

TARRY UNTIL.

By Dr. A. B. Simpson.

"Behold I send the promise of My Father upon you, but tarry ye until. . . . (Luke 24:49.)"

This is an experience into which we can come in all its fulness only by profound spiritual preparation, and it is for this the Master is calling us to "tarry until." Until when? Till the heart is filled and satisfied and the Spirit Himself has witnessed to us that He is satisfied with us and that we have indeed received all that was meant for us in the blessing of Christ and the full inheritance of His grace.

When that comes to pass the heart will know it through a Divine consciousness, and while we shall not cease to receive larger fillings and to hunger and thirst with larger desires, it will no longer be the gnawing hunger of disappointment, discouragement and failure and a restless crying out after God for those things which we ought to be praising Him, glorifying Him and telling the world of His love.

This fulness may not come to all in the same way, for the gifts of the Spirit are as varied as our temperaments, our experiences and our ministries. But to each one it will be satisfying, it will be sufficient and the result of it will be that the subject of it shall become efficient for every ministry to which God has called him, whether it be secret intercession or public witness bearing and working for the Lord.

For this we are to tarry and to "tarry until." What that tarrying involves for each individual Christian the Holy Spirit alone can show in each case. But the following things will surely enter into it:

1. It will involve definite and intense desire for the special filling of the Holy Ghost, a desire so intense as to become for the time the controlling thought and purpose of the soul, and every possible opportunity will be taken advantage of to give expression to that desire and to seek that filling.

2. It will mean the putting aside of needless things that might distract from its pursuit. Not only will it lift the seeker out of all frivolity and waste of time, but it will lead him to put aside things right in themselves, but less important and which have a tendency to distract and satisfy the heart with lesser things and lower planes. Perhaps this is the principal idea connected with fasting and prayer. The idea is that of dispensing with many things, turning aside even from ordinary things and concentrating an undivided heart upon the one great object of our desire and prayer.

3. It will of course lead to much prayer, continued prayer, persevering prayer, secret prayer, and such opportunities of public and united prayer as may be helpful in this direction. Some souls get nearer to God in the secret place of the Most High, others need the upholding of a brother's hands. There is a place for both kinds of prayer.

4. This of course will lead to much honest dealing with our own hearts in the sight of God and in the light of the Holy Spirit. While we are not called to dig up

the buried sins of the past, yet there must be great openness to the Spirit and readiness to hold everything absolutely at the bidding of His holy will and desire nothing, do nothing, hold back nothing upon which He puts His hand. This is the spirit of obedience and an absolutely surrendered will, not necessarily a condemning conscience, but a heart that sweetly says, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

5. All this should be controlled by the spirit of faith. After claiming our blessing from the Lord we are to expect it and say, "It is done," and henceforth wait upon Him with a full confidence that He has heard us, that He has granted our prayer, that He is now waiting to pour out upon us His Holy Spirit and to fill us with all the fulness of God in the way best fitted for us and for which we are best prepared. We will not make any steady progress until we let our actions become transactions, our coming become committal and our prayer be turned into praise. We are to wait upon God with constant expectation of His full blessing and a heart open to take in just as fast as it comes.

6. The effect of all this will be a great mellowing, deepening and quickening of our spirit. As we wait upon the Lord, all our spiritual faculties will be awakened, aroused and strengthened. The very atmosphere of the Spirit will come to pervade our inward being and, like the softened ground after the plow and harrow have pulverized it, will be able to take in the showers of blessing which the Spirit pours upon us to turn them into fertility and fruit. It is said that Michael Angelo used to spend whole nights in the tombs in order that the images of that shadowy world might be vividly impressed upon his imagination. So as we dwell much with God and the things of God, we shall find our spirit partaking of their color and prepared for their reception.

7. Not only so, but through such waiting on the Lord we shall find that we have already been receiving the very thing for which we waited. Not always as a rushing mighty wind does the Spirit's fulness now come, but breath by breath His gentle hands gather about us even as the dew-drops crystallize unseen about the plants of earth at eventide. Our spiritual capacity is so vast that we cannot in a moment take in all that God has to bestow, and if we could we would not be able to digest it. God has no system of quick lunches, but "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him."

Astronomers tell us that they can only photograph the finer stars by leaving the camera for a long exposure for many hours together and then they find the faint impression on the sensitive plate of distant worlds which it was impossible to see by a momentary glance through the most powerful telescope. So God has finer touches to impart to the soul which only can be impressed upon the sensitive organism of the waiting spirit as we tarry long in His revealing presence. We are in the days when the Holy Spirit is finishing His work and adding more delicate touches to the picture which He has been transcribing upon the tablets of our hearts.

Surely we may expect as the end draws near that the very finest work of the Holy Ghost will be perfected in the preparation of the Bride and the ornaments of her glorious array and only those who come close enough and wait long enough in His presence can have God's very best. Let us therefore ask Him for the waiting spirit, for the hearkening heart, for the deep stillness that can receive the impress of His touch and reflection of His image. It was Luther that said, "Be silent unto God and let Him mould thee." The deepest prayer of the waiting spirit is one of silence. The heart's highest longings are unutterable. We do not need to translate our burden, but pour it out in inarticulate desire and holy longing, and He will understand, translate and answer.

Nor do we need to give up our practical duties while thus waiting on the Lord. We can

"Carry music in our heart

Through the busy street and wrangling mart."

There is an old, sweet legend of a monk who was about to go to the door of the monastery to fulfil his noonday task of administering alms to the poor who always gathered at that hour, but just as he was starting he was detained by a vision of the Lord Jesus standing before him in all His glory. Instead of waiting to meet his Lord, he reluctantly passed on to his humble task and then slowly returned to his cell, wishing he could have tarried, when to his delight and wonder he found the vision waiting still, and as the Lord met him in glory and blessing He said, "If thou hadst stayed I would have left. Well done, good and faithful servant, as you did it unto one of the least of these you did it unto Me." So still the Lord loves to meet us with His most gracious manifestations when we are most faithfully fulfilling His will, whether it be in the closet, the sanctuary or the place of daily service.

8. Finally, the great purpose of all our waiting on the Lord is to give to us a larger capacity for His fulness and a more responsive spirit to receive the loftier ideals of what He has for us. This last thing is perhaps our greatest need. We are so accustomed to linger in old ruts, to follow old trends of thought, experience and feeling, and to "measure ourselves by ourselves and compare ourselves among ourselves," that we fail to realize all the things that God hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him." God is saying to His people today, "Behold I will do a new thing." "When the Spirit is poured out from on high" not only does "the wilderness become a fruitful field," but "the fruitful field is counted for a forest." "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." The Lord is wanting to wither many of the flowers even in our spiritual garden that He may make room for the everlasting flowers of the paradise above. Already their perfume is wafted to us from the borders of the land beyond. Oh let us catch the heavenly breath, let us listen to the song that no man can know save those that are redeemed from the earth, and let us rise to meet our "upward calling" and "apprehend that for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus."—Pentecostal Herald.