

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN WORKER.

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INCREASING interest is everywhere being taken in the work of the Holy Spirit, and rightly so, for this is the Spirit's Dispensation. As the Son of God had His day and work upon earth, reaching from the advent song of the angels through the darkness of the garden and cross to the resurrection and ascension; so the Spirit of God is now having His day and work upon earth, beginning with Pentecost and winding up with the Second Coming. He is now in the world in some such way as the Son was then in the world, and so we enjoy to-day in the real presence of the Spirit what those others enjoyed in their day in the real presence of the Son. The Son was embodied, and thus came so close to the people of that day and they to Him. And the Spirit is embodied too. The Son's body was specially prepared for Him, a body all His own. The Spirit is beholden to you and me for His body. He enters into the bodies of those who will receive Him, and dwells embodied there. Instead therefore of the embodied Son in one place at one and the same time, we have the embodied Spirit wherever there is a Christian, and so we have ten thousand embodiments of the Spirit at one and the same time, and here and there and yonder, at home and abroad. Blessed mystery this, not only God with us, but within us! God manifest in flesh still! God embodied in you and me to-day, in this dull clay of mine here and now!

### THE SPIRIT'S POWER NEEDED FOR SERVICE.

This paper has to do with the Spirit's work only in relation to the Christian worker. Here is one, let us suppose, who wants to do work for the Lord in one or other of its many departments. He is looking forward to it, in sight of it, face to face with it. The work may be that of the pulpit, the mission field, the professorial chair, Sunday School work, the service of the Master in any of the many fields of activity open to both men and women at home or abroad. The candidate is already a Christian, and has more or less Christian experience. His education too, or her's, is more or less complete, the more so the better, other things being equal. He is, in a word, where the eleven were, or about where they were, when the ascending Lord charges them to tarry in the city, until they should be "clothed with power from on high."

As I look at it, the Christian worker needs the Spirit, not only for regeneration and sanctification and such like purposes, but he needs Him also for Christian service, and he so needs Him, that he is ill equipped for it, if he go to it unclothed with the Spirit's power. The Lord's

work requires the best a man has, and no man is, nor can be, near-hand his best, who is without what the Spirit can do for him. I do not say he is without power of a sort, power of an earthly sort, but he is without power from on high, and without that power, he cannot do efficient work. The work in such hands will limp and lag. It will drag heavily. Even best efforts will come short.

Take Peter as an illustration. Take him before, and then after, the day of Pentecost. Take him without, and then with, the Spirit's power. He is a Christian before as well as after, a believing man, not a perfect man by any means, but a good and true man.

Well, look at him on the night of the betrayal. You will say: "That is scarcely fair. That is taking him at a disadvantage, that is taking him at his weakest and worst." And I grant that. But then it will do as an illustration, and that is the use I am making of it. You see him cowering, shrinking and shivering, over the court-yard fire, and denying his Lord before maids and menials. At once you say: "Poor Peter! What a weak fallen disciple! How utterly unfit as yet to lead men, to be a guide to the people, to do service for the Lord!" Now that is Peter, the man of rock, before he receives power from on high.

But look again! This is some weeks later. Pentecost is past, the Spirit poured out, the power from on high received. He is tempted again, tempted to deny his Lord, tempted to hold his peace. Authority wants to gag him. Force wants to compel him to a wrong silence. But now there is no cowering cringing fear about the man. He speaks, and speaks with a wisdom and power that men have to listen to. It is felt and acknowledged that the power and wisdom he has is not of himself. He is indeed Peter. There is no mistake about that. He is the rough fisherman-disciple. You see it in the man's swagger. You hear it in his Galilean brogue. You observe it in his want of culture. It comes out all over him, the Simon Peter of the man. But then there is now about him a power that makes you forget all that, that more than compensates for his lack of culture, that compels respect, that commands attention, that convinces the most stupid prejudices, that shuts the mouth of criticism, that awes. He is now another sort of man to men, a man to listen to, a man to follow, for he is Peter full of the Spirit's power.

"TARRY YE IN THE CITY, UNTIL YE BE CLOTHED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH."

I think there is an application here for the Christian worker of to-day, for you and me. I think there should be a season of solemn heart-searching and spiritual preparation, a special season of waiting upon the Lord in prayer, in view of entering upon any Christian work. Is a