

## DEEPENING OUR SCRIPTURAL LIFE

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It becomes the task of all right-thinking Christian workers in this hour to define anew the terms used to express religious truth. The apostasy of the age has resulted in a misuse of nearly all our terms. It is very common to hear and read of spiritual life and a spiritual vision, when all that is meant by the use of this language is that which is not purely material. Culture, refinement, and mere humanitarian service, are about all many persons seem to think the term "spiritual" includes.

The fact is, this term in its true Bible use does not mean or include any of the things named. One may have culture and refinement and may spend all he has in social service programs, seeking the betterment of humanity, and know nothing at all of spiritual life.

## Becoming God-Conscious

Man is a three-fold being in his nature. Our physical self is the medium by which we are earth-conscious. Our rational self gives to us our self-consciousness and the use of all our rational capacities. There is a higher department in our nature, namely, our spirit. It is in the realm of the spirit part of our nature that the death of sin reigns. The major fact in that death is our separation from God. Spiritual life begins in the fact of the new birth, or that spiritual resurrection by virtue of which we become God-conscious. Thus, to be spiritual is to be God-conscious. This becomes real to us by the operation of the Holy Spirit upon our spirits.

Of the deep things of God for which we are capacitated it is declared "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; that is, for them who are spiritually alive and who deal with him by the Spirit through the truth. The very next statement of Scripture is, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

The apostle continues his teaching by stating, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." It is perfectly evident that the believer in Jesus must receive the divine gift, or baptism with the Holy Spirit, in order to see and hear and know the things which are hidden from the eyes of them who know not God and who are not possessed and controlled by his Spirit.

## Tarrying

We often see people seeking to deepen spiritual life by mere creating activity rather than by tarrying for the gift of the Holy Spirit. While the exercise of prayer and the study of God's Word are definite and established means by which we live spiritually, they are not of themselves a substitute for receiving the Holy Spirit who searches the deep things of God and reveals them to our human spirit. God has provided that all twice-born men shall be made truly and fully spiritual by the further work of his Spirit as he is received in his pentecostal fullness.

The conditions for receiving a personal Pentecost are such that our whole vision of life is changed through our deepened relationship with God. It is impossible that any one

sense without receiving the Holy Spirit of promise in an epochal experience after having been born again. It is just as true that no one can be filled with the Holy Spirit of promise without being in a true and proper sense spiritual. Paul declares, "He that is spiritual discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man." The term "man" as used in this instance and in the preceding quotation referring to the fact that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, relates to man in his natural or unspiritual state.

## The Mind of Christ

In the deepening of spiritual life, the Holy Spirit will increasingly impart to the wholly yielded life the very mind of Christ. Thus Paul in one instance exhorts, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." And again he declares of the spiritual man, "But we have the mind of Christ." That spirituality is capable of deepening and of an increase by the continued co-operation of the receiving subject is a fact which we ought to recognize. Carefulness to walk as he walked, the cultivation of a sensitive response to his voice, constant devotion to the Word and to his worship, will all serve in deepening and enriching our spiritual life. Then, too, there is a relation between our spiritual life, and Christian service. We are not saved by works; we are, however, created unto good works, that we should walk in them. "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Spiritual life needs to be expressed not only in devotion and worship, but in soul-winning activities. Intercessory prayer, personal endeavor to win souls, and works of charity are all in order for the true representative of Jesus here in this world order. To live unto ourselves will make it difficult to maintain spiritual life. There is an outreach in true life which needs to be expressed in holy activity. Undertake to win a soul. Don't give up, but persevere in your effort. Have a prayer list. Intercessory prayer is one of the highest spiritual activities of a true Christian. No one thing can happen that will afford any soul greater joy or serve to deepen devotion to Christ more than to lead another to him. Active, earnest, persistent service will react on our own spiritual life most favorably.

## HE MAY COME TODAY

At the end of a long point of land extending into a beautiful lake in Switzerland, far from the beaten track of tourists, a traveler chanced upon a beautiful villa. He knocked at the garden gate and an aged gardener undid its heavy fastenings and bade him enter. The aged man seemed glad to see him and showed him around the wonderful garden. "How long have you been here?" the traveler asked. "Twenty-four years." "And how often has your master been here meanwhile?" "Four times." "When was he last here?" "Twelve years ago." "He writes often." "Never once." "From whom do you receive your pay?" "His agent in Mailand." "But he comes here often?" "He has never been here." "Who does come, then?" "I am almost alone—it is very, very seldom that even a stranger comes." "Yet you have the garden in such perfect order, everything flourishing, as if you were expecting your master's coming tomorrow!" "As if he were coming, sir, today!" exclaimed the old man.

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the duty of being ready for our Lord's coming today, though His coming may be far in