

And an Highway shall be there, and a Way, and it shall be called

The wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.—isaiah 35:8.

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THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

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We do not for one moment question nor deny that there is such a gift, for the Scriptures plainly state that there is. One might as well deny all the gifts of the Spirit as to deny the gift of "tongues." But I desire to point out some of the errors concerning the present day teaching in the movement known as the "Tongues Movement." It is well to remember that all fanatical movements have some truth; but usually it is distorted truth, and distorted truth is error.

The first error is that of giving an undue emphasis and prominence to the gift of "tongues;" putting first what God put last in the order of the gifts. In 1 Cor. 12:28, we find the numerical order of the gifts, given, doubtless, according to their relative value; and the last mentioned is "diversities of tongues." We commit a grievous error when we put last what God puts first, or first what God puts last. We must learn to leave truth in the place and order that God puts it, for God puts first things first and last things last.

This is why I do not make use of the term "the four-fold gospel." Says one, "Do you not believe in the four-fold gospel?" I would answer, "Yes, I believe in a hundred fold gospel." "Then why object to the four-fold?" Because it places the subject of divine healing and of second coming on an equality with the subject of pardon and sanctification—as though of equal importance. While I am a glad witness to divine healing, and rejoice in the glorious hope of His coming, I am persuaded that it is infinitely more important that men should be saved and sanctified than that they should be healed of physical ills, or accept our view of our Lord's return. And yet the multitude will seek physical health before they will holiness of heart.

The second error of the "tongues movement" is in the teaching that all may have, and should have the gift of tongues. After enunciating the gifts, Paul raises the question, "Are all apostles; are all prophets; are all workers of miracles; have all the gifts of healing; do all speak with tongues?" (12:29-30). Of course, this is just another way of saying that all do not have the same gift. And no one would teach that all should be apostles, or that all should be prophets, or teachers, and yet when it comes to "the gifts of healing" and "tongues," it is urged that if one was just right and living up to their privilege, all might be healed and all should speak with tongues. This we deny, and insist that it is wholly unscriptural. As well urge that all should be "apostles" and "prophets" as urge that all should speak with tongues.

It should be remembered that all the gifts are in the sovereignty of God, and that "all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as HE will." 1 Cor. 12:11.

A third error, is that of insisting that the speaking with tongues is the necessary accomplishment, and evidence of the Pentecostal experience. This is as though the sun in the solar system needed a tallow dip to prove it is in the neighborhood. The Holy Ghost bears His own witness, and can do so in ten thousand different ways. One might as well insist that unless "there came a sound from heaven as of

a rushing mighty wind," and "cloven tongues of fire" were visible and all the other phenomena of historic Pentecost were present, Holy Ghost had not yet been received. Not only so, but it is not said in second chapter of Acts that they speak with "unknown tongues," but "other tongues, as the Spirit will utterance." This is different from the "gifts of tongues," in there was no interpreter necessary the day of Pentecost, "because every man heard them speak in his language;" and this was the arrangement of the multitude as they exclaimed, "How hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born." The exercising of the "gift of tongues" always requires an interpreter, and is positively forbidden and prohibited in the church when there is no interpreter. "If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church." 1 Cor. 14:28.

A fourth error is in the assumption that the "gift of tongues" is an evidence of advanced spirituality and superior piety. We would insist that all the gifts are on this side of the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians; that after enumerating all the gifts, the Apostle Paul says, "And yet shew I unto you a more excellent way," and gives then, the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, thus indicating that Perfect Love is "more excellent" than any of the gifts. While evidently the Corinthian church had the "gift of tongues," it may be well to note that this church gave the apostle more trouble than any other church in the New Testament; that they had "divisions;" had gone to law "brother with brother;" had misused the sacrament of the Lord's supper; had among them gross immoralities, such as was "not so much as named among the gentiles"; and evidently had misused the gift of tongues which called forth the restrictions of the 14th chapter in the exercise of that gift. He said of them in the third chapter, they were "yet carnal;" and "babes in Christ." So the "gift of tongues" among them did not prove advanced spirituality and superior piety.

A fifth error is in supposing that any sort of a mysterious gibberish or jargon—though not understood by themselves or anyone else—is the "gift of tongues." The falsity of this claim has been disproved by numbers who have sincerely supposed they had the gift of tongues and gone to the various missionary fields to find they could not speak so as to be understood by the natives at all—though they were sure before going the Lord had given them the language and called them to those fields. Indeed, there have been exceedingly few, if any, of real authenticated cases of the gift of tongues in these latter days. It should be remembered that Satan can manipulate our vocal organs just as certainly as he can any other part of our being, as in the case of witchcraft, sorcery, spirit-rapping, etc., hence we need to heed the injunction, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

I do not seek the gift of tongues, first, because I have that which is "more excellent," and would not know what to do with the gift of tongues if I had it. Second, because the command is, "Covet earnestly the best gifts," and the gift of tongues is not the best," for greater is he that pro-

with be correct to say that because ten thousand men did the same thing, therefore it is a law of the converted tongue, pray for one's enemies, but from other processes of reasoning and special statements made in the Bible we do know that it is the universal rule that when a man is converted he does love his enemies and desires their salvation and seeks with all his might by prayer and every other means to win them to the same knowledge of the saving grace of God as he has received. We know that Mr. Wesley's conversion was genuine because we know that a converted man always does what Mr. Wesley expressly states that he did. This view of the regenerated nature is not only a picture of the newly born soul but it is a faithful description of the perpetual attitude of the spirit of a converted man, for he who would obtain the forgiveness of his own sins must forgive others their sins against himself, and he who would retain the forgiveness of God must continue to forgive those who have trespassed against him. Thus it is that all of those states of mind which are sometimes called holding grudges and hating certain persons and wishing evil towards them is plucked up by the roots at the very start and these uprooted evils should never be allowed to gain a hold upon the heart again. It is certainly an erroneous if not a wicked and absurd thing when persons come to the altar seeking a clean heart that they should be obliged to pass through hours of severe struggle to bring themselves to the point where they can forgive some one. He who holds within his own heart hatred or malice or enmity toward any human being and permits that to influence his spirit or conduct in relation to that person has no just ground whatever for laying any claim at all to being a converted man. He may have been converted but if he was, he ceased to hate his enemies and began immediately to love them, and if he does not now love them although he may have been once converted, is all the time while hating his enemy an unconverted man. Some of the most shocking and disastrous failures we have ever noted in revival work and especially at the altars of the Church have come from a failure to recognize actual relations toward God in this matter of loving or hating enemies. We have seen persons struggling for hours to reach a point where some old grudge could be forgiven and failing in this souls have turned back to perdition. We fear that very often the experience of entire sanctification is preached as a cure for an unforgiving bitter spirit. We are certain beyond any controversy that this is daubing with untempered mortar, is the work of a novice and not of a true teacher of the Gospel, it in reality the work of the devil and not of the Holy Spirit. In all kindness and yet in unwavering fidelity preachers of the Gospel should go everywhere proclaiming that he who possesses an unforgiving spirit toward any of God's creatures is himself walking in darkness and unless he repents and obtains forgiveness and a grace which enables him to forgive all persons is and must be in eternal darkness. It is a cruel thing to delude souls into imagining that while yet possessed of a bitter wicked spirit toward any human being such a person is a proper candidate for the experience of entire sanctification. We would be careful not to cause any one to cast aside his confidence, we would strictly avoid making the way to appear more

THE FRUIT OF CONVERSION.

A crisis came in the life of the Rev. John Wesley on Wednesday, May 24, 1738, when he entered into the experience known among Methodists as conversion. At about five o'clock in the morning he opened his Testament and read these words, "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that we should be partakers of the divine nature." A little later that same day he again opened this book and read, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon of that day he attended service at St. Paul's and the anthem was, "Out of the depths have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O, let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O, Lord who may abide? For it is mercy with thee; therefore shalt Thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his sins." In the evening of that day Mr. Wesley went unwillingly to a society meeting where one was reading Luther's preface to the Apostle to the Romans and of this meeting Mr. Wesley records in his journal, "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the load of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a mean special manner despitely used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now felt in my heart."

Special attention is hereby directed to the fruit of conversion mentioned by Mr. Wesley in the statement that he began to pray as soon as converted for his enemies. It is not only the fact that he prayed for his enemies at once, but all that such praying stands for to which we would especially direct attention. It would not be a correct process of reasoning to infer from the fact that one man as soon as converted took to praying for his enemies, nor would it

be difficult than it really is, we would flood the world if possible with encouragement and hope for all who desire to obtain a clean heart, but one might as well try to fly without wings as to reach the fountain of cleansing without first having yielded up to God an unforgiving spirit and obtaining from God complete victory over it. The special reason for emphasizing in unusual manner this point is because we have observed so many persons who live at a poor dying rate because of their unwillingness to receive from the Holy Spirit a forgiving spirit. A Roman Catholic lay member somewhat under the influence of strong drink engaged in conversation with us at one time as we were riding on a trolley car hastening to the funeral of a friend and this man declared that he knew personally two neighbors who were enemies of each other and the priest besought them to be reconciled. One man was at the gates of death and the other in health. At the solicitation of the priest the well man entered the room where his enemy lay sick and besought him to forgive his past offenses. The sick man prompted by the priest declared that he would forgive his neighbor, at which the priest rejoiced, but his joy was soon cut off when the sick man remarked, "This holds good if I die but if I get well there is nothing to it. All wicked malicious hatred is of the devil and is peculiarly the trait of character by which he is most conspicuously known, therefore he who has the spirit of wicked hate or even of mild enmity in his heart against a human being and permits that to have any influence upon his own conduct is acting with the nature of Satan rather than the nature of God. It would be well if there could come a revival of the old original Wesleyan type of experience, that the instant the Holy Spirit performs the work of regeneration and the new life begins to pulsate within, the heart thus renewed cries out in behalf even of the most bitter and unrelenting of enemies. Wesleyan Methodist."

A minister of marked ability, annoyed by unpleasant things, which he supposed existed only in his denomination, thought to get rid of them all by uniting with another denomination. He made the change. He succeeded in his new denomination, and became one of its foremost ministers. Many years after a young minister of the denomination which he had left visited the distinguished divine to tell him of his difficulties and ask his advice about changing his denominational relations. The older man heard him patiently, as he told of lack of appreciation, hindrances to advancement, small salary, etc., and then said to him with much emphasis, "Go back to your church, and stick to it. You will find quite as many disagreeable things in any other denomination." Which was excellent advice. And it applies equally to the people, other than ministers, who go from church to church to avoid difficulties or to better their condition.—Exchange.

Prayer therefore. Prayer is not words merely but work; not a substitute for labor but labor itself. When men pray they are employing spiritual forces as real as the material forces of gravitation and cohesion. They liberate energy which works at the deepest roots of human need. We never do finer work than when we finely pray.

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