

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

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EDITORIAL

"... AND FASTING"

In his comment of Matthew 6:16, Dr. Adam Clark points out that reference to fasting, in the Greek language, meant "a total abstinence from food" from na, not, and esthein, to eat.

Fasting, or abstaining from food for a specified period of time, that we may give ourselves to prayer, is scriptural. Christ and the apostles commended fasting as a means of gaining spiritual help and blessing, and the devoted Christians of the early church observed the custom condoned by the Lord and His disciples both by precept and example.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ indicated that He expected His followers to fast by saying: "When thou fastest..." When the Pharisees asked Him why His disciples fasted not, He replied: "As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast..." When the disciples inquired of the Lord concerning the cause of their embarrassing failure in respect to the healing of the boy possessed with an evil spirit, Jesus said: "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." AND fasting.

We cannot bring prayer and fasting onto the same level in respect to importance. Prayer is commanded, fasting commended. Prayer is essential to Christian living, fasting is useful in Christian service. But scripture and experience confirm the idea that fasting lends greater impetus to prayer, and makes possible triumphs and blessings through prayer that are not forthcoming when it is prayer minus fasting rather than prayer plus fasting.

Perhaps the deadlock between the forces of darkness and the children of light would be broken if we should sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, and have a time of weeping between the porch and the altar, the priests the ministers of the Lord, leading in fervent prayer to God for a visitation of the Holy Ghost.

I fear that we have been infected by the selfish, ease-loving spirit of this age. We rest in smug self-complacency while multitudes are being hastened down the slippery steeps of moral degradation toward a horrible destiny. We may reason out of our lives all that calls for self-sacrifice, but not without painful loss.

"This kind goeth not out but by prayer and

... " Have you tried it? If not, will you at least experiment with this prayer AND fasting method of seeking Divine blessing?

GUEST EDITORIAL

THE ATOMIC POWER OF THE CHURCH

Rev. J. C. McPheeters,
Editor, Pentecostal Herald

Text: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8.

Pentecost is the atomic power of the church. There was a demonstration of the most amazing spiritual power that earth had ever witnessed.

Jesus raised an expectancy in the minds of his disciples of a coming event of tremendous significance, following his departure from the world. As Jesus approached the end of his earthly ministry, he assured his disciples that he would send another Comforter. He promised his disciples that he would not leave them comfortless.

The disciples of Jesus had become accustomed to witness the mighty manifestations of God's power, in the many miracles which Jesus performed. Jesus assured his disciples that they would be empowered to do even greater works, after his departure.

When Jesus departed from the world, the quest of Pentecost held a priority in the lives of his disciples. Everything hinged upon this quest. The disciples had received the great commission from the lips of their Lord to go unto all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. This commission was important. It was urgent. But there was a priority claim above this commission. It was the fulfillment of the command: "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

The disciples could have offered many excuses for deferment in the fulfillment of this command. They could have pleaded the necessity of moving immediately into the field already ripe unto harvest. The world was lost, and why take time out in the quest of Pentecost? Their personal and domestic affairs demanded attention and why not spend the time in setting their houses in order, in preparation for carrying the gospel to all the world?

Some among the disciples of Jesus, might have reasoned that the practical and sensible thing would be to hold a conference on plans and methods for evangelizing the world. Certainly such a conference has its place in the Christian economy.

Some members of the group of the disciples of Jesus might have suggested a conference for arranging the appointments of the disciples for their respective fields of labor in fulfilling the great commission which Jesus had given. Such conferences are necessary and they are important and in no sense to be minimized.

Another disciple might have suggested a conference on publicity. It is quite important that the gospel message be properly publicized. The church often falls far behind the world in this matter of publicity.

Another disciple might have suggested to plan a membership campaign as a method for

the fulfillment of the great commission of Jesus. The number of the disciples was small. The number would have to be enlarged before any effective attempt could be made toward the fulfillment of the great commission. The small number of the disciples would indicate the necessity of an intensive membership campaign. Membership in the church is of great importance and the securing of members should not be neglected.

Another disciple might have suggested a crusade for social righteousness. The world was socially corrupt to the core. Human slavery abounded. There were great gladiatorial combats, where men fought to death, for the entertainment of multitudes in the great Roman area. The slave master was given the power of life and death over his slaves under Roman law. Crusades for moral reform are among the essential tasks of the church.

If any of these suggestions were made as a priority claim for the immediate task of the disciples, they were not heeded. All of these things were important, but there was a priority claim over them all. It was the claim which Jesus had laid upon them when he commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the promise which he had given to baptize them with the Holy Ghost.

This is still a priority claim for the disciples of Jesus, wherever Pentecost has not been realized. Peter assured his audience in his sermon of Pentecost that the promise which Jesus gave was not for the disciples of that age alone. He said: "For the promise is unto you, unto your children, unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Spiritual resources were released at Pentecost which brought the disciples into the flood tide of Christian experience. It was on the crest of this flood-tide experience that the gospel message went forth with power to an unbelieving world.

The beginning of the march of conquest of the newly empowered and cleansed disciples was at Jerusalem. The city was profoundly impressed that something unusual had happened in the lives of the disciples.

There were critics who branded them as being drunk with new wine. Others, no doubt, regarded them as being swept away with wild and foolish fanaticism. But regardless of the criticism incurred, the city was profoundly impressed. There was a new thrust into the city when the disciples were baptized with the Holy Ghost. These simple, unschooled men and women became the center of attraction. The revival advertised itself. There is nothing that spreads more rapidly than the news of a Holy Ghost revival. It immediately is "noised abroad." The revival immediately overflowed the narrow boundaries of the upper room. The disciples went forth from the upper room and began witnessing on the streets of the city. Their words commanded the attention of the people. Their boldness was a source of astonishment to their hearers. Men were convicted and inquired of them the way of salvation. By their testimonies they made adequate preparation for Peter's sermon.

Pentecost always sweeps beyond the narrow limits of the church edifice. The passion, zeal, and fervor of Pentecost cannot be confined within the walls of the church edifice. Pentecost carries men out upon the dusty trails of human need. It sends them out on the highways of life, wherever men are found, with a message of the crucified and risen Christ.