

Send the Fire

The church today is full of indifference, materialism, unbelief and powerless programs that don't save lost souls. What we need is the fire of the HOLY GHOST.

The crying need of the church today is a real baptism of the Holy Spirit. As they kneel in their studies, earnest pastors are crying out to God over the lack of power; the indifference and absence of the young people; the cold materialism and unbelief of those who remain; and the lack of revival fires.

The remedy for this ailment—the solution for this problem—is a real baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire upon the church.

With the outgoing of godliness and the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost came the entrance of worldliness and “forms of godliness” that deny the power thereof, and the cooling off of the white heated love for God and souls. Many have turned to socials, suppers, community uplift, moving pictures in the parish house and compromise that professes to “fight fire with fire” and brings the world into the church in order to draw the people from the world, arguing that if they are to have it anyway they might better have it in the church than without.

This, however, will never prove a satisfactory solution for the problem. There is one sure way back to power, back to the old-time glory, back to Pentecostal conviction, soul winning and sweeping revivals—one way back to the old-time welling, praiseful hallelujahs and glory that will draw the thronging multitudes from the haunts of sin, help us arrest their attention and fix their eyes upon Christ. This one way is plainly described by Jesus:

“Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49, KJV); “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8); “Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (John 20:22).

Just as the flowers with drooping heads that have been bathed in the bright sunlight every day need the refreshing showers of rain from heaven—so the church of today, having found and basked in the warmth of the Savior’s love, needs the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to refresh, invigorate and cause its drooping head to lift with strength and new courage.

Just as the electric light bulb in the finest chandelier in the White House, despite the splendor of its setting, must be connected without a break to the distant powerhouse if it is to give light—so the pastor and the church of Jesus Christ, though they be in the finest cathedral in the land, must have an unobstructed line and a solid connection with the powerhouse of the Holy Spirit if they are to shine and draw perishing multitudes from the darkness of unbelief and worldliness of today.

Just as the finest automobile, in spite of its satin finish, its cord tires, its properly lubricated and well-tuned motor must have gasoline in its tank in order to cover ground and to make real headway—so the clergy, the laymen, the Christian hearts the whole world over need the power of the Holy Ghost. No matter how much shining polish, lubrication and well-tuned machinery we may have, if the power of the Holy Spirit is missing, it is hard to push the church automobile up the hill of real revivals.

Just as—but there! We all know that what we need above all else is a genuine baptism of the Holy Ghost! Not just the

theory, not just “take-it-by-faith-believe-you-have-it-and-go-on-experience.” We have tried this substitute too long.

Not a wildfire excitement that runs to fanaticism, emotionalism, or side issues and that causes the recipient to fight and argue and boast more about the manner in which the Holy Ghost enters His temple than about the real, practical power and soul-winning efficiency that His dear incoming brings.

Not an experience that causes one to strut about and plume oneself with an “I-am-holier-than-thou, for I-have-had-an-experience-you-do-not-possess” air. Not an experience that boasts only of its own joys and transporting moments of transfiguration, its attendant signs and evidences (though, thank God, these will attend that incoming), but a real, sane, practical, level-headed, mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire such as the 120 received on the day of Pentecost. This baptism will equip the recipient for service, endue him with power as a winner of souls, fill him with a love and passion for the lost akin to that in the heart of the Father, and help him lift up the crucified Lamb of God to a dying world.

Oh, yes, dear Lord—with all our hearts we long to see the church of today tarry until she receives the genuine baptism and power of the Holy Ghost. We do not want anything that is foolish, unscriptural or impractical, but that which is genuine, biblical, and applicable to the business of preaching the gospel in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost, with the same methods and results that attended Your work in the apostolic days of old.

We yearn not for a spirit of fear but for a spirit “of love and of power and of a sound mind.” We desire that love which

will draw multitudes to the cross of Christ—that power which can cleanse away sin and heal those that are oppressed—the sound mind of the genuine Holy Spirit who has come to guide us into all truth, to take the things of Jesus and reveal them to us.

A mountaintop experience is of value only as it equips and fits us for practical service in the valley. The power of Pentecost, with its rushing wind and tongues of flame, was of value in that they who received the Spirit became His temple thenceforth to glorify the Christ and win the multitudes to the Lord.

And hallelujah, this power is to be had today! God's store has not run short. The gift and power of Peter's time are for us. Let us cease beating ourselves against the stone wall of coldness, formality and unbelief in our own feeble strength; let us set our faces one and all to seek the power the disciples found on the day of Pentecost.

Let us open our hearts to the searchlight of heaven and cry unto Him: "Strip us, Lord, of everything, of the world and self and sin. Empty, cleanse, purify these cold hearts of ours. Melt us in humble contrition at Thine own crucified feet.

"Take doubts and fears away, dear Lord. Help us to forget the giants in the land, to forget the hypocrites who have professed to have had this great experience but have become like vain children, playing with and boasting of a toy they did not know how to use.

"Help us to fix our eyes on the Bible—the dear Word of God—the

promised power—the pattern given—the definite, practical results that lead therefrom, and then,—Oh, precious Lord, help our poor, faltering feet to find the lowest step and mount the stair that leads us to ‘the upper room.’

“Baptize us with Your power, endue us with Your might. Give us, Master, nothing short of the mighty power of Acts 2:4, not for our own sake, but for Your name’s sake—that as a flaming torch we may be held within Your hand to point the way to others, to lead the lost to Calvary, the Christian to the upper room and the Spirit-filled believer to the harvest fields to glean and work for You.

“Then will we see the sinners saved, the sick made whole, believers filled with Your power; then will our altars overflow, our churches be too small. The world is starving for the gospel of power that will meet the crying need of body, soul and spirit. There is but one way to meet that need—there is but one solution to the problem, one glorious path of victory open—’tis the baptism and the power of the blessed Holy Ghost.”

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Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944) was the founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. She was a gifted evangelist and preacher and the author of several books, including In the Service of the King, Fire From on High and This Is That.