiness of heart. After the close of the meeting, a man came into the house where I lodge, who was awakened the last Sabbath, under preaching. We prayed with him but he did not obtain saving faith, We were near an hour upon our knees at family-prayer, and the head of the family received the witness of the Spirit: which he had not experienced, for twelve months.

14. Preached at Keighley, held a leaders'-meeting and admitted nine on trial.

18. Having formed a preachers' class, in Keighley, last Friday; to-night six persons gave in their names, most of them deeply awakened.

19. Fellowship-meeting. A glorious time ; one sanctified wholly.

25. Attended my class. Many people came and prayed for pardon, but did not receive it.

26. To-night our fellowship-meeting was well attended. After a number had spoken in quick succession for about an hour, one man stood up and informed us that he had come, expecting to get saved to-night. I asked if there were any more who were seeking the Lord, and if there were that they would stand up and inform us. A woman got up, with tears starting from her eyes, and said, "I went home from the preaching last Monday night so much affected that I have got little rest since, either by night or day, and I have come expecting the Lord to set my soul at liberty." After this more spoke nearly to the same purport. We kneeled down to implore Almighty God to proclaim liberty to these captive souls. We had not prayed long before a young man believed with his heart unto righteousness. We then sung,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow, &c."

I then requested: this man to go and speak to another man who was in distress. He, did so, and very soon that man received the witness of the Spirit. The meeting commenced at eight o'clock, and closed between eleven and twelve; during which time seven souls obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. Many more were in distress. The scene was truly interesting; while sinners wept and cried for mercy, the sounds of praise were heard among believers.

CHAPTER 2.

Progress of the Work from December. 3 to 12, 1825.

Saturday evening, Dec.3. At the fellowship-meeting when a few had spoken, I exhorted those who had got liberty the last fellowship-meeting, to inform us how they obtained it. Some did so. I then enquired whether any else had got saved this week. "Yes, me," replied a man who had been in the army many years, and in satan's Service much longer. The man's wife got liberty to-night, and her daughter hath obtained a sense of pardon during the week. One man who got quit of his burden to-night, lay some time with his face towards the ground, praising the Lord. He wondered that he did not believe sooner, and cried, "it is quite easy to believe. It is quite easy to believe." Three got saved at this meeting, and more were in distress.

10. Fellowship-meeting. More people than usual. A cry for mercy. We concluded and I exhorted the mourners to stay a little longer. After wrestling and praying some time, two found Him, of whom Moses, in the law, and the prophets did write.

Sunday, 11. After preaching twice in the country, I returned to Keighley; and after Brother Pedley had spoken in the chapel, we called a prayer-meeting. At eight o'clock the praying labourers attended at private houses to hold prayer-meetings. I was at one of them; the house was crowded; the Lord poured his Spirit; one soul obtained justification by faith. Being asked if the Lord had spoken peace to his soul; "I know it," he replied, "as well as I know my right hand from my left."

12. Preached at Keighley, a glorious time. After service we held a leaders'-meeting and admitted eighteen persons on trial. During the last fifteen days, sixteen souls have been justified, and two or three wholly sanctified, (all in the town.)

CHAPTER 3.

Course of the Proceedings from January 1 to the 22d 1826.

Sunday, Jan. 1. Lovefeast in the town. Quick and sound speaking. Many people. Some were crying for mercy in the gallery; I left the pulpit and we prayed with them, and one, got liberty: and the last sabbath three got liberty at a place in the country; and, during the week, two in the town. O Lord, spread the revival through the circuit.

2. Preached at Keighley, from Col. iv 5, "Redeeming the time;" after which I attended the leaders'-meeting and we received twelve on trial.

13. Met my class. A happy time; four gave in their names. It is nine weeks to-night since this class was formed; and out of the world the Lord hath gathered twenty souls: most of whom enjoy the favour of God, the rest are seeking, it. Lord, grant them the desire of their hearts.

14. Fellowship-meeting. A man who had been in the Methodist New Connexion eighteen months, having heard that the Lord was saving souls among us, came in to get the blessing of pardon; he got it and went home rejoicing, and other three besides him: two more struggled hard for it, but did not get liberty,

17. Preached at Scartop to a large congregation. Met the society; and, while exhorting them to “Fight the good fight of faith,” to pray for, and expect a revival, the Lord quickened us together.

19. After speaking to a small congregation at Utley, returned home and poured out my soul to God in secret prayer. I had such a solemn overwhelming sense of the Omniscience and Omnipresence of the Unsearchable Lord God, as I never before witnessed. O, what solemnity pervaded my mind, under an humbling sense of mine own unworthiness. I gave myself unreservedly to the Father, through the Son by the assistance of the Holy Spirit. O that I may enjoy uninterrupted and eternal union with my Maker, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Judge.

21. Fellowship-meeting. About one hundred people attended; one woman, a hearer of the Baptists, came three miles in order to get liberty. She received it, and other two persons likewise. More were seeking; and a class-leader informed us that he obtained entire holiness of heart, (while at private prayer) of which the gave a clear and scriptural account.

Sunday 22, at 10½, at Moreton Banks; 1¼ and 5, at Keighley to large congregations. After night service held a fellowship-meeting, (we have begun to do this once every month;) it was a glorious time. At 8 o'clock attended a prayer-meeting. A great moving: one backslider made happy; souls in distress, believers filled with gratitude and praise. Glory, glory: four heavy laden souls have found rest in the wounds of Jesus to-day; sixteen within this last nine days; thirty-four the last two months, in the town, and six or seven in the country.

CHAPTER 4.

Further account of the work from February 12 to the 27th, 1826.

Sunday, Feb. 12. During the last week two have got justified, and one or more wholly sanctified. Preached at Hawarth at 10½ o'clock, renewed tickets and added one. 1½ and 5 at Keighley. At 5 the chapel was so crowded that the people could scarcely get in. I read an awful account of an apparition at Glen Cottage, near Kirby-Malzeard, and preached from Matt. xvi. 26, “What shall it profit a man, &c.” It was a solemn time; having preached three times and renewed tickets to upwards of one hundred members, I felt weary in body; but my duty is my delight.

14. At Scartop. A good time: two have got sanctified wholly since I preached here before.

17. At Harden. A large congregation; I believe the Lord blessed the people. I gave them tickets and received one on trial.

18. Fellowship-meeting. Nothing extraordinary took place, till it was time to draw towards a conclusion. I then exhorted those who were seeking pardon or holiness, to inform us. After some time a man broke through shame, and informed us that he had been without the evidence of his acceptance two years. And some believers told us that they were seeking to get their hearts made pure. We knelt down to pray for penitents and believers, but none got what they sought. We sung, and I exhorted them to sit down, I got upon a form, and told them, as both justification and sanctification were obtained by faith, if they could believe they might be saved either sitting or kneeling, and be saved (unworthy as they saw themselves) without any merit of their own, - saved now this moment.

I was interrupted by one who told us that she had got it, and then another and another believed with their hearts unto righteousness, and with the mouth they confessed that the blood of Christ had cleansed them from all sin. I counted to eight or nine who (I believe) got it. But the work was so instantaneous, that I could not exactly ascertain how many got that blessing. In the mean time, two obtained justification by faith. I never was at such a meeting as this before. Glory to the Lord for ever.

Sunday, 19. At Moreton Banks at 10½: Preached and admitted three on trial. In the afternoon held a lovefeast at Keighley. More people at it than on any former occasion. Many spoke clearly and spiritually of justification and sanctification. At 5 I preached in the chapel to a large congregation, after which I exhorted the society.

20. Preached in Keighley to as many as the chapel could contain; had good liberty; we held a leaders' -meeting, and received seven on trial. At that held three weeks since twenty-three were added.

24. Visited some persons who have a desire to obtain salvation, I invited them to my class, which I met to-night; and four gave in their names.

25. Fellowship-meeting: A glorious time from first to last. Many under conviction; ten or more professed redemption in the blood of Christ, viz. forgiveness of sin. a backslider was weeping and groaning for liberty in a most lamentable manner. When the meeting concluded he refused to rise from his knees. He did not believe while I stayed, the meeting lasted between three and four hours. Being much fatigued I went home: where I had not been long before I heard some people come up singing. I stepped to the door, and was informed that the man had got liberty. Praise the Lord: his promises are sure.

Sunday, 26. Preached at Rycroft, at 10½ o'clock, in a barn, to some hundreds of people. At 2 at Sawood, I could scarcely get into the house for the crowd. A solemn influence seemed to attend the word. Some could not get in. Service concluded, I hastened to Collingworth at 5 o'clock. The house would not contain half of the congregation; but the Old Methodists permitted me to preach in their chapel. This has been a good day to my soul.

27. We have had our Quarterly' Meeting to-day, and find that we have added seventy souls during the quarter. Lord increase our gratitude.

CHAPTER. 5.

Increasing progress of the work, March 1826.

March 4. Fellowship-meeting. Two or three saved, and a few more, seekers, comforted, but not fully saved.

7. At. West. Moreton. Crowded house; powerful time.

9. At Hainworth. Solemnity pervaded the assembly while I reasoned upon the necessity of a speedy preparation for judgment, A full house.

10. Preached at Slack Lane Head, three miles from Keighley, in a barn. About three hundred hearers. I believe good was done.

11. Fellowship-meeting. A gracious influence rested on the meeting, it appeared to me, that many were in distress. So, I requested as many as were seeking pardon to tell us. One man arose trembling and said, "I came on purpose." Six or seven more spoke nearly to the same effect. We kneeled down to pray for them, and seven obtained peace through believing. More were in distress, my soul has been in its glory to-night.

Sunday, 12. Attended 6 o'clock prayer-meeting. One mourning soul got encouraged, not fully saved. At 9 o'clock, preached in the chapel from "Verily there is a reward for the righteous." It was a comfortable time. 1½ o'clock, I attended a lovefeast at Moreton Banks. The place was crowded, the power, of God descended; the hearts of the people melted like wax before the flame. It appeared as though they would have continued speaking for hours longer than they did. It struck my mind to request those who had got liberty during the last four months to-confess it in as few words as possible. A goodly company arose, this took up but little time; in the meanwhile one man got up and said, (tears streaming from his eyes,) "The Lord has set my soul at liberty just now;" this had a powerful effect on the meeting. I then exhorted those who were seeking pardon to inform us, that we might direct them how to obtain it. More did so than I could count, I then cried; "Are all else pardoned. Is there not another seeking the Lord?" Then some more answered in the affirmative. Three souls got liberty.

I then concluded the meeting, and requested all to go away who had got enough, but those to stay who had not. So many stayed that it was with difficulty I got about the place to seek up the mourners for they lay about the place in all directions. Two or three more soon got their burden removed; and it seemed that there were more in distress than the praying labourers could attend to. So I cleared three forms and invited the mourning souls to come forward; and within two minutes they were filled with penitents. It did me good to see them; the praying labourers explained the plan of salvation and prayed with them.

I then retired as secretly as possible, as I had to preach at Keighley at five o'clock. I hastened: thither.' A local Brother gave out a hymn and prayed, while I took a little refreshment; after which I spoke to a crowded congregation. After service called a prayer-meeting. Before it began some friends returned from the lovefeast and informed me, that from the beginning to the final close of the meeting thirteen souls got liberty; and I have heard of another since, Praise the Lamb. This has been one of the best days ever my eyes beheld. Although it is near four months since the commencement of the revival, I do not know that one of the new converts have fallen back.

CHAPTER 6.

A few things which I think have been useful in promoting the Revival.

1. When I came into this circuit last mid-summer, the circuit was considerably embarrassed, and unable to support two travelling preachers. The circuit wrote to the general committee, requesting them to use their influence in getting another circuit for one of us. A circuit was provided for my colleague, and since then I have had no colleague. There was not work for two preachers in the

circuit; consequently when one removed the burden was lighter, and our temporal concerns grew better.

2. Excluding improper characters: (according to rule) from the society.

3. Preachers, leaders, and members, got united, and,

4. We agreed to give ourselves to God, and pray for a revival, expecting one.

5. Some of our members were successful in inviting their neighbours to the preaching and the class.

J. Bowes.

Approved by the Committee.

References

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