



Providence/Paradox and Revival

Revd Dr Simon Vibert



Who did the choosing?

Charles Simeon to John Wesley

1784



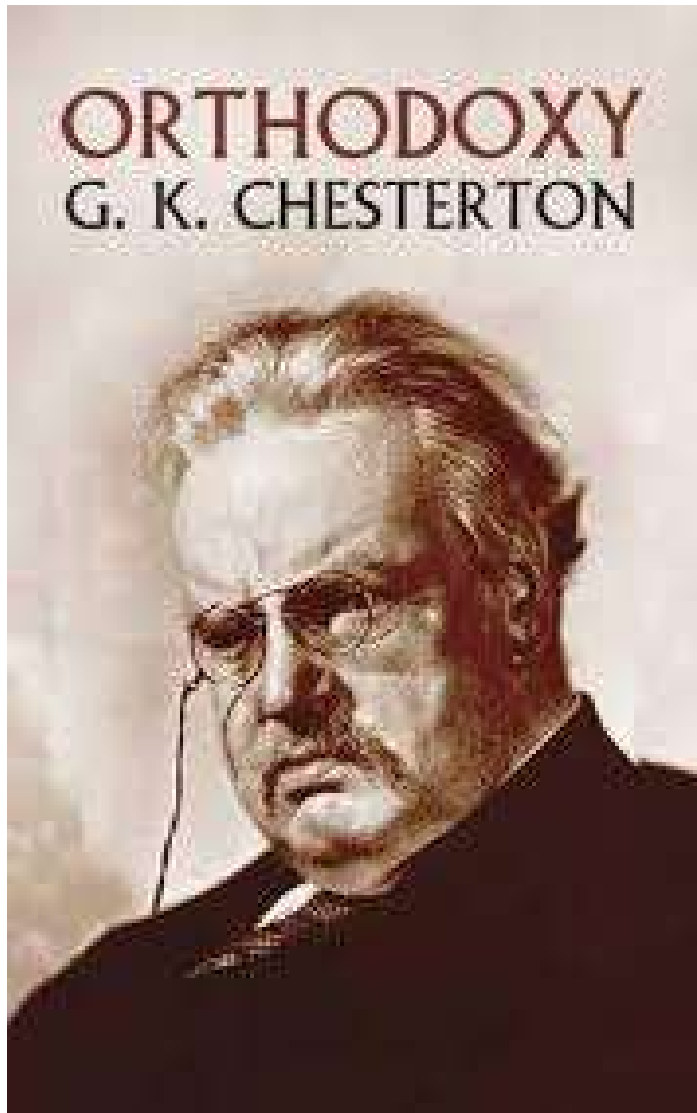
“Every act of revival is an interplay between Divine and Human activity which should instill confidence and humility”



Definitions

Providence –
God's sovereign
control

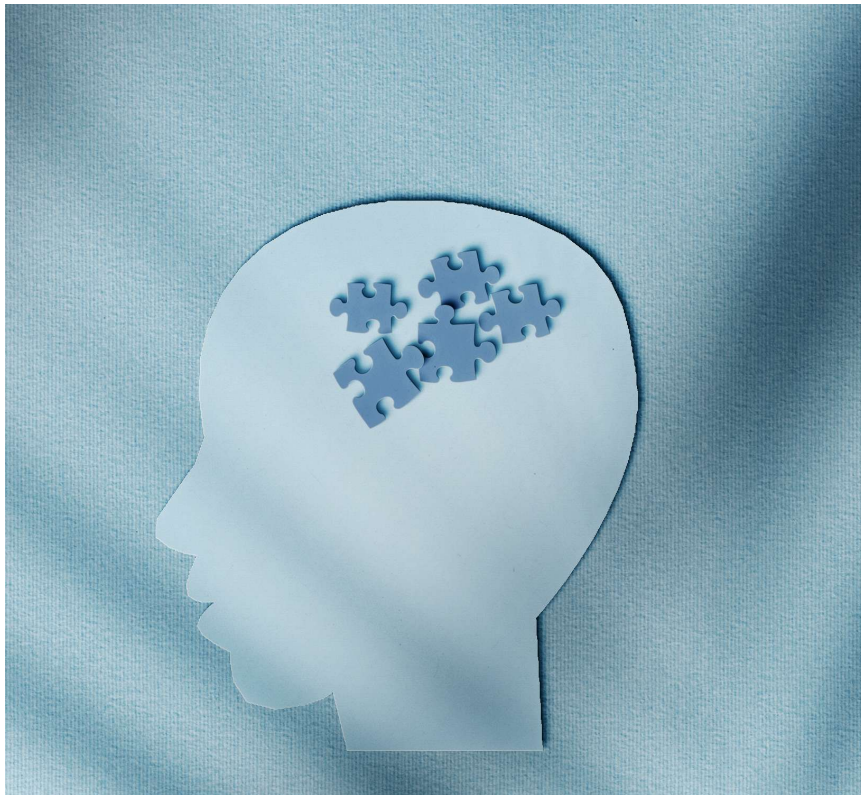
Paradox –
seeming
contradictions
in God's plan



G K Chesterton ***Orthodoxy***

- "All the real argument about religion turns on the question of whether a man who was born upside down can tell when he comes right way up. The primary paradox of Christianity is that the ordinary condition of man is not his sane or sensible condition; that the normal itself is an abnormality.... It is only since I have known orthodoxy that I have known mental emancipation" (p. 165).

James Anderson, *Paradox in Christian Theology*



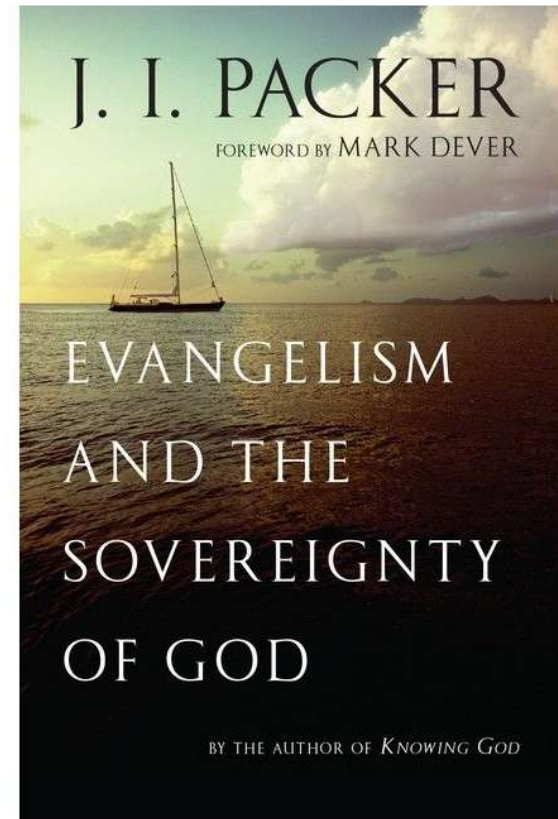
- “A Paradox thus amounts to a set of claims which taken in conjunction appear to be logically inconsistent”
- The Trinity
- The Incarnation

J.I. Packer
***Evangelism and the
Sovereignty of God***

Antinomy

Paradox

Mystery



Paradox and the Bible

Isaiah 50:28

Psalms 145:3

Job 11:7-9

Job 36:26

Job 37:5

Isaiah 55:8-9

Romans 11:33-36

1 Corinthians 2:10b-11

Philippians 4:7



The Bible is full of Mystery/Paradox

**This is comforting and
humbling**

- Inspires awe
- Keeps us God-centred
- Leads to prayer
- Motivates us to WORK & WAIT

Defining Revival

- Habakkuk – “O Lord, revive your work” (3:2)
- Isaiah – “O that you would rend the heavens and come down” (64:1)



“On our feet we may have
arguments about it, but on our
knees, we are all agreed”

Jim Packer

The Mystery/Paradox of Revival

- “The Truth is not in the middle, and not in one extreme; but in both extremes, even if you cannot reconcile them”
- Charles Simeon

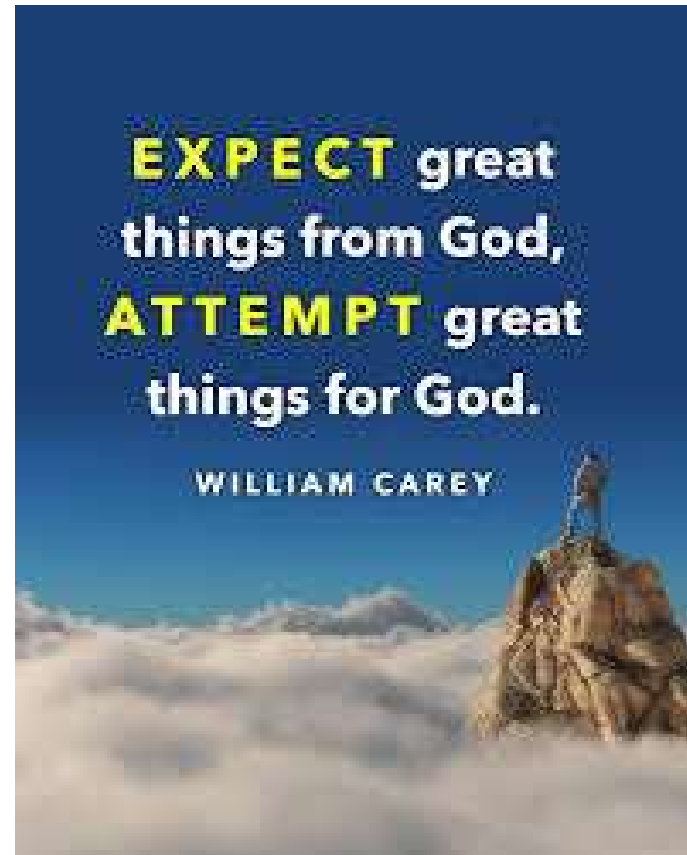
“Work as if everything
depends upon you;
Pray as if everything depends
upon God”

Jim Packer

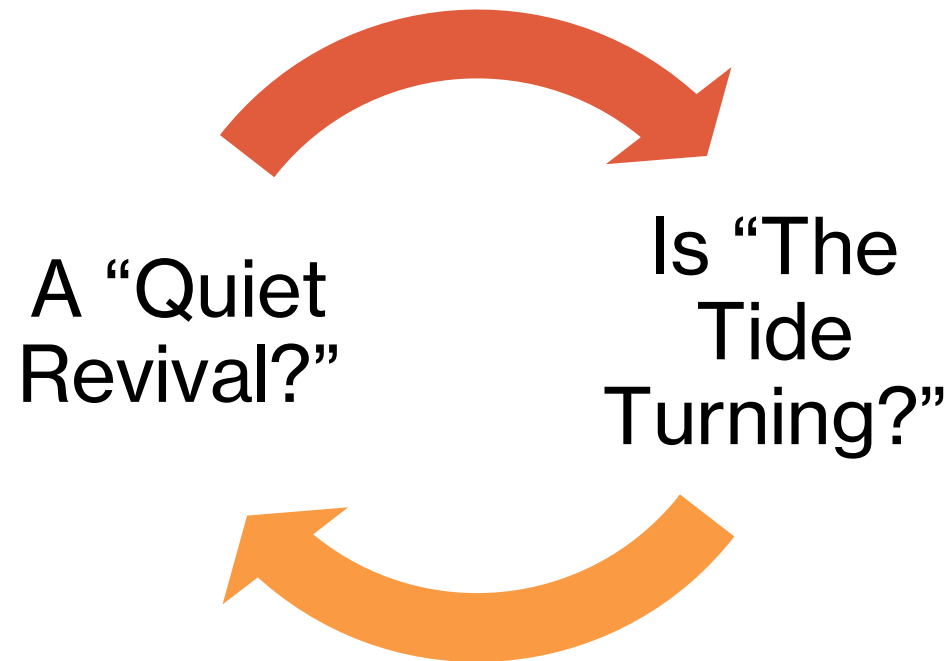
2 big mistakes

- A. It's all about us
- B. It's all about God

William Carey



What are we learning from what is going on around us?



What do we do with what we have learned

- What is our part/God's part?
- **Session one –**
- *Communication with a view to conversion*
- Building bridges



What do we do with what we have learned

Session one –

The Gospel is

- About God
- About Sin
- About a Saviour
- About Repentance



What do we do with what we have learned

- What is our part/God's part?
- **Session two –**
- *Earnest and deep prayer*
- Psalm 85:6: "Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?"



Learning from Revivals

- Wesleyan Revival (18th C)
- New England Revival (18th C)
- Welsh Revival (1904)

Evan Roberts

- Confess all known sin, receiving forgiveness through Jesus Christ
- Remove anything in your life that you are in doubt or feel unsure about
- Be ready to obey the Holy Spirit instantly
- Publicly confess the Lord Jesus Christ

“Every act of revival is an interplay between Divine and Human activity which should instill confidence and humility”



Books

James Anderson, *Paradox in Christian Theology: An Analysis of Its Presence, Character, and Epistemic Status*, Paternoster Theological Monographs, 2006

Richard Bewes, *Under the Thorn Tree*

Brian Edwards, *Towards and Biblical and Pastoral Theology of Revival*

Charles Finney, *Revival*

Jen Pollack Michel, *Surprised by Paradox*

Walter Kaiser, *Revive us Again*

J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*

RC Sproul *Chosen by God*

Oswald J Smith, *The Revival we Need*

Warren Wiersbe, *Truth on Its Head*