

less transaction. This reminds us of the common method of deciding whether certain amusements, etc., are right or wrong. Ministers usually tell young people that they should not engage in anything upon which they cannot ask God's blessing. "If you can honestly pray about a thing it is likely to be right." Strange that such counsel should be given in the light of history which makes it clear that men have conscientiously prayed over the burning of heretics and witches, and have also asked God's blessing upon the grossest forms of immorality. Yet what better advice can men give who have no knowledge of the Holy Ghost as guide into all truth?

Though it may be true that there were some defects in the lives of the apostles after Pentecost, that they did not clearly apprehend the full meaning of Divine Guidance at the first, yet it is perfectly clear that the change was so great that it cannot possibly be accounted for on any other hypothesis than that it was the result of their acceptance of the Holy Spirit as guide into all truth. It is equally clear that they pressed the acceptance of the same Spirit in the same sense as they themselves received Him, upon all their converts.

Turning now to the historical argument what do we find?

First, the Old Testament clearly predicts that one of the most distinguishing features of the future dispensation should be the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh. That God's laws should be written in the heart and placed in the mind. Secondly, John Baptist, the immediate forerunner of Jesus, and the greatest of the prophets, declared that the great mission of Jesus was to baptize with the Holy Ghost. Thirdly, Jesus Himself laid far greater emphasis upon this part of His mission than upon any other aspect of it, giving it special prominence just before His crucifixion (see John, xiv, xv and xvi), and also

just before His ascension (see Acts, ch. 1). Fourthly, the apostles passed through a distinct crisis in their experience in exact harmony with the teaching and prediction of Jesus that they should receive the Holy Ghost not many days hence and that this baptism would give them clear perception of spiritual truth and make them powerful witnesses unto Himself. Fifthly, the apostles not only received the Spirit themselves but pressed His acceptance upon all the first Christians, many outside the apostolic circle receiving Him in the same sense as those inside that circle, Stephen, Paul and Luke being notable examples. The theory that the gift of the Holy Ghost received by the apostles was in any sense different from the baptism received by the ordinary believers of the day is as pure a fiction as could be invented.

But some one says we all believe in the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Certainly: we do not deny it; but what we insist upon just now is, that this baptism of the Spirit means taking Him to be guide into all truth and empowerer to do the perfect will of God on earth as it was done by Jesus. If the Holy Ghost does not do this for us, then we press the question what does He do, or what advantage is there in receiving Him at all? Let all lovers of truth ponder this question well and see if they can find a reasonable answer. We are convinced that they will be forced to the conclusion that if Divine Guidance, the gift of the Holy Ghost as guide into all truth and empowerer to do the whole will of God, was not the secret given to the world by Jesus, then He gave us no secret at all so far as holy living is concerned, His death having reference to pardon and not to holy living.