

# Enlargement of Heart.

by Daniel Steele

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*The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of having an enlarged heart filled with God's love, leading to joyful service and empowerment through the Holy Spirit.*

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 6:11

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

Daniel Steele preaches about the importance of experiencing the crisis of the enlargement of the heart, symbolizing perfect love and the love of God shed abroad by the Holy Ghost. Many Christians struggle with spiritual development, facing opposition within and often on the verge of surrender, not fully grasping the promises and power of God. Steele emphasizes the need for believers to dwell on the promises of Scripture, study the extent of Christ's saving power, and pray for God's exceeding abundance in all things.

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## Transcript

It was the Psalmist who, according to the Septuagint version, testifies (Ps. 119:32), "I ran the way of thy commandments when thou didst enlarge my heart." In his early spiritual life there was in this Old Testament saint the same straitness, slowness and lack of momentum, which characterize young Christians in modern times. His service had been enforced by the law and its penalties. Duty was a word which had not been written over and almost concealed by the superimposed capitals which spell LOVE.

But it seems there was a crisis in his religious life where constraint ends and joyous liberty begins; where irksomeness disappears, and spontaneity in service is a permanent characteristic. The crisis which separates these two experiences is the enlargement of the heart. This is a figure for what St. John calls "perfect love," and which St. Paul elsewhere describes as "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost"; though he once, at least, employs the Old Testament phrase (2 Cor. 6:11), "O ye Corinthians, my mouth is opened unto you, my heart is enlarged."

Reverse the order of these clauses, and we have the cause and the effect. A full heart makes an unloosed tongue. The inquiry is all important, When is this crisis reached? Some say. "Never this side the dying bed." But no Scripture proof of this dismal doctrine is ever given. It is not true that the believing soul must be a partly filled goblet till it is overflowed by the waters of the river of death. Others say: All souls at the new birth are deluged with love to the brim; a love that drives their chariot-wheels as swiftly as the mysterious electric current drives our street-cars up and down our trimountain city.

Such a steady motive-power is not the experience of multitudes, yea, the vast majorities who are truly regenerate. Their inertia is great, and the impelling power is feeble. Indeed, something worse than inertia is to be overcome; a strong opposition often arises within, which it takes all their strength to overcome. They have not a heart at leisure from itself to concentrate upon the work of God. True it is that a few Christians, like John Fletcher, very soon after their birth into the kingdom, because of a correct apprehension of their privilege in the dispensation of the Spirit, are deluged with divine love and become giants in faith.

The mass of believers are mere babes in spiritual development. They see days of great weakness, and are often on the verge of surrender to the foe. Some, alas, throw away their arms, and run away from the fight, and never renew the battle. Others fight all their lives with foes in their own hearts and never overcome and cast them out. They have been told by their preachers that this war in the members is the normal Christian life. Hence, believing their preachers instead of the Word of God, they limit his power by their unbelief, and never gladly run, but always sadly drag themselves along the heavenly way.

This large class of Christians needs enlightenment and encouragement, and not denunciation. They need to dwell in thought upon "the exceeding great and precious promises," that they may have an experience of the "exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe." They need to lock arms with St. Paul and walk through his glorious epistles, and get his large view of the extent of Christ's saving power, since he has sent down the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. They should study the new Greek words which Paul coined to express the fullness of divine grace and the wealth of privilege which are the heritage of those who fully believe; such as that translated by "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37), "much more abound" (Rom. 5:20; 2 Cor. 7:4), "and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love." (1 Tim. 1:14.)

Especially should they ponder that declaration of God's ability to save, found in 2 Cor. 9:8, in which are two "abounds" and five "alls," -- "God is able to make all grace abound towards you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work." They should daily repeat St. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, emphasizing each petition, especially the ascription at the close (Eph. 3:20), "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly [superabundantly, above the greatest abundance. -A.

Clarke] above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." There is not sufficient familiarity with the promises on the part of professed Christians. While unbelievers neglect the threatenings, believers are prone to neglect the promises of the Holy Scriptures. Again, the growing failure to magnify the Holy Spirit results in constraint, and in the legal spirit, instead of the freedom of the evangelical spirit, inspiring courage to run through troops of foes.

How many so-called evangelical Christians there are whose creed is practically as defective as was that of the first believers in Ephesus -- "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" as receivable into the heart.

This important item dropped out of a Christian's faith palsies his tongue, paralyzes his hands, and enfeebles his feet. If he is a preacher, his message will be delivered in the weakness of uncertainty and doubt. Splendid rhetoric, and oratorical tones and attitudes, are beggarly substitutes for the unction of the Holy Ghost. The anointed pulpit will always be mighty. The Spirit inspires fearlessness, imparts freedom of utterance, enkindles zeal and unconquerable love of souls. All of these are elements of genuine eloquence. They furnish the man, the subject, and the occasion.

The formal prayer meeting would be transformed by the enlargement of the heart. Dumbness, the penalty of unbelief (Luke 1:20), will find a ready and glad utterance, and the dry harangue will be replaced by the hallelujah.

Let the heart of Protestantism be enlarged by the fullness of the Comforter, and rivers of salvation would flow out unto the ends of the earth, vitalizing those organizations which he can use, and sweeping away those which have been devised as substitutes for his regenerating and sanctifying power.

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