

The Gift Of The Holy Spirit By Samuel Chadwick

~Other Speakers S-Z: Classic Christian Writings:

The sphere of the Holy Spirit is in the Living Temple of sanctified humanity. He dwells not in temples made with hands. The Temple at Jerusalem was a permitted mistake, as surely as the kingship of Israel. In the New Jerusalem there is no Temple. The Tabernacle was a type of heavenly realities. The Temple sought to give solidity, permanence, and magnificence to that which God meant to be provisional and typical.

God cares nothing for costly buildings, and everything for loving hearts. He seeks men. He wants men. He needs men. He dwells in men. Immanuel is the first word and the last of the Gospel of grace.

In a powerful plea for the life of prayer, E. M. Bounds says: "God's plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than of anything else. Men are God's method. The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men."

He has staked His kingdom on men. He has trusted His Gospel to men. He has given His Spirit to men. The Church is on the stretch for new methods, new plans, new buildings, new organizations, but "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (2 Chron. 16:9).

The Holy Ghost does not come upon methods, but upon men. He does not anoint machinery, but men. He does not work through organizations, but through men. He does not dwell in buildings, but in men. He indwells the Body of Christ, directs its activities, distributes its forces, empowers its members.

Those gathered in that Upper Room "when the day of Pentecost was fully come" had been prepared for His coming. They were disciples who acknowledged the Lordship of Jesus. They had realized His saving power, and surrendered all to His Sovereign will. For ten days they had been in prayer, and for the greater part of three years they sat at the feet of Jesus. When they realized His Sonship He blessed them, and now the promise of the fiery baptism is fulfilled.

The Spirit "sat upon each one of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:3-4). He had come to reign over each and all. Jesus Christ had defined the Spirit's mission and outlined His program. He was to unify them into one Body, guide them into all truth, and strengthen them for all service. In the Church He is the supreme executive, but He has His seat in the soul. He directs all things from the spiritual center of the inner life.

The body prepared for the Eternal Son was born of a Virgin; the body prepared for the Indwelling Spirit is begotten of faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God. The Church is the sphere of His ministry, the agent of His purpose, the place of His Presence.

The Spirit In The Believer

"The Spirit sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled." The whole is for each, and each is for all. The story of Pentecost reveals what the gift did for individual men, as well as for the whole company.

Peter moves in the blaze of the sun. Throughout the gospel narrative he is a man of generous impulses, with many failings. He utters his resolves with the emphasis of the irresolute, and often fails in the hour of testing.

Pentecost reveals him transformed. He has the certainty of revealed truth in his speech, and the confidence of invincible power in his bearing. The man who cringed and skulked a few days ago stands upon both feet, utterly destitute of fear. Temperament and natural aptitude are unchanged, but the man is radiant with a new energy, transfigured with a new Spirit, effective with a new power.

The Spirit of Christ has clothed Himself with Peter. He speaks with the same Galilean accent; but the utterance is of the Holy Ghost. St. Paul put the same truth another way when he said: "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). The indwelling Presence is clothed with sanctified manhood, and becomes the very life of life, and the very soul of the soul, "I live; yet no longer I."

The Apostle attributes all spiritual effectiveness to the indwelling power. "Our sufficiency," he says, "is of God Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:5-6).

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There are other kinds of ability than that which comes of God through the Spirit, but they are death dealing and never life giving. It is the Spirit that quickens. Everything else fails. The letter may be faultlessly orthodox, the method may be marvelously ingenious, the man may be tremendously earnest, but only the God-made, God-inspired, God-enabled avails.

Carnalities kill. The power that quickens, transforms, perfects, is of God the Spirit. There never was so much human perfection in the Church, but the New Jerusalem is not built up by the powers of Babylon; it comes down out of Heaven from God. Believers without the Holy Ghost cannot do the work of the Spirit.

The Spirit In The World

It is this mystery that has filled the history of the Church with anomalies. Inadequate men are always doing impossible things, and ordinary men achieve extraordinary results. God's biggest things seem to be done by the most unlikely people.

Unknown Davids kill terrifying Goliaths. The weak confound the mighty, and things hid from the learned and wise are made known to unlearned and ignorant men. The All-wise seems to delight in nothing so much as turning the wisdom of the vain to folly, and the strength of the proud to shame.

He has declared the insufficiency of all but Himself, but man struts and sets himself to demonstrate his own sufficiency. Pride of logic, pride of skill, pride of personality, pride of power, perpetuate the spirit of Babel in the Church of God with the same inevitable result. It ends in defeat, disaster, and dishonor.

There is no conquest of the world for God but by the Holy Ghost. He alone can convict the world "in respect to sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). There is no other power that can do that, and without conviction there can be neither the salvation of the soul nor the coming of the Kingdom.

Our one lack is the power that comes of the Spirit. For holiness and for service, for prosperity and for victory, He is our one need. The Spirit is God's gift. The power cannot be bought either with money or merit. A gift can only be received or rejected. This gift is for all who believe and crown Jesus Christ in their hearts.

From *The Way To Pentecost* by Samuel Chadwick (1860-1932). Samuel Chadwick served as pastor, evangelist, lecturer and college president in Britain.