

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 40:3

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HOLY FIRE VERSUS HUMAN ENTHUSIASM

By Rev. S. K. Wheatlake

A minister of considerable note as an evangelist not long since, and within the range of the writer's labors, was in the habit of frequently urging his collaborators to pray more loudly and earnestly. Upon learning of this strange procedure a query arose in my mind: Can it be possible that any who read their Bibles and labor for the salvation of souls can suppose there is no difference between Holy Ghost fire and mere human enthusiasm? Or that human force, regardless of the moral attitude toward God, can produce a spirit of prevailing prayer? And yet on second thought it is not so strange after all when we consider that the Holy Ghost is simply "the Word," hence they had nothing but human enthusiasm to excite to action.

True, human effort may work up an enthusiastic feeling and many may suppose that they are getting blessed, and that great good is being done; but it is all a sad delusion; for the service that pleases God and brings to earth the best results is not that of human energy urged on by the crack of the leader's whip.

The power of the Holy Ghost may be distinguished from mere human enthusiasm in that the truth at the right time and in the proper spirit does not lessen its power. True charity rejoiceth in the truth. When the fervor of a meeting is cooled off, when the truth has been plainly stated, it is evident that the feeling was not divinely spiritual, for the Spirit and the Word agree.

At a certain holiness camp-meeting in Ohio a bishop was to preach following the love-feast. The enthusiasm of the occasion ran high. Near its close a sister arose and testified in the power of the Spirit to her deliverance from wearing of gold and worldly adornment in general. The temperature of the service immediately fell below zero. As the gold-bedecked bishop arose to preach, he complained that the uncharitable testimony of the sister had robbed him of his inspiration in that it had destroyed the enthusiasm of his congregation. The same state of feeling on which he depended for his help could have been produced almost any time by an oration from Robert Ingersoll.

Again, the difference may be distinguished in that the pouring out of the Holy Spirit always convicts of sin and prompts to holy action, while mere human enthusiasm does not. The human efforts of the prophets of Baal, intensified by the irony of Elijah, without doubt produced a great religious excitement, though it did not elevate the morals of its subjects. But the effects produced by the descending, consuming flame in answer to prevailing prayer actuated its subjects to serve the living God and to destroy evil from their midst. There is always rottenness in connection with fox fire; so there may be any amount of wickedness unthought of in a service run on the line of human enthusiasm, while souls are brought into the church on its tide without being brought face to face with their sins.

Two men in North Michigan went out one day to hunt bear. One of them on finding the object of his search dropped his gun and cried to his companions, "I have got him, I have got him." But the bear ran off. So today the popular church in seeking souls has discarded the God-ordained means of success (the Holy Ghost), and has resorted to human enthusiasm and worldly policy; and as the world rushes into her arms she triumphantly shouts, "We have them!" But it is soon evident to the careful Bible reader that the world has captured the church—Free Methodist.

TRAINING THE VOICE

A preacher of the Gospel ought to strive to present the truth in the very best manner possible, and he should be glad to have any apparent hindrance to the highest effectiveness of his discourse pointed out. It may be his mannerisms in the pulpit are faulty, or that his voice sounds rough and harsh, or he may speak too loud or too low. Whatever it may be, he should be glad to be informed of it and be swift to correct the habit.

A common fault is to speak too loud and talk too fast. When a preacher does these things he makes it difficult for the average hearer to properly understand him. Some are so in bondage to this bad habit that they will talk as loud in a small room to a few persons as they will to a large audience in a large auditorium. By exerting too much physical energy in preaching and talking too loud, they bring on sore throat and nervous disorders, and many of them are compelled to give up the work of the ministry while comparatively young, when, because of their experience, they should be at their best for the Lord and for the church.

On the question of training the voice, the Pathfinder recently expressed the following thoughts:

"There is an immense difference between listening to a pleasant, smooth, well-modulated voice and one that is strident, harsh, twangy, rasping, or simply rough or indifferent. It is an important matter in public speaking to which too little thought is given. Actors give attention to the sound of their voices—it is in the profession—but lawyers, lecturers, politicians, and after-dinner speakers apparently do not.

"But those in whom carelessness of this sort is most regrettable are our preachers. Many of them have voices that are unpleasant, and they appear totally unconscious of the fact. Members of the congregation, of course, never complain, but listening to such voices year after year they suffer in silence. Yet this is a disagreeable feature that could be easily eliminated in many cases. Every minister should train his voice as well as his mind. He works with both. A little conscious effort, especially with expert advice, would do wonders. A neglected voice is as bad as neglected clothes—and much more disagreeable."—The Free Methodist.

A TRAINED HOLY GHOST MINISTRY FOR THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Peter Wiseman

God has greatly used in the active ministry many men who had practically no training by the schools for the sacred task. It is also true that God has throughout the ages used men of great academic standing. He found a Saul, changed him to a Paul and gave the church through him many divine epistles and sacred theology. He found a Luther and the Reformation came. He found the Wesleys and a great spiritual revival swept around the world. A host of other Christian scholars might be mentioned. It is perhaps not saying too much to say that had the men without a training from the schools been blessed with an academic education and yet retained the same humble spirit, the same usability, that God would have done much more by and through them; that such were used of God despite their limitations on this line is really no argument against Christian education. Ignorance is not bliss.

Times have changed. Thirty years ago in many centers the gospel of full salvation was new, and the best people in the churches were ready for it. There were no tabernacles as central meeting places, few missions, and no competition, and the persecution received was helpful. Today in many centers there are tabernacles, missions, little holiness churches and much competition. Situations altogether new have arisen, and in many places situations which make it quite impossible to do much. In many cases the plans, methods, and instrumentality of years ago would be fruitless today. We do not mean the slightest reflection on the wonderful men of God back yonder. We need more of the same kind of devotion today. It is the change years have brought as witnessed by many who have labored through the years and are still carrying on.

There are today new and bold enemies. Destructive criticism has become very bold, yea, brazen. On the other hand there is dead traditionalism. Two other enemies quite opposite are fanaticism and formalism.

How can these and other enemies be met? We certainly cannot meet them by merely denouncing them. In an age of intellectualism reason must be produced, for the greater part of our congregations is composed of people who have gone through the high schools. To rail on heresy without reason is to feed it, and the action in itself is a phase of fanaticism.

What is, then, the qualification needed today in order to be able to meet these enemies? There is but one answer, namely, the very best qualification possible is none too good, and is actually necessary. In view of the greatness of the vocation this is obvious.

Let us be specific here. We mean by the education necessary the best academic training that one can obtain, if possible in a spiritual college, a full salvation college.

Is this sufficient? By no means. With all due

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Mrs. Hartshorn Miller,
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