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THE LEAKAGE OF SPIRITUAL POWER?

by Commissioner S. L. 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 that night, his soul was like a loosely-strung bow. He couldn't shoot the King's arrows into the heart 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 back-slidden; he had a good experience. Nor was he dull and insipid; on the contrary, he was one of the brightest, keenest officers I knew. 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.

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, he spent the time playing soft, dreamy music on his violin; and though faithfully, lovingly warned, he 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. And things were lively, but it was not with divine life. It was the liveliness of mere animal spirits, and not of the Holy Spirit. I do not mean by this that a man who is filled with the power of the Spirit will never make men laugh. He will. He may say tremendously funny things. But he will not be doing it just to have a good time. It will come naturally. It will not be "dragged in on all fours," and it will be done in the fear of God, and not in a spirit of

lightness and jesting.

He who wants a meeting of life and power should

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THE PERMANENCE OF PENTECOST

by Donald M. Vorp

"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off . . ."—Acts 2:39.

Pentecost was not fad but fact. It was a fact of history. Pentecost was an expression of God — a full revelation. As an event in history, it fully revealed God. The third person of the Trinity was made known. Through the Spirit, men were to know the Father and the Son. Pentecost as such an event cannot be repeated.

But Pentecost was not only a fact of history. It is a fact of experience. It was and is an experience in God — full redemption. Pentecost as such can be repeated. It must if Christianity is to live. It will if Christianity lives. There is something permanent in Pentecost.

A Person Glorified

Pentecost glorified a Person through the work of the Spirit. His work was to administer redemption by acclaiming the Redeemer. Men were to be drawn to Christ more than to the Comforter. He was to affect men with what Christ had effected for them. Life was to be lived in the light of Calvary. Its love would convict. Its life would convert. Its claims would challenge.

Pentecost glorified the Divine through the work of the apostles. The center of their life was Christ. The crux of their preaching was Christ. Their emphasis was on principle only as it was grounded in the Person. They spoke only of the process of salvation as it issued from the Person of the Saviour. Salvation centered not in creed or conduct but in Christ and the cross. Religion could not be produced by church membership. Nor could it be bought or bargained for by financial support. Religion centered in the Redeemer. Conversion meant change — a change in a man produced by the God-man.

The Christian life can be no less if it is to be Christian at all. Every life lived in God must glorify the Divine. God must be supreme. Christ must possess our loyalty.

We must concern ourselves more with the Redeemer than ritual. Our emphasis must be with acclaiming the Saviour as well as admonishing the sinner. We must lay more stress on the Christ of experience than the crisis-experience. How loudly we have acclaimed the process! How little the Person!

Personality Purified

Pentecost purified personality. One of the passing values of Pentecost was the tongues like unto fire. But they symbolize one of the permanent values of that day. For fire both consumes and cleanses. Even so was the work of the Spirit. He penetrated and purified the inner depths of the heart life. Sin was consumed. Self was cleansed.

A purified personality meant full redemption. It meant deliverance from sinful attitudes as well as sinful acts. It was redemption provided for the manifestations of the outer life and the motives of the inner life.

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