

LAMPS, PITCHERS, AND TRUMPETS

(Continued from Page One)

II. THE PITCHERS.

But it is not without significance that the lamps and the pitchers are so closely related. If the lamp is of the mind, the pitcher is of the heart. The pitcher is the symbol of devotion. Revival is a flowing pitcher. It is the overflow of the Spirit. On the last day of the feast of tabernacles Jesus watched the priests pour out an offering of water from the golden vessels—water brought from the pool of Siloam; while temple singers sang, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Jesus then stood and cried: "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, Out of his inward parts shall flow rivers of living water." Then John adds, "This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive."

Revival is a breaking of the pitchers, or the breaking up of the inner man. It is the occasion when the soul is loosened from its conventional motions and exults in the freedom of the Spirit. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

The pitcher is full of many sweet motions of the soul. Just follow the Psalmist through his lyrical expressions of praise, joy, gladness, awe, wonder, mystery, light.

"Bless the Lord O My soul!"

"Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us!"

How beautiful is emotion without emotionalism! It is like the pouring out of milk and honey. It is food for the saints and gloriously attractive. It never violates Paul's injunction that everything be done in decency and order. Where the Spirit is there is beauty as well as life. Dr. R. J. Dixon used to say that if the Church has the Spirit there will not be much need for advertising.

III. THE TRUMPETS.

But revival is also the blowing of a trumpet. The trumpet is, significantly, last. The lamps are lit, pitchers broken, then there is the blare of the trumpets, showing that the mind must be cleaned and the heart inspired before the call to meaningful action. This is the call of the watchman on the tower. It is the call to duty, to action. It is a blast to our conscience to seek the right and do it. It is a call to responsibility—to God, to ourselves, to others. It is the summons to work. The trumpet may be a loud note from Sinai, proclaiming the demands of the Law. It may be the muted call from Calvary. Or it is the clear, vibrant call of resurrection triumph. It is the trumpet which blows with no uncertain sound to prepare us to battle. It is the universal call of Christ. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."

Revival is the force of the Spirit working through the lamps of our minds, the devotion of our hearts, the work of our hands. Any one alone is a menace to the ends we would achieve. The lamp without the pitcher is light without warmth or power. The pitcher without the lamp is emotionalism and pure subjectivism. The trumpet without the lamp is action without direction, or without the pitcher is hyperactivism. The pitcher without the trumpet is emotion without activity, a dangerous frustration of spiritual energy. But altogether in unison, head, heart, hands, they constitute the symbols of great power, great victory. But still, only as they become the agencies of the Spirit.

The great function of the Holy Spirit, in the use of

the means we present, is to translate our offerings, our tools, our finite speech into His own language—the language of the Spirit. Paul seems to suggest this in regard to prayer in the eighth chapter of Romans. But He probably does it with all our offerings, just as I translate my little boy's letters when I am away. He laboriously composes with awkward marks and symbols that even the code experts in Washington could not unscramble. But I can translate every scratch on that paper. With great feeling he tells me that he loves me, and how he wants me to come back soon, and especially to bring him something. And how I delight in answering his letters!

The great function of the Church is to present in humility for the Spirit's use, our heads, our hearts, our hands, finite and inadequate though they be.

Who knows but what this is the time, today, for shining lamps, broken pitchers, blowing trumpets!

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DO WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST?

(Continued from Page 3)

religion has simply the honour of being less faulty than the rest. Jesus Christ must be accounted for in the same way. He is simply the crown and consummation of progressive humanity. The emphasis is Man, and in that emphasis there is reason to rejoice, but the strange thing is that in the intense interest in Jesus the certainties about Him that come through the Spirit are lost.

DOCTRINE WITHOUT EXPERIENCE

The Church still has a theology about the Holy Ghost, but it has no living consciousness of His presence and power. Theology without experience is like faith without works: it is dead. The signs of death abound. Prayer-meetings have died out because men did not believe in the Holy Ghost. The liberty of prophesying has gone because men believe in investigation rather than inspiration. There is a dearth of conversions because faith about the New Birth as a creative act of the Holy Ghost has lost its grip on intellect and heart. The experience of the Second Gift of Grace is no longer preached and testified, because Christian experience, though it may have to begin in the Spirit, must be perfected in the wisdom of the flesh and the culture of the schools. Confusion and impotence are the inevitable results when the wisdom and resources of the world are substituted for the presence and power of the Spirit.

The rebound from materialism is seen in such movements as Christian Science, Spiritualism, and Theosophy. It is the truth in these things that give them their power, and it is useless to deny them. They are the reaction of the spirit against the bondage of flesh and mind. The cravings they represent must be met by the experience of Pentecost.

Modernism and Mysticism are also the products of a religion that is not baptized of the Holy Ghost. Sacerdotalism is another. These things flourish in impoverished soil and dunghills. They are the works of the flesh, and the product of spiritual death. The remedy for them is not in reproach and bitterness, but the floods and rivers, winds and sun. The answer is in the demonstration of a supernatural religion, and the only way to a supernatural religion is in the abiding presence of the Spirit of God.

If we could fill the hearts of God's people with an intense, personal love for the Saviour Who died for us—the kingdom of Christ would appear on earth.

—Andrew Murray