

Revivalist Propaganda &

The Cause of Truth in Wales

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Part Two

PSYCHOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

If there is one thing that definitely characterises the evangelical preacher in Wales today above all else, it is that he laments his own lack of power in the pulpit. The general feeling is that preachers of today do not have “the power” to preach to the masses with the same results as their forefathers. The great problem associated with this so-called lack of power is a perceived inability to reach the hearts of men both within and without the church through the preaching.

All too often, ministers today are over-impressed with the religious fervour of the past. They read of congregations being moved to tears and crying out in exultation. The modern preacher sees no tears, hears no shouts of exultation, therefore he feels a failure for nothing can be seen or heard in the meeting in response to his preaching.

On reading the accounts of meetings in days gone by, it is apparent that it was the tears and the shouts that seemed to carry the preacher along in his “hwyl” (Pronounce it “hoo-weel”)¹¹. As the sail carries the boat through the water, so the “hwyl” carries the preacher along, which leads to the preacher in turn carrying the congregation along. More often than not, both preacher and congregation were being “carried along” on an emotional high, with little or no addition being made to their knowledge of God, but plenty of religious experience no doubt.

Examples can be given. In the Calvinistic Methodist Association meeting of June 1844, at Llanerchymedd, Anglesey, Mr Rees Philips was first to preach in the afternoon meeting out-of-doors. The record of the event states that he began to

¹¹ This Welsh word is closely associated with preaching. Literally the word means “sail”.

preach tidily, yet every word seemed to land at his feet, and he became discouraged as he went on. He turned from this subject to that without being able to lay hold of the "Amen". After a quarter of an hour he sat down, wiped the sweat off his brow, and with a heavy sigh lamented that the cause of God was such a failure in his hands.

John Jones, Talysarn, one of the "hoelion wyth,"¹² rose to preach. His text was Hebrews 6:17-19: *"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;..."* He begins in a voice that was far too low for such a large crowd to be able to hear very much of what he is saying, and everything continues quite dead for a while. After a quarter of an hour, those who are straining their ears to listen sit down on the grass. After half an hour of his preaching the meeting is as dead as ever, and people could be heard complaining that this association is heavy and that even John Jones, Talysarn, is sleepy. The whole thing appears to be a failure. But even though John Jones is preaching without effect, he labours manfully on, when many a lesser preacher would have given up completely. Suddenly, he lifts his arm and raises his penetrating voice even to the end of this sentence: "People, the oath is still th-e-r-e". At this, an electric shock seemed to strike the people. The "eight-inch nail" had surely gone through the oak board, struck through by the master of the congregation. The emotions of the crowd are completely in his hands. The flood of fluency, the attractiveness of his accent, the strength of his voice, all seem to land like fiery darts upon the crowd. The Reverend Richard Parry, Llandudno, who gave the report of this meeting, went on: "We could not follow the sermon, sometimes because of the quietness of his voice, at other times because of the groans of the crowd".¹³

Another example of a preacher with "power" was the Rev. Edward Matthews, Ewenni. Rev. J. Cynddylan Jones begins his description of him as a preacher by saying that it was usual for Matthews to preach in a low voice for the first half-hour, frequently too low for the congregation to hear to their profit. His sentences were full of breaks, sometimes he would just break off in mid-sentence. But, says Jones, the gaze and the raising of the eyebrows, the throwing of the hand, created a far greater effect than the choicest of words. Before long, he would straighten to his full height. Then, as it were, the sun would shine, the humour which would make the face of the congregation break out with an element of joy. Then the storm would break, the voice being pitched higher and higher and stronger and stronger, demon-

¹² Pronounce it approx. "hoy-lee-yon weeth", literal translation: "eight-inch nails", a term that was and is used to fondly refer to those preachers who are reckoned amongst the best in the land.

¹³ *Cofiant Y Parchedig John Jones, Talsarn, gan Owen Thomas*, (Biography of Rev. John Jones, Talysarn by Owen Thomas), Wrexham, 1874., pp.623-626.

strating to the congregation that he had a fullness of noise within himself like that of a whirlwind in a cave. At this point the preacher becomes red-hot. The congregation appears to be still on the surface, but in the deep waters it begins to be troubled. And then a splash. The voice swells like the sea before a storm, the congregation moving back and forth like a boat upon the sea - up and down, faithful to the swellings of the waters. Matthews would then loudly recite a Bible verse or part of an hymn. His voice increasing in volume and becoming stronger. The storm would abate, and, as it were, the clouds would break. At this point, peoples eyes would be full of tears, their faces aglow with smiles - indeed the whole congregation abuzz with excitement. A short silence would follow and the feelings would foam once more. He has preached for an hour and a quarter and the congregation is well pleased - some sitting, some standing, others breaking out into songs of praise - all content to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. At this point, Matthews would close because, according to J. Cynddylan Jones, he had reached his object in preaching - *he had overwhelmed his congregation*.

Cynddylan Jones goes on to give the testimony of an English Wesleyan preacher, who felt more of a thrill listening to Rev. Edward Matthews preach than he ever did listening to any English sermon, even though he did not understand a single word of Matthews, who was preaching in Welsh.¹⁴

Interesting indeed with regard to this aspect of preaching are the words of David Brainerd, who in the last few days of his life saw that ministers stood in great need of an earnest endeavour to obtain much of the grace of God's Spirit and God's gracious influences, for "when ministers feel these gracious influences on their hearts it wonderfully assists them to come at the consciences of men, and as it were to handle them; whereas without them, whatever reason and oratory we make use of, we do but make use of stumps instead of hands".¹⁵

Brainerd then thought that an effective, powerful, Spirit-filled ministry was one in which the preachers could produce a visible effect upon their congregations by manipulation, which is the same idea that was prevalent in the thinking of the Methodists in Wales.

We saw in the reports above of the preaching of both John Jones and Edward Matthews that they apparently had the ability that is described by Brainerd of "coming to the consciences of men and as it were to handle them". The effect no doubt was a religious or spiritual "high". We offer no criticism here of the content of the sermons, but we do and must criticise the fact that these men were using gospel preaching in order to create an atmosphere where they could manipulate their congregations by their expertise in the pulpit.

The preachers of today must not appraise the preaching of the past in the light of their own lack of ability to produce such similar effects, but in the light of the Word of God. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. We can-

¹⁴ Rev. J Cynddylan Jones D.D., *Athrylith a Gras*, (Genius and Grace), Caernarfon, 1925, pp.36-40.

¹⁵ *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Ball, Arnold and Co., London, 1840, Vol. 2, p.383.

not escape the fact that large parts of the sermons described above were inaudible and therefore of no profit to the hearers. Indeed, the truths of the gospel in the hands of such preachers seem almost expendable in order to give to the people an unforgettable experience.

When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, he was preaching and in so doing was unavoidably passing on information, which was **heard**. It was the word that they heard that affected those present. **Acts 2:37**: "*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*". In **Acts 17**, at Thessalonica, we see Paul reasoning; explaining and proving from Scripture, not creating an atmosphere where people would be carried along on a "spiritual high". Some of the Thessalonians did have a heart-changing experience of God. Here we must keep in mind that such an experience would have a greater or lesser emotional effect upon individuals dependent upon each person's own personality. Far more important than the attaining of a "spiritual high", is the emphasis in **1 Thessalonians** for example that an experience of God makes the Christian become an imitator of Paul, a follower of Christ.

The preacher, according to the Scripture, is one that has been sent by God to proclaim the very Word of God. The preacher stands as the representative of the Word that was made flesh, and must not, indeed if he be truly called to the ministry, he cannot preach or work in any way different from his master. The true preacher will primarily be a teacher of the people as was the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, we see that the people were astonished at Jesus' doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. It is the case with all too many so-called preachers today, that they are taken up with that one word in the last verse of **Matthew 7**, **authority**. The idea that too many people have is that this authority is some kind of presence, some kind of power over the people. But from the text it can be plainly seen that it was not Jesus' presence or his oratory that gave him authority in this instance, but the doctrine preached, i.e. his authority came straight from the unadulterated Word of God. Christ was not pussyfooting about with trivia as were the scribes. Christ preached the Scriptures, the whole Scriptures and nothing but the Scriptures, confident that the results of his preaching were in the hands of God his Father, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. We must say it again, it was the doctrine taught that caused the amazement, not oratory, not histrionics, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of God could never stoop so low as to manipulate his hearers.

Sad to say, Welsh historical resources indicate that the kind of preaching adumbrated in the examples given above, together with the scenes endemic to such, were by no means a matter of a few isolated instances. To the contrary, these antics were widespread. Let us once more remind ourselves what was taking place. The crowds had gathered, supposedly to hear the gospel - yet at times they cannot hear anything from the lips of the preacher. How are they to make sense of what *is* heard?

As we have seen, in Scripture, the hearing is vital, "How shall they hear?", "He that has ears to hear". Much of what took place in Wales was detrimental to the hearing of God's Word. We should surely ask: how Scriptural was that?

In the course of events described at Llanerchymedd, we see a preacher stand up to preach and then give up a quarter of an hour into his sermon, seemingly meandering from one subject to another. Had he not prepared a sermon? If not, why not? If he had prepared, it was his duty before God to give the complete sermon, the whole message. Where was the preacher's faith in the authority of the Word of God?

We must move on to discuss a vital factor with regard to these powerful preachers and their powerful sermons. From the mid eighteenth century, up until the beginning of the twentieth century, "big meetings" played an integral part in the religious life of Wales. The Association meetings of the Calvinistic Methodists and the Conferences of the Congregational and Baptist churches were the primary festivals of the main denominations. From this apex, one moves down to regional and county meetings, and from there down to the district and presbytery events. Linked very closely to this idea of some meetings being more important than others, was the necessity to have the preacher to fit the occasion. And of course, only those from the premier league of preachers were fit to address the "big meetings". A look at the events and preachers in any given period during the last two hundred years would soon tell who was ahead in the pecking order of preachers at that time. The point we are coming to is that invariably, the spiritual "highs", the great "experiences", took place when there was a gifted preacher and a huge crowd. It is impossible to find any record of a revival or anything of that nature taking place in a church that is less than full, or in a place out-of-doors where there is just a small crowd. We cannot escape the fact that a full church or a crowded field is a veritable kindling waiting to be fired.

While it is good for the church to have meetings arranged at presbytery level and higher in order to demonstrate the unity of the church, the hype associated with these "big meetings" in Wales tended to fuel the expectation of the masses. This in turn led to an undermining of the life and ministry of the local church rather than strengthening its witness. It was almost as if the spiritual life of the nation was controlled and gauged by the amount of excitement generated at a "big meeting". This hype also made preachers ambitious of having a place in the forefront of the church, and tended to fuel their pride.

In the Calvinistic Methodists, the preachers were ordained not as pastors of churches but as ministers of the gospel to the whole denomination. This led to churches not having a settled ministry, as the pastor was often away seeking to earn a name for himself in order to gain a place amongst the higher echelons of preachers. The net result was that the ministry received week by week was not a consistent building up of the saints in the most holy faith, but a hit-and-miss affair, which made the people learned judges of preachers, and created in them a desire to hear the "best" at the "big meetings" rather than placing themselves under the judgement

of the Word of God by means of a faithful and consistent ministry.

This was in stark contrast to the early non-conformist (pre-revival) ministers who saw it as their duty to build up their congregations by a faithful, consistent ministry and catechising. These men only went on preaching forays in order to help struggling causes when the need arose. It should be noted that the Congregationalists up until fairly recently would generally have had their minister preaching at their home church most Sabbath days, whilst the Presbyterian (Calvinistic Methodist) ministers would only have had one or maybe two Sabbaths per month with their own flock.

Money

It is not the done thing to mention the ministry of the word and money in the same breath. But we will leave the usual path of fearful silence on this matter and say that we cannot but help think that the preaching circuit of years gone by did provide a fairly good standard of living. For example, in 1854, John Jones, Talysarn, received £112 for fulfilling preaching engagements, and £148 9s. in 1856. This was at a time when the quarrymen of Talysarn had an income of less than £25 per annum. While it is vital that churches do make sure that their ministers are not living on the breadline, we must question the motives of men whose income was four or five times that of their members. We approach this subject with the utmost caution - we are not out to vilify John Jones, Talysarn, in this regard. He may have for example given most of his money away or accrued considerable expenses on his travels. The latter is unlikely as there were homes up and down Wales that were noted for the exceptionally high standard of hospitality they gave to preachers. All we can say at this point is that a study of the financial side of the ministry in Wales particularly amongst the Revivalist tradition would make interesting reading, no doubt revealing that many ministers suffered terrible hardship for the sake of the gospel, where others no doubt made their fortunes off the backs of the hearers.

Especially pertinent in this regard is the question of how many preachers for the sake of financial gain neglected the real building up of the saints in order to obtain a name on the preaching circuit and make a small fortune for themselves?

Doctrine

The early non-conformist ministers were to a large extent faithful men who held to the five-points of Calvinism, as also were many of the clergy of the established church. The early Methodists cannot but have been influenced by this theology. A closer examination of their doctrinal position however shows that many of them were, at best, Whitfieldian. There was of course a close link between George Whitfield and the early Methodists in Wales, with Whitfield making many forays into Wales to preach and to confer with the Welsh leaders of the revival. In the main, their doctrine would include a belief in election, but not in limited atonement, which of course laid a sure foundation for problems in the years ahead. We say "in

the main” because there were people who were fearless five-pointers. The Calvinistic Methodist Confession of Faith of 1823 is an excellent document which unequivocally keeps to the five points. For example, in the section on election of grace, it speaks of God from all eternity choosing and separating Christ to be the covenant head, mediator and surety to his church to redeem and to save. Also God elected in Christ a multitude that no man can number out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation unto sanctification and eternal life and arranged all the means to ensure its outcome. In the chapter on Redemption, it is stated that Christ died in the stead of those that were given him to be redeemed, and only those.

One of the men responsible for ensuring the purity of the doctrine in the Confession of Faith was John Elias (1774-1841). Although he was a Calvinistic Methodist, he was nurtured in spiritual things by his Anglican grandfather who taught him to read and made him familiar with the works of Griffith Jones, Llanddowror. He appears as a man of a fearless nature, who tended to be rather autocratic. This in turn made him a man who was feared and resented, but his autocracy was generally derived from a zeal for the truth and glory of God. He would preach anywhere and speak out everywhere in the name of truth regardless of the consequences. When members of a church in Holyhead were suspected of plundering from the shipwrecks that sometimes occurred off the Anglesey coast, it was John Elias who was sent to deal with the matter. On his arrival in Holyhead, he found out that there were so many of the members involved with this matter, that the only course of action was to excommunicate the whole church. At Rhuddlan, he preached on the Fourth Commandment out-of-doors to the masses that came to a market on the Lord's Day, without any regard to his own safety. Many that day were made to think on their ways before God. A reading of his sermons shows that he would have no truck with Arminians. For example, preaching on the love of Christ, he closes with these words:

“One challenge again to the devil and Arminius before I close. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”

Another preacher in the same mould was the Baptist, Christmas Evans. In a sermon on **Hebrews 7:22**: “*By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament*”, he made no bones of the fact that he would have nothing to do with the Arminians:

“Wesleyanism gives no honour to Jesus who plays his own part as a helper and leaves myriads to go to hell for not playing their own parts”.

“Blind Wesleyanism thinks that Jesus did not know the people for whom he was made surety.” “It is a poor redemption that the Wesleyans preach up and down the country. They are stirred and owned by the devil to blacken the grace of God.”

“The Wesleyans are as dark as people who have never seen the Bible with regard to the New Covenant.”

It seems that the influence of these men and others like them ensured that there was a remnant in Wales who loved the Lord and his truth, and clung to the old

doctrines of grace. The sad thing is that the quotes we have used are taken from the biography of John Jones, Talysarn, by Owen Thomas, which the author uses to denigrate true Calvinism and indeed he boasts that in 1874 there is now a far more gracious (sic) spirit abroad in the land with regard to Arminianism. We must understand that this statement of Thomas' was definitely the voice of the majority of those who had the audacity to call themselves Calvinists.¹⁶

In the following year, the section on Redemption in the Calvinistic Methodist Confession of Faith was supplemented by a note saying that it was necessary to draw attention to the "opposite truth" (!) on the universal sufficiency of the atonement. This sought to give expression to the idea that God has a love for all mankind. By now the rot had truly set in in the denomination. Its extent can be seen by the fact that J. Cynddylan Jones, who was known in his day as a conservative theologian, could write in a book published by the Calvinistic Methodists in 1925:

"....the Calvinistic theology, and almost every minister in the land were of that persuasion, looked fearfully upon the Wesleyan theology, and they believed unequivocally that it would lead to disastrous results in the religious life of the Principality....We can afford to smile at the fear the old theologians had, yet we can excuse them even if we cannot justify them for Wesleyanism was to them as a new and strange form of theology and practice. The disastrous results they anticipated have not come to pass(!), and after a hundred years of proving, I welcome the Wesleyan denomination as one of the most evangelical and fruitful in good works.....that the world ever saw."

He goes on:

"....the theology of the New Testament is broad enough to include the two."¹⁷

Jones calls John Elias as one who had adopted hypercalvinism at an early stage and was never completely free of its shackles. By "hypercalvinism" he obviously means true Calvinism which is often in Jones' writings seen as something that is extreme compared to the moderate "Calvinism" of his own day. He clearly does not see Calvinism as being the only reasonable system of theology which can be derived from the Scriptures. He speaks of: "Arminianism and Calvinism as contrasting parts of a divine circle" and asks: "where is the theologian that can make an honest attempt to unite them and present to the Christian church a new body of divinity in the which the Calvinistic truths and the Arminian truths will both have their own place? The one and the other are now one-sided. Is it impossible to ensure a balanced truth?"¹⁸

That these questions can appear in a denominational publication without voices of protest being heard speaks volumes for the state of religion in the land by the 1920's. We should remind ourselves afresh that this man was and *is still* counted as a conservative evangelical. Whither Evangelicalism?!!

¹⁶ Cf. "*Cofiant Y Parchedig John Jones Talsarn*" Owen Thomas p. 290-291.

¹⁷ Rev. J Cynddylan Jones D.D., *Op.cit.*, p.186.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.188.

Anyone with the slightest idea of true biblical religion would know that Calvinism and Arminianism are in no way compatible. Indeed anyone facing the Scriptures with an open mind would know that Arminianism is unbiblical, ungodly and would have long come to the conclusion that Calvinism is not merely the best expression of Biblical theology, but the very expression of the teaching of the Scriptures.

The extent of the havoc wrought by fine sounding so-called conservative evangelicals like Cynddylan Jones cannot be underestimated. By looking for a “reasonable, balanced theology” they could sit comfortably with various shades of opinion and open the door wide for modernism and ecumenism to march right in and capture the hearts of the people. What Jones and his ilk were baldly stating is that there is no room for polemics in religion - the net result being good-bye conviction, good-bye living faith, good-bye vibrant Christianity - welcome floppy religion, welcome world into the church.

The Wales of today is reaping what these people sowed. We are left today with a sad situation where the Word of God is rare and finding someone to have true fellowship around the Scriptures is like looking for the proverbial needle in the haystack.

Congregational Singing

It is quite obvious from Ephesians 5:19 that true doctrine can be sung into the church as well as preached. The singing of the psalms of David to which this text refers ensures not only purity of worship but purity of doctrine. What is sung very often captures the imagination of man, perhaps more so than that which is read or recited. We must not underestimate the power of words sung on the minds of men and women.

The Nonconformists in Wales pre-1735 were exclusive psalm singers, which ensured that the preaching of the Word and the catechising had a healthy spiritual supplement. The dawning of the Methodist revival brought a change with regards to what should be sung in church. At the beginning it appears from the diaries of Howell Harris for example that there was no immediate change in the content of the singing. In 1736, he relates in a letter “that we are to have a music teacher to teach us to sing psalms”. In the same year he also tells of an open door being given him to speak and pray as he accompanied a man who went about teaching congregations to sing psalms¹⁹. By contrast, from January 1738 and onwards there are frequent references to the singing of hymns in Harris’s diaries.

Subsequently, in the 1740’s hymn books began to appear in the churches at an alarming rate, they were generally the compositions of one or two authors with hardly any psalms included within their covers. Also, it was an idea of the Methodists to borrow tunes for their compositions from the pubs and taverns and

¹⁹ *Hanes Methodistiaeth Galfinaidd Cymru* (History of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists) edited by Gomer Morgan Roberts, (Caernarvon 1973) Pages 100 and 420.

their works swiftly caught on. A visitor to many a pub in Wales today is surprised to find hymns sung during the sing-songs that occur. This can only be because many of these hymn tunes actually had their birth in the taverns to whence they have returned. Small wonder then that one historian can speak of the Methodist revival as being a sort of "do-it-yourself religion expressing itself in formal gatherings and religious ditties sung to popular tunes."²⁰

Those who have argued for the singing of hymns in Wales from the very first have seen them as a means of enriching the worship and of being an improvement on the "old" congregational exclusive singing of psalms. While we do not doubt the sincerity of the people who make these statements, we must state quite categorically that their sincerity is misplaced and is indeed a cloak for their audacity. What man can improve upon the compositions of God? For verily the standpoint of those who make this statement must be that the psalms are inferior and insufficient.

The early singing of hymns, as was the singing of psalms, was unaccompanied, and it was not until well into the nineteenth century that organs and harmoniums were introduced into public places of worship. A visit to many of the older chapel buildings will reveal that some pews had to be cut down in size or totally removed in order to make room for the harmonium.

A Time of Testing

The year 1848 saw the publication of a report of government commissioners into the state of education in Wales. The report was published bound between blue covers, and the ramifications of the report became known in Wales as the "treason of the blue books." The commissioners had two detrimental things to say about the Welsh nation. **Firstly** they said the Welsh were uneducated for many of the school pupils examined could not speak a word of English, and **secondly** they were Nonconformists. As most of the schools were under the tutelage of the church, the report caused a stir in the church. Many of the ministers saw it as their bounden duty to ensure that their children had an English education. To have an English education became the chief desire of the parents, so that their children could get on in the world. A consequence of this was that their spiritual education was neglected. Some ministers saw this Anglicisation as something that was damaging to the future well-being of the nation and far too much of their efforts were taken up in defending and promoting the Welsh language. It was almost as if the language became THE issue, if not a god. All too many sermons dealt with this subject instead of Christian doctrine.

As to the accusation of being Nonconformist, the reaction was twofold. First of all, with regards to church buildings and manses, it is noticeable that those that were built after 1850 are much bigger than they need have been. Many of the Nonconformist chapels in some villages dwarf the local established church buildings. The message is loud and clear. Welsh nonconformity is as good as the

²⁰ A.H.Dodd, *A Short History of Wales*, (B.T.Batsford Ltd, London, 1979.)

Anglican establishment, if not better! The ministers at this time began to wear the clerical collar, of Romanist origins, to give the impression that their ministers were as "called of God" as their Anglican counterparts. This time of testing found the churches wanting with respect to their visible elements. The world's perception of the Church became the all-important factor in setting the standards, rather than local needs in the light of God's Word.

In this article we have given an overview of something of the life of the evangelical faith in Wales. We have done so not in order to denigrate the movement for the sake of it, but in order that people may yet come to question the propaganda that is prevalent in most religious literature pertaining to the land. That there were good things in the religious life of the past in Wales we do not deny, but we emphasise again that what the Revivalist propaganda holds out that made the Wales of yore spiritual and godly, on close examination is seen indubitably to be nothing more than emotional froth. The effect of this has been devastating in that it has made people cling to the propaganda and have as their only hope a period of revival. In all this, the pursuit of truly understanding the doctrines of the Scripture takes a poor second place to the pursuit of revival.

We hope and pray that this article will at least make some people think afresh about the religious history of Wales and their own lands. May God be pleased to ensure that our religion not be fired by the distortions of the propaganda-mongers, but by His Word and His Spirit. This would make us far more objective in our reading and understanding of the events in the religious history of our land.

It is a dark night on the Church, the depth of winter, when she is sleepy and ready to die, and the Lord is hiding his face in the ordinances, and when only a few are crying out for his appearance, and those scarcely audible in their call!

It is still more awful, if while they are asleep they should think themselves awake, and imagine that they see the sun at midnight.

Yet such are the circumstances of the Church GENERALLY. Yea, the darkness of night, I say, is upon her, and she is slumbering, having lost the presence of her Lord, and so unhappy as not to know the loss she has sustained!

John Elias (famous Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Preacher, 1774-1841)
Letter written 28th June 1831, (Cf. John Elias: BOT 1973 p. 241- 2) after nearly 100 years of so-called "revivals" all across Wales! Evidence indeed of the failure of the revivals to produce godly fruitage!