

The Leakage of Spiritual Power

By Commissioner S. L. Brengle

That man of God and lover of souls, James Caughey, tells, in one of his books, how he was invited out to tea one evening; and though there was nothing harmful in the talk of the hour, yet when he went into the meeting that night, his soul was like a loosely-strung bow. He couldn't shoot the King's arrows into the heart of the King's enemies, for he had no power. It had been lost at the tea table.

I knew an officer once who let all his spiritual power leak out, until he was as dry as an old bone when he got into the meeting. It was in this way. We had to ride three miles in a street car to get to the hall, and all the way there he was talking about things that had no bearing upon the coming meeting. There was nothing wrong or trifling said, but it was not to the point; it turned his mind from God and the souls he was so soon to face and plead with to be reconciled to Him; and the result was that, instead of going before the people clothed with power, he went

stripped of power.

I remember the meeting well. His prayer was good, but there was no power in it. It was words, words, words! The Bible-reading and talk were good. He said many true and excellent things, but there was no power in them. The soldiers looked indifferent, the sinners looked careless and sleepy, and altogether the meeting was a dull affair.

Now, the officer was not back-slidden; he had a good experience. Nor was he dull and insipid; on the contrary, he was one of the brightest, keenest officers I knew. The trouble was that, instead of keeping quiet and communing with God in his own heart on that car until his soul was ablaze with faith, and hope, and love, and holy expectation, he had wasted his power in useless talk.

There are many ways of letting power leak away. I knew a soldier who came to the hall very early every evening, and instead of getting his soul keyed up to a high pitch of faith and love, he spent the time playing soft, dreamy music on his violin; and though faithfully, lovingly warned, he continued that practice till he openly backslid.

I have known men whose power leaked out through a joke. They believed in having things go with a swing and so they told funny stories and played the clown to make things lively. And things were lively, but it was not with divine life. It was the liveliness of mere animal spirits, and not of the Holy Spirit. I do not mean by this that a man who is filled with the power of the Spirit will never make men laugh. He will. He may say tremendously funny things. But he will not be doing it just to have a good time. It will come naturally. It will not be "dragged in on all fours," and it will be done in the fear of God, and not in a spirit of

lightness and jesting.

He who wants a meeting of life and power should remember that there is no substitute for the Holy Ghost. He is life. He is power. And if He is sought in earnest, faithful prayer, He will come; and when He comes, the little meeting will be mighty in its results.

He should be earnestly sought, in secret prayer. Jesus said: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret;

and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." He will do it; bless His holy name!

I know of a man who, if possible, gets alone with God for an hour before every meeting; and when he speaks, it is with power and demonstration of the Spirit.

The man who wants power, just when it is most needed, must walk with God. He must be a friend of God. He must keep the way always open between his heart and God. God will be the Friend of such a man, and will bless him and honour him. God will tell him His secrets; He will show him how to get at the hearts of men. God will make dark things light, and crooked things straight, and rough places smooth for that man. God will be on his side, and will help him.

Such a man must

keep constant watch

over his mouth and his heart. David prayed, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips;" and Solomon said: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." He must walk in unbroken communion with God. He must not forget, but cultivate, a spirit of joyful recollection by which he will be always conscious that he is in the presence of God.

"Delight thyself in the Lord," said the Psalmist. Oh, how happy is that man who finds God to be his delight; who is never lonely, because he knows God, talks with God, delights in God; who feels how lovable God is, and gives himself up to loving, serving, trusting God with all his heart!

Comrade, "Quench not the Spirit," and He will lead you to thus know and love God; and God will make you the instrument of His own power.

WAYS TO KEEP PEOPLE FROM LIVING FOR GOD

Pray through, then don't live it long enough to prove that there is anything to salvation.

Watch for every possible occasion for criticism, and make sure to press the point.

Be self-righteous—everyone wrong but yourself.

When a young Christian stumbles, make sure that you speak of it before the unsaved.

Go to places where you know a Christian has no business going; then say that you didn't know.

Look as much like the world as possible; then still hold to your profession.

Never sacrifice for the church, but continually fret over the family budget.

Do not express your love for God and His cause, except at church.

Feel more sorry for the unsaved with a headache, than for the pastor with the heart-break.

Keep evil conversation going continually. Never feel any responsibility for anyone but yourself.

Be sure you are "Number One" at all times. Show a cranky, sickly attitude toward all.

Try these for three weeks; and if you do not feel backslidden by then, just remember that you were before you had these symptoms, for, without fail, no Christian does these things.—Selected.

Walking By Faith

Clara H. Nesmith

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin"
(Romans 14:23)

What a halo of light falls upon these words of St. Paul, as the Spirit interprets them for us! What a revelation to God's people, if they would but apply them to the many things that come up in every-day life, for which we cannot find in the Scriptures a plain, "thus saith the Lord"!

How often in our business or social or home life we are brought face to face with such questions as these: Is this right, or that wrong? Can I do this, or go there? Is there any harm in wearing this or that article of apparel? How about eating this, or drinking that? On business lines, just what is "doing unto others as we would have them do unto us." What is a just and fair profit, and what is going beyond and defrauding our neighbors?

Then on social lines, what is our duty toward and just how shall we treat those whose every-day life, manners, practices, and whole make-up are positively disagreeable to us?

As we meet these things day after day, how we fly to the precious Word of God, to see whether or no, "against such there be any law," often to turn away disappointed, with the question still unsettled, because we find no answer that exactly fits the case, when, if we would but apply this general rule, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin," how quickly would this mountain of doubt and uncertainty be removed, and we would go, "Running up the shining way with the glory in our souls."

Truly, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in that thing which he alloweth."

Oh! the pain, the heartaches, the remorse, the many bitter tears of repentance, that might be avoided if the words of our text were written on the tablets of our hearts to be used by the Holy Spirit in times of doubt! How many times we walk blindly into sin and condemnation because we are not really sure what the will of the Lord is, and verily, "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith," "Whatever is not of faith is sin."

Unless we have a settled conviction in our own soul that a thing is lawful and right for us, we had better steer clear of it. We dare not act on the faith of another, nor accept their light as our own, although such an one might be far above us in wisdom and spirituality. We must have our own conscience "void of offense toward God and man," though some might think us overscrupulous. How many have grieved the Holy Spirit, lost the joy and brightness out of their experience, the victory out of their lives, their success as soulwinners, yea even their own souls, by tampering with things that were "not of faith."

Again Paul says, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient. All things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's good." "For no man liveth to himself," and "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

We learn from these, and many similar texts, that the life of faith is of a two-fold nature, that it regards our brother as well as ourselves, and, that "Those who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves," and to "Take heed

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 2)