

HOW TO BRING DOWN THE BLESSING OF GOD

Andrew Telford, in "Gospel Herald"

Mankind in general lives from from God's purpose—far from His plan and special blessing. He lives in a very limited space in regard to enjoyment and inward satisfaction. All the peace that he gets and all the rest that he enjoys comes from his surroundings. Sometimes individuals feel keenly the lack of this inward peace and satisfaction and become conscious that something is not right on the inside. The fact and force of sin has baffled and beaten them. At that point they have turned to Christ and have found the inward rest that comes to men and women who cast their weight on Christ. They now enjoy sins forgiven (1 John 2:12).

The church of Christ is like Samson of old when he arose to accomplish what needed to be done, and "wist not" that God's full power had departed from him. He had become disarmed and disabled. How much church life is like that! We need that something that will lift us above the power of only what education can do. We need something that will do more for us than "good organization" or even orthodoxy. We need a new ministry of the Holy Spirit that will deliver us from being nominal and ordinary Christians—a power that will make us abnormal and extraordinary Christians. For all of this we need the fullness of the blessing of God. How can we get it?

A Sense of Depletion

The reason we do not enjoy such blessing is because our stock for trade has been depleted. We are unconscious of it. Why are church pews so empty on Sunday evenings? How is it the "outsider" remains untouched? Christian efforts are so abortive. Political and economical counter-attacks are puny weapons against what we face. Do you not see our failure? A sense of failure has preceded every revival.

A Serious Regularity

Christians live by their emotions and feelings. Bible perseverance and endurance that marked the early Christians is absent. The saints work by spasms. They attend God's house exactly the same way. Any "little thing" can cause a child of God to be irregular in Christian service and worship. Paul said, "Having . . . obtained help of God, I continue unto this day." Can't we be more faithful in our service for God, however humble that service may be? Can't we be more faithful in the attendance at the prayer meeting and in the Sunday services? We must be more faithful in systematic giving if we are going to see God's work prosper.

Soul Discipline

Oh, how little the saints of God know about the matter of discipline in their Christian lives. They allow themselves to relax in the service of the Lord. They allow fleshly and worldly desires to have a pre-eminent place in their conduct. Every Christian must demand that his body do the thing that is necessary and essential. Our redeemed personalities must be made to serve the Lord. If we lack soul discipline now, it is likely because our parents did not discipline us when we were children. Child training is the back-ground and the basis for all discipline. "His commandments are not grievous." When we do them, they rejoice our hearts. We must put first things first so that our lives will be lived in the plan of God and for the glory of God, then we will have God's blessing upon us.

A Stream of Petitioning

Don't stop praying. "Men ought always to pray" (Luke 18:1). "Prayer without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). We have failed in intercession. We stop praying before the answer and the blessing comes. The Lord said, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves,

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The King's Highway



HONORS FOR THE CHOIR AND GLORY TO THEIR CHRIST

The annual music festival for Yarmouth and area was held at Yarmouth in mid-February with Mr. David Griffiths, A.R.C.M., of Scotland as adjudicator. For the first time, Bethany entered the festival with both choir and the male quartet participating.

The choir's rendition of "In Heavenly Love Abiding" earned a first-class mark of eighty-six. The adjudicator commented: "Jolly well . . . good team . . . good balance and blending . . . little moments of difficulty, particularly with tricky half tones . . . tones generally good . . . words clear."

The mark of eighty-six made the choir eligible to sing in the final program of the festival. At the conclusion of this program in the presentation of prizes the choir received a challenge prize consisting of a plaque and \$5.00. These are "presented for the best performance by a group, excluding grade school choruses — to include string ensembles, choirs, band or wind ensembles — donated by the Yarmouth Citizens' Band." The plaque is kept on a yearly basis, but may be kept permanently by any group which wins three years in succession.

The male quartet also earned an eighty-six with its singing of "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross." The adjudicator commented that the number was reverently done; that he liked the blend of voices; that the enunciation was good. As the last number on the Thursday evening program, the quartet's piece was like a benediction and elicited the remark from the adjudicator that it made a fine ending to a day of fine music. Indeed it did.

FESTIVAL AFTERTHOUGHTS

The most rewarding feeling about Bethany's part in the music festival was the conviction that we had been a witness through Christ-honoring music. The theme and the truth of our hymns expressed sincerely through reverent words and music left a lingering message with the listeners.

Good — and this word needs emphasis — Christian music by virtue of its theme, its truth, and its feeling is music at its best. It speaks from soul to soul.

Thinking on these things, we should have a greater concern that we learn more about communicating God's message through music. Insensitive, irreverent, and incompetent musical performances do not bring any blessing to souls or any glory to God. The knowledge needed is to be gained in Christian schools through Christian teachers.

In this regard Bethany is now offering an invaluable service to our youth and church. Surely we shall not have to persuade churches to send their youth for this training and surely we shall not have to convince youth of the opportunity to serve Christ through music. We should have a dozen youth at Bethany next year, (and some of the best at that) for special music training.

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MOSES HILLMAN PASSES

Just as this issue of the Highway is being mailed for publication, word has been received that Moses Hillman, 92, a highly esteemed and dear saint of God has been promoted to his eternal home. He passed away on Tuesday, February 27.

L. K. Mullen