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THE SECRET OF SPIRITUAL POWER

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A great deal has been said and written upon the subject of spiritual power, and perhaps I can add nothing original upon the subject, but may help to stir up some pure minds by way of remembrance.

While attending a holiness convention in Star Hall, Manchester, England, one day, there opened up to my mind a series of thoughts as to the secret of God's power in man. In the first place, the secret of spiritual power consists in the union of the Holy Ghost with the purified faculties and natural energies of the human soul, and, on the human side, it consists in the utter abandonment of the soul to, and a hearty cooperation with, the Holy Spirit. It is not eloquence, nor style, nor personal magnetism, nor psychology, nor the natural energy of the human soul, not even the energy of a purified soul.

The soul may be purified, and yet as a mere creature, the creature faculties and creature powers do not have the power of God in soul saving, in aggressive spiritual work, in bringing sinners to repentance, or believers into holiness. It is true that a human soul free from sin, as a mere creature, has a marvelous power above other unsaved souls, but as a creature, though it be holy, yet in itself it does not possess that secret energy which can communicate conviction that leads to salvation. So that, however holy a man is, there must be joined on to him a divine current, a supernatural energy which he is the vehicle and conductor.

This divine power is a secret unknown to the world, uncomprehended by the most learned sinners, misunderstood by carnal professors, utterly beyond the grasp of philosophers or scientists. Let us notice some scripture proofs. Jesus had a pure soul; from the very initial of his being he was perfectly free from the fallen nature of Adam and, as a mere man, he was superior in moral strength to all the men of the world. And yet it was not by his holy creature-strength that he did the works of his Father.

The power that Jesus used in working miracles, in preaching sermons, in healing diseases, in casting out demons, and in saving souls was not the power of his sinless soul; but it was the power flowing from the baptism of the Spirit upon his pure humanity. This is distinctly marked in the two periods of his life. From his infancy to his baptism in Jordan he was entirely holy, but wrought no miracles, but when the Holy Ghost descended upon him, from that time on, he was the Anointed One, and worked under the perpetual unction that flowed through him from the Holy Spirit. So that in addition to his holy creature-faculties, God poured into him the fullness of the Spirit. We are told that when Jesus had gotten through with the temptation of the wilderness, he "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee." This expression of the returning in the "power of the Spirit" implies that there was added unto him a power which he did not possess as a mere pure man.

We sometimes hear it said that holiness is power, and that all the power we need for the work of God is heart purity, but these remarks are not entirely correct according to the Word of God. It is true that heart purity is power in the creature sense of power, but it is not the power of the Holy Ghost in the scripture sense of it.

Jesus is our example, and we read that he received in addition to his pure humanity the power of the Spirit, and that it was "through the eternal Spirit (he) offered himself without spot to God," and that it was "he (who) through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles." And he so often affirms, "the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself," that is, the words did not proceed from his mere pure humanity. Now, if Jesus needed the Holy Ghost united with his holy creature nature in order to give him the peculiar secret of power in his mission, and if he is our example, how much more necessary it is that we should have our sanctified hearts and our mental faculties in vital union with the Holy Spirit, that by that union we may do the work of God. So that we cannot depend on the natural energies even of our saved souls. We cannot depend on ourselves in any form, nor on any creature, or number of creatures however holy they may be.

Another proof text is, Jesus says, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you." The old version says, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." But it is more correct to take the marginal reading. According to the thought in the old version, the power is a something which is detached from the Holy Ghost, but according to the margin, the power is identified with the Holy Ghost, and is spoken of as a current or wave which gushes out from the conjunction of the Holy Spirit and the human soul. Just as the current of water in the wilderness did not gush from the rock of itself, nor did it gush from the rod, but when the rod touched the rock, the stream poured forth, so the current of divine power does not go forth from the Holy Ghost apart from the human soul, nor does it proceed from the merely purified soul, but when the sanctified soul and the Holy Ghost are united, from that ineffable union there goes forth what is scripturally called the power of God. Thus the secret of power is in having the Holy Ghost unite himself to our souls, cleansing, filling, inspiring us, supplying us according to each emergency with supernatural light, energy, wisdom, courage, tact, and zeal to do the will and work of God. This power is something that God puts within the soul, which the soul itself does not comprehend, so that a person under its endowment does not break down the human soul if it were left by itself.

One of the best illustrations of this secret power is a current of electricity, of which the sanctified faculties of man form the negative pole, and the Holy Ghost, the positive. If these are separated there is no current, but

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