



The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

Mrs. Judson Hillman
March 53

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., APRIL 30TH, 1952

No. 295

Pentecostal Power

Thomas Cook

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of host" (Zechariah 4:6).

Nobody ever was or ever will be converted merely by the preaching of the gospel. It is the gospel applied and enforced by the Holy Spirit that saves men. Like the Arctic sun, it is possible to give light without heat. Clear views of truth may be set forth, but without the Spirit's unction no convincing power will attend their enunciation. All natural gifts are good, but they are perilous if depended upon instead of the Holy Spirit. The more gifts the better, if all are subsidized and sanctified by the Spirit of God; but apart from absolute reliance upon Him, human ability may become a snare. Said the late Mrs. Booth, "The history of the Church proves that just in degree as she has come to have the human, she has ceased to have faith in the supernatural." When numbers and prestige decline, how often do we resort to all kinds of external aids and appliances, instead of seeking to have restored the lost power of God! Our work is spiritual, and only spiritual power can accomplish it.

It is lamentable to see how frequently preachers take that one and essential condition of success—the presence and power of the Holy Spirit—for granted, while they spare no pains to secure all other elements of necessary preparation. No preacher can be inspired to the maximum of possible service who has not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Christian life begins at Calvary, but effective service begins with the baptism of fire.

It was this Pentecostal baptism that prepared the Apostles for their work. Before Pentecost there was not much service rendered by them that was worth the name, but with the Spirit's baptism they entered upon a new phase of life and service. The visible tongues of fire were only emblems of what had passed within. What new creatures they then became! How their gross conceptions of Christ's Kingdom were purged away, and how they were raised from earthliness to spirituality! Their intellects were flooded with divine light, their souls throbbled with divine sympathies, and their tongues spoke so wonderfully of the things of God that all who had known them previously were amazed, saying, "What meaneth this?"

They were raised to a new altitude; a new energy and force possessed them. Each became strong as an iron pillar—the weakest as David, and the strong as the angel of the

Lord." They met together as the sincere but timid and partially enlightened followers of Christ, but they left the upper room full of light and power and love. With this experience, difficulties melted into empty air. There was no limit to their hopes, because there was no limit to their power. Their strength was not "as the strength of ten," but as the strength of the Almighty. Nothing could resist the wisdom and Spirit by which they spoke. Multitudes were pricked to the heart, and cried, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Within one generation paganism was shaken to the center, and Christianity had spread throughout the known world.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was, and still is, a sort of initiatory rite to the life of Pentecostal service and victory. The analogy of the Sacrament of Baptism connects the baptism of the Spirit with a new era in Christian life. None can read the lives of the early Methodist preachers without being impressed with the fact that those whose labors were pre-eminently owned of God bear witness to the reception of a distinct definite blessing which they received subsequently to conversion. Some of them termed it "the second blessing," but they really received their Pentecost, and suddenly became bold, mighty, aggressive, and conquering.

Have we not all known men who possessed this wonderful gift? They seemed to be able to look into the very souls of their hearers, and to talk to them with an almost divine authority and instantaneous effect. Some of them were not profound thinkers, or powerful speakers, but they were wholly devoted to God and full of desire for the salvation of souls. When they spoke they seemed surcharged with an energy which could not be called their own. They had a something which touches the tongue and enables them to declare with astonishing effectiveness the message of grace. It is like the holy oil poured on Aaron's head, and which, running down to the skirts of his garments, communicated to the whole man a charming fragrance. We have felt at a loss to account for their influence, and have been compelled to confess that the power they possessed was not human but divine. They had received that divine endowment which is called unction—the crowning gift of the Holy Spirit for service. It is neither pathos nor eloquence nor psychological power nor mental force; but a subtle, mysterious, unaccountable, and almost irresistible influence which God alone can bestow. No words can describe the gift, but it may be known and felt by all.

The experience of the late D. L. Moody, of America, is very striking. We give it in his

own words: "When I was preaching in Farwell Hall, in Chicago, I never worked harder to prepare my sermons than I did then. I preached and preached, but it was beating against the air. A good woman used to say, your preaching.' Oh, my desire was that I 'Mr. Moody, you don't seem to have power in might have a fresh anointing! I requested this woman and a few others to come and pray with me every Friday at four o'clock. Oh, how piteously I prayed that God might fill the empty vessel! After the fire in Chicago I was in New York City, and going into the Bank on Wall Street, it seemed as if I felt a strange and mighty power coming over me. I went up to the hotel, and there in my room I wept before God, and cried, 'O my God, stay Thy hand.' He gave me such fulness that it seemed more than I could contain. May God forgive me if I should seem to speak in a boastful way, but I do not know that I have preached a sermon since but God has given me some soul. I would not be back where I was four years ago for all the wealth of the world. I seemed a wonder to some of you, but I am a greater wonder to myself than to anyone else. These are the very same sermons I preached in Chicago, word for word. They are not new sermons, but the power of God. It is not a new gospel, but the old gospel with the Holy Spirit of power."

Such was Mr. Moody's account of the anointing which made him what he was. Nothing else can make a man so powerful and glorious in his life and history. We know nothing else that is needed to make many preachers all that God meant them to be, but this baptism of fire. Nothing burns its way through all obstacles as fire does. It consumes forests, melts metallic barriers, and marches on with the tread of a conqueror. Nothing can stand before it. Give us men on fire with the Holy Spirit, and nothing can prevent Christianity from becoming the all-conquering power in the world it is destined to be.

The wonder is that any preacher can be content to work without this priceless gift. Much better would it be for the world if the Church would cease making weak efforts to save it, and wait upon God until it is endued with this power from on high. With it we shall accomplish more in one year than in a hundred years of working in our own strength. We claim to be sharers of Pentecostal privileges, and yet how few have received this baptism which Christ is exalted to bestow!

Prayer and faith are the conditions. "There in the heavens is the residue of the Spirit; prayer taps the reservoir, and the outlet wid-

(Continued on Page 4)