

General Topics :: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey**HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:11**

Any discussion of the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and the power which results from it, would be incomplete if attention were not called to the fact that spiritual power may be lost.

One of the strangest and saddest stories of the Old Testament history is that of Samson. It is also one of the most instructive. He was by far the most remarkable man of his day. The grandest opportunities were open to him, but after striking temporary victories, his life ended in tragic failure, all through his own inexcusable folly. Time and again it is said of him that "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him," and in the power of that Spirit he wrought to the astonishment of his people and the discomfiture of the enemies of the Lord; but in Judges 16:19,20, we see him deserted of the Lord, though unconscious of it, his strength gone from him and he about to be taken into wretched captivity, the sport of the godless, and to die with the enemies of the Lord a violent and dishonored death.

Unfortunately Samson is not the only man in Christian history, who, having once known the power of the Holy Spirit, has afterward been shorn of this power and laid aside. There have been many Samsons, and I presume there will be many more-men whom God has once used and has afterward been forced to lay aside. One of the saddest sights on earth is such a man. Let us consider when it is the Lord departs from a man or withdraws His power from him, or in other words, "How power is lost."

1. First of all God withdraws His power from men when they go back upon their separation to Him. This was the precise case with Samson himself. (Judges 16:19. Comp. Num. 6:2, 5). His uncut hair was the outward sign of his Nazarite vow by which "he separated himself unto the Lord." The shearing of his hair was the surrender of his separation. His separation given up he was shorn of his power. It is at this same point that many a man today is shorn of his power. There was a day when he separated himself unto God. He turned his back utterly upon the world and its ambitions, its spirit, its purposes; he set himself apart to God as holy unto Him, to be His, for God to take him and use him and do with him what He would. God has honored his separation, He has anointed him with the Holy Ghost and power. He has been used of God. But Delilah has come to him. The world has captured his heart again. He has listened to the world's siren voice and allowed her to shear him of the sign of separation. He is no longer a man separated, or wholly consecrated, to the Lord, and the Lord leaves him. Are there not such persons among those who read this? Men and women the Lord once used, but He does not use you now. You may still be outwardly in Christian work, but there is not the old time liberty and power in it, and this is the reason-you have been untrue to your separation, to your consecration to God; you are listening to Delilah, to the voice of the harlot, to the world and its allurements. Would you get the old power back again? There is but one thing to do. Let your hair grow again as Samson did. Renew your consecration to God.

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:12

2. Power is lost through the incoming of sin. It was so with Saul, the son of Kish. The Spirit of God came upon Saul and he wrought a great victory for God. (I Samuel 11:6, ff). He brought the people of God forward to a place of triumph over their enemies, who had held them under for years. But Saul disobeyed God in two distinct instances (I Samuel 13:13, 14; 15:3,9-11,23), and the Lord withdrew His favor and His power, and Saul's life ended in utter defeat and ruin. This is the history of many men whom God has once used. Sin has crept in. They have done that which God has told them not to do, or they have refused to do that which God bade them do, and the power of God has been withdrawn. The one who had known God's power in service and would continue to know it, must walk very softly before Him. He must be listening constantly to hear what God bids him do or not do. He must respond promptly to the slightest whisper of God. It would seem as if anyone who had once known God's power would rather die than lose it. But it is lost through the incoming of sin. Are there those among the readers of this book who are passing through this dreadful experience of the loss of God's power? Ask yourself if this be the reason; has sin crept in somewhere? Are you doing something, some little thing, perhaps; that God tells you not to do? Are you leaving undone something God bids you do? Set this matter right with God and the old power will come back. David was guilty of an awful sin, but when that sin was confessed and put away, he came to know again the power of the Spirit. (Ps. 32:1-5; 51:11-13).

If we would continuously know the power of God we should go often alone with Him, at the close of each day at least, and ask Him to show us if any sin, anything displeasing in His sight, has crept in that day, and if He shows us that there ha

s, we should confess it and put it away then and there.

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:13

3. Power is lost again through self-indulgence. The one who would have God's power must lead a life of self-denial. There are many things which are not sinful in the ordinary understanding of the word sin, but which hinder spirituality and rob men of power. I do not believe that any man can lead a luxurious life, overindulge his natural appetites, indulge extensively in dainties, and enjoy the fullness of God's power. The gratification of the flesh and the fullness of the Spirit do not go hand in hand. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these two are contrary the one to the other." (Gal 5: 17.) Paul wrote, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." (1 Cor. 9:27, see R.V. Greek. Note also Eph. 5:18.)

We live in a day when the temptation to the indulgence of the flesh is very great. Luxuries are common. Piety and prosperity not seldom go hand in hand and in many a case the prosperity that piety and power have brought has been the ruin of the man to whom it has come. Not a few ministers of power have become popular and in demand. With the increasing popularity has come an increase of pay and of the comforts of life. Luxurious living has come in, and the power of the Spirit has gone out. It would not be difficult to cite specific instances of this sad truth. If we would know the continuance of the Spirit's power, we need to be on guard to lead lives of simplicity, free from indulgence and surfeiting, ever ready to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2. Tim. 2:3.) I frankly confess I am afraid of luxury;-not as afraid of it as I am of sin, but it comes next as an object of dread. It is a very subtle but a very potent enemy of power. There are devils today that "go not out but by prayer and fasting."

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:14

4. Power is lost through greed for money. It was through this that a member of the original apostolic company, the twelve whom Jesus Himself chose to be with Him, fell. The love of money, the love of accumulation, got into the heart of Judas Iscariot, and proved his ruin. "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil," (1 Tim. 6:10, R. V.) but one of the greatest evils of which it is the root is that of the loss of spiritual power. How many a man there is today who once knew what spiritual power was, but money began to come. He soon felt its strange fascination. The love for accumulation, covetousness, the love for more, little by little took possession of him. He has accumulated his money honestly; but it has absorbed him, and the Spirit of God is shut out, and his power has departed. Men who would have power, need to have the words of Christ, "Take heed and beware of covetousness," writ large and graved deep upon their hearts. One does not need to be rich to be covetous. A very poor man may be very much absorbed in the desire for wealth-just as much so as any greedy millionaire.

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:14

5. Power is lost through pride. This is the subtlest and most dangerous of all the enemies of power. I am not sure but that more men lose their power at this point, than at any of those mentioned thus far. There is many a man who has not consciously gone back upon his consecration, he has not let sin, in the sense of conscious doing of that which God forbade or conscious refusal to do that which God commanded, creep into his life, he has not given way to self-indulgence, he has utterly, persistently and consistently refused the allurements of money accumulation, but still he has failed, pride has come in. He has become puffed up because of the very fact that God has given him power and used him, puffed up, it may be, over the consistency and simplicity and devotion of this life, and God has been forced to set him aside. God cannot use a proud man (1 Pet. 5:5.) "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." The man who is puffed up with pride, self esteem, cannot be filled up with the Holy Spirit. Paul saw this danger for himself. God saw it for him, and "lest he be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to (him) a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet (him), lest (he) should be exalted above measure." (2 Cor. 12:7). How many men have failed here! They have sought God's power, sought it in God's way, it has come. Men have testified of the blessing received through their Word, and pride has entered and been indulged, and all is lost. Moses was the meekest of men, and yet he failed at this very point. "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" he cried, and then and there God laid him aside (Nom. 20:10-12). If God is using us at all, let us get down very low before Him. The more he uses us the lower let us get. May God keep his own words ringing in our ears: "Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth gra

ce to the humble." (1 Pet. 5:5.)

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:15

6. Power is lost through neglect of prayer. It is in prayer especially that we are charged with the energy of God. It is the man who is much in prayer into whom God's power flows mightily. John Livingston spent a night with some Christians in conference and prayer. The next day, June 21st, 1630, he so preached at the Kirk of Shotts, that the Spirit fell upon his hearers in such a way that five hundred could either date their conversion or some remarkable confirmation from that day forward. This is but one instance among thousands to show how power is given in prayer. Virtue or power is constantly going from us, as from Christ (Mark 5:30), in service and blessing; and if power would be maintained, it must be constantly renewed in prayer. When electricity is given off from a charged body it must be recharged. So must we be recharged with the Divine energy, and this is effected by coming into contact with God in prayer. Many a man whom God has used has become lax in his habits of prayer, and the Lord departs from him and his power is gone. Are there not some of us who have not today the power we once had, and simply because we do not spend the time on our faces before God that we once did?

(to be continued)

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/12 13:17

7. Power is lost through neglect of the Word. God's power comes through prayer, it comes also through the Word (Ps . 1:2, 3; Josh. 1:8). Many have known the power that comes through the regular, thoughtful, prayerful, protracted meditation upon the Word, but business and perhaps Christian duties have multiplied, other studies have come in, the Word has been in a measure crowded out, and power has gone. We must meditate daily, prayerfully, profoundly upon the Word if we are to maintain power. Many a man has run dry through its neglect.

I think the seven points mentioned give the principal ways in which spiritual power is lost. I think of no others. If there is one dread that comes to me more frequently than any other, it is that of losing the power of God. Oh, the agony of having known God's power, of having been used of Him, and then of having that power withdrawn, to be laid aside as far as any real usefulness is concerned. Men may still praise you, but God can't use you. To see a perishing world around you and to know there is no power in your words to save. Would not to die be better than that? I have little fear of losing eternal life, every believer in Christ has that already. I am in the hand of Jesus Christ and in the hand of God the Father and no one can pluck me out of their hand, (John 10:28-30), but I see so many men from whom God has departed, men once eminently used of God, I walk with fear and trembling, and cry unto Him daily to keep me from the things that would make the withdrawal of his power necessary. But what those things are I think he has made plain to me, and I have tried in the words here written to make them plain to both you and myself. To sum them up they are these: the surrender of our separation, sin, self-indulgence, greed for money, pride, the neglect of prayer, and the neglect of the Word. Shall we not, by God's grace, from this time be on our guard against these things, and thus make sure of the continuance of God's power in our life and service until that glad day comes when we can say with Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day," (2 Tim 4:7, 8,) or better yet with Jesus, "I have glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." (John 17:4, R. V.)

Re:, on: 2006/4/12 15:59

Just wanted to commend you shibu for your choice in Authors. Very happy to see another Good and Godly name posted.

Lord Bless you.

me again

Re: - posted by myke (), on: 2006/4/13 14:08

Shibu,

Excellent post! Here is the need of the hour among those of us in Christian service! It seems to me that too much emphasis is placed today on the the external things like methodology and the pragmatic relevance of our ministries! The real issue is -- are we in right relationship with HIM?!!! Is HIS power flowing?!!! This can come only through continual and consistent heart searching and personal examination in the light of the Scriptures! May the Lord truly help us!

In Awe of His Grace,
Myke

Re: - posted by shibu (), on: 2006/4/13 23:58

To see a perishing world around you and to know there is no power in your words to save. Would not to die be better than that? I have little fear of losing eternal life, every believer in Christ has that already. I am in the hand of Jesus Christ and in the hand of God the Father and no one can pluck me out of their hand, (John 10:28-30), but I see so many men from whom God has departed, men once eminently used of God, I walk with fear and trembling, and cry unto Him daily to keep me from the things that would make the withdrawal of his power necessary: R.A. Torrey. Oh! Lord, give us such a cry in us daily like these godly men who walked with You.

In Him,
Shibu

Re: HOW SPIRITUAL POWER IS LOST : R.A. Torrey, on: 2006/4/14 16:32

Pretty strong message here! I'd say there are a lot of Samsons who have been side-lined by deception! BEWARE, MEN OF GOD, Your enemy the devil seeks to devour you! If you take a solid stand against his world system and its allurements, you will fight evil on every corner! Take your stand, but prepare for war! This is not for the weak and flimsy! Put your boots on, and KICK(in the gates of hell!) :-)

Re: - posted by My_Daughter, on: 2006/4/14 17:42

This ministered to me

The one who had known God's power in service and would continue to know it, must walk very softly before Him. He must be listening constantly to hear what God bids him do or not do. He must respond promptly to the slightest whisper of God. It would seem as if anyone who had once known God's power would rather die than lose it. But it is lost through the incoming of sin. Are there those among the readers of this book who are passing through this dreadful experience of the loss of God's power? Ask yourself if this be the reason; has sin crept in somewhere?

If we would continuously know the power of God we should go often alone with Him, at the close of each day at least, and ask Him to show us if any sin, anything displeasing in His sight, has crept in that day, and if He shows us that there has, we should confess it and put it away then and there.

How do we get this "Power"? It starts with Obedience!!! I have been challenged in this area like you have no idea. What is the Spirit of God asking of you? What is he asking of you right NOW?

Jesus Thank You, Thank you for standing in my place, Thank You for being willing to be the ULTIMATE sacrifice on a day like today over 2000 years ago. Thank you, that because of your obedience when I am weak, I can say I am strong, because your strength is perfected within me. Thank You, that because of you, I can say I am the Head and not the Tail, I am above and not beneath, I am more than a conqueror, and I can do all things through Christ Jesus that gives me strength.

God I want more of you in my life, I desire for this burning sensation in my stomach to never decrease, but to increase even more. Do not take the palpitations away as they confirm to me that you desire for me to speak. God I will not say that I have arrived to the place you desire for me to be, but I will continue to go forward in seeking you. I ask Father God that you would search my Heart and Know my ways. Create in me a clean heart oh God, and do not take away from me your Holy Spirit.

To you be the Glory, the Honor, and the Praise.

Saints Happy Easter