

The Living Dead.

What shall we do with our dead? The dead who have not died—Who meet us still in the very paths...

"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

BY THE REV. G. A. DOWNEY.

No man can sit down to the study of the Bible and other literature on the subject of being filled with the Spirit, without realizing a great lack, and at the same time a great longing to be thus filled.

The early Christians, who were chiefly used in the advancement of the Kingdom, were Spirit-filled. Jesus himself returned to Galilee "in the power of the Spirit."

All good spirits are born of the Holy Spirit whose name is Love. He is the Spirit of love. He is love, for "God is love."

1. It is the secret of power for the ministry. The minister of to-day is almost overwhelmed with professional helps and organizations for carrying on his work.

There are thousands of them—far too many. Being filled with the Spirit would mean as a result with them, in most cases, being baptized and joining the church.

The Rev. Wm. Arthur, in "The Tongue of Fire," thus illustrates the value of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's work:

"Suppose we saw an army sitting down before a granite fortress, and they told us they intended to batter it down. We might ask them how? They point us to a cannon ball. Well, there is no power in that! It is heavy, but not more than a hundred weight, or half a hundred-weight. If all the men in the army were to throw it, it would make no impression. They say no; look at the cannon. Well, there is no power in that; it is a machine, and nothing more. But look at the powder! Well, there is no power in that; a child may spoil it; a sparrow may pick it up. Yet this powerless powder and this powerless ball are put into this powerless cannon; one spark of fire enters it, and then, in the twinkling of an eye that powder becomes a flash of lightning, and that cannon ball is a thunderbolt which smites as if it had been sent from heaven."

So ministers have the powerless speech to convey the truth, but when it is accompanied by the fire of the Holy Spirit, it breaks the stony heart and is mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. Pray for the ministers. Here is one great responsibility of the laymen. It is easy to say, "He lacks power;" but do you pray for your minister?

2. It is the secret of power for the church. The many vacant seats in the pews on Sunday morning, the meager attendance at Sunday school, and the small and too often dull social meetings seen in too many churches, are largely due to the lack of a Spirit-filled church membership. Gloom, fault-finding, doubt, backwardness in duty, all help to kill the power of the church. These do not exist to any great extent in a Spirit-filled church.

Church members seek pleasures and allow indulgences for themselves which simply make the Gospel more and more completely "hid to them that are lost." What, pray, has our denomination gained by taking the names of certain sinful pleasures out of the covenant? It would have been time enough to do this when our church members become so filled with the Spirit that they do not wish to do these things.

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3. It is the secret of power for the Christians outside of the church. There are thousands of them—far too many. Being filled with the Spirit would mean as a result with them, in most cases, being baptized and joining the church. They could not keep out. The kind of sanctification, or holiness, or Spirit-baptism that keeps men and women from joining the church is more properly "crankification" than anything else.

4. It is the secret of power for the unconverted. There are strong and good men and women among us who are unconverted. There are thousands of them "not far from the Kingdom." But, oh, how weak their lives, how sinful, compared with professing Christians!

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not with professing Christians but with Christ and what they might be consecrated to God and "filled with the Spirit." Those far away from God ought readily to see the need of the purifying and strengthening influences of God's Holy Spirit.

A young soldier was once dispatched on a dangerous errand by Wellington. The young man said, "One touch first of thine all-conquering hand." Such inspiration lasts. To be "filled with the Spirit" means to be always in touch with the truly all-conquering hand of Christ.

Just a few words as to how to obtain the Holy Spirit in fullness. Here let one speak who had the Spirit in fullness and power through a long life of successful Christian service, Mr. Moody.

Some years ago, perhaps ten or fifteen, he seemed to lay emphasis on the idea of getting emptied first. He used to say: "But remember, he is not going to give this power to an impatient man; he is not going to give it to a selfish man; he will never give it to an ambitious man whose aim is selfish, till first emptied of self—emptied of pride and all worldly thoughts." Yes, but how is a poor mortal, all full of pride and self-conceit and worldly plans, to get emptied of these things? Later in his life, Mr. Moody gave better instruction. He said: "Some one said this morning, and I have had it said to me very often, 'Mr. Moody, why don't you tell the people that they must get emptied before God can fill them?' Now, I want to say to you that you can empty yourselves just as easy as you can fill yourselves, and no easier." Then he would give this advice: "My dear friend, you want to ask God to lift up the floodgate and let the tide come in upon you, and then these things will go of themselves."

Mr. Drummond agrees with Mr. Moody's later view, for he says, in his address, "The Greatest Thing in the World": "Souls are made sweet not by taking the acid fluids out, but by putting something in—a great love, a new Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. Christ, the Spirit of Christ, interpenetrating ours, sweetens, purifies, transforms all."

The first thing is a conscious need of that Spirit. "The greatest hope is found in the deepest sense of destitution." Then, go to Luke 11:9-13. Pray, believe, and wait.

"Hover o'er me, Holy Spirit, Bathe my trembling heart and brow, Fill me with thy hallowed presence, Come, O come, and fill me now."

Conquering Beseetting Sins.

He who makes excuses for them never will overcome them. The first thing is to admit that they are sins and must be conquered, that to overcome them will involve a severe struggle, and that this struggle cannot succeed without Divine help. In other words, face the facts if you expect to make any headway in conquering your beseetting sins. Then do whatever is possible in the way of strengthening the will. This is easier with some than with others. It is possible to a certain extent, the realization of what any sin is in God's sight, and of the peculiar mischievousness of the special form of sin in question, and the resolution to be ready for it hereafter, and to resist it—these furnish strength of will. They confirm the purpose and resolve not to yield.

Furthermore, victory involves beginning again after failure. It is possible, of course, not to fail, yet nine times out of ten failure occurs before long, and is more discouraging because of the special effort to overcome which has been made. But it is a part of the discipline of character to go through the experience of failing and trying again. We ought not to fail, but, when we do fail, we must not be disheartened, but pray for Divine forgiveness and help, and face the struggle before us with determination greater than ever and with an affectionate trust in our Heavenly Father more intense than ever. No one can conquer beseetting sins in his own strength. Let this be distinctly understood. Whether one be a Christian by profession or not, it is equally true, and the whole history of Christianity has proved it, that no one ever succeeds in overcoming the sin which besets him except as he depends upon and follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It is Christ who wins the battles in us and through us. We are his soldiers in the fight against our sins, but we cannot fight even in his cause by ourselves. We must have and must realize the co-operation of His Spirit.

Beseetting sins are among the most subtle. They would not be beseetting unless they were. Whatever their form, they have a grip on us which we never fully realize till we try to cast them off. Trifling although they may sometimes seem, as we first face them we soon learn that our relation to them is that of a real, terrible bondage. If we are to live Christian lives in any true sense, to know anything of the happiness, freedom and usefulness of true followers of Christ, it can only be as we consecrate ourselves without reservation to the struggle which begins when we first learn what Christ is like, and continue till our last breath, the struggle to overcome, in His name and for His sake the sin which doth so easily beset us.—Congregationalist.

How Stanley Was Converted.

During an interview between Mr. Stanley and a newspaper correspondent, the distinguished and intrepid explorer said: "I have been in Africa for seventeen years and I never met a man yet who would kill me if I folded my hands. What has been wanted and what I have been endeavoring to ask for the poor Africans has been the good offices of Christians, ever since Livingston taught me during those four months that I was with him. I went to him as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. To a reporter and correspondent such as I, who had only to deal with wars, mass meetings and political gatherings, sentimental matters were entirely out of my province. But there came for me a long time for reflection. I was out there away from the worldly world. I saw this solitary old man there, and asked myself, 'How on earth does he stop here; is he cracked or what! What is it that inspires him? For months after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at his carrying out all that was said in the Bible, 'Leave all things and follow Me.' But little by little his sympathy for others became contagious; seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how he went quietly about his business, I was converted by him, although he had not tried to do it. How sad that the good old man should have died so soon. How joyful he would have been if he could have seen what has since happened there!"

THE ROOTS OF THE CHURCH.

The closets of God's people are where the roots of the Church grow. And if the roots be not nourished, there can be no trees with branches and fruit. In many senses the root of the plant is the most important part of it. Men do not see it. It is hidden away down under the ground. Yet in the dark it works away, and in the secret laboratory it prepares the life which goes up into the plant or tree, and manifests itself in trunk and branches in leaves and fruits.

The beautiful leaf-fabrics are woven down in the looms of that dark earth-factory. The colors that tint the flowers are prepared in that lowly workshop. The little blocks that are piled in silence, one by one, as the fabric of the tree goes up, are hewn out in the secret quarries of the roots. He that would bless a tree must first bless its roots. So it is in the spiritual life. It is not the closet which men see. It is not a man's secret, personal religious life which the world notices and praises. Yet it is in the closet that the roots of his life grow. And if the roots be not nourished, then the tree will soon die.—J. R. Miller.

TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

To be a Christian is not merely to be good, but to be good for something. To be a Christian is not merely to join the church, but to become associated with the people of God for service, so as to both receive good and to do good. To be a Christian is not merely to make a profession of faith in Christ, but to live a life of service for Christ. To be a Christian is not merely to declare allegiance to Christ, but to be born anew into the life, power, and spirit of his kingdom. To be a Christian does not necessarily imply freedom from doubts, but it does imply exercising that living faith in Christ which in due time triumphs over doubts. Nicodemus and Thomas had their doubts, but by coming to Christ and clinging to him they achieved a complete victory over them all. To be a Christian is not necessarily to be sure that you are right and that those who differ with you are wrong, but it is to be very certain that you do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and honestly strive to know and do his will.—Telescope.

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Important to Remember.

The man who lives to please himself will find that he has a hard master. This life will mean more when we realize that it is the pathway to the next.

This world is too small to afford a sense of safety to the man who obeys only himself. The more faith we have in God the more faith they will have in one another.

To persuade one soul to lead a better life is to leave the world better than you found it. It is not hard to find people who are willing to give up some sins, but the tug comes when they are asked to give up all sin.

If there were any chance for salvation after death, the devil wouldn't work so hard to get men to put off their praying until the last minute.—Ram's Horn.

SIN OR NOT DOING.—Doing nothing at all is often the worst kind of wrong doing. Simply failing to do what we ought to do may be more inexcusable than any mistake in our best methods of doing. If we see another by our side in peril, and fail to give him warning or help within our power, his blood is as clearly on our head as though we had stricken him down with a club or a knife. What sentence of the Judge, in the great day of account, can be severer than "Inasmuch as ye did it not, depart from me?" Let us watch and strive against the righteous doom of not doing.—S. S. Times.

You will never cure your brother of his errors by sneering at him. If he is ignorant he needs to be dealt with patiently. If he is wilfully wrong, kindness and prayer will better suit his case.—Selected.

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