Don't Resist the Holy Spirit.

BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER.

That eminently successful physician of souls, Dr. Spencer of Brooklyn, tells us in his "Pastor's Sketches," that once when passing through a village, he was invited into an inquiry-meeting and requested to say a word to each inquirer. One lady, a perfect stranger, told him with tears in her eyes that she had not come to Christ; she could not tell why; her heart was hard, and she feared that she never would be saved. "How long, madam, have you been in such a deep trouble of mind?" "For three weeks, sir," she said, sobbing aloud. "Then," replied Dr. Spencer very tenderly, "then for three weeks you have done nothing but *resist the Holy Spirit.*"

He left her, and passed out of the room. Several days afterwards, as he was driving near that village, he met the same lady riding with a friend in a carriage. She recognized him, seized the reins, and stopped the horse. "That was true, sir, that was true," said the lady. "What was true, madam?" "What you told me in that inquiry-meeting, that I had done nothing but resist God's Spirit. That sentence pierced my heart. I thought I *was yielding* to the Spirit by being anxious, by coming to meetings, by beginning to seek the Lord. If you had made any explanation of your remark, I might never have come to Christ. That expression about 'resisting the Holy Spirit' opened my eyes, and I could not let you pass without thanking you for the plain, honest words which revealed to me my real guilt, and the hindrance in my heart." The lady soon allied herself to the Church of Christ, and good Dr. Spencer got a new proof that nothing short of the naked *truth* will ever teach a sinner the subtle sinfulness of his heart, or send him to the Saviour.

That same truth, uttered in love, may be the very truth needed by the person now reading this article. You are thinking seriously, my friend, about your spiritual condition and character. You are not satisfied with yourself; your sins trouble your conscience; you want to be better; you may honestly say, "Yes, I want to be a Christian." Perhaps you have been reading your Bible for light, have been praying, or may have gone into an inquiry-meeting. Yet you do not become a Christian? Why not? Where is the hitch and the hindrance?

Let me say to you that "becoming a Christian" simply means becoming *Christ's*. The Holy Spirit leads in only one direction, and to only one Person. It is not to a meeting, or a book, or to a doctrine, however good all of these may be; it is to a living, loving, almighty *Person* that the Spirit is directing you and drawing you. Don't resist the Spirit! You stand outside the door, or rather, you keep Jesus Christ outside the door of your heart. You say prayers, but do not confess your sins, and break off from them. Repentance means action, not mere emotion. You imagine that you are on the road to becoming a Christian. Yet you do not obey and *follow Christ*. That means action, not merely serious feelings. What the Holy Spirit is pressing upon you, is the whole heart for Jesus Christ! A few sins you may have abandoned; a few prayers you may have made; but there is a fortress in your heart that has never surrendered. Satan still "holds the fort"; it is garrisoned with self-righteousness, and there are plenty of sand-bags in the form of excuses and good promises. While your innermost heart holds out against Christ, you are resisting the Holy Spirit. You may be willing to go to church, go to your Bible, and go to a prayer-service; but you do not go straight to the one atoning Saviour, yield yourself all up to Him and cry, "O be merciful to me a sinner!" Saving faith is an act. It is the forsaking of sin to follow Christ; it is the letting go of self-help and trusting Christ; it is the grasp and grip of your soul on Jesus Christ. Everything short of this is a quenching of the blessed Spirit. Then, my dear friend, submit yourself to the Spirit's guidance, and do what the inner voice in your conscience bids you. An honest hour with Jesus is worth more than months of sermons or prayer-meetings. Settle it with Him. Whatever Jesus bids you do, as He speaks by His pleading Spirit to your conscience, do it. No soul ever went to hell while obeying the Spirit; millions, we fear, have gone there by resisting Him.

"The Stiffened Finger of Death."

The above words were used in regard to one who, in his will, has left a sum of money to a benevolent cause. The writer said: "I did not say he gave it, but that he left it; perhaps I should have said he relinquished, because he could no longer hold it." In the first place, let the reader distinguish, as the *Christian Index* admonished its readers, between giving and relinquishing. The stiffened fingers of death can relinquish, but they cannot give. So, my brother, if you would give, or rather lend or pay, anything to the Lord or His cause, *you* must do it, for "the stiffened fingers of death" cannot do that duty.

But this is not the only duty those "stiffened fingers" cannot perform. There are many religious duties and services that the dying Christian may see as the light of eternity shines back over his life, and he would as gladly make amends for them, as for the sin of not giving; and while those stiffened fingers could relax to make some amends for their tightness in the past, they cannot give back wasted time and opportunities; they cannot help the children, whose minds and morals have been neglected; they cannot refund to those who have been defrauded. Poor, miserable, stiffened fingers, who can tell the pains they bear! If they do not point to a hell in sight, they point to "the giving account with grief." (Heb. 13: 13.) Who were they who were to be gladdened at the great day by the words, "enter into the joy of thy Lord?" Was it not said to the "good and faithful servant?" The stiffened fingers of death have nothing to do at the death of the good and faithful servant of God.

Again, there are Christians, converted souls, who put off making a public profession of Christ in baptism till death knocks at the door and calls for them. Then they plead for time and opportunity to bear witness for Jesus, just for this one more chance to confess Him before men. We have seen just such a case. Thirty years, according to the man's account of himself, had elapsed between conversion and baptism, and who can tell the deep regrets of that poor soul as it reflected over the wasted time, service and money that those thirty years might have given to the Lord? If those stiffened fingers could, they would have rolled back the wheels of time in order that lost years might have been redeemed. Think of it, Christians, make your wills now, and make God's will your will for life as well as death.—*Index.*

Speak Kindly.

Why not? Why should not husbands and wives bound together as they are in the most intimate of all earthly relations and necessarily in constant intercourse with each other, consecrate and hallow the sacred relation, and bless themselves, by always using kind words when they speak to each other? Where is the place for hard words, angry words, and words of reproach and bitterness? Such words always leave a sharp sting behind them. They are not the words of affection, and become neither husband nor wife. They contribute nothing to the happiness of either, and are the prolific sources of a large amount of misery. The husband who abuses his wife by his words, and the wife who snaps and snarls at her husband, are alike untrue to their marital pledge, and really in a very bad way. Such husbands and wives ought at once to repent of their sins against each other, and acquire better affections and better manners.

Speak kindly. Why not? Why should not parents always speak in this way to their children, and why should not children always so speak to their parents? If parents thus speak children will naturally learn to do the same thing. The example by the parents will reproduce itself in the practice and habits of the children; and the latter will grow up into manhood or womanhood with a gentleness and softness of manners, and a carefulness in the use of words that is characteristic of refined and cultivated beings. Authority, when exercised through kind words, is scarcely felt simply as authority. The element of severity is withdrawn from it; and obedience to it is secured by love. Parents who allow themselves to get into fits of passion with their children, and then thunder and storm at them in the language of vehemence and anger, are making a grave mistake in the matter of family government. Such parents need first of all to govern themselves and put their own passions under a healthful restraint.

Speak kindly. Why not? Why should not brothers and sisters living in the same house, eating at the same table, and fed and clothed by the same bounty, always speak to each other in this way? By so doing they will minister to each other's happiness, avoid petty quarrels, make home pleasant, cultivate good affections, gratify their parents and please God. As they become men and women they will be scattered hither and thither, and when thus scattered it will be pleasant for them to look back to their childhood days, and remember that their intercourse with one another was kindly and affectionate. The friendship then formed will follow them through life.

Yes; speak kindly. Why not? Why should not men who are associated together in business study and practice the law of kind words toward each other? Why should not the master speak kindly to his servant? Why should not one speak kindly to a stranger who may ask him a question? Why should not those who differ in opinion address each other in the use of respectful and kindly words? Why should not those who oppose moral evils temper their language with the law of kindness in the form of utterance? Why should not the minister of the Gospel, the doctor and the nurse in the sick-room, the buyer and the seller, the banker and the merchant, the governor and the governed, the judge on his bench, the warden of a prison, and, indeed, every man and every woman, on all occasions, in all circumstances, and under all provocations, both study and practice the law of kind words in the total intercourse of life from the cradle to the grave?

We would like to have our readers, each one for himself, ponder these questions; and also the title placed at the head of this article. There is an amazing power for good or evil in words. A large part of human influence is exercised through this channel. What one is in life, how he affects others, and how they will feel toward him, depends very greatly upon the use he makes of his tongue. If he goes through life with a lawless and acrid tongue, as the instrument of an equally lawless and acrid heart, hurling epithets right and left at others, blistering the sensibilities of his fellow-men by his own vehemence, and disgusting them with his vulgarity, he may set it down as a fact that he will make himself a nuisance in the social system. Everybody will be afraid of him, and manage, as far as possible, to keep clear of him. If, on the other hand, he sweetens his own life with kindness of feeling and kindness of words, he will always be a pleasant person to meet, to talk with, and be acceptable and agreeable anywhere and everywhere. Society will find good use for such a person, and will use him to its advantage and his advantage. Kind words are the cheapest, and, at the same time in practical power for good results, the most potent words that one can use. Reader, speak kindly. You will thereby avoid saying what might be offensive to others, and while making yourself happy also make others happy.

—One man recently said of a neighbor: "He is a very nice man if you don't have any business to do with him." What a slash was that into a man whose religion is vain! What if sinners have to warn each other not to have business with particular Christians? What if a man's religion cannot be found in his own house? What if the poor are afraid of his heavy hand? No doubt there are such men who are ignorant of their terrible error and danger. They belong to the church; they think of the church as something they have stock in; they have a notion that all criticism is born of hatred of the church. Just because he is reproached for meanness, such a man now and then plumes himself as a martyr for Jesus. It is a terrible delusion. He is not blamed because he belongs to the church, but because he is dishonest, unmerciful, impassionate or revengeful, or, one word, an unrighteous man by the St. James standard.—*Zion's Herald.*

Items from "The Kingdom."

William Carey said that his missionary interest was first excited by reading Capt. Cook's voyages, and he first intended to go to the Pacific islands.

Any brother, clerical or lay, in the Moravian church, is expected to hold himself in readiness to respond to a call to foreign missionary work at any time.

Christians, while giving to all useful benevolent and philanthropic objects, should give precedence to the claims of religion, and the extension of Christ's cause in the earth.

We are to give proportionately (Deut. 16: 10 17); systematically (1 Cor. 16: 2); willingly (Ex. 25: 2; 2 Cor. 9: 7); liberally (Rom. 12: 8); promptly (Ex. 22: 29; Prov. 3: 28); and not only of our superfluities (Mark 12: 44). Above all, we must give lovingly.

In Burma.—Three were baptized in Mandalay in September.——A church of ten members was formed in Sagaing November 2.——One Chin recently baptized at Tayetmyo, came a hundred miles to receive the ordinance.—— The Women's Home Mission Society in the Rangoon Sgau Karen mission supports several Bible women.——In Rangoon ten Karens from heathen families have been received into the church as the result of one woman's labors since May.——Rev. Walter Bushell recently baptized two men in a heathen village a long way from any Christians; so a new centre of light is started.——Seventy red Karens have been baptized into the Paku Karen churches.——There is a constantly increasing number of Karen Christians who are being placed in responsible offices under the government. They have a powerful influence in favor of Christianity.

In India.—Five were baptized in Madras, three at Hanamaconda, thirteen at Nursaravapetta, and one hundred and forty-seven on the Ongole field.——Two men walked sixty-five miles to be baptized by Mr. Maplesden at Secunderabad.——Mr. J. Newcomb, of Cumbum, reports twenty-seven baptized Nov. 18.——Dr. Clough says: "Thus far this year we of the Ongole Station have baptized 607, and connected with the Vinukonda mission 387—994 in all."

In Assam.—There is not a spare man, and one station is entirely vacant.——Mrs. Burdette, of Gauhati, has been ordered to stop all work; but she is working on in spite of the prohibition, because there is so much to be done, and nobody else to do it.—Rev. C. E. Burdette writes: "It is very discouraging to see American Baptists hanging back just now. Men for Upper Burma ought to have been in training on the field for two years at least."

In Africa.—The Uganda mission, Central Africa, according to the latest letters, was enjoying the favor of King Mwanga. Many have been baptized.——A new mission is to be started on the Upper Congo among the Balolo tribe under the auspices of Dr. Guinness. Eight thousand dollars have already been subscribed to begin the work.—*Standard.*

Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's Home.

The residence is delightfully situated on one of the hills at Upper Norwood, to the southeast of London. It may be described as a spur or continuation of the hill on which the Crystal Palace stands, from which building it is situated about a mile. From the house and grounds can be obtained superb and extensive views over the weald and hills of beautiful Surrey—from Wimbledon, with a peep at Windsor, on the right, round to Kent on the left. The strong south-wester has free course here, and sweeps straight from the sea over the pleasant country. When it is strong, it brings the salt spray with it; and Mr. Spurgeon assures us that the salt is driven on to his study windows, and he has tasted it from them himself.

It is the fresh air that Mr. Spurgeon needs, and he rejoices in it here to his heart's content. "Fresh air is more than medicine to me," said he. And he can sit in his study, with the glass door open to the grounds, or make his way to a summer-house near, or, if the weather be bad, he can retire to a conservatory.

The house stands in its own grounds, which are both beautiful and extensive. It is approached from the main road, leading to Streathman Common, by a carriage drive, which is so flanked and shaded between trees and shrubs as to form almost a continuous avenue right up to the house.

Between the fencing and trees on the right we catch glimpses of the beautiful garden and grounds, and, presently, of the commencement of a sheet of water, which winds blow away below the slope of the hill on which the house is built.

The portico, beautiful with greenery, is at the foot of a tower which rises above the house roof. The front door will probably be found open, if the weather be found favorable, and a light, but strong, wire "trellis-door" closed instead. This is, no doubt, to permit free ingress to plenty of fresh air, while affording an effectual barrier to any "stranger" who may have found his way in past the lodge at the entrance gates. The same trellis-door is to be found in the study, opening on to the lawn.

The hill slopes downward on two sides of the house, and is clothed with beautiful trees. Down below are the kitchen garden and lawns, on one of which the students of the college disport themselves at bowls. In the kitchen-garden is the well of medical water, known as the Beulah Spa, from which Mr. Spurgeon permits his neighbors at the hydropathic establishment to draw. It is curious to think of the great preacher of the Metropolitan Tabernacle as the proprietor of a Spa; but such is the fact. We are inclined to think, however, that he holds a far higher opinion of the exquisite fresh air on the top of the hill than of the unpleasant-tasting Spa-water.—*The Quiver for December.*

A beautiful young lady became so sadly disfigured with pimples and blotches that it was feared she would die of grief. A friend recommended Ayer's Sarsaparilla, which she took, and was completely cured. She is now one of the fairest of the fair.

The "Wasted" Sermon.

Dark clouds were gathering in the western sky. A storm was rapidly approaching. A cloud of disappointment overshadowed the minister's face as he stood by his study window hoping against hope that the storm might pass over. He turned back to his desk and sighed as he took up the sermon he had just been reading over.

"Is it not hard?" he said to his wife, who was sitting in her low chair before the open grate; "even the weather seems to have entered into league with everything else to defeat my hopes. This is the last Sunday before communion, and I spent so much labor on these two sermons, thinking that surely some good would come of them; but only two of those whom I had especially in my mind were there to hear this morning's sermon. Bro. Henderson's new organ proved a superior attraction, and they went to hear it. Now this evening I cannot hope for an audience, for this storm looks as if it would break just about church time. I have a great mind to preach an old sermon, for I have spent so much labor on this one, and hoped for so much from it, that I can not bear to waste it on a few."

"It is hard," responded his wife, sympathetically, as she came to his side and looked out at the lowering sky; "but, dearest, you know who will choose your audience this evening. Do you think it would be better to lay aside the sermon you have prepared especially for this evening because the weather is so unpropitious, than to preach it in faith that God will not let His Word return unto Him void?"

The minister shook his head.

"Perhaps you are right," he said; "that is a question I have never been able to settle satisfactorily in my own mind; whether I have any right to reserve a sermon that I have prepared for a special occasion. I will preach this one to-night, that I may err on the safe side if I err at all."

Great drops began to patter down as they left the house, and before they had gained the shelter of the church the rain was coming down in torrents. One by one the faithful few who were always in their accustomed places, despite wind or storm, struggled in, and just as the second bell stopped ringing, three of those over whom the pastor had yearned came in, and it was with a hope that his appeal might reach these three hearts at least that he began the service.

A prayer rose upward from his heart as he rose to preach. The feeling that his message was directed especially to these three souls which had not yet found the Saviour lent him unusual energy and power. His text was the precious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11: 18. His hearers could not be but impressed by the earnestness and solemnity of his appeal, as he urged them to accept the precious invitation and find the rest and peace which passeth all understanding.

As the notes of the last hymn echoed through the church, the storm seemed to rage less furiously for a time, and a man who had been standing in the vestibule, unseen by either minister or people, raised his umbrella and went out into the darkness again, with the words of the hymn, "Delay not, delay not," following him until he passed out of hearing. He had sought refuge there from the storm just before the sermon, and had been an unseen listener through the remainder of the service. He had glanced at the array of empty pews, and the small congregation scattered about the church, with a smile half of amusement, half of contempt.

"A storm like this sifts a church pretty thoroughly," he said to himself. "In spite of all their professions, there are few that care enough for their soul's salvation to seek it in such weather. I suppose the minister will save a sermon by it, however; for no doubt he will either give them an old one or let them go without any."

The door leading from the vestibule into the church was ajar, so he heard every word of the sermon without any effort to do so. He listened with an interest that he was surprised at. It was his boast that he could live, and had always lived and prospered, without religion. He was a successful lawyer, with genial manners, which made him universally popular. He was charitable and generous, not from any sense of duty, but from a kindness of heart that made him willing to do anything to alleviate suffering or distress in others, and no man could have led a more upright life than he did.

He believed himself to be thoroughly sincere, and he was merciless in discovering inconsistencies in the lives of those who professed to be Christians. He was the leader of a large circle of young men, who, admiring his character and talents, followed his example implicitly in regard to religious matters. He had not entered the doors of a church for years, and it was only the fury of the elements that had driven him to seek a temporary shelter there this evening. Had the sermon been argumentative he would have sought argument to mentally refute it. But it was nothing of the kind; it was an earnest appeal to all to come to the Saviour, and he could not doubt that the speaker spoke from his heart.

A strange longing to know something of this joy and peace in believing came over him as he stood there alone in the darkness, but he shook off the feeling half angrily. Still there was a fascination that held him to the spot until the sermon was concluded and the hymn read. He walked homeward rapidly, trying to banish the train of thought suggested by the words he had heard, but his attempts were useless. He sat by the glowing fire in his own room, while the storm raged without, and tried to comprehend this new feeling which had taken possession of him.

"It is the weather," he muttered to himself, impatiently, drawing the heavy curtains together that they might deaden the sound of the wind and rain. But he could not so easily shut out this unusual depression. He remained up late, and retired only to toss restlessly on his pillow and hear again the words, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." Rest! That was what he longed for; but how could he give up his unbelief, his arguments, and go to the Saviour whom he had rejected all his life?

"That sermon was utterly wasted," said the minister to his wife when they reached home, "for old Mr. S—— slept through it, and it is evident enough that the two girls present paid no heed to it. And yet I can not blame myself, for I did my utmost. If I had had a hundred unconverted souls before me I could not have tried more earnestly to win them. I was so terribly in earnest myself tonight that I felt as if I surely had reached some heart, but you see how entirely I failed. I have lost heart and hope."

"Don't say that," answered his wife. "You have done your part—now trust the Lord to do His part." But she could not cheer her husband's depressed spirits.

The next morning when he was enjoying the late breakfast that was his Monday morning's privilege, the door bell rang, and a card was brought in to him.

"Mr. L——!" he ejaculated, in surprise. "What can he have come for?" He left his unfinished breakfast and went into the parlor.

Minutes passed away into an hour, and still Mrs. N—— heard the continuous sound of voices in low, earnest conversation, and she grew somewhat annoyed at this untimely visitor who had interrupted her husband's breakfast. At last she heard the sound of retreating footsteps, and the opening and closing of the front door. She replaced the dishes which she had been keeping warm upon the hearth. When the door opened, and her husband re-entered the room, she was struck with the look of solemn joy on his face.

"Truly, God's Word did not return unto Him void last evening," he said, with a glad ring in his voice. "The storm was His messenger to bring one within the church who might otherwise never have entered it. Mr. L—— was driven by the tempest to seek shelter within the doors of the church, and he heard the sermon which I thought was wasted. It has already brought forth fruit, by God's blessing, for Mr. L—— came this morning, as humbly as a child, to ask the way to his Saviour. May God forgive me for my lack of faith in His power, and to Him be all the glory."

Mr. L——'s openly professed allegiance to his new Master was but the first fruit of that sermon. Those who had imitated him in his indifference to religion followed his lead now, and a new spiritual life was infused into the church, the beginning of which could be traced back to that stormy evening when Mr. N—— preached the sermon, which, in his ignorance of the workings of Providence, he had condemned as wasted.—*Times of Refreshing.*

Religion and Business.

It is possible to put into one's coming and going, into one's doing, a glow of reverence for God, and to make it evident in every transaction that one is trying to be obedient to the divine will. Men may be strictly honest, true in speech and all that, and yet be worldly. How often one hears the remark that business is business. Very true. But business may be more than business; it may be a means of grace; it may be, and ought to be, a school in which the soul grows in gratitude, in patience, in faith, in love, and in all the qualities through which a soul comes into fitness to fellowship now and evermore with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a pitiable sight to see a man hard and cold in his business life, as though this were a great section of his existence in which there is no possibility of cultivating religious principle and having the grace of God. It is a refreshing sight to see a man living in the world and doing with his might what his hands find to do, and yet doing all in this spirit of loyalty to the Master.—*Advance.*

Books for Boys and Girls.

There is not a civilized boy or girl living in the most rural seclusion to be found from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Arctic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, that may not every day enjoy the best society, and have opportunity to form himself and herself after the best models of intelligence and virtue. The mails go everywhere, and everywhere in them may go such books and papers and magazines as will do for the child essentially all that could be done for him if he enjoyed what are technically called the best advantages. It is a liberal education for a child to have *The Wide Awake, St. Nicholas, Harper's Young People, Our Youth*, and when he gets older, the magazines for adults. While reading these he is enjoying the best society; he is making acquaintance with the most intelligent and influential class of people on the continent. A girl who has read and digested books by our standard writers for girls will know how to behave, will have a standard in herself of propriety, of purity, of unselfishness; a boy who has read the various volumes of biography, travel, exploration, and science, written especially for boys by pure and scholarly men, will have a standard of noble action and being within himself that will make a man of him, a gentleman of him, if he possesses the raw material to be worked up. The juvenile family library is the great educator in every family.

Thief Arrested.

The news was received with the utmost satisfaction by the community that he had terrorized; but the arrest of a disease that is stealing away a loved and valued life, is an achievement that should inspire heart-felt gratitude. Chiliness, cold extremities, depressed spirits, and extremely miserable sensations, with pale, wan features, are the results of disordered kidneys and liver. Arrest the cause at once by taking Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It is a purely vegetable detective, that will ferret out and capture the most subtle lung or blood disorder. Druggists.

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