

GREAT PREACHERS MAY HAVE GREAT NEEDS

By H. S. Dow

"And a certain Jew named Apollos, . . . an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:24-26).

It is encouraging to God's people to hear and read about evangelists these days, who are holding meetings in our cities and are reaching thousands of people with a gospel message, many of whom, no doubt, are not in the habit of attending church or a place of worship at all. We hear of many going forward to accept Jesus, and we sincerely hope that they find Him.

We can remember the names of many, who down across the years drew great crowds to their services, and they were called great preachers, and doubtless they had many marks of greatness, like the foregoing record of Apollos, who was great in several respects, and yet was lacking in one thing.

Let us note some marks of greatness recorded of him. First, he was instructed in the way of the Lord; he was mighty in the scriptures; he was fervent in spirit; he was an eloquent man; and he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord with great boldness in the synagogue. And yet when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they knew that he still had spiritual need. These two good persons, whom Paul calls his helpers in Christ Jesus, were not apostles, or preachers, but only lay members, tent-makers by trade; which ought to remind us that Apollos had, or like many modern preachers and singers have, to be very useful in the work of the Lord, but we do need to have a knowledge of spiritual things imparted to our hearts by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "When He . . . is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). A person who has a sanctified heart, and is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, has also a discernment in spiritual things, which helps him, or her, to discern the spiritual condition of others, as Aquila and Priscilla did.

One might think, that a man with the talents and commendable qualities that Apollos possessed should be well fitted to preach the gospel without any thing more. No doubt many churches would be glad to have such a preacher for their pastor. No; the word says, when Aquila and Priscilla heard him, "they took him unto them." These words are very suggestive, these godly people did not criticize him, or go out and talk against him to others. They took him unto them, perhaps invited him to their home for dinner, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

Notice those words, please, "The Way of God." It does not say, expounded unto him the word of God, for Apollos was already mighty in the scriptures. What does Luke, the inspired writer, mean by "The Way of God?" He must mean the way of God had dealt with Aquila and

Priscilla. They evidently enjoyed a Christian experience which Apollos, even with all his good gifts did not possess.

It would be very easy for a person who believes in second blessing holiness, so called, to believe that Aquila and Priscilla led Apollos into the experience of holiness, or full salvation.

Now let us quote some from one of more modern days, Dr. Daniel Steele, a great theologian and Bible expositor. In his book, "Half hours with Saint Paul" he says, "The fullness of the Holy Ghost is necessary to the preservation and efficient use of a great ministerial gift." Dr. Steele also gives his own testimony. Here it is, I quote, from page 305: "Brethren on the subject of the fullness of the Holy Spirit as a possible and sudden attainment in modern times, I am not here to theorize, to philosophize, to dogmatize, but to testify. — I must speak for myself. Six months ago I made the discovery that I was living in the pre-pentecostal state of religious experience—admiring Christ's character, obeying His law and in a degree loving His person, but without the conscious blessing of the Comforter. I settled the question of privilege by a study of St. John's gospel and St. Paul's epistles, and earnestly sought for the Comforter. I prayed, consecrated, confessed my state, and believed Christ's word. Very suddenly, after about three weeks diligent search, the Comforter came with power and great joy to my heart." Space will not permit us to quote farther, where he tells of the liberty and victory he enjoyed after the second crisis, only that he says, "My efficiency in Christ's service is greatly multiplied."

That is what Luke says about Apollos, after his experience with Aquila and Priscilla, when he was come to Achaia: "He helped them much which had believed through grace" (Acts 18:27).

We have read that after Mr. Moody had been preaching the gospel for some time, two good women heard him and discerned his need of a deeper work of grace, and approached him kindly, and led him into the experience of full salvation.

There are thousands of Christians who belong to several religious denominations, who profess to having obtained their present Christian experience by two works of grace. And we believe, that if we had more lay members in our churches who were more like Aquila and Priscilla, that is, were willing to testify definitely to the baptism with the Holy Spirit in sanctifying their hearts, and if they manifested the experience by a joyful, victorious life and testimony, there might be many more good preachers of the gospel led into the experience of holiness like Apollos, and many other more modern preachers. Then like Dr. Daniel Steele, they would have their efficiency in Christ's service greatly multiplied. And we believe also, that more preaching on the great doctrine of holiness by many who profess to have the experience, preaching with the anointing of the Spirit and joy of the Lord upon the preacher, would greatly inspire the unsanctified to seek the blessing.

The doors of opportunity are kept by Him, and He opens doors of service for those who are "willing for any manner of service."—Clipped.

"It is no discredit for holiness to be unpopular with worldly professors of religion."

HOW A FUNERAL MIGHT HAVE BEEN SAVED

"If folks could have their funerals when they are alive and well struggling along, what a help it would be!" sighed Aunt Jerusha, folding her Paisley shawl with great care.

"Now, there is poor Mrs. Brown," she added, as she pinned her green veil to her Sunday bonnet. "How encouraged she would have been if she could have heard what the minister said today! I wouldn't wonder if she'd have got well."

"And Deacon Brown a-wiping his eyes, and all of them taking on so! Poor soul, she never dreamed they thought so much of her!"

"Mrs. Brown was discouraged. You see, Deacon Brown, he'd got a way of blaming everything on to her. I don't suppose the deacon meant it—'twas just his way—but it's awful wearing. When the things wore out, or broke, he acted just as if Mrs. Brown did it herself on purpose. And they all caught it, like measles or the whooping-cough."

"And the minister a-telling how the deacon brought his young wife here when it was nothing but a wilderness; and how patiently she bore hardships, and what a good wife she'd been! Now the minister wouldn't have known anything about that if the deacon hadn't told him. Dear, dear! If he'd only told Mrs. Brown herself what he thought, I believe he might have saved the funeral."

"And when the minister said how the children would miss their mother, as though they couldn't stand it, poor things! Well, I guess it is true enough; Mrs. Brown was always doing for some of them. When they were singing about 'sweet rest in Heaven,' I couldn't help thinking that there was something Mrs. Brown would have to get used to, for she never had none of it here."

"She'd have been awful pleased with the flowers. They were pretty, and no mistake. You see the deacon wa'n't never willing for her to have a flower bed. He said 'twas far prettier sight to see good cabbage a-growin'; but Mrs. Brown always kind of hankered after sweet-smelling things, like sweet-peas and such."

"What did you say, Levi? Most time for supper? Well, so it is! I must have got to meditating. I've been thinking, Levi, you needn't tell the minister anything about me. If the pancakes and the pies are good, you just say so as we go along. It ain't best to keep everything laid up for funerals."—Chimes.

NEGLIGENCE

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently" (Jer. 48:10).

Here is a solemn warning indeed! We have rendered the last word literally, rather than using the usual word "deceitfully," and by so doing have brought important and soul-searching truth right home. The Lord is displeased with negligent work in His name, and yet we must remember that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3).

Do you have a work that you are doing for the Lord? Is it teaching a class, or ministering to the sick, or passing out tracts, or praying for others, or giving of your substance? Are you doing the work of the Lord thoroughly, or negligently? Ask yourself, and then tell the Lord all about it too. A steward must be faithful.—The Pilgrim.