



Soul Travail

By Oswald J Smith

Can we travail for a drowning child, but not for a perishing soul? It is not hard to weep when we realize that our little one is sinking below the surface for the last time. Anguish is spontaneous then. Nor is it hard to agonize when we see the casket containing all that we love on earth borne out of the home. Ah, no; tears are natural at such a time? But oh, to realize and know that souls, precious, never dying souls, are perishing all around us, going out into the blackness of darkness and despair, eternally lost, and yet to feel no anguish, shed no tears, know no travail! How cold are our hearts! How little we know of the compassion of Jesus! And yet God can give us this, and the fault is ours if we do not have it. Jacob, you remember, travailed until he prevailed. but oh, who is doing it today? Who is really travailing in prayer? How many, even of your most spiritual Christian leaders, are content to spend half an hour a day on their knees and then pride themselves on the time they have given to God!

We expect extraordinary results, and extraordinary results are quite possible; signs and wonder will follow, but only through extraordinary efforts in the spiritual realm. Hence, nothing short of continuous, agonizing pleading for souls, hours upon hours, days and nights of prayer, will ever avail. Therefore, *"gird yourselves, and lament ye priests; howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and 'all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord."* (Joel 1:13-14) Ah, yes Joel knew the secret. Let us then lay aside everything else and «cry unto the Lord». We read in the biographies of your forefathers, who were most successful in winning souls, that they prayed for hours in private. The question therefore arises, can we get the same results without following their example? If we can, then lets us prove to the world that we have found a better way, but if not, then in God's name let us begin to follow those who through faith and patience obtained the promise. Our forefathers wept and prayed and agonized before the Lord for sinners to be saved, and would not rest until they were slain by the Sword of the Word of God. That was the secret of their mighty success; when things were slack and would not move, they wrestled in prayer until God poured out His Spirit upon the people and sinners were converted.

Reference Used: The Revival We Need by Oswald J. Smith