



God's New Thing

by brother David

[EDITOR'S NOTE: This message⁹²⁷ was preached at a *SermonIndex Revival Conference* event in Wales in the Moriah Chapel church where the famous Welsh revival began in 1904. This message given by David Legge in that historic pulpit calls for a glorious new work of the Spirit of God in our day. Such a work will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as the true Head of the Church and Lord of all creation. May we be challenged afresh to accept and look forward to God's work in these last days. The following is the text transcription of the message]:

I want you to turn with me to Isaiah's prophecy chapter 43 please, Isaiah chapter 43. Now let me give a little bit of introduction to this message by saying that I believe, with all my heart, that God has been very real and very operative in this Conference, I know He has in my own heart—particularly today—but even leading up to these meetings as I sought God over messages. There are messages that I had on my heart, that other men have preached. This message that I'm about to preach, I know has been on the heart of some of the other men. Now that, to me, is a positive sign that God's Spirit is at work. We are one body, and it is one Spirit that indwells us. But this message is—and I don't like measuring messages, but as far as burden goes (*and preachers here will understand what I mean when I say*

⁹²⁷ This message was transcribed into text by *Andrew W.* of *preachtheword.com* where you can access all of *brother David's* written and preaching ministry.

burden)—as far as burden goes, this is the greatest as far as I am concerned, for me.

Abba Father, Holy Father, in Jesus' Name, Your Holy Child Jesus, we ask for the unction to function in the power and demonstration of the Spirit of the Living God. You are the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. You are the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. O, Living God of the living, reveal Yourself tonight. You have called upon us and said: 'Give me your heart.' Lord, I believe that some have given You their heart, but Lord—could we be bold enough to say to You this evening: 'Lord, give us Your heart?' In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Isaiah 43 then, and we're going to begin reading at verse 16, and I'm preaching to you on *God's New Thing*. Isaiah 43 verse 16: "This is what the Lord says—He who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick: 'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to My people, My chosen, the people I formed for Myself that they may proclaim My praise.'"⁹²⁸ *Amen.*

THE TERM REVIVAL

The term *revival*, I think, is often understood as a *rediscovery of old truth*. I believe that is correct, and there are many examples from the Scriptures and indeed from church history that would bear this out. Perhaps the most obvious example, to my mind at least, is the rediscovery of the Book of the Law in the old temple in Ezra and Nehemiah's day. When the people discovered what God's Law actually said, they were broken and they were cut to their heart—because they realized how far away they had gotten from their God. There was a great move, a reformation, we would say a *genuine revival*

⁹²⁸ Isaiah 43:16-21

and people actually put into practice certain things that had never been fully practiced truly among God's people.

It is a grave mistake to think that those rediscovered old truths will wear the same clothes of those who once espoused them.

So a rediscovery of old truths brought subsequent repentance and obedience to the Word of God. It is true that revival is when old paths of the Word of God, the precepts and the principles of the Bible that never change from generation to generation, are rediscovered—and, as we've heard already, repentance toward God is exercised in a new obedience to what God's Word asks of us. But—and this is the emphasis of my message tonight—though that is the case, nevertheless it is a grave mistake, I say again a grave mistake, to think that those rediscovered old truths will wear the same clothes of those who once espoused them.

1904, praise God. 1905, praise God. In Ulster we are celebrating this year the 150th anniversary of the 1859 revival that you enjoyed here as well and, we heard today, America and Canada and spread to many parts of the world. It is great, and I commend your celebration of God moving in the past. There is, from that, a genuine longing for God to do it again—but I wonder, I ask my own heart, and I ask you tonight: if at times our reminiscences of past revivals are more of a nostalgic romanticism about how things used to be done? 'The good old days,' 'old-time religion,' rather than a genuine longing for God to do something again—even if it may not resemble the thing that we loved Him for doing in the past.

READY FOR GOD'S NEW THING?

I hope you're getting this. Let me put it in a question to you: are you ready and willing for God to do a new thing? Now, if we are not, we may miss what God is going to do—or, could I be bold enough to say, what God has already started doing. Now, don't misunderstand what I'm saying—if anyone knows me, and I know most of you don't, but you will know that I stand firmly on the principles of God's Word. We do need to rediscover the same truths as were rediscovered in past revivals, but let me be absolutely clear: it is wrong—wrong!—to expect God to revive in an identical manner! Also, I think it is wrong for us to desire God to reproduce an identical revival. Now, let

me give you two reasons for that at least: one is from a human perspective, and the other is from the divine. From the human perspective, it is wrong to desire God to reproduce an identical revival because what sufficed to revive in 1859 and 1904 and 1905 does not suffice to revive the Church in the world of the 21st century. We need something new! We need something fresh! But from the divine perspective: God is the God of the original! He is the God of the new thing! Though obviously, if you study revival, you will know there are great similarities shared in every revival—not least, the fundamental doctrinal truths celebrated—but each is original in its own right, and each has had features and peculiarities that were special to it.

Now, we must face facts, that our God is the God of the new thing! I want to show you this from Scripture. Such was the case in Isaiah's day. Look with me please at verses 16 and 17 again: "This is what the Lord says—He who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters, who drew out the chariots and horses, the army and reinforcements together, and they lay there, never to rise again, extinguished, snuffed out like a wick."⁹²⁹ Now, what Isaiah is saying there is simply that the past can teach us, and we must study the past—but we must not be bound to the past, or bound by the past, we must always be looking forward to what God is yet to do. The Lord, in Isaiah's day, wanted them in the present to live in the reality of the past—and the incident that he is referring to in verses 16 and 17 is the exodus of the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt towards the promised land.

God's people often do miss what God is doing, and we might well ask the question: Why?

Now, you must understand the Hebrew mind: The exodus was the greatest miracle, and is still regarded as the greatest miracle among the people of the Jews. Yet God is saying in Isaiah's day, verse 18, "Remember not the former things." Now, that's staggering. In verse 9 he says the same concerning former things, and he's referring to the exodus acts of God once again. In verse 19 He says: "Behold, I will do a new thing"—literally it could be translated, *I am going to do a new thing*.

⁹²⁹ Isaiah 43:16-17

GOD'S NEW THING IN ISAIAH'S DAY

Now, what is the new thing that God specifically is talking about here in Isaiah's day? Well, the children of Israel are in bondage to Babylon, and God is telling them that there's going to be a national liberation, and it will be patterned on the exodus. It will spring, it will sprout like a seed which is germinated, and its time has come. God is saying: 'Shall you not see it?', but I think that could be translated, 'Do you not see it?' The reason why He's saying: 'Do you not see it?', the import of it is, 'You can't miss it! You can't miss what I'm going to do!' But wait, here's the point: they were missing it. They were missing it!

God's people often do miss what God is doing, and we might well ask the question: Why? We're going to get the answer, but before that look at verse 19, the second part, speaking of these great acts of God that are going to happen in Isaiah's day, deliverance from Babylon: "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."⁹³⁰ The acts of God are going to bring the whole world into harmony for the children of God. Now this, ultimately, will not be perfected until the Messianic day when, as we read in chapter 11, even the animal kingdom will come into the great benefits of what it is for God to rule and reign in His universe. Ultimately many of these events that we read of in Isaiah will not be fulfilled in completeness until our Lord's return, and then they will surpass the exodus—Hallelujah!

But what I want you to see tonight is—and this is my point—in some immediate sense these journeying people of God in bondage in Babylon, God says: "You're going to be met by a transformed world. It shall spring forth, you will not be able to miss it! I will make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." This was Isaiah's emphasis: you are in danger, children of God, of missing what God was doing there and then, and is about to do—why? 'Because you are focusing on what I did in the past.' God says: "Do you not see what I am about to do?"

⁹³⁰ Isaiah 43:19

Now there are many lessons we can take out of this tonight, but one of them is this: God is always doing something—always. I emphasized this in my last message about having a perception of God: he who comes to God must believe that He is—and that *is* can mean *active*. We must believe that He is instrumental in our universe. Even when it looks as if nothing is happening—and there are times when we would be forgiven, would we not, to think that God is doing nothing; especially when we compare what's happening now with what happened in the past! But we need to rediscover this knowledge that God is doing something now!

GOD DOING NOTHING?

In the Book of Habakkuk, the prophet was told: “Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.”⁹³¹ The tense is right in the Amplified Version of the Bible: “I am working a work in your day—I’m doing it now, and you cannot see it, but if you were told it, it would blow your mind!” Now, in Habakkuk’s day, He was raising up the Babylonians—that’s a strange work in itself, is it not? It was unexpected. Think of it: God chastising His people for wickedness, and how is He doing it? He’s raising up an even more wicked nation to rebuke His own people.

Incidentally Paul, when he was in Pisidian Antioch in Acts chapter 13, when he was in the synagogue he quoted that verse from Habakkuk chapter 1 verse 5. He applied it to the judgment that was coming on Israel because they had rejected God’s Messiah—and was that not a new thing, because what was God now doing? He was turning to the Gentiles, He was leaving the Jews in blindness for a season—but nevertheless, it is the rebuke of God upon them, because they did not recognize His new work, His new thing. God is working today, God is working in Wales, God is working in Scotland, God is working in England, God is working in Ireland! Jesus said: “My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I too am

⁹³¹ Habakkuk 1:5

working.”⁹³² But here’s my message, brothers and sisters: if we have a preconceived idea of how He must work, we might miss Him.

THE PHARISEE REVIVAL MOVEMENT

God’s new thing was in Isaiah’s day, but secondly I want you to see that God’s new thing was in Messiah’s day. Probably the dominant theme of the Gospels is Christ-rejection by the Jews. He came unto His own, His own things, and His own people received Him not. Why? We could give many reasons, but if we could give one it would be this: He did not live up to their expectations! Right? It was a new thing that threw the scribes of Scripture off the scent completely! The biggest opponents to the new thing were the Pharisees! Now please hear me: the Pharisees were a revival movement, did you know that? Did you know that?

You see, great liberalism had come into Judaistic theology; through the Sadducees who did not believe in resurrection, did not believe in the spirit realm, did not believe in angels and so forth; and other influences. So the Pharisees grew up as a sect who wanted to revive the Torah Scriptures, and they wanted to bring every facet of Jewish life into harmony with the law of God. It might surprise you even further to know that our Lord Jesus sided with them often theologically. He said in Matthew 23 verse 1: “Listen to the Pharisees, for they sit in Moses’ seat. Do what they teach, but not what they do.” In Matthew’s Gospel and in Luke’s Gospel He agreed with them on what is the substance and great law of God: “To love the Lord your God, and to love your neighbor as yourself.”⁹³³ Paul the apostle, when he was before the Sanhedrin, you remember what happened there, don’t you? He sided with the Pharisees over the issue of the resurrection. Now he had a reason to do it, to get them at one another when they were against him—but nevertheless, theologically, he stood on the same grounds.

Do you know that a *back to the Bible* movement can be as dead as the Pharisees? The Pharisees knew their Bibles, but they did not know their God.

⁹³² John 5:17

⁹³³ Matthew 22:37-39

The tragedy was, for the Pharisees, they had the letter of the law without the power of the Spirit. They recognized false doctrine a mile off, but they did not recognize their God when He showed up in the flesh. In fact, the Lord Jesus said: “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about Me.”⁹³⁴ You know the Bible inside out, back to front, and yet you’ve missed Me whom the Bible is all about!

OPPOSING THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT

It is amazing how it can often be the most Biblically literate who oppose an obvious work of the Spirit of God—and often they oppose it on doctrinal grounds. That is what happened to our Lord, to the point that they actually accused Him of demon-possession by Beelzebub, and ultimately it led to His crucifixion. To a large extent, legalism motivated Christ-rejection. Legalism is manifest in self-righteousness and over-obsession with tradition, and a very overt and acute judgmentalism. But do we understand that it was the spirit of legalism that motivated the unpardonable sin? Do you know what I believe the unpardonable sin was? There was the witness of the Spirit to Messiah in Jesus Christ, unbelief on the part of the Jewish nation at that time was the unpardonable sin.

Revival movements—and I love this movement, and I love this convention, and all these conventions—but they must beware, because it is not the Biblically illiterate, it is not the halfhearted or the spiritually lazy who struggle in this area; it is often the highly motivated that will do everything correctly and Biblically who often confine God to their understanding, and who often miss God when He reveals His arm! Don’t misunderstand what I’m saying; we need discernment more than ever in this day and age, but understand this—legalism is equally as dangerous as any false doctrine. The poison of legalism is that it confines God to work in a way that I am comfortable with. The legalist’s God is too small!

God is neither predictable nor controllable, and that was the offense of Christ: He broke the mould. His disciples were a new

⁹³⁴ John 5:39

breed, and the old wineskins of the religious forms of Judaism were bursting under the pressure of the exuberance of the new wine! Now, I have to say, sadly—and I know very little, but I feel this in my heart—that this may, this very same thing, may be true of movements that have grown out of revival. Let me quote you an author, he says: “Most significant movements start by being a little wide, settle down to respectable middle age—and then, rejoicing in their respectability, relax into a creeping death.”⁹³⁵ Now you can think of many a denomination, many an institution, a para-church organization, and most of them started out from a move of God—but where are they this evening? But even those who still, in a measure, are on fire for God—do they not expect or even, God forbid that we should say it, require God to do it the same way again? That in itself can be a hindrance, and it may be such groups that will oppose the new thing when it comes.

Listen to the same author: “The hostility to revivals is never to the idea of revival, which is ardently prayed for, but to God’s answer to our prayers and the unexpected form it may take. To recognize a divine visitation we must view it through twin lenses of discernment and humility. It is easy to recognize it in books, or in retrospect since we are usually accepting the view of the writer of a particular history, but to recognize it when it occurs is more different. During the revivals of the past 300 years many Christians were too confused by their wrong expectations to perceive what God was doing.”⁹³⁶ Vance Havner put it like this: “Evangelicals have all the answers, but they make the wrong conclusions.”⁹³⁷ Evangelicals have all the facts, but they make the wrong conclusions.

SECOND GUESSING GOD

Whenever we think we can second-guess God, I find in my own experience, He scraps the blueprint and surprises us again. I think it’s the same with revival—He scraps the blueprint and surprises us again. We know from creation that our God is a God of ultimate variety, and I believe that He is the same in revival. He did a new

⁹³⁵ John White

⁹³⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹³⁷ Vance Havner (1901-1986)

thing in Isaiah's day, He did a new thing in Messiah's day—and let us see that He did a new thing in the days of Pentecost. Turn with me to Joel chapter 2 please, Joel 2 verse 28: "And afterward, I will pour out My Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on My servants, both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."⁹³⁸

This is the last days, these are the days we are living in—and half of these Words were fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, God's new thing—and many of them will be fulfilled when our Lord Jesus returns. So let us turn to Acts chapter 2, please, to see the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Acts chapter 2, God's new thing, verse 1: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven."⁹³⁹ Now, see the response please, to God's new thing, verse 6, utter confusion! "When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken."⁹⁴⁰

In verses 7 and 8 there is utter amazement, marveling and, indeed, questioning. Verse 7: "Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?'"⁹⁴¹ Look at verse 11, the second half, and verse 12—people are perplexed: "We hear them declaring the

⁹³⁸ Joel 2:28-32

⁹³⁹ Acts 2:1-5

⁹⁴⁰ Acts 2:6

⁹⁴¹ Acts 2:7-8

wonders of God in our own tongues!' Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?'"⁹⁴² Look at verse 13, there is ridicule, misunderstanding and mockery: "Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.'

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: 'Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.'"⁹⁴³ The Authorized Version says in verse 16: "This is that, this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel."

Peter, who was so involved as an instrument in ushering in God's new thing, Peter himself stumbled at the offense of it.

Now, this is the point of Peter as he preached to these Jews: you're familiar with the prophecy, but you have failed to recognize the fulfillment! God's new thing in Isaiah's day, in Messiah's day, in the days of Pentecost—but come with me again to the Apostolic day in general. The first Christians were Jewish, you do know that? At the beginning it was assumed that the special character of their ceremonies and their identity, uniquely, would continue. There was great confusion when Gentiles started being born again—a new thing! It challenged them, and it raised questions like: must these Gentiles become Jews and observe Judaism if we are to accept them? Or, how should we as Jews relate to Gentiles, because we have strict social and dietary laws? And God spoke—and thank God, He still speaks—God spoke to Peter. He was on a housetop in Acts chapter 10, and God gave him a vision in a place called Joppa. He saw a sheet falling down from heaven of unclean animals, unclean in the dietary laws of Judaism, and God said to Peter: "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."⁹⁴⁴

STUMBLING AT THE OFFENSE OF A NEW THING

You remember, don't you, that Peter had been given the keys to the kingdom. It was Peter who was going to open the kingdom of

⁹⁴² Acts 2:11-12

⁹⁴³ Acts 2:13-16

⁹⁴⁴ Acts 10:15

God to the Gentiles. Peter reported back to the Jews that, according to the circumstances regarding Cornelius, Peter said: “I saw the Holy Spirit fall upon them as He did upon us at the beginning.” But what happened? Judaisers entered into the Church, we read about them in Galatians. Their message is found in Acts 15 verse 1, and they said that the Gentiles had to be circumcised if they were to be saved. This is the tragedy of that matter: Peter, who was so involved as an instrument in ushering in God’s new thing, Peter himself stumbled at the offense of it.

Turn with me to Galatians chapter 2, verse 11 of Galatians 2—I hope you don’t mind reading the Bible! Galatians chapter 2 verse 11: “When Cephas,” Paul says, “came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face,”—imagine!— “because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the Gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, ‘You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?’”⁹⁴⁵

GOD ALWAYS UPSETS THE STATUS QUO

Now, listen carefully to what I’m saying: Peter was the instrument to open the kingdom of God to the Gentiles, and yet he stumbled at the offense of God’s new thing. Revival always upsets the status quo! Now, we must understand the hurdle it was for the Jews to accept Gentiles—but this was God’s new thing and, in fact, more accurately it was God’s new man. “For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.”⁹⁴⁶

Jonathan Edwards, the great puritan theologian of revival, said this: “A work of God without stumbling blocks is never to be

⁹⁴⁵ Galatians 2:11-14

⁹⁴⁶ Ephesians 2:14

expected.”⁹⁴⁷ God is always pushing our boundaries. Shock and awe will always play some part in what God does, and we must not contain God to our sphere of knowledge of Him, or our expectations from Him! Our convictions ought never to become restrictions of what God does in our lives and in our Churches!

God was the God of a new thing in Isaiah's day, in Messiah's day, in the Day of Pentecost, in the Apostolic day, and in the historical revival days. One author says: “From a safe distance of several hundred years or several thousand miles, revival clearly looks invigorating. But when we actually look at a revival (either through close historical study or firsthand investigation) we find something not nearly so clear as we imagined. There is sin and infighting and doctrinal error. And if we find ourselves in the midst of revival, rather than being invigorated, we may be filled with skepticism, or disgust, anger or even fear.” Why? Because we fear what we do not understand!

REVIVAL IS MESSY

Why does our expectation not match the reality? Why is revival sometimes so messy? Because revival is war—of course, it's the Lord that has the victory—but that's why it's so untidy at times. When there is unusual emotion expressed—there was a question about this on the panel—where there is apparent disorder we start to fear. Some of the phenomenon we do not understand, we fear. Much opposition to revival is based on a wrong notion of order. Someone has said: “If we insist that revival must be decent and orderly, as we define those terms, we automatically blind ourselves to most revivals. Revival stirs our hearts when we read about it, but would we perceive it as of God if it broke out noisily in one of our own services or meetings?”

The revival that we have heard so much about these couple of days that accompanied Evan Roberts was denounced by a Congregational minister—Peter Price was his name—as a sham and a mockery. I'm quoting him now, “a sham and a mockery, a blasphemous travesty of the real thing.” What made this all the more sad was the fact that Prices' own church had been blessed with revival.

⁹⁴⁷ Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

The additions of hundreds of converts a few months previously in 1904 were to his church. Now Price clearly objected to some of the style of Evan Roberts, and I'm sure all would agree that Evan Roberts was not perfect—but unfortunately Price overplayed his opposition and could not see the hand of God in what he disagreed with. Warren Wiersbe once said: "It never ceases to amaze me that God blesses people I disagree with."

Dr Forbes Winslow, who was a psychiatrist in Evan Roberts' day, took a different line of attack against Roberts, and I'm quoting him, he said: "I would have men like Evan Roberts locked up as a common felon, and their meetings prohibited like those of the socialists and anarchists as being dangerous to the public"—even though four doctors had signed a certificate of Roberts' physical and mental health. It was jibes like those, and the cruel attack of his brother in Christ, Peter Price, that broke the evangelist. By the spring of 1906 he began to retire from public life.

There are stories about Whitefield and Wesley 200 years previous to the Welsh revival. They were opposed because they preached in the open-air, and not in a church building. Whitefield, in a place called Cambuslang in Scotland where there was a great move of God, Whitefield had tracts written against him, and he was accused as 'a limb of antichrist' for being in the church of England. In the 1940s Duncan Campbell was accused of hypnotizing people in the Scottish islands, and he was opposed by other ministers because of his teaching on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Listen to what Arthur Wallace says: "If we find a revival that is not spoken against, we had better look again to ensure that it is revival."

GOD WANTS TO DO A NEW THING TODAY!

God did a new thing in Isaiah's day, He did a new thing in Messiah's day, He did a new thing in the days of Pentecost, He did a new thing in the days of the Apostles, and He did a new thing in the days of historical revival—Oh, He wants to do a new thing today! I believe that He has started a new thing! But someone will ask: how do we know the genuine article? Oh, that is a question. Not everything that is new is true. Jonathan Edwards, in a paper entitled *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, expounds 1

John chapter 4 and verse 1—and I'm almost finished, please turn with me to it. First John chapter 4 verse 1, the great puritan theologian on revival said in that paper: "How can one spot a genuine as from a false prophet?" I believe the distinction is the same with genuine revival and false so-called moves of God. "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."⁹⁴⁸

Jonathan Edwards expounds 1 John chapter 4, the whole thing, and we haven't got time to read through it—read through it when you go home—but here's how he differentiates between the genuine and the false: One, does the preaching in the movement affirm the historic Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah? Is it Christ-centred? Two, does it oppose sin and worldly lusts? Three, does it awaken respect for Scripture by affirming its truth and its divine source? Four, does it awaken an awareness of the shortness of life and the coming of judgment? Five, does it awaken genuine love, both towards God and one's neighbour? Six, does it produce converts with good fruit in their lives?

Someone has said: "It will be from such an orchard, the orchard of 1 John 4, that the fruit of any new thing will come forth from"—but ultimately, time and truth go together. Time will tell, but these timeless truths will be evident! Now, that said, with all the scriptural knowledge, with all the discernment that we can get: when God does a new thing, His new thing, it will be new! "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord."⁹⁴⁹

A SOLEMN WARNING OF FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

I have discharged the burden: do we not need for God to do something new? Do we not need for God to do a new thing in our day and generation? But saints beware, revival movement beware when it comes, lest you be found, or I be found, to fight against God.

Let us pray. While all our heads bowed please, we are in God's presence, and I have felt God's presence nearer to me today than I

⁹⁴⁸ 1 John 4:1

⁹⁴⁹ Isaiah 55:8

think I ever have. While your head is bowed, ask yourself: are your expectations on the altar, your expectations of what revival must be, should be, and will be? Now I am a grasshopper in the presence of giants here tonight, giants of men in the Spirit who have experienced revival—I have not. But I trust them in the Spirit when I say and ask—if it might seem bold to ask it—are you restricting God to what He did before? Are you limiting God to something that He has done in the past? Will you hear His voice? “Remember not the former things. You can’t miss what I’m doing now if you would look at it.”

Father, I am sorry that I’m so weak, and just maybe not getting this across the way it should be or it must be. O God, O God, You’re doing a new thing, You’re calling a Remnant of people from many lands, and You have a burning in their heart from the Holy Spirit. O God, there’s something new that we believe is going to happen. We don’t want sham, we don’t want false fire, we don’t want counterfeit, we want the real thing—and yet Lord, let none of us limit You. O God, let us not miss it. “Pass me not, O gentle Savior, Hear my humble cry; While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.”