

PENTACOSTAL LIGHT

by Aaron Merritt Hills

PENTECOSTAL LIGHT

by

Aaron Merritt (A. M.) Hills

PRAYING FOR THE SPIRIT

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

GRIEVE NOT THE SPIRIT

CHAPTER 1

PRAYING FOR THE SPIRIT

LUKE 11:9-13.

We are living in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. He is the Executive of the Godhead. When Jesus left the world, he declared: “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment ...

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth ... He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. The Comforter, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you ... He shall testify of me” (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15).

What volumes of truth are compressed into these few sentences. We are distinctly told that it is better for the church and the world that Christ should withdraw His bodily and visible presence, because the unseen, omnipresent Spirit would be more helpful than the incarnate Lord visible, but confined to one place. And the mission of the Spirit is revealed. He shall convict sinners of sin and testify of Jesus. He will “guide believers into all truth,” and “show Christ” to them as an all-sufficient Savior, and “teach them all things,” and clothe them with “power” (Acts 1:8), “being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:16).

May the Lord open our hearts to take in these glorious truths, not half appreciated by an unspiritual church in these modern days.

MUST BE PRAYED FOR

Let us remember that while the Spirit is universally present with men, His especially potential presence must be prayed for. Jesus said (Luke 11:13): “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” Here then, is from the lips of Jesus a remarkable encouragement to definite prayer for the Holy Spirit. The argument appeals to the tenderest feelings of the parental heart. As a suffering child, pleading with its mother for bread to satisfy its hunger, is not mocked with a stone; as a father does not taunt his starving boy with the gift of a SCORPION, so God, our heavenly Father, will not mock our hungry souls when we cry for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

What an encouragement to pray! What a sweet assurance that the heavens are not brass above us; that the throne of grace is not inaccessible, and that God is not deaf to the cries of His spiritually needy children. Prayer is a thing of divine appointment. The voice of petition is as sweet to the ear of the Infinite as a seraph’s song, and prayer is the most pleasing incense that rises to the Omnipotent’s throne. Therefore, in spite of all the clamorings of doubts and doubters, “men ought always to pray and not to faint.”

Moreover, the words of Jesus imply that the great need of His followers is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Without Him souls faint and perish, as bodies languish and die without food. No divine life without Him, no acceptable prayer, no appreciation of Jesus, no understanding of the Word, no swiftness in the heavenly race, no efficiency of service, no growth in grace, no fullness of life, no sanctification of the heart. With what inexpressible longing, then, with what importunity ought all Christians to pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit! Life, usefulness, preparation for heaven — everything that intimately concerns the spirit of man for time or eternity depends upon the helpful work of the Holy Ghost.

You will notice that the coming and work of the Holy Spirit were the great themes of Christ’s last conversation with His disciples, and He dwelt upon them with special emphasis as being supremely important to His Church for evermore. Have we, as Christians, been sufficiently alive to this fact? Have we realized that we are nothing, and there is nothing for us worth having if we are to be without the friendship and assistance of this

Divine Power? Surely we may agree with Owen, that “He should be the great subject-matter of all our prayers, and that the principle work of faith in this world is this asking of the Spirit of God.”

To leave now these general statements, and to show more explicitly and clearly why we should earnestly pray for the Holy Spirit, I remark, —

I. That only so can we have the indwelling of God in our souls. We are by nature dead to things holy. There is no life in us. So God entreats us to “be filled with the Spirit,” “and alive unto righteousness,” and “dead unto sin.” In other words, not until God, through the Spirit, makes our hearts His abode can we live worthily, having a Christlike attitude toward sin and toward holiness. It is by the Spirit that we abide in Christ, and He “in us the hope of glory.” In answer to importuning prayer He overshadows man now as of old and fills us, and we become the temple of the Holy Ghost. The souls of believers actually become His dwelling place, so that He is personally present with them in such a way as to inspire in them spiritual life and holy affections.

“They that are in the flesh can not please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness” (Romans 8:8-10). What less can this wonderful language mean than this: through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we become partakers of God’s life. This is the only source of whatever spiritual life we can ever possess. This is the secret of holiness, the crowning blessing, the source of all other spiritual blessings — this indwelling of the Spirit in the heart of man, the union of the human with the Divine. And for this preeminent gift Jesus taught us to pray.

II. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit that we may have a better appreciation and a clearer perception of the truths of the Bible. “The Spirit shall teach you,” said Jesus. The mysteries of God’s wisdom are “revealed unto us by his Spirit,” said Paul, because we are “strengthened by his Spirit in the inner man.” “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another knowledge by the same Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:8).

“When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14). Is not this the most pointed intimation that we need the Holy Spirit’s illumination in order to understand the Word? By perusing the Scriptures daily, and pondering the revelations God has made of Himself of Christ, of redemption, and of things unseen and eternal, in the same way in which we study algebra and history, much indeed of a certain kind of biblical knowledge can be gained. Such study should not be neglected. But yet there is a heart-acquaintance with truth and experience of it, a spiritual insight into the Gospel, an apprehension and comprehension of Divine things which it can never give. There is much in the Scriptures that the unaided intellect will never discover, appreciate or understand. It is the Spirit’s Book, and the Spirit is its best Commentator and Interpreter. There is a heavenly light to be given, and a heavenly eye to perceive its radiance, which only the illuminating Spirit can impart. There is a quickening of the soul, an unwonted appreciation of divine truth, a sensing of heavenly things that is born only of the Spirit of God. “The unction of the Holy Spirit,” says Dr. Steele, “is the highway to all knowledge. This is especially true of an insight into theology. “Hence the Holy Ghost is the only conservator of orthodoxy.” Says Samuel Rutherford: “If you would be a deep divine, I recommend to you sanctification.” John Bunyan, imprisoned for years in Bedford jail, with no library but the Bible and no teacher but the Holy Ghost, had a diviner insight into the things of the kingdom, and more exalted visions of glory and views of God than ever came to the pampered but scholarly bishops of his day. “Who knoweth the deep things of God but the Spirit of God,” and who but He reveals them unto the heart of man in answer to prayer? I can not help thinking that if the theological professors of our country for the last forty years had sought the Baptism with the Holy Ghost and His illumination with half the zeal that they have studied the writings of tobacco-befogged and beer-soaked German rationalists, they would have sent us out a Spirit-anointed ministry, with vastly better equipment for the service of the churches and the cause of Christ than we received at their hands. Rev. A. B. Simpson says: “It is wonderful how the untutored mind will often, in a short time, by the simple touch of the Holy Spirit, be filled with the most profound and

Scriptural teaching of God, and the plan of salvation through Christ. We once knew a poor girl, saved from a life of infamy and but little educated, rise to most extraordinary acquaintance with the Scriptures and the whole plan of redemption through the simple anointing of the Holy Spirit. We simply give to Him our spirit, and He fills it with His light and revelation.”

Hear the scholarly commentator and flaming Southern evangelist, Dr. Godbey, who can read his Bible in nine different languages and dialects, and has for fifteen years used no New Testament but the critical Greek. With all his college learning, he preached fifteen years “an utter failure as a soul-saver,” “committing the awful blunder of substituting my intellect and education for the Holy Ghost.” Then he sought the Holy Spirit anointing. Listen to him now, in the ripeness of his maturity: “What is this spiritual gift of knowledge? It is insight into divine truth. As the Holy Spirit is the Author of the Bible, He alone understands its meaning. Man teaches the intellect, but the Holy Ghost teaches the heart. Many people think the mind is greater than the heart, but they are egregiously mistaken. The heart is the man himself, the mind being his servitor. The gift of knowledge reveals to you the deep, hidden meaning of God’s Word.

“Many years ago an old Methodist bishop said to us young preachers: ‘Young men, God can teach you more in a minute than men can teach you in a year.’ That strange, and to me paradoxical, statement lingered in my memory, and made an indelible impression on my mind. Years subsequently, when the Lord led me into Beulah Land (sanctification), and imparted to me the gift of knowledge, I for the first time understood the old bishop. I graduated at college, and ransacked all the world for books, and gathered me up a library at the cost of one thousand dollars, thinking I would have to study those books in order to be an efficient preacher. About that time the Lord gave me sanctification, flooding my soul with celestial fire, and transforming the metaphysical preacher into a flaming revivalist. The fire swept through me night and day, from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I preached four to six times a day, moving in a revival cyclone the encircling year. I was compelled to bid farewell to my library, give up sermon-making, and devote all my time to saving souls. Consequently, I consecrated all my fond aspirations to understand the Bible, and went forth, content to cry, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, that

‘taketh away the sins of the world!’ having forever abandoned all my cherished aspirations to understand the Bible. Anon, to my unutterable surprise, I find myself surrounded by preachers and people with open Bibles, listening to my expositions of the inspired Word. That God would use me as a teacher of the Bible seemed to me a paradoxical dream. But what is the solution of the mysterious problem? The Holy Ghost has revealed to me His Word. The spiritual gift of knowledge is the golden key which unlocks the Bible. This explains how Bob Burks, when converted and sanctified, could lucidly and forcibly explain the Scriptures, though he could not read a word. This is the reason why the illiterate women of the Salvation Army are better preachers than many college graduates who fill our city pulpits.

“God is raising a kingdom out of the slums and jungles to preach His Gospel and save the world. It is a significant fact that the poor backwoods circuits enjoy a purer Gospel and a more vital Christianity than the wealthy stations, because the poor, illiterate circuit-riders are taught by the Holy Ghost, while the learned pastors are taught by men. Human learning is all right in its place, but it is a blighting curse when made a substitute for the knowledge which none but the Holy Ghost can impart.

“Reader, if you would understand the wonderful revelations of God’s Word, give up all your own wisdom and sit down meek and lowly at the feet of Jesus, and abandon yourself to the Holy Ghost, that He may teach you the deep things of God. We learn, in 2 Corinthians 3, that the first lesson in the school of Christ is to find out that we are fools. Corinthians 2 teaches us that the Word of God can not be discerned by the human intellect. The Holy Spirit must teach your spirit His revealed Word and will, or you will remain a spiritual ignoramus. God’s Word is the sword with which we are to conquer the world, flesh and Satan. You do not need colleges and theologians to reveal to you God’s Word, but you need the Holy Ghost to illuminate it.

“D. L. Moody, the world’s evangelist, is an unlearned layman. Yet he is a master in Israel, at whose feet theologians of all nations would do well to sit and learn the Word of God. He is a wonderful example of this spiritual gift of knowledge. Amanda Smith is an illiterate colored woman, born and

reared in Southern slavery, yet she has preached to myriads in America, Europe, Asia and Africa, and is wonderfully luminous in the Word of God. She is one of the most efficient preachers in the world; the secret of the matter is, she is taught by the Holy Ghost the deep things of God. You can not afford to be without this gift', ("Spiritual Gifts and Graces," pp. 18-20).

Once a Christian woman came to Dr. Keen, and said: "I don't love to read the Bible; I haven't a relish for it. I prefer to read the magazines and the best authors. There must be something wrong. I know I ought to love the Bible." He replied to her: "There is something wrong. You need the baptism with the Holy Ghost that will unseal the Book and illuminate its pages, so that your soul will exclaim, 'How I love Thy law!'" She sought the Spirit, and in two months she said to Dr. Keen: "O! the Bible is a changed book. It is such a precious book! I only wish I had more hours in which to linger over its pages." Oh, how sadly do all believers need the Spirit, that we Christians may behold new and wondrous things out of God's law; that our neglected Bible may have for us an unwonted charm — a heavenly fascination — for evermore.

3. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit, that we may have a more perfect assurance of the love of God. Probably all true Christians have a more or less satisfying idea that God loves them. But, alas! with many it is only a dim, trembling hope, that scarcely amounts to confidence. There is very little peaceful, restful assurance in it. Multitudes have long periods of painful doubt and darkness, until they come to question the reality of their own piety, and even the love of the blessed God.

Who does not see that this is not ideal Christian living? The Sacred Page says of God: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." "As the Father hath loved me, even so have I loved you." "The hairs of your head are all numbered." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." O, blessed Jesus, what love — matchless, infinite, eternal! And yet, to the weak apprehension of Thy children, it is all unreal. Thou dost seem more distant from us than the stars and the sun. In times of trouble it seems as if Thou hadst forgotten Thine own. But when Thy Spirit comes the veil is

lifted, and we behold, with open vision, the glory of God. Nothing now seems so real as Thy love, for it is “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost,” as the light of the sun is poured upon the earth in the morning.

When the baptism with Thy Spirit comes we know and believe the love that God hath to us” (1 John 4:16). We are “able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge” (Ephesians 3:18, 19). Dear reader, it is the coming of the Holy Spirit that makes God’s love a blessed reality to the soul, out of which come hope and peace and joy and all foretastes of heaven. He came upon Mrs. President Edwards in 1742, and she wrote: “I can not find language to express how certain the everlasting love of God appeared; the everlasting mountains and hills were but shadows to it. My safety and happiness and eternal enjoyment of God’s immutable love seemed as unchangeable as God Himself. Melted and overcome by the sweetness of this assurance, I fell into a great flow of tears, and could not forbear weeping aloud ... All night I continued in a constant, clear and lively sense of the heavenly sweetness of Christ’s excellent and transcendent love, of His nearness to me and of my dearness to Him, with an inexpressibly sweet calmness of soul, in an entire rest in Him.” The Spirit came upon the Rev. Wm. Tennent when he was in the woods in prayer, between the morning and afternoon service, and in a trance “heaven came down his soul to greet,” and, like Paul, he saw and felt things unspeakable. An humble woman in Massachusetts told the writer that the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the tears streamed down her face all the day as she stood over her wash-tub, for her excessive raptures of joy from the conscious love of God. Oh, for such a comforting assurance — a perpetual consciousness of the love of God in the hearts of all believers. Then would the “oil of joy take the place of mourning, and the garment of praise be given for the spirit of heaviness.” The light of the Church of Christ would be as the morning, and her brightness as the noonday, and God would be her peace and our God her glory. Instead of being a feeble, sickly folk, we should march to conquest and victory like an army thrilled by the music of heaven, ever conscious that God’s “banner over us was love.”

4. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit that we may be kept from evil, and escape the entanglements of the world. Satan is perpetually after us, with his gilded temptations, laying his snares for our unwary feet. How often are the good enticed and blinded and seduced from the path of rectitude! How often do even the earnest and the serious-minded lose their reckoning in the labyrinths of human affairs, and make grievous mistakes that wound their souls and hurt the cause they love! How often good judgment fails, even among the most thoughtful, reminding us so impressively that the evil one deceives, if possible, the very elect! If our arch-enemy can not keep us from coming to Christ, then he follows us over into the kingdom of Jesus, and with Satanic guile seeks to induce us to do something that will at least kill our Christian influence. He gets us to commit some stupid blunder, or adopt some habit which, in its serious consequence to others, is equal to a crime. A minister might be named, of match less gifts, whose life was a perennial stream of beneficent influence. He was betrayed into some indiscretions, some foolish blunders, that made him the target of ridicule for the sons of Belial, and caused the Christians of a nation to weep in sorrow and hang their heads in shame. Another famous doctor of divinity, a mighty scholar, an intellectual prince among men, might be named who preached a sermon that amazed the Christian public and filled the holy with grief. One million and a half copies of that sermon were printed and circulated in the saloons of America! Think you the Holy Spirit ever inspired a sermon that saloon-keepers would industriously circulate? Were these men guided by the Spirit when they were working a mischief whose evil influence they could not undo in a thousand years, were they to live so long? Not a bit of it. They had got far enough from God to be guided only by their own natures; and man, apart from God, at his best estate, is altogether vanity. Similar illustrations without number might be given. There is a reason why the sons and daughters of pious parents often go wrong. There are reasons why so many good people have no great influence for Christ. Blunders! blunders! blunders.'

Now, where is the remedy? Who shall instruct our minds, and give us the discerning vision and steady our tottering feet? I know of but one power that can meet the emergency — that Holy Spirit that is appointed to guide us into all truth, and keep us from foolish and carnal things. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you."

He only, by dwelling in us, can give the divine guidance, the spiritual discernment that can infallibly penetrate beneath the guise of things and make us superior to the enticing allurements of a wicked world.

5. We need to pray for the Holy Spirit that we may properly appreciate CHRIST. Jesus said: "When he is come, he shall glorify me." He magnifies the person and offices of Christ to the soul. So much did the saintly Finney appreciate this fact that he wrote a whole book about the work of the Spirit revealing Christ to us. I should like to quote from its glowing pages; but, as usual, I am writing far away from home and my library. He names, if I remember, some fifty or sixty offices of Christ which the Holy Spirit makes real to the soul. They are such as these: Christ as "Immanuel," "Counselor," "God," "Prince of Peace," "Way," "Truth," "Life," "Shepherd," "Lord," "Master," "Redeemer," "Savior," "Prophet," "Priest," "King," our "Wisdom," our "Jesus," our "Righteousness," our "Sanctifier," our "Mediator," our "Bread of Life," our "Water of Life," our "Intercessor." In scores of pages Finney proceeded to tell in a thrilling way what the Spirit had revealed to him about Christ. None need fear that by exalting the person and work of the Holy Spirit Jesus will thereby be obscured. The fact is, only by honoring the Holy Spirit and receiving Him into the heart can we have any adequate appreciation of our blessed Savior. Had the Holy Spirit been duly appreciated and honored and prayed for, Unitarianism, that so degrades the person and atoning work of Jesus, would never have been heard of. Mr. Stead, of London, said most pertinently not long since: "What the world now needs, is 'Christs'" — people who reproduce the life and Spirit of Jesus. Such the people of God become when, by the anointing of the Holy Ghost, Jesus becomes properly revealed to and fully incarnated in the heart. Christ came to reveal the FATHER to men; the Spirit comes to reveal CHRIST to men. "When the Comforter is come ... he shall testify of me" (John 15:26). "He shall not speak of himself" (John 16:13). That is the literal truth. The Spirit talks to the heart of Jesus, till Christ becomes unspeakably precious and real. As Dr. Keen says: "He [the Spirit] holds Himself incognito, while He shows the things of Christ unto us. Bishop Thoburn's description of an Oriental marriage incident illustrates this beautifully. A prince, who is the bridegroom, seated under a canopy on a great white elephant, is escorted at midnight to the house of the bride; torchbearers,

with lights on the end of long rods, walk beside the elephant — out of sight — holding their lights so that the blaze shines full on the prince, exhibiting him in all his gorgeous attire and adornments. They are unseen, but the prince appears all glorious in the light which they throw upon him. So, when the Holy Ghost is received into the soul, He turns the full blaze of His indwelling presence upon the face of Jesus, and He becomes exalted and transfigured to the soul.” Any system of theology that subtracts from or in any way belittles the person and work of the Holy Spirit will end by degrading Jesus and His atonement. “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3). One may have a cold, intellectual conviction of the divinity of Christ, but it is only when the Holy Spirit comes that one feels that He is divine, and rejoices in Him and adores Him, and enthrones Him Lord of all in the heart.

And the Spirit manifests the presence and companionship of Jesus. He is felt to be with us and in us, because His Spirit has made us the temple of the Holy Ghost. Christ is “formed within” us, and is “in us the hope of glory” — a companionship real and abiding. This was what cheered Madam Guyon and John Bunyan in their dungeons for Christ’s sake. The Apostle Paul said: “God was pleased to reveal in me his Son;” and after the Spirit anointed him, Jesus was ever real to his soul, and his Lord’s promise was fulfilled, “Lo, I am with you always.”

Mrs. Mary D. James sings thus of an ever-present Savior:

“I’m walking close to Jesus’ side
So close that I can hear
The softest whispers of His love
In fellowship so dear;
And feel His great almighty hand
Protects me in this hostile land.

“I’m leaning on His loving breast,
Along life’s weary way;
My path, illumined by His smile,
Grows brighter day by day;

No woes, no foes my heart can fear,
With my almighty Friend so near.
O wondrous bliss! O joy sublime!
I’ve Jesus with me all the time!”

Above all, the Holy Spirit, when He comes, will honor the Priesthood of Jesus, and open our eyes to recognize Him as the Anointer — the Baptizer, “with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” This gift is from Jesus. He ascended on high that He might “give gifts to men.” His great gift is the Spirit. John Baptist said: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” Mr. Keen well observes: “Until the soul is anointed with the Holy Ghost it sees Jesus only as a sacrifice and Savior. When it is filled with the Holy Ghost, He then is recognized as Anointer and Baptizer. For the lack of this generally in the church, Jesus is largely unknown and unhonored in His exalted character as the giver of the Holy Ghost” (“Pentecostal Papers,” p. 134). “Jesus is not fully received until He is recognized in both offices, as Savior and Anointer, and so soon as He is honored in the latter as in the former, He manifests Himself by giving to the soul the gift of the Holy Ghost. This truth, so clearly apprehended by the Apostolic Church, has been obscured and well-nigh lost. But it is now dawning again, with all its gracious splendor, upon many hearts. A venerable and scholarly minister says: ‘Those who are recognizing and heralding the Gospel of Jesus as the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and with fire are in the foremost of the reformation of the twentieth century’” (“Pentecostal Papers,” pp. 187, 188). O Christians, O churches of God, let us pray continually for the Holy Spirit, that He may open our eyes to see the glories of our ascended Lord! Then Jesus shall be more to us than a historical character that once lived and died and went away, we know not whither. He will then seem nearer to us than the nearest friend nearer than the hand that wipes away our tears — even an indwelling Savior, who has all might, all power to baptize us with the Holy Ghost, and live in us a life divine. With the illumination of the Holy Spirit in us, we shall have a new, an anointed, vision to see Christ in His multiplied relationships and infinite glory till He shall become “chiefest among ten thousands” and the one “all in all.”

6. We need to pray for the Spirit that we may be purged from sin and sanctified. A seraphim brought fire from heaven to Isaiah and put it on him, and said: “Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged” (Isaiah 6:7). Malachi prophesied of Christ that “He is like a refiner’s fire ... and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and

purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Malachi 3:2, 3). John Baptist said of Jesus: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” We are told in Acts that at Pentecost “there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire” (Acts 2:3); and that this Holy Ghost fire “purified their hearts” (Acts 15:9). “Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:16).

Here, then, is the great work of the Holy Ghost, foretold by prophets, realized by apostles, and promised of the Father to all believers of every age. This purging, sin-consuming, fiery energy of the Holy Spirit, burning the canker of sin out of our hearts, is the need of us all. As fire refines the gold, so does the Holy Spirit fire, when coming in Pentecostal power, purge out the “sin that dwelleth in us,” and sanctify the heart. Then what growth in grace — what fruitfulness! “The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” And this glorious cluster of Christian graces is by no means a complete list of the fruits of the Spirit. There are adoration, obedience and gratitude toward God. There are justice, courtesy, pity and sympathy that go out toward our neighbor. There are humility, zeal, courage and the like — the holy characteristics of the renewed heart in which God dwells. We are by nature such lean and meager souls! Our hearts are so barren of all good! What can convert our sterility into fruitfulness and cause our desert life to blossom as the garden of the Lord? Only the HOLY SPIRIT. Four times in Scripture He is directly declared to be the source of our sanctification, and many times indirectly. Beloved, there is a growth of soul which we know little about — a spiritual development far beyond what we usually see. There is a tenderness of conscience, a strength of holy purpose, a singleness of eye, a degree of devotion, a oneness with Christ, a victory over the world and a holiness of heart possible to God’s loved ones, which few Christians attain unto. It is a state of rest in Jesus, a union with Him, in which the “old man” is crucified, and sin loses its power to charm, and the victory of faith is complete, because the life is hid with Christ in God, and we are the temple of the Holy Ghost. In Scripture language it is called “sanctification” — a state in which everything is set apart as sacred, and “holiness unto the Lord” is written upon every faculty, and every employment, and every possession; and the soul, like Enoch of old, continually walks with God. Who does not hunger for such a

life? What Christian is not weary of backsliding and succumbing to temptation and coldness of heart, and clouds, and doubts, and heaviness, and faintness of spirit? But victory comes not, and such life is not known, save as we are sanctified by the Holy Ghost. It is something to believe in, to long for and to pray for, until the unspeakable blessing is given. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

Whitefield said: "I would rather have five men who are led by the Spirit and walk with God than to have five hundred men at whose piety the devil laughs." Wesley said: "Give me a hundred men who fear nothing but God, and hate nothing but sin, and I can take the world for Christ." General Gordon, starting for the Soudan, said: "If you can find a man who does not love money, honor or a great name, and who looks upon God as the only source of power and might, and regards death as only an escape from misery, bring him to me, and I will make him my companion and helper; but if you can not find such a man, leave me alone with God." "Ah!" said a Brahmin to a Christian, "I have found you out; you are not as good as your Book. If you Christians were as good as your Book, you would take India in five years." Is not this the sad need of the world today sanctified Christians, baptized with the Holy Spirit, fearing nobody but God and hating nothing but sin, and free from a slavish love of the world, and as good as their Book? May God send us the sanctifying Spirit in power.

Rev. J. Hudson Taylor, of the China Inland Mission, said, in an address, as reported in a London missionary magazine for December, 1896: "Whosoever drinketh of this," continued the Savior, 'shall thirst again.' But the Lord does not stop there. If He had stopped there He would have told us no more than we know, and than heathen China expresses in its proverb, 'Man's heart is never satisfied.' Christ continued: 'But whosoever' — no matter whom he may be — 'whosoever drinketh 'drinks and continues to drink —' of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.' And the 'shall' means SHALL, and the 'never' means NEVER, and 'thirst' means THIRST. It may seem a very simple thing to say, but it has been a great revelation to me that 'shall' means SHALL, and 'never' means NEVER, and 'thirst' means THIRST. It carries me back to an afternoon in a Chinese city, where, alone, I was reading this chapter, oh, so hungry, so

disappointed with my own life, my own service, wishing I could throw it all up, feeling it was hardly honest of me to go on preaching Christ to these poor heathen while I felt myself not fully saved, while I knew that if temptation came in certain directions I should inevitably fall. How could I go on telling the Chinese that Christ was a perfect Savior, and could help them at all times, when I knew there was scarcely a day that I was not betrayed into irritability of temper, or in some other ways that my heart told me were displeasing to God. I knew a good many flood-tides, but the ebb-tides came, too, and the ebb was often greater than the flood. That day the Holy Spirit showed me, in a fresh light, that ‘shall’ means SHALL, and ‘never’ means NEVER, and ‘thirst’ means THIRST, and went on to say, further, not only ‘shall never thirst,’ but ‘the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well’ — a spring, springing up, overflowing. How long? ‘Unto everlasting life.’ I just accepted the Master’s word, and with a joy that I can never, never tell (and that I never think of without gratitude, as I go back to that time in my study in China in the winter of ‘68-‘69), I sprang from my chair. O, how I did praise God! Praise the Lord, my thirsty days are all over! They are behind! They will never come again! I cried aloud in my joy. I accepted His Word that ‘shall never thirst’ means SHALL NEVER THIRST; and I did not expect to be thirsty again. ‘Praise the Lord,’ I said, ‘there will be no more going over the flower-beds with an empty water-can! No more pumping!’ And I do praise God that the experience I have had since has not disappointed me. He keeps His word. ‘Shall never thirst’ means what it says; and twenty thousand years hence it will be as true. And I want you all to take it home to you, and go wherever the Lord sends you. It does not matter where it is, ‘shall never thirst’ means SHALL NEVER THIRST. The woman came to the well with a pot for water; she went away with a WELL in her bosom, and it overflowed all over the city.” May the sanctifying Holy Spirit come upon all of us till the irritability shall be taken away, and the hunger and thirst of the heart shall be satisfied, and the ebbing of the spiritual life shall cease, and the now barren, desert-like Christians shall be “well-of-water” Christians, overflowing the communities where they live, and making them oases in the kingdom of God. This leads me to say, —

7. We ought to pray for the Holy Spirit that we may be endued with power from on high. This was Jesus’ parting charge to the disciples —

they were to pray till the Holy Spirit came to endue them with power to win souls. They did pray until the Holy Spirit was poured out, and Pentecost was the result. They continued to pray, and “there were added to the church daily those that were being saved.” What do Christians need now more than this power to save men which the Spirit can impart? Individually and collectively, we stand so impotent in the presence of sin and sinners. We have little power to cast out demons and to bring many to righteousness. The sermon at Pentecost resulted in the conversion of three thousand souls. A wit has scornfully said it now takes three thousand sermons to convert one soul.

Moreover, the responsibility of saving men is now, for the most part, laid upon a class of hired professionals, whereas formerly all Christians felt a solemn responsibility resting upon them to bring others to Christ. Every Christian was then a preacher; that is, he bore public testimony to the work of Christ in his soul, and the power of Jesus to save. This Holy Spirit is as near to us as to the early disciples, and the same power is as possible to us as its need is urgent.

All successful soul-winners are such by virtue of the Holy Spirit power that is resting upon them. President Mahan, in his “Baptism With the Holy Ghost,” tells us of a man who lived in New Jersey in the early part of this century, by the name of Carpenter. For a time his Christian life was like that of thousands of others — he had only a name to live. He became painfully conscious of his moral and spiritual inefficiency and impotency, and of the absence of any assured hope or settled confidence or trust in God. He consequently set his whole heart upon attaining through the Spirit, in answer to prayer, a more perfect work of grace in his soul. At length the baptism with the Spirit came; the light of God encircled him, and after his anointing he had “power with God and with men.” He was only a layman, of limited common-school education, yet his influence for Christ was well-nigh irresistible. At his funeral in the First Presbyterian Church of Newark, it was publicly stated by one of the ministers present that, from the most careful estimate, it was fully believed he had been directly instrumental in the conversion of more than ten thousand souls. And what was the secret of this wonderful power? He himself revealed it to an intimate friend a little before his death, when he declared that “for

ten years he had walked continuously under the cloudless light of the Sun of righteousness, and had been in a state of entire sanctification.” Sanctified and clothed with power by the Holy Spirit was the explanation of it all. I shall give other illustrations of this enduement of power in the next chapter. There is abundance of proof that this gift is still for us, and for all time. It is something we should all desire and pray for with unutterable longing till the enduement comes.

I am persuaded there is a serious difficulty lying at the very roots of our modern church life. Our resources are so vast and our opportunities are so many, while our triumphs are comparatively so few! There must be a cause for this widespread leanness in the church of our day. We are forgetting the hiding-place of our power. I once filled a pulpit in Massachusetts. At the close of the service, a venerable ex-pastor came forward and thanked me for the sermon, and said: “It seems good to hear the ring of the old gospel once more. Our last pastor, in seventy-three sermons and prayers, by actual count, made no reference to the Holy Spirit.” Here is the difficulty. We are neglecting and casting a slight upon the Third Person of the Trinity. We are trying to build up the churches without the counsel and assistance of the Master Builder, forgetting that when God would rear His temple He says to men: “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” O Christians, there is such an Agent in the Church of Christ as the Almighty Spirit of God, whose aid can be secured in answer to importuning prayer. He can lead us into all truth, and help us to live a holy life, and animate our hearts with unwonted zeal, and clothe us with the invisible power.

“Ye that love the Lord, keep not silence; send up a loud, long, united and unsparing entreaty for this promised aid. This, this is what we want, and this is all we want. Till this be obtained, neither human nor angelic agency can be of much avail. But let this Power be felt; let the ministry be fired with the faith and zeal of the apostles, and let all Christians have the purity and prayerfulness and singleness of heart of the first disciples, all, like them, having a mind to work and a heart to yearn over and travail for souls, and, as Bishop Pierce affirms, “Pentecosts might be multiplied, and converts be as numerous as the dew-drops of the morning.”

CHAPTER 2

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Acts 19:2:

“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?”

Ephesians 1:13: “In whom [Christ] ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

Ephesians 5:18: “Be filled with the Spirit.”

These words were all spoken to the same body of Christians, and plainly teach the order of soul development. We learn in Acts that the Ephesians believed and became disciples. “Ye trusted in Christ after ye heard the word of truth,” says Paul. Then the dear apostle taught those disciples about the Holy Ghost. Like many another church, they had not “so much as heard” of Him as a Divine, sanctifying power. But Paul taught them, and they received the Holy Ghost and were sanctified. “After that ye believed” in Christ, he afterward wrote, “ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” The seal of the Spirit is holiness or sanctification (2 Timothy 2:19-21). Now, in behalf of these sealed, sanctified Christians, Paul offers that wonderful prayer in the third chapter of Ephesians: “That ye ... may be able ... to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God”; and in the fifth chapter he commands them to “be filled with the Spirit.”

The Bible commentator, Godbey, says: “In his fervency he [Paul] runs into the wildest hyperbole, leaping on infinitely beyond sanctification. The popular idea that sanctification is the highest state of grace is very erroneous. It is the normal New Testament experience, but comparatively not a very high state. ‘To be filled with all the fullness of God’ indicates a state of grace infinitely beyond entire sanctification.” John Fletcher said:

“It is a small matter for me to be emptied of all sin (i. e., sanctified wholly), but a great thing for me to be filled with all the fullness of God.”

This brings our theme fairly before us, and I observe, —

1. There is a blessing after conversion which all need. Precious as regeneration is — worth more than all the world — no Christian ought to be satisfied with it. There is something beyond that is higher and better. The disciples were Christians. Jesus commissioned them to preach and to cast out devils, a work that God never would have committed to wicked men, the children of the devil. He said to them: “Ye have followed me in the regeneration.” “Your names are written in heaven.” He said of them: “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” “They have kept thy word,” “and they have believed that thou didst send me.” That these disciples were converted is indisputable.

But it is equally certain that these regenerated men were not wholly pleasing to God, nor all that God wanted them to be. They were imperfect in faith, cowardly, selfish, jealous, ambitious and vindictive. Jesus prayed that they might be sanctified and “be perfect”; and before He ascended He charged them to tarry in Jerusalem till they were baptized with the Spirit. They did so, and from the hour that the Spirit came they were transformed into new men. The fire of the Holy Spirit burned the unbelief and the cowardice and jealousy and selfishness and sin all out of them. “They swept out from Jerusalem like cyclones of fire, penetrating the time-honored empires of Satan till they sealed their faith with their blood.”

Philip, the evangelist, went down to Samaria and preached Christ, and gathered a large company of believers, “and they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” But there was another blessing which they greatly needed and God wanted them to have. And Peter and John hurried over from Jerusalem to help them to receive the sanctifying, power-enduing Holy Ghost. It was so with, Cornelius, the “devout,” God-fearing Roman, “who prayed to God alway,” and his household. They worked righteousness, and were accepted of God (Acts 10:35). But they needed such instruction as would lead them to the baptism with the Holy Ghost, and God sent Peter to give it to them. As they were listening

to the truth, the Holy Ghost came, and their hearts were purified (Acts 15:9). Moody calls Acts “the Gospel of the Holy Ghost.” It is full of this “second blessing” doctrine from beginning to end. Dear reader, if you have been born again, I congratulate you. But if that is the sum of your religious experience, then God is teaching you, by these lines, that you greatly need what the disciples and Cornelius and the converts of Samaria and Ephesus needed — the sanctifying baptism with the Holy Ghost. Seek it with all your heart.

2. Notice how to seek it, how to obtain this blessing of the Spirit baptism. In my book on “Holiness and Power for the Church and the Ministry” I devote five chapters to this important subject, and there give more ample and explicit instruction on how to obtain the blessing than is given in any of the fifty books I have read on this theme. I put my whole heart into it, because I had learned by a score of years’ experience as pastor and evangelist, that multitudes are hungering for a higher Christian experience, i. e., sanctification, and knows not how to obtain it. Teachers have not been plain enough in pointing out the way. I should have entered into Canaan twenty-five years before I did, and been spared a quarter of a century of floundering about in the wilderness, if President Mahan’s “Baptism with the Holy Ghost” had given me clear and ample instruction. It is a blessed book; but it is vague and general where it ought to have been definite, and as plain as a sign-board, pointing to the “Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,” even that inbred sin-depravity which is the torment of Christian hearts. I can only give brief directions here. And if any reader wishes more complete instruction, I commend him to the larger work. The real conditions of receiving this unspeakable blessing, briefly stated, are these:

1. What dear Amanda Smith calls “A conviction of want.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Blessed are the Christians who learn that conversion is not enough, who are not spiritually satisfied, and do not think that “they are rich and increased in goods and have need of nothing.” When you begin to know and feel that you are “miserable and poor,” while at the same time you are sure that you are a child of God, the Spirit is calling you for the blessing.

2. Repentance that you have been so tardy to reach out for the sanctifying Holy Spirit. “Blessed are they that mourn” — the Christians who mourn not over the loss of health or friends or money, as some suppose, but who mourn that they have kept the sanctifying Savior from the throne of their hearts so long, and have been so slow to become the temple of the Holy Ghost. God help you, dear reader, to take your place among the mourners.

3. A firm belief that this blessing is for you. You can not successfully seek a blessing that you do not believe it is possible for you to receive. Faith would be paralyzed. But God says: “The promise [of the Holy Spirit] is unto you ... and to all” (Acts 2:39). “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). “For God called us ... in sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:7. R. V.). Believe it; write your own name, as Dr. Steele did, into the calls and promises, and believe that you are the one that God has invited to receive this blessing.

4. Hunger and thirst for it. “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.” In my larger book I tell of the hunger of heart felt by Chapman and Moody, and Torrey, and Phoebe Palmer, and Hannah Whitehall Smith, and Dr. J. O. Peck, and other people whom the Baptism with the Spirit made to become kings and queens in the kingdom of God. A lazy desire will never secure this heavenly gift. The saintly Mother Booth said: “No one will ever have this pearl of great price until they are willing to sell all they have to get it.” Brother Torrey says: “No one will ever obtain it while he thinks he can get along without it.” It is the sharp soul-hunger that nothing but the Spirit can appease that drives to importuning prayer for this blessing, and brings it down from God.

5. Obedience. A renewed and far more intelligent submission of the will to God than you made at conversion. “The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him” (Acts 5:32). Absolute surrender of our will to know no other than the sweet will of God! All the bad habits and questionable and doubtful indulgences to be given up! Our wills to be used only in deciding that God’s will shall be done!

“Take Thine own way with me, dear Lord,
Thou canst not otherwise than bless;
I launch me forth upon a sea

Of boundless love and tenderness.

“I could not choose a larger bliss
Than to be wholly Thine; and mine
A will whose highest joy is this,
To ceaselessly unclasp in Thine

“O! it is life indeed to live
Within this kingdom strangely sweet,
And yet we fear to enter in,
And linger with unwilling feet.

“We fear this wondrous rule of Thine,
Because we have not reached Thy heart;
Not venturing our all on Thee,
We may not know how good Thou art.”

6. Consecration. Paul, writing to Christians, said: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). The spiritually-minded Bishop Simpson said that the “body” being, for the present, the home of the soul, meant in this verse “the whole being” — all there is of man. In other words, we are to give everything to God — all we have and are — our selves, our time, talents, possessions and influence to be His forever. “Holy, acceptable unto God,” i. e., He will accept the gift, and He, the altar, will sanctify it and make it holy.

The sinner can make no living sacrifice, for he is “dead in trespasses and sins.” When he offers himself to God he offers only the wreck and ruin of sin. Like the ancient Israelite, he is flying from the avenger of blood, goaded on by the fear of the consequences of sin and endless damnation. He falls at Jesus’ feet, and pleads to be saved.

But the Christian, already saved, made alive in Christ Jesus, and a citizen of God’s kingdom, no longer flies from the avenger of blood, but is actuated by gratitude and regard for the glory of God. He can bring a living sacrifice, bringing himself that he may spend and be spent for the glory of God, in a way which the sinner, convicted and seeking pardon, can not do.

But why, you may ask, must a Christian, seeking the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power, thus launch forth on a boundless sea of God's sweet will, and lay his all forever on the altar in consecration? It is that self and selfishness may be emptied out of the heart. Dr. Carradine says, somewhere: "I used to think the disciples spent ten days in the Jerusalem chamber getting filled; but I now believe they were there ten days getting EMPTIED." Moody writes: "Let us ask God to forgive our sins and anoint us with power from on high. But remember, He is not going to give this power to an impatient man; He is not going to give it to a selfish man; He will never give it to an ambitious man, whose aim is selfish, till first EMPTIED OF SELF — EMPTIED of pride and of all worldly thoughts. Let it be God's glory and not our own that we seek, and when we get to that point, how speedily the Lord will bless us for good." In another passage this same blessed man of God says: "I believe firmly that the moment our hearts are EMPTIED of pride and selfishness and ambition and self-seeking and everything that is contrary to God's law, the Holy Ghost will come and fill every corner of our hearts; but if we are full of pride and conceit and ambition and self-seeking and pleasure and the world, there is no room for the Spirit of God; and I believe many a man is praying to God to fill him when he is full already with something else. Before we pray that God will fill us, I believe we ought to pray Him to EMPTY US" ("Secret Power," pp. 31 and 43). In the same vein B. Fay Mills once said: "The great condition of power is to be emptied of self and to be filled with God; to renounce self and appropriate God; to be dead unto self but to be alive unto God by the power of the Holy Ghost" ("Power from on High," p. 25). This, dear reader, is why, if you wish the Holy Spirit to come with power, your will must crown Jesus Lord of all, and your all must be laid upon His altar.

7. But after you have done all I have suggested, you may still miss the blessing unless you take one more step. Five times the holy Word tells us that we receive the sanctifying blessing by FAITH. "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through FAITH" (Galatians 3:14). Just as once, when a sinner, you apprehended your atoning Savior by faith for pardon, so now receive the Holy Spirit by faith as your Sanctifier for sanctification. By simple faith "reckon yourself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God," and God will make the reckoning good (Romans 6:11)

You could not believe until you had taken the first six steps I have described. But if you have really taken them, they have brought you to believing ground. It is now possible for you to believe the Word of the holy God that, as you do your part, God does His part. Believe, then, with all your heart, and according to your faith it shall be done unto you. “Reckon” by faith “that you are dead indeed unto sin”; God will slay the “old man” within you, and make you “dead unto sin.” Believe that you are now and henceforth “alive to holiness and God,” and He will make you so. The very simplicity of it stumbles and staggers people who are seeking the blessing. It is as it was in conversion. Once it was difficult for you to realize that upon the conditions of repentance and faith Christ would come and save your soul. Now you empty out of your heart everything for which you are directly responsible, and make an assignment of your heart to Jesus, begging Him to come in and take absolute and eternal possession, and believe for it. Stand right there at the door of the emptied heart, and look up with the expectant look of faith for your descending Lord. Just as surely as Jesus came to believers in days of old, “giving them the Holy Ghost, purifying their hearts by faith,” so He will cleanse yours. You will find that the Spirit coming in will do the last bit of cleansing that you could never do. “We cleanse the life and He cleanses the soul.” He will put out the “old man” carnality, that “root of bitterness” that is ever springing up to trouble you; that secret source of all backsliding; that “law in your members” forever warring against your redeemed soul. Then you will be a sanctified temple of the Holy Ghost. Having done all else, simply BELIEVE, and there rest in calm assurance that the work is done. God may be pleased to have you wait a little for the witness of the Spirit. But believe, and wait and expect. If occasion offers, dare to confess to God and angels and men and devils that you have taken Jesus as an “uttermost” Savior, and that you are “cleansed by the blood.” Jesus will not disappoint you. He will send the Spirit. The Spirit will come. Your purified heart will find it all blessedly, gloriously true.

3. This blessing may be increased beyond the degree of sanctification by repeated pourings out of the Holy Ghost, until the soul is filled and overwhelmed with the blessing. In John 20:22 we read that after Jesus rose from the dead He appeared to His disciples and breathed on them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Beyond doubt they received a touch of the

blessing then. But for some reason the full blessing could not be given until Jesus had ascended to the Father. In Acts 2:4 we read that at Pentecost “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” In Acts 4:31 we read that when these same disciples had prayed, “the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.” Thus within the space of a few months at the most they received the Holy Spirit three times. It would seem as if they had either lost part of the blessed fullness, or else their capacity for blessing had increased, and God had filled them again. God does not, apparently, deal in the same way with all souls. But the blessed truth seems to be manifested that “God giveth not the Spirit by measure” unto those who open their whole beings to receive and use all He gives them.

It is a very great thing to be converted and regenerated, and become “a new man in Christ Jesus.” It is a very much greater blessing to receive the Holy Spirit in sanctifying power. But it is a much greater blessing still to receive the “fullness of the blessing,” to “be filled with the Spirit,” to “be filled with all the fullness of God.” To quote Godbey again: “This indicates a state of grace infinitely beyond entire sanctification.” Or John Fletcher again: “It is a small matter for me to be emptied of all sin (i. e., sanctified wholly), but a great thing for me to be filled with all the fullness of God.” Do not accept for a moment the popular heresy that sanctification is the ultimatum of all progress or Christian attainment. That is what John Wesley meant when he said the experience of entire sanctification may consist with very little spiritual power. Godbey adds: “Hence you need not be discouraged as to your sanctification because of this deficiency, but seek it from the Lord as a subsequent gift” (“Spiritual Gifts,” p. 36). But, oh, when one is FILLED, FLOODED with the Holy Spirit, till, as Moody did, one must exclaim, “Lord, stay Thy hand; I can endure no more and live,” then the heart is equipped for service. It is endued with “power from on high,” and God is wonderfully glorified in the life. I am persuaded that many sanctified Christians who are sweet and beautiful and pure in heart need to seek the added and repeated fillings with the Holy Ghost, till God shall make them wondrously useful. For,

IV. This mighty filling of the Spirit is given to equip us for mighty service. As Arthur has said, in his “Tongue of Fire”: “It was a new religion, and a poverty-stricken one, which the little band of disciples had to propagate. It was without a history, without a priesthood, without a college and without a patron. It had no presses, it had no literature, it had none of our modern means of influencing masses of men. It was cast solely on the one instrument of the tongue, and in that respect it was destitute of the wisdom of the Greek and of the skill of the scribe. It was destitute of prestige; it was contemptible in numbers; it was rustic in manners and thwarted by circumstances. With only its two sacraments and its tongue of fire, on it went, and on, overturning its enemies and advancing the name of the Lord.” Says Dr. Godbey: “On the day of Pentecost all the disciples received double tongues of fire: one to preach hell-fire to convict the wicked, and the other to preach heavenly-fire to sanctify the righteous. Hence the gospel preacher has but two subjects, i. e., hell for the wicked and holiness for the Christian, and is bound to have a tongue of fire to preach either of these gospels. The baptism with the Holy Ghost splits the tongue, and sets both prongs of it on fire. Therefore our Savior made sanctification the basis of the gospel ministry, and interdicted His apostles the privilege of going forth under the commission until they had received a fiery baptism. He knew they never could preach this wonderful double salvation till they received double tongues of fire.”

It is this divine power accompanying common human speech, turning it into a tongue of flame, that Christians need. Without it they can not successfully plead the cause of Jesus.

Christian workers and Christian churches need power — spiritual POWER; and all POWER belongs to God. “It is only as we have power from on high that we have power at all.” “The gospel ... is the power [dunamis] of God” (Romans 1:16). “Ye shall receive POWER [dunamin] when the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” From this old Greek word for power we have derived our modern word “dynamite,” the name of the awful newly-invented explosive, whose mighty force nothing can resist. This is what the worldly, weak and languishing church of today needs a fresh endowment of heavenly power, spiritual DYNAMITE. Says Godbey: “It takes the dynamite of conviction to burst up the strong heart

of the sinner. All sin is Satan's rock. It is so hard that nothing but God's dynamite can blow it out of the human heart." When God lavishes this spiritual dynamite upon a man, he is fitted for service, and becomes mighty for God. Jonathan Edwards had it that day that he preached that sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," and sinners were so moved that they cried for mercy, and hung on to their seats to keep from slipping into hell. Calvin Worcester had it. Dr. Bangs writes of him: "Such was the unction of his spirit and the bold, resistless power of his appeals to the wicked, that few of them could stand before him. They would rush out of the house or fall to the floor under his word. It is recorded of this holy man that when so far reduced as not to be able to speak above a whisper, his whispered utterances conveyed by another to the assembly would thrill them like a trumpet, and fall with such power on the hearers that stout-hearted men were smitten down to the floor; and his very aspect is said to have so shone in the divine glory that it struck conviction to the hearts of many who beheld him. At one time, when he was preaching, a man in the front gallery commenced swearing profanely to disturb the meeting. The preacher paid no attention till in the midst of the sermon, when, feeling strong in faith, he suddenly stopped, fixed his piercing eyes on the profane man, then stamping his foot and pointing his finger at him, cried out, with great energy, My God, smite him!' He instantly fell, as if shot through the heart with a bullet. At this such a divine afflatus came upon the congregation that sinners were crying to God for mercy in every direction, while saints burst forth in praises to His name."

Dr. Akers received this spiritual dynamite. "Immediately," says he, "as I believed for it, I was filled with such a sense of Christ's fullness and grace as overpowered me, and, unable to speak or stand, I sat down. I felt that the power working in me was able to raise all the dead from Adam to the last man that dies, and said to myself, 'This is the power of Christ's resurrection.' The congregation was affected at the same time in a similar manner. Believers wept and shouted for joy, while the impenitent trembled and fell to the floor, crying for mercy. At last I got to my room and lay down, unable to sit up, overwhelmed with a sense of the infinite grace and glory of God. In some ineffable way there came to me a consciousness of the presence of the triune God — Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost — a view of the Holy Trinity as related to human redemption and my own need, which filled me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But mortal man could not long endure such visitations of the living God, and at length I asked Him to stay His hand, and let me live to declare His glory. Under my first sermon after this forty persons were awakened, and most of them were soon converted; and under almost every sermon I preached for years similar results appeared. Nearly half a century full of changes has passed since then, but the power of that baptism is with me still, and I trust will abide with me for ever” (“Prevailing Prayer,” p. 441). This spiritual dynamite was given to Finney, with oft-repeated bestowals of the gift, until he became a very wonder of God. He tells us that at times, when he was preaching, people fell from their seats as fast as he could have knocked them off with a club. With this power upon him, he enters a cotton mill, his face radiant, no doubt, with celestial fire. Operatives look upon him and begin to tremble, till they can not tie the threads with their fingers. They are confused, then appalled, and sit down and weep. A solemn awe settles upon them, as if the angel of God was summoning them to judgment, so mightily are they convicted of sin by the power of the Holy Ghost. The proprietor of the mill, an ungodly man, does not escape that heavenly influence, and says to the superintendent: “Stop the mill; it is more important that our souls shall be saved than that this factory should run”; and all this time the mighty man of God has not spoken a word. A religious meeting is held right there and then, and hundreds cry for mercy and rush into the kingdom. At another time, when for days Christians were discouraged, and sinners were enraged and stubborn and would not repent, Finney and a Baptist deacon went into a grove together, and spent the whole afternoon in prayer. Just at evening God gave assurance of victory. Mr. Finney says: “The Spirit of God came upon me with such power in preaching that night that it was like opening a battery upon them. Conviction spread over the congregation. Many could not hold up their heads. When the service closed one was lying speechless on the floor”; and that night he was sent for from many quarters to visit people in awful distress of mind, and great numbers were saved.

It was this heavenly dynamite that took possession of a dull student in Andover sixty years ago. He was so dull that he could not take the studies in eight years that his schoolmates took in four years. “Yet,” said one of

them, who afterwards became a college president, “that dull student was used to do more for God than all the theological students, and all the professors, and all the ministers, and all the church people in all the town of Andover, Mass.” With a six-months’ license, he went to preach in a township where there was but one Christian, and in six months he died; but before his death he saw “every man, woman and child in the township but one converted.”

It was this divine might that enabled the black Negro, Samuel Morris, to lead seventeen men to Christ the first day after he landed in New York City from Africa. It was this that enabled Dehlia, a poor fallen woman of New York City, after her conversion and baptism with the Holy Ghost, to lead, in ten months, one hundred and fifty of her fallen companions in sin to Jesus. It was this that enabled a servant girl in Australia to start a revival which brought a similar anointing to a pastor and his church, and led to the conversion of seven hundred souls. It was this that has made dear black Amanda Smith a benediction to two continents, and started Jennie Smith out as a most successful railroad evangelist, and made Annie Fothergill an evangelist in England. It was this that enabled Robinson Watson, a lay evangelist of England, to secure ten thousand trophies of grace in four years, and helped James Caughey to see twenty-one thousand six hundred sinners repenting, and ten thousand Christians at the altar, claiming a sanctifying Savior, in six years. It was this that gave to Phoebe Palmer her twenty-five thousand souls, and to Maggie Van Cott her seventy-five thousand, and to A. B. Earle his one hundred and fifty-seven thousand, and made Andrew Murray, and F. B. Meyer, and Torrey, and Chapman, and Mills, and Moody so wondrously used of God. It is this that has made Smith, and Pickett, and Thompson, and Carradine, and Godbey, and others in the South, such heroes of faith and power, and enabled Bishop Taylor and General Booth and his wife Catherine to belt the world with gospel radiance. It was this that caused Dr. Charles Pitman to be an apostolic camp-meeting preacher, the effect of whose preaching was felt in three worlds. During his travels he stopped at a camp-meeting in an eastern state, and said to the presiding elder in charge: “Brother, I have a message from God to deliver to this people, and I can not get away from it; and if you will let me preach this afternoon, as I must leave tomorrow, I will deliver it in the name of God.” As the service

began fierce lightnings flashed across the sky and the loud thunders rolled up into mid-heaven. Dr. Pitman knelt before the God of the universe with whom he was acquainted, and in whom he believed, and prayed with holy boldness: "O Lord God Almighty, Thou who hast sent me to preach to this people, hold back these threatening clouds for one hour, while we go on with this service in Thy name, and let us not be disturbed by the impending storm, but let Thy presence descend upon both preacher and people, and let great good be accomplished this day in the salvation of souls." His auditors were amazed, and held their watches while he preached just an hour with heavenly pathos and Holy Ghost anointing. "Now," said he, "go to your tents, and fall before God." Again the pent-up lightnings flashed and the thunders roared; the rain descended almost in a deluge. The people stood aghast and trembled. Sinners fell to the earth under the power of the convicting Spirit, and "over five hundred souls were converted." Glory to God! He has a heavenly dynamite to put into the life and face and words of any one who is willing to surrender, and die to self, that he may be used of God.

5. It is the imperative duty of the church to pray for it. Wigel well says: "All should tarry for this Holy Spirit power. I have no doubt that it would be infinitely better for the world if professors would suspend all their efforts in every other direction till, with strong crying and tears, they shall have waited on the Lord and received this unction. How few stalwart souls there are in the church — moral giants, who can put their arms under a whole community and lift it Godward! The land might be full of these giants. How the hearts broke and the stubborn wills surrendered under the all-powerful testimony of Peter, **RACKED BY A CHURCH ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST!** The power of Satan over the sinner is alarming. The Holy Spirit alone can break this influence. How easy to lead a sinner to Christ when this power of Satan is smitten! 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.' If we would do more pleading with God we would not have to do so much pleading with men. It is not so much great preaching that we need as great praying! It is power, power, **POWER** from on high, that is the need of the church today." Yes; the preacher "**BACKED BY A CHURCH ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST.**" I desire to impress this upon every layman who may ever read these lines. It is the devil's trick to lead the church to throw all

responsibility for the possession of this spiritual dynamite and success in spiritual work upon the minister, the membership indulging themselves in worldliness and unspirituality. God can not lavish His best gifts upon such a church. It was Peter and the whole church filled with the Holy Ghost that harvested the three thousand souls, not Peter facing the mob with a breaking heart, while half the church were at a big dance and the other half were attending a progressive euchre party! God pity the forsaken, heart-aching modern preachers!

Dr. Wilbur Chapman once told us that, when he went to Philadelphia to be pastor of Wannamaker's church, after his first sermon an old man met him in front of the pulpit, and said: "You are pretty young to be pastor of this great church. We have always had older pastors. I am afraid you won't succeed. But you preach the gospel, and I am going to help you all I can." "I looked at him," said Dr. Chapman, "and said to myself, 'Here is a crank.'" But the old man continued: "I am going to pray for you, that you may have the Holy Spirit power upon you, and two others have covenanted to join with me." Said the Doctor: "I did not feel so bad when I learned that he was going to pray for me. The three became ten, the ten became twenty, and the twenty became fifty, and the fifty became two hundred, who met before every service to pray that the Holy Spirit might come upon me. In another room the eighteen elders knelt so close around me to pray for me that I could put out my hands and touch them on all sides. I always went into my pulpit feeling that I would have the anointing in answer to the prayers of the two hundred and eighteen men. It was easy to preach, a very joy. Anybody could preach with such conditions. And what was the result? We received eleven hundred into our church by conversion in three years, and six hundred of them were men. It was the fruit of the Holy Spirit in answer to the prayers of those men. I do not see how the average pastor, under average circumstances, preaches at all." O disciples of Christ, remember you have something else to do besides going to church as curious, idle spectators, to be amused and entertained, or even instructed. It is your business to pray mightily that the Holy Ghost will clothe your minister with power, and make his words like dynamite to the flinty hearts of sinners.

“If we would obtain this power we must feel deep down in our hearts that nothing can supply its place. Here lies the difficulty of the church in multitudes of instances. She leans upon other things to do the very work which this power was sent into this world to perform. In some cases she will lean upon the minister, his talent, his eloquence, his learning or his influence. When the church has secured the man of her choice, she sits down to rest. She expects he will build her up. What can a minister do unless he has this power to work with him? If he is as eloquent as Gabriel, not a soul will be saved without this power. The church must feel this, and be on her face, and plead with God for the Holy Ghost to work in him and by him. If the church substitutes the preaching and talent of the minister, or leans upon them instead of this power, God will withhold this blessing, and let the church try it. Now, says God, lean upon and glorify the minister if you will, but the people will go to hell, and I will hold you accountable. Should He give this power to such a church, they would give all the glory to the minister. God says: ‘My glory I will not give to another.’

“Again, the church can lean on a series of meetings to save men. But what can a series of meetings do without this divine power? You may have them three hundred and sixty-five days in every year, and not a soul be saved, unless those meetings lead you to lean upon and look to this power for the salvation of men. Again, the church may lean upon a splendid edifice, a fine organ, and the best singing, thinking that this will draw the people and save them. But, notwithstanding the churches in our cities have been experimenting in this way for years, the wicked have walked straight by our splendid sanctuaries on the way to hell! It requires the power from heaven to fill our sanctuaries” (“Power from on High,” American Tract Society).

It was a church leaning hard on God in prayer for a week, and spending nearly two whole nights in prayer, that brought the Holy Spirit power upon their pastor, Livingstone, when he preached the sermon at Shotts that brought five hundred to Jesus. It was a similar praying of a church for Jonathan Edwards for a week that gave him the manifestation of power already referred to on the most memorable Sabbath of his life.

Finney himself says that it was the praying of “Father” Nash and Rev. Clary and other souls who were walking with God that clothed him with such power from on high that the stoutest sinners were broken down by his presence and his words. The Baptist evangelist, Earle, tells us: “An evangelist had just closed a four-weeks’ meeting, and said, The revival is at an end; we can go no further. I stopped in town to rest a day or two on the way to a meeting, and was asked to preach. The minute I got in I could see that the net was full of fish, but there was not power enough to pull it to shore. And I said: ‘Now, there is that double parlor, and we are going in there to spend the whole of this night in prayer, if Jesus does not answer sooner. You may rely upon it, He will answer when He has got something He can use. One after another we poured out our souls until half-past two in the morning, when Christ seemed to walk in among us, saying: ‘My children, I have got prayer that I can use, and you can put you heads on your pillow and go to sleep.’ I went home and slept soundly. That night God sent conviction like a chain-shot of lightning to the heart of Judge _____. He was a bold sinner — the leaning-post of all the sinners in the town — and he was converted. There was another prominent man in the place, and as soon as he heard the judge was converted, he came and cursed us all, and said: ‘Judge _____ has made a fool of himself.’ I said: ‘Let the man curse; he will pray pretty soon.’ The Spirit took away the leaning-post, and swept like a tornado. In three or four days all the prayers that were in the golden vials were used up. Fifty of us went to the vestry and prayed till past midnight, till Christ came and told us to go to rest. A third night two hundred of us prayed again to fill the golden vials, and the revival swept like a tornado, and one hundred and fifty men — hard, solid men — in that town were converted.”

Moody has lately said this of his work at Cambridge: “I don’t think the preaching had anything to do with it. Mr. Sankey and I had a pressing invitation to go to Cambridge when we were in England ten years ago, and I refused. I thought I had no call to go to universities. But when we were over there again, another call came, signed by a list of names six or eight feet long, and I said, ‘I will go.’ The first Sunday night we were in Cambridge the students tried to break the meeting up. I had preached to all classes of people — to the hoodlums of California — and never had that happen before. It looked very much as if they were going to snatch the

whole thing out of our hands. I don't think there were fifty students out of that roomful that heard the songs of Mr. Sankey, and right on through the whole meeting it was just the same. On Monday night the disturbance was just as bad, or worse. On Tuesday the outlook was darker than ever. But on that day a lady, a bed-ridden saint, who was very much interested in the work, sent around word to a few Christians to get together in a little upper-room, to plead with God for a change in those students. That turned the tide. It wasn't the preaching. They had heard better sermons from the best preachers of the Church of England. It was those Christians, in that upper-room, praying to God, that made the difference. And how they did pray! It seemed as if their prayers burst into heaven, and I said 'The victory is ours.' That night I preached. I don't think I had much power. When I asked, 'If any man in this audience wants to become a Christian, will you go into the inquiry-room?' — they had their gowns on; of course, they were known — I did not know there would be a man. But there was a hush over that audience, and fifty-two men sprang to their feet and went up into that gallery, and we had all the inquirers we could attend to. About one o'clock in the morning — I was getting pretty tired — a man came to me, saying: 'I wish you would come and talk to this man.' They were on their faces, crying to God for mercy. God had not only broken their wills, but their hearts were broken. It wasn't the preaching; it was pretty weak that night. I talked to the man, and the tears were running down his cheeks. But he found Christ that night. Some one said to me: 'Do you know who that was? That was the senior wrangler in Cambridge — the first in scholarship among three thousand students.' There he was on his knees, and the power of God came in answer to prayer. The next Sunday night there were two or three hundred inquirers — men of broken hearts, crying out for God. It isn't preaching we want; it is prayer. I would rather be able to pray like Daniel than to preach like Gabriel. "We don't want any more preachers in this country; — we have enough. What we want is to PRAY. Let us open up communication with heaven, and the blessing will come down."

When will the great body of believers learn this all-important lesson: to clothe their ministers with Spirit power — God's dynamite — by their prayers? Moody, in the face of that great body of cultured, jeering rebels against God, was no more than a chip on a turbulent torrent until the

bed-ridden saint and her friends in the upper chamber prayed down the heavenly power that broke their wicked hearts.

The only road to victory for the barren churches and ministers lies through the Pentecostal chamber. Even Finney, a man of rare intellectual gifts, though not college bred, and possessing transcendent gifts of oratory, and beyond compare the mightiest man I ever saw stand before an audience to preach, wrote: “No HUMAN ELOQUENCE CAN EVER CONVERT A SOUL! Unless the Spirit of God sets home and makes the truth of God effectual, all human eloquence and learning will be in vain. And it is a fact worthy of all attention and consideration, that with very little culture this endowment of power will make a Christian wise and efficient in bringing souls to Christ. It is very humiliating to human learning and pride, and always has been; nevertheless, it has been Christ’s method from the first to ‘choose the weak things of this world to confound the wise.’ This power is not a thing which people can gradually grow into by forming habits of persuasion and conversation. It is a gift — an anointing instantaneously received, and that may be enlarged or diminished as the possessor of it uses it more or less faithfully. Where this power exists, the more learning and eloquence the better. But it is painful to observe the constant tendency to substitute culture for this power, or human learning and eloquence in place of this divine endowment. I fear this tendency is increasing in the church. The churches are calling for men of great learning and eloquence instead of men who are deeply baptized with the Holy Ghost. The seminaries of learning are much at fault in this thing. They do not lay half stress enough upon the possession of this endowment as an essential qualification for usefulness in the world.” And so the seminaries of learning and the churches themselves are unwittingly conniving at their own shame, and bringing up a barren ministry to increase the desolations of Zion. O teachers of ministers! O people of God! lay stress upon the Divine anointing. Pray for it for yourselves. Above all, bring down the cloven tongues, the heavenly fire, the spiritual dynamite upon the ministry, or they will not be able to break the hard hearts of sinners, and they will go to hell, and you, in large measure, will be held accountable for it.

6. When we get the blessing of the Holy Spirit for sanctification and service, we must take care that we do not lose it. The blessed, sensitive Heavenly One can be carelessly grieved and driven from our hearts. There are men who have this Holy Spirit power upon them till they shine like the stars of heaven. Then they fall like Lucifer. God, make them a warning to us. “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

1. We must be CLEAN VESSELS, ever depending on Jesus for the perpetual cleansing of the blood. God can get along without gold vessels or silver vessels. He can use very common earthen vessels; but they must be clean. He gives the Holy Spirit “to them that obey him.” If we tolerate carelessness about God’s law, and get lax in conscience and once disobey, the Spirit is gone. “Christians, walk carefully,” as those utterly dedicated to God and set apart for holy uses.

2. Keep close to Jesus as possible. Peter fell because “he followed afar off.” Moody says: “God always chooses the vessel that is close at hand.” I have seen a minister that was a very giant in physical proportions. He gloried in his learning. He boasted of having three tons of books. Yet, they told me that, with a whole church to help him, he had not had a conversion for nearly two years. At the same time a Salvation Army lassie, three squares away, in a rickety old building, was preaching the gospel, and having conversions. She was living near enough to God to be used.

3. If God is pleased to make us unusually useful, we must keep humble. Moody says: “We will have to keep down in the dust. God won’t use a man that is conceited. The moment we lift our head, and think we are something, He lays us aside.” God help us to keep low in the dust at Jesus’ feet, and for whatever we are or do, give Him all the glory.

The whole Christian world has just been startled by the spiritual downfall of one who has been a very prince in Israel. It is almost needless to say the writer refers to B. Fay Mills. When he was an obscure minister, God’s Spirit came upon him, and gave him the power of a Samson to slay the Philistines of sin. Whether it was the money that poured in upon him, or the unbounded popularity that turned his head and caused him to lose his humility, we know not. But certain it is that, spiritually, he is a fallen man.

Somehow, somewhere he has lost connection with the blessed Holy Spirit, and all that made him the man of power and fame is gone. It is absolutely certain, for his own words prove it. No man speaks lightly of truth and of a Divine Savior, as he is doing, who is at the same time filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus; B. Fay Mills is degrading Him. B. Fay Mills suddenly finds himself in religious affinity with the Unitarians, a denomination that never had, and never can have, any spiritual power. Their fundamental teaching insults the Son of God and the Holy Ghost. They can faintly glimmer with an ethical culture derived from the abandoned faith of their fathers and from the purer religious faith around them; but that they should be radiant with spiritual power, while discrowning Jesus and grieving the Holy Spirit, is flatly impossible and unthinkable. When such a man as Mills has been comes to find himself in sweet harmony and fellowship with such thinkers, one can only say: "How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed!"

These words are being written in the pastor's study of a city church whose walls, but a few years ago, resounded for days to B. Fay Mills' voice. Then he thought himself privileged to be permitted to preach a divinely-inspired gospel of salvation, through faith in a Divine Savior, from present sin and from wrath to come. Now he tells us: "I would not dogmatize, either in affirmation or denial, concerning the Scriptures, the supernatural character and work of Jesus, or the mysteries of the world to come." Then he esteemed himself "an ambassador of Christ," pleading with sinful men "to be reconciled to God." Now he says: "We have outgrown the idea of man as once holy and now demoralized, and of the special revelation and peculiar devices of God to reconcile Himself to His own handiwork and His creation to Himself." Once he held up a Divine, atoning Savior as the only hope of fallen man; now he says: "I would emphasize the essential divinity of man", "but I would not dogmatize concerning what may be called the unique divinity or deity or pre-existence of Jesus." "I would not emphasize the necessity of a belief in the deity of Christ." Once he said: "The great condition of power is to be emptied of self and to be filled with God; to be dead unto self but to be alive unto God by the power of the Holy Ghost." Now, when asked before a ministers' meeting about the secret of his success as an evangelist, he replies: "So far as the truths have been presented, I think it is due to

three things — to their simplicity, to their gentleness, and to the fact that I always put the snapper in the right place.” The Holy Spirit power was not mentioned. It was simplicity, gentleness and Mills’ skill in adjusting a WHIP-SNAPPER PERORATION! O Christ, have mercy on a man so insulting to his God, and so fallen! May we all take warning.

CHAPTER 3

GRIEVE NOT THE SPIRIT

Genesis 6:3:

“My Spirit shall not always strive with man.”

1 Thessalonians 5:19:

“Quench not the Spirit.”

Ephesians 4:30:

“Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are united in the great work of redemption. The Father seems to be revealed as the source, who “so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son.” In the fullness of time Jesus came, to make atonement. He then ascended to the right hand of the Father, there to rule till all is brought into subjection to Himself. He promised when he went to the Father to send the Holy Spirit to take His place and continue His work. (See John, chapters 14 to 16)

We are now living in the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. He is revealed to us as the Executive of the Triune God — the exclusive Divine Force that now comes directly and actually into contact with the human spirit, in order to effect its enlightenment, conviction, conversion, regeneration, and sanctification. He alone does this work. It is not the blood, nor the truth, nor faith that finally and actually cleanses and restores the image of God, but the Holy Ghost. As Dr. Asbury Lowrey has written: “The Holy Ghost resolves all the forces and virtues of redemption into experience. The Father sanctifies, but sanctifies through the Spirit; the Son sanctifies through the Spirit; the truth sanctifies, but also sanctifies through the Spirit; the blood sanctifies, but it sanctifies through the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the medium (Agent) through whom all the efficacies of

redemption reach the heart. The Spirit, like a minister at court, is the channel through which all saving power comes to the soul. The enduement of power from on high is the endowment of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Ghost that gives efficiency and productiveness to every agency of salvation.”

I am writing on the work of the Holy Spirit for and in every heart, and how the Spirit may be grieved and the work stopped. I am writing, then, directly to every one who may ever read these lines, be he sinner, believer or saint. If you are now far from God, and are ever brought to Him, it will be by the Holy Spirit. If you are now a believer, and ever become sanctified, and persevere unto the end, it will be by the aid of the same blessed Spirit. So, whoever you are, or whatever you be, I WRITE TO YOU.

I. Consider the nature of the Spirit’s work in the heart.

1. He sometimes specially strives with men to persuade them to abandon sin, or to take some advance step in the Christian life.
2. The means He uses is the TRUTH. The Holy Spirit operates as a Guide, a Teacher, a Friend. His strivings are persuasive strivings. Just as you might go to a neighbor and urge upon him some duty, plying him with all arguments and motives and persuasions, so the blessed Spirit of God comes to us, throwing a divine light upon some duty hitherto only dimly perceived and felt. He explains its bearing upon us and others; He debates with the mind, reasons to convince the judgment, then drives home on the conscience, and all that He may inspire us to right action. Several times Jesus calls the Holy Spirit “the Spirit of truth” (John 15:26; 16:13), because truth is the instrumentality which He uses to bring men into harmony with God. He uses a word, a sermon, a providence, a prayer to arrest the attention of the soul and then pours in a flood of truth to move the will and change the life. A religious tract was kindly handed to a young man. He saw what it was, and indignantly flung it to the winds. God caused a corner of a leaf with the one word ETERNITY on it to fall upon his coat-sleeve and remain long enough for his eye to read it; then the Spirit sent the mighty thought of eternity into his soul, for which he was

unprepared. It drove him to his knees and to Jesus. Thus the Spirit works. The result aimed at is voluntary obedience to truth and to God.

3. We learn from these passages of Scripture that God, having once created man to be like Himself — a voluntary free-agent, a moral sovereign — never forces him, never overwhelms him by mere power. He never robs man of his self-control. If God should force man or angel to an act against his will, that moment He would destroy all accountability for the act, and He would degrade that moral being from his free-agency. Dr. Parker, of London, has truly said: “Our experience and the teaching of Scripture, and the condition of free moral-agency, unite in affirming that so long as man is man he must have the power of resisting God; and so long as God is God He must wait until the heart’s door is opened from the inside. Even Omnipotence can not force a human heart.” In the same vein says Dr. Lyman Abbott: “No man can be saved against his will, because salvation is conformity of the free-will to the eternal and immutable law of God. Salvation and compulsion are contradictory terms. Salvation can only be accomplished by persuasion.” President Fairchild well says: “God can accomplish whatever is an object of power. But works which involve an absurdity or self-contradiction are, of course, excluded; they do not belong to Omnipotence. For example, to determine that two and two shall be five instead of four, or that there should be a shorter distance between two points than a straight line, is not predicable of Omnipotence, and does not belong to God. There are also moral absurdities, not quite so obvious but just as real. For example, that God should compel a wicked man to become virtuous, or should by His power turn the hearts of men from sin to holiness, are such absurdities. Holiness and virtue are the free, voluntary choice of men, and can not be enforced by power.” These writers all state the truth. The strivings of the Holy Spirit are persuasive only. The sinner is forever free to reject God, and may do it in spite of all that God can properly and wisely do for his salvation. If any are foolishly waiting for some overwhelming, irresistible influence to force them to become Christians, or to become holy, they are waiting for something that will never come to them.

4. It logically follows, therefore, as all experience and Scriptures teach, that it is possible to resist all the influences God ever exerts to bless the soul.

He entreats us: “Quench not the Spirit,” “grieve not the Spirit,” for “my Spirit shall not always strive with man.” We have the fearfully solemn power to do it, to brace ourselves in successful resistance to every redeeming influence of the Spirit of God. Dr. Abbott says: “The most awful fact in human life is the fact that man can resist all the sympathetic pleadings and persuasions of God; can choose death rather than life, and destroy himself in spite of his Father’s love.” O solemn, awful thought! Dear reader, in all the range of your eternal years nothing will ever come to you so supremely important as the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. He comes to enlighten, to guide, to regenerate and to sanctify. Don’t resist Him. He who deliberately and persistently and finally does it is forever lost.

II. The serious question now arises: How is the Holy Spirit resisted and grieved? We answer —

1. He is grieved by resisting and refusing to put in practice THE TRUTH. We have already called attention to the fact that the truth is the means the Spirit uses in instructing the mind and reaching the conscience and changing the life. To this end God, the Spirit, draws near to the soul, and makes some truth as clear as sunlight. A hitherto neglected, and perhaps unperceived, duty now faces the man. It matters not what truth and what duty it may be. It may be the duty to repent of sin, or to submit to the will of God, or to accept the new birth by faith in Jesus; to make some restitution and right some wrong, or to make public confession of Christ, or to abandon some evil habit, or to consecrate the whole being and accept sanctification from the Holy Ghost. When this new truth comes, it is the voice of God to the heart. Everything now depends on how it is received. If the soul is vexed and harassed and irritated, and struggles against the unwelcome revelation, and persists in it, the grieved Spirit will, in time, leave the willful soul to its own chosen darkness. So all truth may be resisted and the Spirit quenched forever.

2. The Spirit is grieved by courting infidelity and defending errors and false positions in morals. The abuse of the intellect has a subtle attraction for some minds. They delight to be on the contrary side, and to argue against “whatsoever things are lovely and of good report,” and defend everything

that is off-shade in thinking and morals and religion. Of choice, they read infidel books rather than the books written by reverent and devout minds. Start any question or subject, and they will at once, by their speech, show their hostility to truth and Christian morality and their friendliness to error and wrong. They will argue against the sacredness of the Sabbath, and the divine inspiration of Scriptures, and the divinity of Christ, and everything that looks like practical Christian living will be sneered at as Puritanical, while everything loose in thinking and lax in morals is persistently advocated and defended. The writer had a college classmate and two seminary classmates who swung themselves out into infidelity by this very mental process. Two years ago a man in Massachusetts was converted in one of my meetings, who stood up and testified that thirty years before he read an infidel life of Christ, which had made him an unbeliever, and cost him thirty years of sin and sorrow and shame. Six months ago a young man knelt at the altar to come back to Christ. He afterward told the writer that he lost his religion by reading a single book of Robert Ingersoll. He said: "The Holy Spirit warned me at the time not to read it, but I disobeyed, and it cost me years of backsliding."

God has given an awful warning on this subject: "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved; and for this cause God sendeth them a working of error that they should believe a lie, that they might be judged who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." God gave us our minds to LEARN TRUTH, and not to court and defend error, and he who does the latter insults the illuminating Spirit of God.

3. Men grieve the Holy Spirit by procrastinating when convicted of sin, and by refusing to repent and give their hearts to God. When God comes robed in mercy and offering salvation to the guilty sinner, and pleading for his heart, it is the critical hour of soul destiny. Then eternal life hangs trembling in the balance. I believe that God, having created us moral beings with sin and temptation in us and around us, is under a solemn obligation to strive with us by special illumination and effort to win our souls at least once; but I do not see that He is obliged to strive with us more than once. As a matter of fact, I do not believe any man ever lived on the globe with whom that ever-blessed God did not strive at least once, giving a full and fair opportunity for salvation, by that heavenly influence, that Spirit-light

“which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” No soul will ever dare to meet God in judgment and say he did not have a chance for salvation. But such an hour of heavenly help, of blessed opportunity, need not, may not, come but once. Such an hour came to Felix when God sent Paul all the way from Jerusalem to Cesarea to reason with him of “righteousness, temperance and a judgment to come,” and the striving Spirit drove home the message till Felix trembled. It was his one fair, full chance for eternal life, and he abused it. When, under the deceitful plea of waiting for “a convenient season,” he ordered Paul back to the guard-room, the Spirit of God went with him, and Felix’s day of grace was over. He had frequent interviews with Paul afterward, but the insulted, grieved, fatally-resisted Spirit of God strove no more. Thus multitudes are quenching, for the last time, the Spirit of God. They may live on afterward, but, once deserted by the Spirit, they are already as truly lost as if finally shut up in the realms of despair. Listen to this awful echo of this solemn truth from Canon Farrar: “The Spirit of God hath striven with him and striven in vain. The Holy Light is but a beam shining quietly in the darkness, easily strangled in the willful midnight; the pleading voice is but a low whisper amid the silence, easily drowned in the tempest of the passions. It is one last call to repentance, and the presumptuous sinner carelessly and wilfully rejects it; and after that, the call comes no more again forever, and the things that belonged to his peace are hid forever from his eyes. Life continues, but it is really death; and on the dead soul, in the living body, the gates of the eternal tomb have closed.”

4. We grieve the Holy Spirit by wilfully, deliberately violating conscience. This is a truth of the utmost importance to Christians. All growth in grace and soul-development is in it. The Holy Spirit has vastly more to do with conscience than we suppose. Joseph Cook says: “Conscience is the voice of God in the soul.” It is not difficult to make the matter plain by illustrations. A person goes on for years in a course of conduct or in the practice of some habit, never questioning its propriety. All at once his attention is arrested; he sees his conduct in a new light. Its enormity becomes apparent, and the guilt of his past life in connection with it. Everything stands out before the mind and aroused conscience as clear as the noonday, and a silent appeal is made to the soul by an unseen person to alter the life. Now, whence came all this flood of new light? Who was it

that thus arrested the attention and enlightened the mind, and convinced the judgment and appealed to the heart? It was the Holy Spirit. That is the way He takes to correct the evils of men and bring them to godliness. That is His way to lift the churches and the nations heavenward. A century ago the pastor of the First Congregational Church in Hartford, Conn., was partner in a distillery, and ministers and deacons and men and women universally drank intoxicants, with scarcely a thought of the immorality of their conduct. Why isn't it so universal now? Because the Spirit of God has come to one, and another, and another, pointing out the inconsistency of this in Christians. The Christian conscience has been so aroused and illuminated that millions have become total abstainers. Something like a century and a quarter ago a bright young Congregational minister in New England bought a hogshead of rum, and sent it by the captain of a slave vessel to Africa, stipulating that in return for it he should bring him a Negro from Africa to be his slave. Such an infamous transaction as that brought no reflection on that minister's piety, and he was made president of Vale College! But should a minister be guilty of such a deed today he would be esteemed no more a Christian than a Modoc savage. Why this change of opinion about the propriety of exchanging New England rum for human flesh and blood? Oh, the Spirit of God has been opening the eyes of Christian men and women to perceive the wickedness of such gross conduct, and inspiring them to practice temperance and righteousness. So God's Spirit is abroad among men, plying hearts everywhere with light and truth, that His people may be "holy and without blemish before him." When the blessed Spirit thus comes to any man, it is the day of his visitation. If he is disobedient to that heavenly vision, it may never again return, because the grieved Spirit leaves the soul to his willful darkness and the practice of the sin he loves.

This explains the fall of many people who have long been followers of Christ. The Spirit of God urged them to rise to some higher plane of Christian living, and they consciously refused, and by so doing they forfeited their justification and lost religion altogether. The Spirit of God would no longer keep companionship with their disobedient souls. This, too, is the way young Christians fall. They run well for a time. They are seen in the house of prayer, and their voice is heard witnessing for Jesus. But they suddenly drop away. Why? They love play naturally, and the

world and Satan tempt them to indulge in some amusement that the Holy Spirit condemns. They yield, and fall into the snare, and the guiding Spirit no longer goes with them.

This leads me to discuss briefly three amusements, indulgence in which on the part of Christians peculiarly grieves the Spirit, and has caused countless thousands to fatally fall away from Christ.

- (1) The theater. Spurgeon said of it: "It must be a strange school for virtue that attracts the harlot and the debauchee. It is no place for a Christian, for it is best appreciated by the irreligious and the worldly. If our church members fall into the habit of frequenting the theater, they will lose all relish for the ways of God. Theater-going, if it become general, will soon prove the death of piety." Why did that great man of God, with his church of seven thousand members under his eye and the great city of London for a field of observation, make such a charge? The following are among the manifest reasons to any Spirit-filled soul:
 - (a) The theater introduces to the public, as its entertainers, many people of loose morals and disreputable character. There are exceptions; but this is so apt to be the rule that the great McCready, after retiring from the stage, said: "None of my children, with my consent, under any pretense, shall ever enter the theater, nor shall they have any visiting connection with play-actors or actresses." The late famous tragedian, Edwin Booth, wrote, in the *Christian Union*, that he would never let his daughter see a play till he himself had first gone to see if it was decent. He married the leading actress of his company, after which she never performed again, "because," Mr. Booth said, "the stage is no fit place for woman." The Frenchman, Dumas, said: "The very place is immoral."
 - (b) The theater usually exalts vice and holds up virtue and piety to ridicule. The Christian is pictured as a hypocritical sneak, and the villain or seducer is made the hero. John B. Gough, once an actor before his conversion, said: "I have found that

in the theater piety and religion and virtue are almost always held up to ridicule. The praying Christian is represented as an impudent, mean fellow, whereas a reckless seducer is presented as a gentleman with every noble quality under the sun.”

- (c) The theater panders to all that is low and base in human nature. The great theatrical manager, McVicker, said: “The Shakespearean dramas never paid and never will pay.” Edwin Booth, with all his prestige and magnetism, even though supported by all the genius of Barrett and Bangs, sunk a fortune in New York City, in the early seventies, with the best of Shakespearean plays, while two fortunes were made at the same time, in the same city, by the unspeakably vile Black Crook. Dr. Cuyler says: “The experiment once made in Boston of so managing a theater as to exclude every indelicacy from the stage, and every notoriously improper person from the audience, ended in a pecuniary failure.”
- (d) The theater degrades the women before the footlights, and debauches the young men and maidens in the audience. It is a notorious fact that the spectacular exhibitions of females in scant attire and the lewd speech appropriate to such scenes are the chief attractions of the modern play — the more nudity the better. Keep off the stage everything indecent and impure, and there is not a theater in America that could keep open its doors. “The greatest authority on theatrical management,” says Rev. G. Douglas, D. D., “affirms that the exclusion of sexual passion from the stage would in six months necessitate the closing of every theater on the continent.” The great actor, Edward Keene, confessed that “the influence of the theater was to destroy the sensibilities and to harden the heart.” Mr. A. M. Palmer, an authority on this subject, says: “The bulk of the performances on the stage is degrading and pernicious. The managers strive to come just as near the line as possible without flagrantly violating the laws against decency. It is not so much a

question whether people can play or sing as how little they will consent to wear.” Mr. Daniel E. Bandmann, after twenty-nine years on the stages of all countries, says: “The Hindu would turn away with disgust from the exhibitions which are sought after and applauded on the stage of this country. Our shop windows are full of, and the walls covered with, show-cards and posters which should be a disgrace to an enlightened country, and an insult to the eye of a cultured community.” Yet Christian people rush to theaters to witness these sensuous and indecent spectacles! The young man and young maiden who, in their homes, have been shielded from every coarse and indecent suggestion, here gaze upon and listen to that which at first makes their cheeks burn with shame. “The coarse jest, the innuendoes against virtue and morality, lust but thinly veiled, and vice in its most seductive forms, make their assault upon eye and ear, while passion lays its siege at the citadel of the heart.” These things once seen and heard and felt blister themselves into the memory, and innocence is lost forever. Under the infernal spell many a soul reels and falls, and is engulfed in eternal ruin.

Furthermore, the excitements of the theater unfit for the normal enjoyments and exercises of the mind and heart. The church members who frequent it lose all relish for the closet and the Bible. The prayer-meeting becomes tame and distasteful. They who can stay till eleven o’clock at night at the theater, clamor for much music and short prayers and sermonettes in the churches, simply because all relish for purely spiritual things has been destroyed by this unhallowed dissipation. The theater, whenever permitted, desecrates the Sabbath, and is in perpetual and malignant opposition to the church and kingdom of Jesus Christ. Wherever it thrives the church declines and religion decays. No wonder that attendance upon the theater by the people of God grieves His Spirit, and brings them into coldness of heart and backsliding, which often ends in the loss of the soul!

- (2) Consider card-playing. Innocent people, who have not thought deeply and observed widely, ask what possible harm can there be in playing cards in the home or social circle? Such a question deserves an honest and candid answer. The evil lies in the tendencies and attendant perils associated with it. Some people have nothing in their mental make-up to which such games appeal. They are utterly indifferent to their fascinations. With them it is only a question of moral influence and a waste of time. But for another type of mind card-playing has a strange fascination, which easily grows into a perfect mania. It becomes so absorbing that for such people, whether at home or on the cars or the steamboat, or in the hotel or in the social gathering, the inevitable cards must be produced. All higher and nobler and more rational forms of social entertainment are crowded out that this dwarfing, driveling game may be enthroned. Sooner or later, the victim of this stupid infatuation craves something more than mere amusement. This, like every other abnormal and unhealthful indulgence, has lost its power to satisfy, and, for the sake of added excitement, the game is played for stakes. Now the once innocent card-player is on the gambler's incline. By a natural evolution the "innocent" home card-party degenerates into the fashionable "progressive euchre" party, which is only polite gambling. Sam Jones well says it is "progressing hellward a mile a minute"; for the male victim of it easily progresses into the gambler's hell.

Mr. John Philip Quinn kept a gambling saloon in Chicago for twenty-five years. A few years ago he was converted, and at once started out to lecture and warn the people against the evils of card-playing. So wholesome and effective was his work that Chauncey Depew sent him over the New York Central in his private car in recognition of his service to railroad men. In an address in the People's Temple, in Boston, Mr. Quinn said: "Card-playing at home simply makes the home a kindergarten for the gambling saloon." He probably knew what he was talking about.

Of course, it is possible to gamble about anything. But no other game has been so absolutely prostituted to Satan's uses as cards. They are found in every house of sin on the globe. I submit that Christian parents have something better to do in their homes and social gatherings than to train the young for the haunts of vice. There is getting to be a public mania for gambling — gambling in stocks and bonds, and real estate and grain, in speed of horses, and baseball and football and prize fights. The public conscience is being swept away to a degree perilous, says Chauncey Depew, to the business world. This degrading passion for gambling is usually awakened by card-playing. Nobody can tell in what mind the slumbering germs of this passion lie. It is with this as with drinking — the safest and easiest time to stop is before one begins. Card-playing may be condemned, also, on the simple ground that it involves a most wicked waste of time, all of which belongs to the Savior who bought us, and should be wholly spent in His service. Dr. J. G. Holland, the famous editor and author, says his father's most intimate friend said to him with dying breath: "Keep your boy from cards. Over the card-table I have wasted time and lost eternity."

Lastly, it is utterly fatal to the spirituality of Christians and churches. A popular pastor of a large church in an eastern city startled his congregation one Sabbath morning by offering his resignation. In it he said: "It is not because my salary is insufficient; not because the field is not large enough to satisfy my ambition; not because there is any dissatisfaction with me, as far as I know, but because the church is so given up to worldly amusements that I have no hope of accomplishing anything in this place; and having witnessed against these things in vain, I have decided not to waste the prime of my life in a barren field."

An eminent Christian physician of Falls River, Mass., said to a ministerial friend of the writer: "Once, a few years ago, our prayer-meeting filled our lecture-room, which seats three hundred. But the ladies began to play cards, and it became a fashionable

craze, and the pastor rather favors it. As a result, we now have but twenty-five at the weekly prayer-meeting, and they are not card-players. I was talking with a young man about to enter the ministry, and he said to me that he thought cards were a harmless, innocent amusement. I said to him: ‘Let me tell you something for your own good. If you want your church to commit spiritual suicide, just encourage them to play cards as a harmless amusement.’” The harm which this senseless craze for this amusement, that reigns supreme in every den of iniquity on earth, has wrought to the Church of Christ, the prayer-meetings it has emptied, the family altars it has thrown down, the closets it has caused to be deserted, the backsliding it has occasioned, and the millions of these backsliders and their children whom it has sent to hell can never be known till we all stand before the bar of God at the judgment of the great day. What wonder that the Holy Spirit is grieved when the followers of Jesus forget their covenant vows, and run, with groveling worldlings, after this sport that is death to earnest piety.

- (3) What of dancing? I am compelled, of course, to speak of it as it is among all classes and under all circumstances. The least objectionable forms lead to the most objectionable; the social private dance leads to the masquerade or public ball. We must examine the thing as it is, and not discuss some imaginary thing that might be. At the outset we cheerfully admit that there are not a few innocent, not to say verdant, people who have not thought much about the subject, and do not really understand why the dance is utterly pernicious. Let me, by a few simple questions, aid such people in their thinking. Do you ever hear of men hiring a hall and an orchestra, and dancing till morning by themselves? Why not? Do you ever hear of women dancing by themselves till they are half dead? Why not? Do you ever hear of a family doing it — father dancing with mother and brother dancing with sister till long past midnight? Never. Why not? Honest now, do you not know why? If you really do not, let me kindly aid your dull thinking. The SEX ELEMENT is the charm of the dance, and the one thing that makes it even tolerable. It is, therefore, essentially

an evil thing. It leads, first, to impure thought; second, to improper conversation; third, to immodesty of action, and last, to immorality of living. Of course, such statements coming from a preacher are likely to be challenged as untrue. Very well; let others, who are not preachers, speak.

A chief-of-police in New York City has said: "Three-fourths of the women and girls that are leading lives of immorality have fallen through the dance." Mrs. General Sherman said: "Virtuous women ought to blush at the very mention of the dance." James G. Blaine's famous relative and author, "Gail Hamilton," says: The dance is essentially unclean, and can not be washed. The very pose of the parties suggests impurity." The Police Gazette, one of the lowest papers in America, whose circulation is forbidden in some places, said: "Strange that young ladies will allow gentlemen to assume positions and take liberties in the public dance that they would not allow in their private parlors." We may remark, in passing, that it does seem as if a self-respecting woman ought to want her conduct to be, at least, up to the standard of the Police Gazette. Prof. Amos R. Wells: "Dancing, like all Gaul, is divided into three parts: one-third is aesthetic, one-third is physical exercise, and the remaining one-third is sensual. The last third of this heathen Gaul is the stronghold of the province. The sensuality of the dance makes bold-eyed women of soft-eyed maidens; makes swaggering rakes of pure young men; it changes love to flirtation and a game of flippant shrewdness. It never recreates a Christian; it creates a sensualist." The editor of the Utica Herald, of New York, said: "More young men and girls are ruined in this city at dances than by any other means. This is a severe indictment, but it is, nevertheless, true, and the destruction of nine-tenths of the young women who are known to the police as 'street walkers' is due to the bad associates of the dance."

The New York Tribune of March 4, 1881, quotes a Roman Catholic bishop as saying: "The confessional reveals that nineteen out of every twenty women who fall and are lost can trace the beginning of their sad state to the modern dance."

Prof. A. T. Sullivan, an ex-dancing master, says: "Waltzing is the spur to lust." Mr. T. A. Faulkner, who for years was a teacher of dancing, and held the championship of the Pacific Coast in fancy and round dancing, was convicted of his sin by the fierce arraignment of a ruined girl who had fallen in his dancing school. It led to his conversion, and then to the writing of a book against this awful sin, entitled, "From the Ball-room to Hell." In it he writes: "The matron of a home for fallen women in Los Angeles says: 'Seven-tenths of the girls received here have fallen through dancing and its influence.'" He himself, as a city missionary, asked two hundred inmates of brothels how they came to fall, and one hundred and sixty-three of them confessed that they were ruined by dancing schools and ball-rooms. He says: "I know of a select dancing school where, in a course of three months, eleven of its victims are brothel inmates today." He gives this advice to silly, fashionable mothers who send their daughters to the dancing-master for training: "If you have a choice of a saloon for your son, and a so-called select dancing school for your daughter, I beseech you, in the name of God, place your son in the saloon, but keep your daughter out of the dancing school."

You see, up to this point I have not quoted preachers against the dance, but men and women in all walks of life. Now let the pastors speak:

Dr. Howard Crosby, Presbyterian: "The foundation for the vast amount of domestic misery and domestic crime which startles us was laid when parents allowed the sacredness of their daughters' persons; and the purity of their maiden instincts, to be rudely shocked in the waltz."

Dr. H. M. Tenney, Congregationalist: "Those who are under the spell of cards and dancing are the last to be reached by the gospel and the first to backslide."

Bishop Coxe, Episcopal: “The gross, debasing waltz would not be tolerated another year if Christian mothers in our communion would only set their faces against it, and remove their daughters from its contaminations, and their sons from that contempt of womanhood which it begets.”

Dr. James Brand, Congregationalist: “The real core of the Christian’s objection to the dance is, it is naturally dangerous to social purity. Its chief fascination lies in the relations of the sexes. It is useless to mince matters on this point. The danger of the promiscuous dance lies in the too familiar handling of each other’s person. It is a very rare thing to find a devoted Christian worker who is a dancer. I can learn of no man or woman with a decidedly evangelistic spirit who approves of the dance. It is equally difficult to find any church members who are regularly and helpfully at the prayer-meetings who are at all given to the dance. I have not been able to discover any church, which it known far and wide as a power for the kingdom of Christ, whose members, to any large extent, patronize the dance.”

The Roman Catholic bishops, in council at Baltimore, in 1866, sent out this in their pastoral letter: “We warn our people against those amusements which may become an occasion to sin, and especially against the fashionable dances, which, as at present carried on, are revolting to every feeling of delicacy and propriety, and are fraught with the greatest danger to morals.”

The writer, in his rounds as an evangelist and pastor, has seen and heard so much about the evils of the dance that his heart is sick. In one city a hotel was pointed out where three women fell in one single evening at a dance. Within six months he has helped a pastor in revival work who informed him that within a few weeks five girls of his congregation had become mothers, without being wedded, as the result of the last season’s dancing. In another city a doctor of divinity was pointed out, pastor of the leading church, whose daughter, attending the dances of the most fashionable club, was ruined, and afterward died in a hospital in a far-away

city, whither she had gone to hide her shame. Yet with such facts ever repeated, constantly multiplied; with this stream of iniquity ever widening and deepening, that is flowing like an Amazon tide and sweeping countless thousands down to hell, Christian women look up into his face, with an innocence that rivals the daisies, and a verdancy that surpasses the grass of June, and ask, "What harm is there in dancing?"

Some worldly, fashionable people are not amenable to argument. They are beyond all rational persuasion. They are a thousand times more afraid of not being in the fashion than they are afraid of sin. They have lost all conscience. Worldliness has reduced their moral backbone to the limpness of a cotton string. To seem to be aristocratic they will have intoxicants on the table, even though it does engulf their husbands and sons in hopeless ruin. They must patronize the dance, even if it is likely to make their sons rouses and their daughters harlots. "O Fashion! Fashion, what power hast thou to browbeat holy nature so that she dare not speak to assert her sacred claims against thy imperious sway!" I am not writing for such people. It would be useless. They are abandoned to the pleasures of sin. They may be church members; multitudes of them doubtless are. But they are strangers to Jesus. They "love the world, and the love of the Father is not in them."

But there are others not utterly committed to a career of Christless worldliness. They are toying with these fashionable pleasures which so many church members run after. They are troubled about it because the Spirit of God has not wholly left them; they are willing still to listen to the voice divine. For them I write. To them the Spirit speaks: "O do not this abominable thing that I hate" (Jeremiah 44:4)!

"But," they say, "can not we be saved, and go to theaters and play cards and dance?" I do not know about it. It is not for me to say what people can or can not possibly do, and finally be saved. David committed adultery and murder, and doubtless was finally saved. You would better not try it. If you do, the chances are a

thousand to one you will perish. Doubtless many professors of religion have indulged in these amusements, and by the infinite cleansing grace of God have been finally saved. But multitudes have tried it, and made their bed in hell. Let me say just here, in passing, if you have no other purpose in following Jesus than merely to escape perdition; if you prefer to walk as far from Christ as possible and walk as much with the world as you can, and as close to the border of hell as you dare, and not consciously go over the brink, it is more than probable that you do not really love the blessed Savior at all, and have no part or lot with Him.

But I put this whole question on a higher and nobler plane. If you are a genuine Christian, God owns you, body and soul. Your time, your strength, your influence, your money, all belong to Jesus, to be used in His service and for His glory. You have stood at the altar and taken upon you vows, solemn as eternity, that you would live for Jesus. And now, have you nothing better to do with your eyes and ears than to have them feast, hour after hour, on the pollutions of the theater? The sight of the bill-boards is enough to make a decent man's face crimson with shame, to say nothing about the living reality. Have you nothing better to do with your time than to waste it over the card-table, in brainless excitement or roars of silly laughter, because you hold a good hand or because a ten-spot can cover a nine? After giving your body to Jesus, to become the temple of the Holy Ghost, can you find nothing better to do with it than to waste its strength in the licentious embrace of the waltz?

And what about your influence? Jesus says: "Ye are the light of the world"; "Be not conformed to the world"; "Love not the world, neither the things of the world"; "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Are you doing all this, letting "your light shine" by a holy influence, "not conformed to the world," when you are loving precisely the same pleasures that the vilest sinners love, and pursuing them with the same zest? Did the blessed Son of God walk the earth in self-sacrifice and sorrow, and suffer in

Gethsemane and die on Calvary, and tell us to deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Him, meaning by it that we were to go to theaters and play cards and dance and be merry? Can He say to such professors of religion at last: “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast denied thyself and followed me: enter into the joy of thy Lord”? O shame, that such questions need to be asked to professedly Christian people! All unchristian people know better, and they have little or no respect for the religion of those church-members who indulge in these amusements. They never ask dancing, card-playing, theater-going Christians to lead them to Jesus. They will invite you to their unhallowed pleasures, and applaud you for joining with them; but behind your back they sneer at your religion as canting hypocrisy. No sinner in the dying hour wants one who loves these things to pray with him, or speak to him of the life to come. It is also a fact that the persons, of all classes, the most difficult to win to Jesus Christ are the children of church members who approve of these pastimes. The lives of such are a reproach to the cause of Christ. Their influence is often worse than that of avowed infidels. They may repent and be saved, but it will be “so as by fire.” What wonder, then, that the Holy Spirit, who comes to sanctify the church and to save the world, is grieved when the cause of Christ is thus betrayed by His own disciples! Moody once said: “The Roman spear did not hurt the heart of Christ so much as the kiss of Judas.” O, let us not betray the Master! For Jesus’ sake, young Christians, for the sake of your own growth in grace, and for the sake of your Christian usefulness, give up, cheerfully, these perilous, inexpedient pleasures, or you will grieve the Spirit, and lose His companionship — the crowning blessing of life.

- (4) People grieve the Spirit by using intoxicants and tobacco, etc. Science has spoken unmistakably on these subjects, and the masses of intelligent people know better than to practice these vile, injurious habits; and if Christians do it, it must be against the protests of conscience, and so the Spirit is grieved. Only last night a Christian brother was bowing with me in prayer, crying out to God for some cure for his conscious leanness of soul. I found, by

questioning, that he had been attending theaters and smoking against the protests of conscience. He told me that he had been trying in vain for months to find peace with God and enjoyment in religion. Of course, he couldn't, because he was constantly grieving the Spirit. I have never known one who used tobacco or liquor, or ran after these pleasures of the world, to obtain the baptism with the Spirit until he gave up his filthy indulgences. It is only as we heed the illuminated conscience and "walk in the light as he is in the light" that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

- (5) It grieves the Holy Spirit when men neglect the Bible and prayer. The Bible is the Spirit's book, and He must be wounded if it is not lovingly read, just as a mother would be grieved if her children should not read her letters. Prayer is talking with God. How it would grieve a husband if his wife should go about him continually, and never speak to him! Such cold, unloving treatment of God can not be otherwise than displeasing to Him. Here is the first start of a world of backsliding. Christians forsake their closets and neglect the Word and religious literature, and then try to feed their immortal natures on the chaff of irreligious reading, or by devouring the husks of the satanic press. Of course, it grieves the Spirit to see the followers of Jesus thus turn away from the living bread and go down to death moral suicides, "because of the virus of a baneful literature voluntarily poured into their arteries."

6. There is a conceited, irreverent, flippant treatment of the Bible which grieves the Holy Spirit. We will quote a noble Christian scholar on this point. Dr. Daniel Steele says: "When the Holy Spirit moves holy men to write saving truth for the spiritual healing of the nations throughout all generations, and bad men develop a satanic ingenuity in assailing this precious record, and in destroying the faith of men in that religion which transforms sinners to saints here and reveals life eternal hereafter, the Spirit of inspiration is not only grieved, but is deeply disgraced ... There are in our times a class of higher critics, who are studious to conserve all the truth that the Holy Spirit has inspired, With such He is well pleased.

His honor is safe in their keeping. But there is a class of destructives who are madly attempting to sweep out of the universe every vestige of a supernatural revelation, and to beat down to the dead level of naturalism every religious truth that stands a foot above the level. The personal Holy Spirit, whose mission it is to conserve and apply saving truth, can not look upon this attempt with indifference. It dishonors Him to assault His work.” Professor Sayce shows that these critics argue from baseless assumptions, and come to their conclusions by utterly unscientific methods; that “Christ was in the law and the prophets, as Jesus taught; that Christianity was essentially a historical religion, and if we will not have a historical religion we must go elsewhere for our faith.” “By hostile criticism ‘the law and the prophets’ have been sliced and dissected, until little or nothing has been left to the traditional authors, and the law, instead of having been promulgated on Sinai, has been pronounced to be the product of the Babylonian exile, and we are forced to assign the origin of the belief in the divine message and supernatural authority of the law to successful fraud. The very conception of the Mosaic law, as held by our Lord and His apostles, has been swallowed up in chaotic darkness ... This ‘critical’ method of the ‘higher critics’ is essentially vicious, and archeological discovery is proving it to be so ... The same method applied to the New Testament would lead to the same results. The same canons of criticism which have led to the denial of the historical character of Genesis would also lead to the rejection of John. If all that the higher critics tell us of the Old Testament is true, it can not be long before the New Testament is deprived of its historical character. The Gospels will follow the Pentateuch, and the personality of the Founder of the Christian Church will be as nebulous as the founder of the Hebrew polity. The ‘higher critics’ never seem to realize that their conclusions are opposed to the great practical fact of the existence of traditional Christianity. Against this fact they have nothing to set forth but the linguistic speculations of a few individual scholars. On the one side we have a body of doctrines which has been the support in life and the refuge in death of millions of men of all nationalities and grades of mind, which has been witnessed to by saints and martyrs, which has conquered first the Roman Empire, and then the barbarians who destroyed it, and which has brought a message of peace and good-will to suffering humanity. On the other side there is a handful of critics with their lists of words and their polychromatic bibles. And yet

the ‘higher criticism ‘ has never healed any bodies or saved any souls.” Of course not, for a grieved and insulted Spirit can not co-operate with a criticism which breaks down all rational faith in the integrity and veracity of the sacred Word. Dr. Steele says: “We have heard one of the champions of ‘liberal Christianity’ read in his Boston pulpit from Job, Plato, Seneca, Cato and T. Starr King, and then say, ‘Thus endeth the reading of the Scriptures.’” Another shabby insult to the Book of books, and to the Holy Spirit, its Author.

7. The Holy Spirit is grieved when He is practically ignored in the administration of the church. “The whole administration of the affairs of the Church of Christ has, since the day of Pentecost, devolved upon the Holy Spirit. That day He was installed as the Administrator of the church in all things.” “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” When the hierarchy or the democracy ruling the church do not listen for His voice or seek His guidance; when solemn issues are settled by a “show of hands” instead of prayerfully waiting for the direction of the Spirit, an awful blunder is made that will be sure to tell against the welfare of the Church of Christ. Today, as of old, by waiting on the Spirit in humble prayer, church conferences and councils may render their decisions: “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us” (Acts 15:28). “Quench not the Spirit.” How easily it may be done, in the choice of a pastor, by political wire-pulling, by the prayerless, self-willed action of a domineering few! Says Dr. A. J. Gordon: “The humble and godly membership of the little church may turn to some pastor after much prayer and waiting on God for the Spirit’s guidance, and the signs of the divine choice may be clearly manifest, when some pulpit committee or some conclave of ‘leading brethren’ vetoes their action. Alas! for the little flock so lorded over that the voice of the Holy Ghost can not be heard.” Who has not seen it, and seen, as a consequence, the church rent by dissension or killed by barrenness, because the Spirit had been grieved? “From the watch-tower where we write,” says Gordon, “we can look out on half a score of churches on which ‘Ichabod’ has been evidently written, and the glory of which has long since departed. They were founded in prayer and consecration ‘to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven.’ Why has their light been extinguished, though the lampstand that bore it still remains, adorned and beautified with all that

the highest art and architecture can suggest? Their history is known to Him who walks among the golden candle-sticks. What violence may have been done by headstrong self-will to Him who is called 'the Spirit of counsel and might'? What rejection of the truth which He, the 'Spirit of truth,' has appointed for the faith of God's Church till at last the word has been spoken: 'Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye.' The Spirit is the breath of God in the body of His Church. While that divine body survives, and must, multitudes of the churches have so shut out the Spirit from rule and authority and supremacy in the midst of them, that the ascended Lord can only say to them: 'Thou hast a name to live, and art dead.' The body may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing; but simply because the Spirit has been withdrawn from it, it has passed from a church into a corpse."

8. Akin to the last point, we may truly observe that the Holy Spirit is grieved by being ignored in the management of church finances. When money is needed for the Lord's work people rely upon themselves, their tact and judgment, upon their business, and sometimes unbusiness, methods. Says Rev. C. A. Cook: "Just so long as no place is given to the Holy Spirit in the financial matters of the church, just so long will she remain on the side-track of mere human plans and possibilities, and come far short of her God-given privileges." Says Dr. John Humpstone: "The question of finance is a question of the Holy Spirit. Given Pentecostal blessing, and Pentecostal consecration of property will follow. No one but the Holy Spirit can incite souls to that degree of faith which will lead them to set at defiance the dictates of selfishness, the maxims of worldly policy, and the suggestions of over-cautious prudence." The churches turn their back on the Spirit, and then come the feasting schemes, the broom-drills, the crazy sociables, the pious lotteries, dances, and other like disgraceful, worldly schemes, until the Spirit has been grieved and His influence quenched. Six weeks ago the writer was holding meetings in Cincinnati. Two squares away a church fair was in progress for two weeks. All kinds of musical instruments, furniture, stoves, flour, ale, wine, live goats and other beasts were raffled for, and four thousand dollars were cleared. Had Jesus appeared on the scene, as of old, He would again, doubtless, have driven them out with a whip of cords, saying, with indignation, "Ye have made my Father's house of prayer a den of thieves."

The Boston Congregationalist of November 11, 1897, lies before me, saying: "Thirty young women of families connected with Trinity Church of N. Y., gave an entertainment recently in the Opera House. They blackened their faces and impersonated Negroes in a minstrel show. The proceeds went to swell an organ fund for the church. If there are still honorable men in that church, the show must have stirred other music than that drawn from the organ. Such antics in aid of a church are a disgrace to Christianity." These lines are being written in a church whose pastor was approached, not long ago, by a female member of a fashionable city club, offering a club dance in behalf of the church. The pastor had the wisdom and piety to decline the offer; but, alas! it was accepted by another church a few squares away. Thus the Spirit is grieved and quenched, and the churches become as barren as the Sahara desert.

9. Ministers of the gospel and other Christian workers must certainly grieve the Spirit "when they more earnestly desire His gifts than Himself; when they are more eager to be clothed with His power than to be filled with His presence; when they rely more on polished rhetoric than on the power of the Holy Ghost; when they are more concerned about preparing the sermon than themselves; when they are more ambitious to please the church (people) than the 'Head of the Church'; when they aim to tickle 'itching ears' rather than to convict and convert wicked hearts; when they are using the sacred office as a ladder to personal fame or gain, instead of a stairway up which they may lead repenting sinners to the bosom of God." Dr. Steele, from whom the above was quoted, also observes: "The Spirit is dishonored whenever Christ is not exalted as the only Savior of lost men; when anything is substituted for the Spirit's offices in the inspiration of the spiritual life and the development of Christian character, such as a germ of natural goodness instead of the new birth, education instead of sanctification, culture of the aesthetic tastes instead of the fruit of the Spirit; when He is displaced in the pulpit by some fad or fancy of momentary interest; when Jesus Christ crucified is regarded as a less attractive Saturday pulpit bulletin than the last international yacht race, or a panegyric on the last humoristic poet of liberalism." The writer once sat in a Boston audience and heard a doctor of divinity preach on "The Gospel of Greece," and he announced for the next Sunday's theme, "The

Gospel of Montenegro.” The Advance of yesterday tells of a minister who filled his house by preaching on “Your Weight for a Cent.” Where can such things end but in stranded churches, deserted by the grieved Spirit of God? One Sunday a preacher from New York filled the pulpit of that mighty warrior of Israel, Dr. Hawes, of Hartford. The next morning a brother minister met him, and referred to it. “Yes,” he quickly replied, “there are a great many ways of going to hell, and flashy preaching is one of them.” The writer heard Dr. Godbey make a remark recently that made his soul quake. It was this: “I would sooner have a saloonkeeper’s hell than to have the hell of a recreant preacher.” Oh, that we who stand before men as the accredited ambassadors of Jesus Christ, may not grieve the Spirit of God!

10. Individuals and churches often grieve the Holy Spirit by being penurious and dishonest in reference to the enterprises of the church and kingdom of Christ; in other words, by robbing God in tithes and offerings. No man who is niggardly can have spiritual power. He has too little of the Spirit of the self-sacrificing Jesus to be used and honored of the Holy Spirit. A Boston deacon came to his pastor’s study some years ago, and said, with deep solemnity: “Pastor, I want to tell you something as a warning to others. Seventeen years ago I became interested in a certain kind of spiritual work, and the Holy Spirit said to me, ‘Deacon, put your money into it generously.’ I said to myself, ‘No; I can’t afford it. It is a man’s business to accumulate; I must accumulate, accumulate!’ Pastor, for the last few years I have lost heavily. It has set me to thinking; and as near as I can calculate, I have lost to a dollar all my accumulations for the LAST SEVENTEEN YEARS, and I have been lean in Spirit besides!”

That wonderful Spirit-led pastor, Dr. A. J. Gordon, felt that at one season his church was not being blessed spiritually as it ought to be. He went before his church — the Clarendon Street Baptist Church, Boston — and preached a missionary sermon, and told his people to pray over the matter and then give as the Holy Spirit prompted them, and put God to the test and see if He would not bless them spiritually. He thought they would give a thousand dollars extra. But, lo! under the promptings of the Spirit, they brought an offering of twenty thousand dollars for missions. Immediately the heavens opened above them, and a mighty revival of

flood-tide power broke upon them. More churches would have these gracious visitations if they did not grieve the Holy Spirit by robbing God.

11. The Holy Spirit is grieved by speaking against and by rejecting holiness or sanctification. It would grieve an author to malign and reject his best and favorite work. The Spirit is called “Holy” because it is His chief work to impart holiness to fallen men, and keep them in it. “The masterpiece of the Holy Spirit is the completed holiness of a soul born with a propensity to sin.” When one fights the doctrine of sanctification as a possible experience, and says malignant things about it and about all who advocate it, they are approaching perilously near the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which hath never forgiveness.

And when God comes to a soul with special illumination, through persons or books, or fresh light upon the sacred Word, and awakes a hunger for holiness and clearly points out the way to obtain the sanctifying baptism with the Spirit, it is a solemn and critical hour. It is a special honor conferred, a special call given to be one of God’s saints, and walk with Him in white, and bear witness to the power of an uttermost Savior to give full salvation. The religious life, then, is like riding a bicycle — it must go forward or fall. There are given to some revelations so distinct, calls to sanctification as a privilege and duty so clear, light so abundant, that then, to consciously cling to some sin and prefer the world to Christ, means to so grieve the Spirit that justification itself will be lost, and there is nothing before the soul but backsliding and ruin. It is a solemn thing in the march of the spiritual life to consciously reach Kadesh (which means holiness); one must then go forward and take the Canaan of sanctification, or turn back and die in the wilderness. With many illuminated hearts, I am persuaded it becomes, then, literally a choice of HOLINESS OR HELL! May God graciously keep back the reader of these pages from the fatal step!

In conclusion, let me entreat my Christian readers to put in practice no business principles, to indulge no appetites, to tolerate no habits, and to allow no amusements that can not stand the search-light of closet prayer and the most critical investigation, aided by the illuminating Spirit and the Word of God. Break all unhallowed connection with the world, and with

all energy of soul, as the Spirit leads, press on in the Christian race “for the prize of the high calling of God.” “For God hath called you unto holiness” (sanctification, R. V.). I once heard Moody say, in a burst of eloquence: “I would to God that these Christians who live so near the border-line between the church and the world that you can not tell on which side they are, would either stay with the world or cross the line and get as far from it as possible.” Oh, reader, walk in all the light the Holy Spirit brings you, “and the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse you from all sin,” you “being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” For you there is

“SANCTIFYING GRACE”

“I am so weak, dear Lord! I can not stand
 One moment without Thee;
 But, oh, the tenderness of Thy enfolding,
 And, oh, the faithfulness of Thine upholding,
 And, oh, the strength of Thy right hand!
 That strength is enough for me.

I am so needy, Lord! And yet I know
 All fullness dwells in Thee;
 And hour by hour that never failing treasure
 Supplies and fills in overflowing measure
 My last and greatest need. And so
 Thy grace is enough for me.

“It is so sweet to trust Thy Word alone!
 I do not ask to see
 The unveiling light of Thy purpose, or the shining
 Of future light on mysteries untwining;
 Thy promise roll is all my own —
 Thy Word is enough for me.

“There were strange soul-depths, restless, vast and broad,
 Unfathomed as the sea;
 An infinite craving for some infinite stilling;
 But now Thy perfect love is perfect filling!
 Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God,
 Thou, Thou art enough for me!”

THE END