

The King's Highway

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CONSECRATION AND MANIFESTATIONS

In the popular use of the term "manifestations," we may classify them as follows: First, there are those movements of the Spirit in the believer which, in their expression, involve the immediate use of or consent of the will. Such responses to truth as are evidenced by openly saying, "Praise the Lord" or "Glory to God" or "Amen" may be used upon all appropriate occasions by an intelligent exercise of our own will in responding to the truth. I am deeply convinced that it would honor the Holy Spirit greatly if thoughtful and intelligent people would more often lend themselves to fervent hearty responses to the truth, in the use of such phrases or terms as I have named in the worship of God.

There has been so much fear of emotionalism in our day that our best people have permitted this type of wholesome response to the truth to fall exclusively into the hands of those who are lightweight and who, while true, nevertheless lack wisdom very often as to the time and manner of their response. I have witnessed again and again, in congregations made up of wholesome, intelligent, and devout people, where one individual, without much influence or weight, would respond freely, while all the others would sit utterly mute, thus giving the impression that the only persons who feel much in their relation to the truth are those who are rather weak in their personality and not too desirable in their total living and influence.

On one such occasion, one of the worshippers, whose life and testimony were of an unquestionably high character, said to me after the service, "I felt like saying, 'Praise the Lord' or 'Glory to God' this morning." I said, "Oh you did. Well, no one would ever suspect that you had any such inward response to the truth. Why did you not give expression to your praise. It would have honored the Holy Spirit and blest the meeting. Your failure to do so reflects upon the Holy Spirit and His gracious work, leaving people to conclude that only weak personalities, not too desirable, are ever moved emotionally by the truth of God."

I am not bidding for any fleshly activity in our worship, but for the very opposite of that. If people with depth of character and experience would, by their own choice of will, offer, betimes, the sacrifice of praise unto God, they would prove that "praise is comely for the upright." They would doubtless open channels for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which remain utterly closed by our stolid silence and by our suppression of any expression of our emotion. While some people interpret Christian freedom as a license on their own part to talk as long and pray as loud and shout as much as they may choose, there is, in spite of this undesirable possibility, the need of fervent, intelligent

support to the Word of God by the yielding of our members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness in giving praise and glory to our holy God.

The second type of manifestations is that involved by the general consent of the agent used but not by a direct choice of the will at the time. I refer to such facts as many have experienced in the Spirit's blessing, and using an individual in a very special way without the individual at the time choosing to be so used. The Holy Spirit's manifestation comes within the range of the fact of an absolute commitment to the will of God and a fixed yieldedness that makes it possible for Him to use an individual at any time and in any way He may choose.

I am sure there is a consecration which not only does away with all prejudice against the Spirit's manifestations, but there is such an utter yieldedness to God that the Spirit may surprise the individual betimes by using them in ways of which they had neither planned nor thought. It appears that such manifestations are very rare indeed in these days, but it is not surprising that they are rare. There is so much formality, coldness, and deadness in the average worship service of masses of churches that it appears there is no one free enough in the Spirit for Him to use, and it appears that until there is a general change of atmosphere, the Spirit would not be pleased to manifest Himself in a special way, as it would neither be appreciated nor profitable. Where there is liberty, however, and where the whole truth is being declared, if our consecration includes all I have stated, there will be occasions when God will come down, our souls to greet, and when there will be glory poured in upon a meeting through the channel of a perfectly free and holy individual whom the Spirit can use.

The first time such an experience came to the writer, I was standing before a group of my own parishioners in an afternoon holiness meeting, teaching them the way of definite experiential second blessing holiness. In view of the fact of the kind of commitment I have referred to above, I could have stopped a locomotive going twenty miles an hour, I believe, as easily as I could have stopped the glorious manifestation of the Holy Spirit in a definite shouting blessing that came on me. A perfect tidal wave of glory swept my soul until I went from one end of the room to the other again and again, leaping into the air and shouting hallelujah in a way that was a complete surprise to myself. Just as soon as I could hold my feet to the floor without wilfully resisting the Spirit, I did so. I recognized immediately that the manifestation had not been for myself alone, and I mentally inquired of the Spirit what He meant by using me thus. He immediately whispered to my soul, it is a test. I in turn immediately

put the test on the group of my people before me. I said to them, "I have been trying to make it clear to you what it means to let God have His way with us. Would you be willing to let God use you as He has just used me if He should so choose, and there came the cries of yes, yes from the group already melted down under the power of the Holy Spirit. That became the occasion of the dividing of the waters of Jordan and of some of my dear people who had been seeking for a long time going over to possess their Canaan land dryshod. I am sure the danger to most of us would be to desire the repetition of such experiences for the sheer satisfaction and glory involved to our own hearts. However, we must guard against this. Let God have His way and use us as He will, but always for His own glory and the furtherance of His work rather than the mere satisfaction of our own emotional life. Would God there were more manifestations, of both of the types described in this article, in our meetings generally.

I am going to sign this as I would a letter and say, yours not for fleshly or fanatical activities, but for real Holy Ghost liberty in the worship of the Lord.—C. W. Butler in Christian Witness.

GOSSIPY EARS

A gossipy tongue is a dangerous thing
If its owner is evil at heart.
He can give whom he choose full many a
sting

That will woefully linger and smart,
But the gossipy tongue would be balked in
its plan

For causing heartburning and tears,
If it were not helped out by the misguided
man

Who possesses two gossipy ears.

Oh, the gossipy ears are the ones that believe
The evil reports they are told.

The sly, subtle tales which they gladly re-
ceive

Would tarnish the purest of gold.
The cruel "They say" which goes floating
about

Like a hidden foe, fostering fears,
Would lose all its force were it firmly shut
out

By the man with the gossipy ears.

When the man with the gossipy tongue
happens by

With his stories of evil and strife,
We ought just to look him right square in
the eye

And ask him his mission in life;
We ought to refuse him a chance to retail
The false, idle rumors he hears.

He ought to be locked up somewhere in jail
With the man with the gossipy ears!

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