

The King's Highway

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The Leakage of Spiritual Power

By Samuel Logan 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 at night his soul was like a loosely strung bow. He couldn't shoot the King's arrows into the hearts 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 a backslider; he had a good experience. Nor was he a dull stupid officer; on the contrary, he was one of the brightest, keenest officers I know. 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.

God says: "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth" (Jer. 15:19). Think of it! That officer might have gone into that meeting filled with power, and his mouth should have been to those people as the mouth of God, and his words should have been "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow," and proving to be "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). But instead of that, he was like Samson after his locks were shorn by Delilah—he was powerless as other men.

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, spent the time playing soft, dreamy music on his violin, and though faithfully, lovingly warned, 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, but it was not with Divine life. It was the

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The Family Altar

By A. D. Cann*

John Edgar Hoover says there are many causes contributing to juvenile delinquency, "but one which I have repeatedly observed is the absence of individual moral character in our youth."

Mr. Hoover exhorts American parents again and again to turn to the Bible for guidance in the growing responsibilities of the home. The Bible and Christian faith are the foundation stones of national life.

Roger Babson says:—"I have not been able to find a single and useful institution which has not been founded by either an intensely religious man or by the son of a praying father or a praying mother."

"Families who pray together stay together," is a truthful, timely slogan.

Billy Graham says he would rather miss a meal than miss the family altar.

The family altar reaches back to the beginning. From our first parents down to the present, people have "called on the Name of the Lord." Sometimes this fringe of society has become exceedingly thin. This results in either revival or ruin. In the case of Sodom it was ruin. In the case of Nineveh it was repentance and revival.

At the present time we need a grass-roots revival at the family level. With some of us it may be too late. With others the opportunity is sliding by.

What can we do to save our children? It seems that some are lost in spite of our best efforts. Others are lost because of our lack of effort. Abraham found God's favor. He guided his household after him.

Wherever Abraham went, he built an altar to the Lord. Eli found the disfavor of God because he lacked discipline. His work was religious but not real.

I recall Dr. Wilbur Mullen saying:—"Our parents used the rod more during the family altar than at any other time." Without doubt this is true of many praying families. Reverence and respect for God's Word are just a few of the many benefits stemming from the family altar. It is in this atmosphere of devotion that the parents become the connecting link between their children and their God. To eliminate this link from the home for material gain is fatal to the family. An overdeveloped faculty for earning prevents normal home life. Being successful in business but failures in family life, is failure indeed.

The family altar needs to be recovered in our national life. Spiritual hand-me-downs are not enough. Modernism has invaded our homes and churches because we have given up the study of God's Word for ourselves, and trusted the task to our teachers. Shame on many Christians who leave their Bibles home when they go to church and leave their Sunday School Quarterly at church when they go home.

Satan is determined to destroy the family altar. If he cannot eliminate, then he will cripple, if he cannot

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