

A Powerful Church -- (Continued)

by Seth Rees

Seth Rees emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Ghost in delivering individuals from sin and enabling true spiritual rest through complete surrender to God.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:15, Psalm 37:5, Proverbs 3:5, Zechariah 4:6, Matthew 12:28, Luke 6:45, Galatians 5:22, Hebrews 4:9-10

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Power"

Description

Seth Rees preaches about the true nature of spiritual power, emphasizing that it is not for worldly achievements but to destroy the works of the devil and save humanity from sin. He highlights that the works of the devil are located in the human heart, and the power of the Holy Ghost cleanses and transforms individuals from within. Rees explains that Pentecostal power eradicates pride, jealousy, impurity, and worldly ambitions, leading to genuine joy in the success of others and effortless work in serving God. He illustrates the concept of surrendering to God by comparing it to a ship relying on God's guidance rather than human efforts, emphasizing the need to cease from personal struggles and let God take full control.

Transcript

There is a widespread misapprehension as to what spiritual power really is. It is not power to found colleges nor maintain great universities. It is not power to teach the arts or sciences, to build pyramids, to drive steamships, to run express trains, or to establish telegraphic communication. These things are caused by other forces, other powers, than the purely Pentecostal. It is not power for political scheming or wise statesmanship. There are many things, good things, perhaps, which it is not the special function of this power to accomplish. Positively, it is power to destroy the works of the devil and to save man from sin and from hell. But where, we ask, are the works of the devil? If they are to be destroyed, they must be located, and the power applied to them where they are. Some maintain that the works of the devil are located in the saloon, in the liquor traffic, and so we find men who give all their strength for the overthrow of this hellish business. Others believe that the brothel, social impurity and licentiousness are the works of the devil. Laboring under this impression, certain persons bend all their energy to the work of the social purity movement. Still others assert that the works of the devil are housed in secret societies, and they therefore bend every energy toward the overthrow of these Christless institutions. We admit that the devil is actively engaged in the maintenance of these gigantic evils, and yet we must get on a warmer track than any of these if we are to find his workshop, his place of business, where he turns out his samples. The

place to which we have reference is the human heart. If from it the devil's works are cast out the man leaves the saloon and the woman forsakes the brothel; the lodge man renounces his order, and worldly entanglements are severed. The works of the devil are not located in our heads, in our intellects. If they were, Yale, Harvard, Brown, Amherst, and Dartmouth might be able to cure the disease. Neither is sin to be located in the body. No medicine can reach it. Even if one be healed by Divine power he is not necessarily delivered from inbred sin. Many marvelous cases of Divine healing are recorded in which the healed person was not sanctified. Sin is located in the heart, the spiritual, affectional nature of man. "Out of the heart," says Christ, "proceed evil thoughts," etc.

The Pentecostal power, the power of the Holy Ghost, lays an axe at the very root of the tree, and, instead of dealing with branches and limbs, it attacks and destroys all roots of pride, anger, jealousy, malice, envy, strife, impatience, worldliness, unholy ambition, lust, and all impurity even in its most complex ramifications. It delivers us from all grumbling, whining, peevishness, fretfulness, fearfulness, sensitiveness and touchiness. It blessedly relieves us of all pomp, gusto and brag. The bluster and braggadocio of swaggering depravity entirely departs. That yeasty "puff" so characteristic of carnality when lauded and commended has yielded to amore solid and satisfactory tissue. Men may flatter and use "soft soap," but the Holy Ghost man does not puff up; they may criticize and severely censure and mercilessly condemn, and yet he does not puff down.

This power of Pentecost delivers a man from a thirst for place in the church. No one holds a position that he wants for himself. He is not offended if others are used more than he. He is not "hurt" if others are honored and he is slighted. He rejoices in the prosperity of another, and that not with a smirking, hypocritical semblance of rejoicing, but with a real, heartfelt gladness that "in honor the other" is preferred. "The Holy Ghost coming upon" us furnishes such power that all work runs easily.

"My yoke is easy," says the Lord. One who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost never has to rely on human dependencies or outward circumstances. The writer was one day sailing down the Narragansett Bay in company with a member of his church when suddenly the brother called his attention to the "Walker Armington," remarking that it was the only vessel of its kind on the Atlantic Coast. "What is there peculiar about this vessel?" he asked, for it was but one of the many beautiful four-masted schooners which filled the bay.

"Notice," said the gentleman, "the black smoke issuing from the top of one of the masts. The schooner is fitted out with an engine, and thus is able to sail up and down this crooked channel without requiring the assistance of a tug." "That," I said to myself, "is but a symbol of my own experience. Since I received the Holy Ghost I am not dependent upon any fleet of tugs." That queenly, graceful "floating palace," the "Connecticut," was approaching our Providence harbor one morning in a heavy fog.

As the steamer rounded Field's Point the pilot failed to hear the foghorn, and the huge ship slipped onto the bar. The full strength of the massive engines only lurched the steamer from side to side and ground her hull more firmly in the sand. Tugs were sent for; but the combined efforts of many tugs only showed their utter incompetency to float the vessel. What was to be done? There was but one thing to do. Wait until God's moon by the magic of its attraction had lifted the sea five feet, and then it was that the "Connecticut " floated with perfect ease.

Five feet of God's water under the ship's keel were worth more than all the tugs. So with us when we cease our own struggles. When we stop trusting in our friends to tug us loose, when we turn our eyes from

all things human up to the great God, then he will lift us with the tide of love that swells in his bosom and waft us to a calm haven with perfect ease. Instead of tearing us to pieces by pulling at us, he gently puts the "everlasting arms" beneath us and raises us and bears us swiftly away from all bars and shoals.

It is so delightfully easy when we let him do it all. We are informed by false teachers that "God helps the man who helps himself," and that God will not do anything for us that we can do for ourselves. But this is not Bible. It is damaging teaching. Thus thousands seek God only to supplement their own unholy efforts. They call on him only when they have completely failed. In the utmost extremity God is to be resorted to. What a pity! All our doings are deadly. We reach a point where we must do nothing: Christ must do all.

"Ye shall not fight in this battle. The battle is not yours but God's." "It is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." "For he that is entered into his rest he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." When we receive the Holy Ghost we retire from business; we are then at leisure; we enter upon a Sabbath of rest that never ends, a Sabbath that must not be broken.

So long as we endeavor to care for ourselves, God will give up to us the entire monopoly of the business, and it is awfully hard work. But when we receive him, he takes entire charge and manages everything. We go out of business. We sell the entire stock, the fixtures, the stand, everything to him. We make a clear warranty deed to all we have; we turn in all, past, present and future, things known and unknown, future friends and foes, wealth or poverty, prosperity or adversity, coming conquest and seeming failure. Our reputation is included in the consecration. No longer will we seek it, defend it, or try to take care of it. We will quit itching to run down every little rumor the devil sets flying from lip to lip concerning us. We transfer ourselves with all our belongings over to God. We surrender the papers, we hand over the keys. God cancels the mortgages, pays the taxes, and keeps up repairs on the property. What a relief! Hallelujah!

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