

Halls Aflame: An Account of the Spontaneous Revivals at Asbury College in 1950 and 1958

Henry C. James, Paul Rader

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INTRODUCTION

In a day when unprecedented numbers of people have a form of religion while at the same time the church seems unable to stem the rising tide of degeneracy that threatens the land, the question might be raised: Why this paradox? Should not the church have influence for righteousness in proportion to her numbers? However one may seek to answer this question, it is obvious that what we need is not more religion, but more power. In short, we need real revival.

For this reason, the account after spontaneous revivals at Asbury College in 1950 and 1958 is very timely and provocative of thought. It shows what God can do when given a chance. The particular manifestations of these visitations of God may differ from others, for no two revivals are exactly alike. However, basic principles are reflected here which recur in all genuine spiritual awakenings. The sense of need, effectual prayer, confession and repentance, imparting of new life, infilling of the Holy Spirit and compulsion to tell the good news to others; these are relevant to every age.

The authors of these stories are well-qualified to speak, having experienced the events which they describe. Henry C. James, an alumnus, was himself converted during the revival of 1950; and Paul Rader, student leader on the Asbury campuses, was an active participant in the 1958 awakening. They are thus enabled through their close association with these revivals to transmit much of the moving drama of those days.

It is my hope that those who read these pages will catch something of the spirit which motivated its writing. But even more, I trust that many will be inspired to pray, to work and to believe God for revival today. The power of God is the same. The conditions for revival have not changed. We are the only variable factors in experiencing greater things than described in these pages. Trusting that this book will be used to open our eyes, I join the Psalmist in praying: "Wilt thou not revive us again; that thy people may rejoice in thee? " (Psalms 85:6).

Robert E. Coleman, PhD Sollie E. McCreless Professor of Evangelism Asbury Theological Seminary

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