

~Other Speakers S-Z: Smith Wigglesworth:

Wigglesworth continues:

At the time I received the Baptism in the Spirit, a meeting was going on in the large vestry of the All Saints Church, and I went straight to it. The vicar of the church, Pastor Boddy, had charge and he was speaking. I knew that as yet he had not received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and I interrupted him by saying, "Oh, please let me speak, Mr. Boddy; I have just received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost."

The place was full of people. I can't remember what I said, but I know I made all those people extremely dissatisfied and discontented with their position. They said, "We have been rebuking this man because he was so intensely hungry, but he has come in for a few days and has received the Baptism and some of us have been waiting here for months and have not yet received." A great hunger came upon them all. From that day God began to pour out his Spirit until in a very short while 50 had received the Baptism.

The first thing I did was to telegraph to my home saying "I have received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and have spoken in tongues."

On the train to my home town, the devil began questioning, "Are you going to take this to Bradford?" As regards my feelings at the moment, I had nothing to take, but the just do not live by feelings but by faith. So I shouted out on the railroad coach to everybody's amazement, "Yes, I'm taking it!" A great joy filled me as I made this declaration, but somehow I knew that from that moment it would be a great fight all the time.

When I arrived home one of my sons said to me, "Father, have you been speaking in tongues?"

I replied, "Yes, George."

"Then let's hear you," he said.

But I could say nothing, for although I had received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, I had not received the distinct gift of tongues. That did not come until nine months later. My son did not understand that the speaking with tongues which accompanies the receiving of the Baptism in the Spirit is not the "gift of tongues" spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12. The former is given as evidence that the Spirit has come in Pentecostal fullness; but there may not be any further utterance in tongues unless there is a special anointing of the Spirit. The "gift of tongues," however, is such that the receiver may use it for prayer or praise at any time.

My wife said to me, "So you've been speaking with tongues, have you?" I replied, "Yes."

"Well," she said, "I want you to understand that I am as much baptized as you are and I don't speak in tongues."

I saw that the contest was beginning right at home.

"I have been preaching for 20 years," she continued, "and you have sat beside me on the platform, but on Sunday you will preach yourself, and I'll see what there is in it."

She kept her word. On Sunday she took a seat at the back of the building. We had always sat together on the platform until that day. So the contest had begun right in the church.

There were three steps up to the platform and as I went up those three steps the Lord gave me the scripture in Isaiah 61.1-3, "The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." [Is 61.1-3] I was no preacher, but hearing the voice of my Lord speaking those words to me, I began. I cannot now remember what I said but my wife was terribly disturbed. The bench on which she sat would seat nine people and she moved about on it until she had sat on every part of it. Then she said in a voice that all around her could hear, "That's not my Smith, Lord, that's not my Smith!"

I was giving out the last hymn when the secretary of the mission stood up and said, "I want what our leader has received." The strange thing was that when he was about to sit down he missed his seat and went right

down on the floor. Then my eldest son arose and said he wanted what his father had and he, too, took his seat right down on the floor. In a short while there were 11 people right on the floor of that mission. The strangest thing was that they were all laughing in the Spirit and laughing at one another. The Lord had really turned again the captivity of Zion and the mouth of his children was being filled with laughter according to the word of the Lord in Psalm 126.1-2.

That was the beginning of a great outpouring of the Spirit where hundreds received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and every one of them spoke in tongues as the Spirit of God gave utterance.

God knew that I should have to go all over the world and proclaim this glorious truth, that all could receive the Baptism in the Holy Ghost in exactly the same way as they received on the day of Pentecost with the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance.

The first call that I received after I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit was from a man who had a factory in Lancashire, and who employed more than 1,000 people. He wrote to say that he had heard that I had received the Holy Spirit as at the beginning, and he would like to meet a man who had had this experience. His letter said, "If you will come, I will close down the factory each afternoon and give you five meetings between 1 p.m. and 11 p.m."

I wrote back, "I'm like a great big barrel that feels like bursting if it doesn't have a vent, so I'm coming to you for the meetings."

Up to that time I had had no preaching abilities, but then I felt that I had a prophetic utterance which was flowing like a river by the power of the Holy Spirit. So I went to Lancashire; and that manufacturer closed down his factory, and from 1 p.m. to 11 p.m., with short intervals, I was preaching. Surely Christ fulfilled his promise, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." [Jn 7.38] Quite a large number in that factory were gloriously saved.

Soon after this my dear wife received the Baptism in the Spirit and then we went forth together in response to the many calls that came from different parts of the country. Wherever we went the Lord baptized people with the Holy Spirit.

We went together to a small place in Shropshire where we held a meeting in a Primitive Methodist Chapel. As my wife preached, the fire fell and people were baptized in the Holy Spirit all over that chapel. There was a good deal of opposition and plenty of persecution. It was a small country village and everyone round about seemed to be greatly moved. They all knew about that revival in that church.

The next morning after the fire had fallen, I went walking around the village and entered a grocery shop. A deep conviction fell on three people who were in that shop and before I left that grocery store all three were saved. After I came out I went up the road a little and saw two women in a field who were carrying buckets. I shouted out to them, "Are you saved?" Here again a tremendous conviction seized them. They dropped their pails and began to pray; and right in that field the Lord saved those two women.

Wherever I went conviction seemed to be upon people. I went into a stone quarry where a whole lot of men were employed and I preached to them as they were dressing the big stones, and again conviction fell and many were saved. As I was returning from this quarry, I passed a large hotel. Just as I was nearing it two men drove by in a two-wheel vehicle, and I never have seen men with such evil faces. They looked the very picture of the devil. I did not know who they were but as they came near they cursed me and tried to slash their whip at me. It seemed like a whiff from the pit. They shouted so loudly that the landlord and landlady at the hotel and five people came out of that hotel and dashed at me like mad dogs, cursing and swearing, though I had not spoken a word to them. But I did not fear their assault. I cried out instantly, "In the name of Jesus, in the power of the blood of Jesus, I drive you back into your den." They rushed back into the hotel and I went in and preached Jesus to them.

There were many people healed and baptized at that time and the glory of the Lord constantly fell. Twenty years later I visited that same village and the people recounted the story of that wonderful visitation from God. Many people from different parts of the country would come to our mission and on almost every occasion they would express the wish that I would visit their place and do something for them.

I had many telegrams to go to a place near Grantham to a young man who was very dangerously ill. After I arrived at Grantham I had nine miles to go by bicycle. When I came to that farmhouse that afternoon a woman at

the door asked, "Are you Wigglesworth?" I replied, "Yes."

She said, "I am sorry to say that you are too late. My son is beyond anything being done for him now."

I answered, "God has never sent me anywhere too late."

I asked if I could see the young man. He lay in his bed with his face toward the wall and whispered that if he was turned over he would die, for his heart was so weak. "Well," I said, "I'll pray for the Lord to strengthen you."

In most of my work in those early days I used to pray much and fast. I knew that this case was beyond all human hopes and so I lay awake most of the night praying. I got up very early the next morning and went out to an adjoining field to pray, for I was very much burdened about this case. There in that field God gave me a revelation that this had to be something new in my life.

I went into the house and asked them to put their son's clothes to air because the Lord would raise him up. In that part of England the climate is very damp, so I knew it would be necessary for them to put his clothes before a fire before he could wear them. But they did not believe and so did not do anything about his clothes.

That was Sunday morning and I knew that there was a service at the Primitive Methodist Chapel. I went to the service and was invited to take charge. Through the word of the Lord, faith was planted in the hearts of all those people, and then something happened. They all knew that young man by name and they all said, "Matthew will be raised up!"

That led me to see that faith could be created in others just as it had been created in me, and I went back to that house and said, "Have you put his clothes to air?" I think they were a little ashamed that they had done nothing, so they got out his clothes and put them before the fire. Then I went into the room and told the young man the vision I had, and said that something would happen different from anything that I had experienced before. I said, "When I place my hands on you the glory of the Lord will fill the place till I shall not be able to stand. I shall be helpless on the floor." I went out and got his clothes, and said to one of the household, "All I want you to do is, put his stockings on him."

Why I had asked them to put his stockings on is a mystery. His legs were like those of a skeleton and I saw his helplessness, and knew that a miracle would have to be performed. After this member of the household had put the stockings on the young man I said, "Now you can leave the room."

They shut the door. I think it is a very important thing to have the door shut when you have a case like this to deal with, for then you know that you are just shut in with God. I prayed for the vision to be made good, and instantly, the moment I touched the young man, the power of God filled the room and was so powerful that I fell to the floor. My nose and my mouth were touching the floor and I lay there in the glory for a quarter of an hour. All that while Matthew in the bed was shouting, "Lord, this is for thy glory! This is for thy glory!" The bed simply shook, as did everything in the room, by the power of God. Matthew's strength, his life, and his heart (which was considered the weakest thing about him) were all renewed. I was still on the floor in the glory when he arose from his bed and began to dress. After he was dressed he began to walk up and down the room shouting, "I'm raised up for thy glory! I'm raised up for thy glory!"

Opening the door he shouted, "Dad, God has healed me. I'm healed!" The same glory filled the kitchen; the father and mother fell down; and the daughter who had been brought from the asylum and whose mind was still affected was made perfectly whole that day.

That whole village was moved and a revival began that day. I went into that village unnoticed and unknown, but when I left all the village turned out and shouted, "Please come back, please come back, and stop with us longer next time."

I made the nine miles back to Grantham and paid a visit to one of our converts who had moved to this city. The moment I got to the door she said, "My brother is going to take you to a man who has cancer on the bladder." I went with her brother to the house of a sick man and before I reached the house I could hear a voice crying out, "Oh dear! Oh dear! Oh dear!" It was so loud I could hear it at least 50 yards before I got to the home. When I got into his room he was still shouting, "Oh dear! Oh dear!"

Instantly God revealed to me that neither this man nor his wife were saved, so I said to the man, "This great

affliction is as much mental trouble as cancer. Are you saved?â€•

â€œOh,â€• he cried, â€œif I were saved I could die comfortably. If I were saved I would not mind this cancer or anything.â€•

I pointed out the way of salvation and God saved the man and his wife. That man had such a revelation of salvation that joy overflowed and I could hear him shouting â€œHallelujahâ€• for 50 yards after I left that home. The transformation was beyond all description. He had no more trouble with that cancer. I hurried to the station and just caught my train back to Bradford.

I soon saw that my business would have to give place to the ministry that God was giving me. I had supported my family with my plumbing business; but I was called out of town so often, and people could not waitâ€”they had to seek help from other sources. Each time I returned to Bradford I had less business.

There came a period of very severe frost. I went around to my various customers and helped them to cover up their water pipes so they could get water during the frosty weather, but I knew that when the thaw came I should be wanted at many places to repair broken pipes.

I was invited to a convention at Preston in Lancashire. During those convention days the frost broke and telegrams began coming in asking me to return immediately to Bradford to do repair work. At that time the leader of the convention said to me, â€œYouâ€™ve helped us much and have been a very great blessing, and we would very much like you to stop until the end of the convention; but if you feel you want to go home we will relieve you.â€•

I went home but I found out that most of my customers who had had broken pipes had been compelled to seek other plumbers. There was only one woman, a widow, who had not been able to get a plumber. I went to her house and found that it was flooded with water and that one of the ceilings was down. I was so sorry for her that I repaired her pipes and her roof. She was grateful, for she had waited many days for help. When she said, â€œTell me how much I owe you now,â€• I answered, â€œI wonâ€™t receive any pay from you. Iâ€™ll make this an offering to the Lord as my last plumbing job.â€•

A friend once remarked: â€œAll the people who say they live by faith seem to have their heels worn out, and their clothes are old and green.â€• I believed that God would abundantly provide if I served him faithfully. I promised him at that time that I would obey him implicitly, but I laid down the condition that my shoe heels must never be a disgrace, and I must never have to wear trousers with the knees out. I said to the Lord, â€œIf either of these things take place, Iâ€™ll go back to plumbing.â€• He has never failed to supply all my needs. He increased my vision and faith and gave me calls all over England. I was a pioneer with the Pentecostal message to a great many assemblies throughout Great Britain. Soon calls began to pour in from other countries also.

I had a lot of money on my books that I was not able to collect without court action, but I preferred losing it to going to law. All the debts that I owed at that time were met by a young friend whose heart the Lord opened to make me a gift of some 50 pounds.

My wife and I continued our ministry at Bowland Street, Bradford, even though I had to be frequently absent because I was ministering elsewhere. I believed in house-to-house visitation, and I prayed in every house I entered. Everywhere I went souls were saved and people were healed.

I was not ashamed of the gospel so I purchased the largest flagpole that could be obtained and placed it outside the mission. I had a flag waving on that pole 3 yards long and 1½ yards wide. One side of the flag was red and the other side was blue with white letters. On one side I had the scripture, â€œI am the Lord that healeth thee.â€• [Ex 15.26] On the other side, â€œChrist died for our sins.â€• [1Co 15.3] That flag had great effect on the people who saw it when passing by.

God moved me on to a place of increasing faith, causing me to see that the word of God was written to show us how to act on the principles of faith. I saw that Christ had said, â€œWhen thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.â€• [Lk 14.13-14] So I engaged two people to go out and find all the needy, the sick, and the afflicted and I gave them tickets inviting them to a banquet and entertainment at the Bowland Street mission.

After the two people had gone round the neighborhood they gathered together a great company of needy

people. That sight was beyond all description. There were the blind and the halt and the withered. [Jn 5.3] All around the mission there were wheelchairs and people on crutches and the blind were being led. This was the best day in my life up to that point. I wept and wept and wept. One reason I wept was because of the great need; I was weeping also for joy at the opportunity, and with expectation of seeing things that I had never seen before. And so it was.

The first thing we did was to supply everybody with a first-class meal and there was plenty to spare of the very best we could provide. After they were filled we gave them entertainment, not in a worldly sense, but the whole program was surely very entertaining. The first man on the program was one who had been wheeled up and down in a chair for a very long time, who told how he had been healed by the power of God. The next one on the program was a woman who had been healed of an issue of blood. She told how she was healed by prayer and by the anointing of oil the day before she was to go on the operating table.

Then we had a man who had been going about trailing his foot and his arm because he had had a paralytic stroke. He told how he was healed after the doctors had given him up.

For an hour and a half we kept those poor helpless people deeply moved and weeping by the stories they heard of how Jesus could heal the sick. I said to them, "Now we have been entertaining you today, but we are going to have another meeting next Saturday and you people who are today bound and who have come in wheelchairs, and some of you folks who have come like the woman in the gospel who had spent her all on doctors and was no better, are going to entertain us on Saturday night by the stories of the freedom that you have received today by the name of Jesus Christ." So we prayed for those people and God mightily met us. We surely had a great time the following Saturday night as one after another told of how God had healed them of their different infirmities.

I shall never forget that day. I cried out, "Who wants to be healed?" Of course, everyone wanted to be. I remember one particular case. I had gone to fetch a woman in her wheelchair. The wheel was broken, but I managed to fix it up. I helped her from her home but that wheelchair gave way in the road. I said to her, "Well, you will never want it again anyhow." I fixed it again and ultimately we arrived at the mission. God so marvelously healed her that she walked home, and I am a witness to the fact that she went up all the steps into her house and into her bedroom, praising the Lord as she went.

There was one young man who had been having epileptic fits for eighteen years, who was instantly healed. He had never gone out without having someone to accompany him. His mother brought him to that meeting, and God so wonderfully undertook for him that within two weeks he was working in a factory and bringing home wages.

Another case was that of a young man who was all doubled up like the woman in the Bible. The Lord Jesus called it the spirit of infirmity, [Lk 13.11] indicating that she was bound by an evil spirit. That day that young man was loosed and set free just as the woman was loosed in the synagogue. Christ in his healing ministry said he was working the works of God, and he said that if we believed, we also could do the works of God. [Jn 14.12] He had cast out the spirit of infirmity; so I cast out the spirit of infirmity in the name of Jesus Christ, and immediately the young man was made straight, and everyone was blessing the Lord for the miracle they saw.

Another remarkable case was that of a boy who, from his head to his feet, was encased in thin iron. The building was very crowded but the father lifted up the boy in the iron case and passed him over to the man who was sitting in the seat in front of him. He was then passed on to the next seat and others passed him on until ultimately he was placed before me on the platform. I anointed him with oil and laid hands on him in the name of the Lord Jesus, and immediately he cried out, "Papa, Papa, Papa. It's going all over me! It's going all over me! It's going all over me!" And he was loosened that day and made absolutely free.

Can you wonder that faith was quickened in the hearts of many as they saw these miracles wrought? A week after, these people were going around as witnesses telling what Christ had done for them.