

Tradition says that the apostolic church fasted each Wednesday and Friday and broke their fast at 3 p.m.

This issue of Herald of His Coming is seeking to bring American and all Christendom to their knees in deep, corporate, beseeching, repentant, heart-searching prayer. It is a plea for Christians to return to the old paths, and make Wednesday and Friday the fast days of the church of today.

Since—where prayer is focused—power falls, can we focus prayer relentlessly upon the need of God's direct interposition in this most critical hour?

—Herald of his Coming

It Is Imperative!

by Vance Havner

The people of this generation have made size and noise their standards of greatness. Anything that is big enough and makes enough noise is a success. The religious world has adopted, by and large, the same yardstick. But they did not get it out of the Scriptures. We shall look in vain for a Biblical basis for such criteria. Gideon whittled down his thirty-two thousand to three hundred effectives.

Modern Gideons are not disposed to cut down their crowd. The original Gideon dropped twenty-two thousand cowardly and nine thousand seven hundred careless followers. Modern Gideons would have kept them all and recruited more. Enlistment experts would be horrified at any thought of reducing the Lord's army.

Our Lord's attitude towards crowds is utterly at variance with ours. When He was in Jerusalem at the feast day, many believed on Him when they saw His miracles, but He did not believe in them because He knew what was in man. He could easily have assembled an impressive host of superficial disciples, but He was not out to marshal a mixed multitude. He was making up a conquering minority.

Jesus Made it Hard!

We read elsewhere (John 6:53) that He preached a crowd away, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you"...that was the theme, and it scattered His congregation. "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60), they said, and from that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him.

Finally, to the irreducible minimum of his twelve, He said, "Will ye also go away?" and Peter answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" (John 6:67,68). We moderns would have been aghast at the departing throng. "Maybe we should preach on some other subject. We are losing our crowd. This is terrible!"

Luke tells us (14:25) that "there went great multitudes with Him." We modern promoters would have been in ecstasy. We would have put badges on them, indexed their names, and called it a red-letter day. Our Lord gave them three "cannots" in a row—and lost another army of prospects. It would have given us crowd-conscious mortals a nervous breakdown. "Is there not some way we can hold this multitude? Perhaps we should not make the terms of discipleship so drastic at the start until we have built them up to it."

But our Lord thought otherwise, for by that same method He lost one of His finest prospects, the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-26), and three others in another of Luke's narratives. (Luke 9:57-62). We would have enlisted them all. But then, our Lord was after disciples, not "joiners." Most people are notorious "Joiners." Give them a red button and a certificate and they will join anything. But self-denial and a cross, letting the dead

bury their dead, going to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach...speak of that and there will be slim audiences!

From Noah to now, God has dealt in remnants. He is not converting society, but taking out a people for His Name. Our Lord had compassion on the multitudes, but He never counted multitudes.

From the days of Constantine, when an influx of pagans changed the church from a heavenly commonwealth to an earthly compromise—we have paid the price for impressive statistics!

It is now imperative that we rally in our churches a core, a nucleus, a Gideon's three hundred who mean business for God and souls. Dr. Torrey's rule for revival was, "Let a few members of any church get thoroughly right with God themselves."

"YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER"

by Oswald J. Smith

There are those today who are almost afraid to talk about the Holy Spirit. There has been so much cold conservatism, and so much fanaticism regarding the Holy Spirit that they scarcely mention Him. Yet, He is the Third Person of the Trinity, the Executor of the Godhead, the One who takes the leading place in the Book of Acts.

In the early Church it was the Holy Spirit who did the work. He it was Who guided and directed the apostles. He it was Who convicted of sin and started the apostolic revivals. He—God, the Holy Ghost—was the One who founded the Early Church.

Today, to a large extent He is ignored. It is time, I say, that we give Him His rightful place, for He is the One Who must do the work!

Down through the years I have studied the lives of those whom God has used, and I have discovered that every one was Spirit-anointed. Each one knew of a critical experience in his life, when the Holy Ghost endued him with power from on high, and began using him. Each one was an anointed man!

Anointed men are not satisfied with education and training. They know something more is needed! So they wait in the Presence of God until they have been endued with the Spirit's power. Then they go out and accomplish more in a few weeks, in the power of the Spirit, than they could have accomplished in the energy of the flesh for years.

You do not have to go into fanaticism. There is a Scriptural position that you can take, set forth in the Word of God, and recognized by men of God all down the centuries—an experience that may be yours. If you want to amount to anything in the service of God, you will see to it that it is yours, and you, too, are an anointed man!

You must know that anointing of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise there will be a lack of power in your ministry. If you want souls to be convicted and saved under your ministry, you will tarry until you have been endued with power from on high, and your ministry bears the sacred seal of His anointing. (Luke 24:49).

APPROPRIATING FAITH

Appropriating faith is the faith which not merely acknowledges those great claims and promises which Christ Jesus made, but appropriates personally their efficacy. This faith not merely believes as true certain things about Christ, but believes the Christ concerning Whom those things are believed to be true. This difference is vital.

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