

THE DIVINE FLAME.

WARNING AGAINST QUENCHING MOTIVE POWER OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.

PAUL MIGHTY PHRASE MAKER.

His "Quench" in the Text "Quench Not the Spirit" Has a Superlative Meaning—Question Is a Practical One, and Must Be Answered By Everyone Who Has Ever Felt the Flames of Divine Love.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1904, by William Bailey, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Los Angeles, Cal., Jan. 17.—How to kindle and keep alive in the heart the divine flame which energizes and spiritualizes the whole life is the preacher's theme in this discourse, which deals with a practical religion for everyday people. The text is I. Thessalonians v. xix., "Quench not the Spirit."

The mighty phrase maker Paul is a coiner of many superlatives. He is no stupid platitudinarian. Everyday commonplace, insipid, tasteless, comparisons have for him no attraction. His force is always red-hot; his arms are cranes, his hammers pile drivers, his doors floodgates; his streams are fathomless, onrushing rivers of molten iron; his sparks are stars, and his seconds millenniums.

We would, for our present lesson, use one of Paul's impressive, significant words. His "quench" has a superlative meaning. "To quench" means to smother, as a mother would extinguish the flames consuming the dress of her burning child by wrapping about the flimsy garments a heavy, wet blanket, jerked from off the clothesline. "To quench" means to deluge, to submerge, as the Johnstown fires were put out when the Conemaugh dam broke and houses and stores and factories were floating about in the flood like chips tossed in an eddy. In that word "quench" Paul startlingly warns all believing Christians against the sin of extinguishing the power of the Holy Spirit, which is now burning within them as a living flame. "Quench not the Spirit" is the command to the Thessalonians. Smother not the divine flames.

Now comes the practical question: How do many believing Christians open the floodgates of sin and drown out their spiritual fires? How do many of our new converts chill their holy enthusiasm and dry their cheeks, wet with penitent tears, and harden again their hearts in sin? First and foremost, by neglecting God's place of public worship. By turning their backs upon the Sunday church services. By claiming that they can pray to God just as well at home as in the week night prayer meetings. By asserting, that the "communion of the saints," in a building which has been dedicated to God as a "house of prayer," is not essential for true spiritual life. No true convert should ever be guilty of casting a slur upon the public altar of Jesus Christ. It is hard work for a live coal to keep warm and to remain a live coal outside of the grate. It is hard work for a warm hearted, loving Christian to remain a spiritual "live coal" unless he continually lives in close contact with other loving Christians. It is by the commingling of prayers that the best prayer is produced. It is by the commingling of testimonies that the best testimony springs from our lips. It is by "the foolishness" of preaching that sinners are saved. Yes! And also by the foolishness of preaching that they are brought nearer week by week to the personality of Jesus Christ.

Public worship is not essential for spiritual life, why did God decree that Moses should build a tabernacle as soon as the hosts of Pharaoh had found a watery grave in the depths of the Red Sea? At that tabernacle the Hebrews were compelled to worship. If not essential, why did Christ during his earthly ministry again and again go up to Jerusalem to attend the feasts and again and again go into the synagogues to worship and to pray? If not essential, why did Christ command his disciples to assemble in one place in Jerusalem and await the coming of the Holy Ghost?

Public worship is absolutely essential for the spiritual life of the average man. Some years ago a country boy was riding in the cars toward Philadelphia. In the seat sitting next to him was an old man. After a long conversation, in which the young man told his seat mate that he was going to Philadelphia to find work, the aged man asked him for his letters. "Oh, yes," said the young fellow, "here is one from my old employer. Here is one from my school-teacher. Here is one from my physician." "Is that all? Have you not one from your minister?" asked his seat mate. "Yes, I have that also." "Well, my young friend," said the old man, "I would advise you to present that letter to some church at once. I am an old sea captain, and I have found out by bitter experience that it is safer when in harbor to tie my ship to a wharf than to anchor it out in midstream, to be floated around in the tides. By bitter experience I have also found out that no young Christian is safe unless he is bound up in Christian fellowship with other Christians in Sunday service and in the week night prayer meetings." The old sea captain's experience has been mine. I never saw in my life a church member go astray unless you could first trace his spiritual degeneracy in growing absence from the prayer meeting and Sunday services. If you want to keep close to God you must keep close to his praying disciples. Never neglect, unless compelled, a church service. For your spiritual welfare especially, never neglect your week night prayer meeting.

How may the new convert in another way smother the divine flames burning within him? By throwing away the golden key which unlocks the closet door of secret prayer. By neglecting to have a "trysting place," where, as a lover, he can meet with God and talk over his plans and hopes.

A Christian convert should never get out of prayer touch with the heavenly city. It is a fatal manoeuvre. It will ultimately mean the Christian falling a victim to spiritual ambush, entrapment and overthrow. You have no more reason to expect the flames of a candle to burn in a chemical retort emptied of all oxygen than you have a right to expect your spiritual fires to burn in your bedroom which is not charged and surcharged with the holy atmosphere of secret prayer.

It is necessary for true spiritual life to pray in public. Oh, yes! But it is just as necessary to pray in private. "The Lord thy God is a jealous God." That means in one sense that there are times when God wants us to be alone with him, alone as Christ was alone with the Heavenly Father when Jesus again and again went off alone to pray. He wants us to be alone with him in holy fellowship, as some of us have often been alone with our mothers. Blessed and tender were those hours of sweet communion with our mothers, who have now gone beyond. After the rest of the family were all in bed we used to sit up toward midnight, telling her what we wanted to do and asking her if she thought it was best for us to do it. So God, the Heavenly Father, wants us at times to come to him when we are alone. He wants us to tell him all our plans. He wants us to come to him with the abiding faith of a little child. And the Heavenly Father, "who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Prayer in public necessary for spiritual development? Oh, yes! Prayer behind the locked door, prayer in secret, prayer where only God's ear can hear and God's eye can see, just as important for the spiritual life and hope. During the Revolutionary war a Highland soldier was caught creeping into camp during the darkness of the night. He was charged with being a spy and taken before the commanding general. Being asked why he had left the camp, the soldier replied, "I merely left in order to go out into the darkness of the woods and be alone with God and have secret prayer." "Then down on your knees!" thundered the officer. "Within twenty hours you shall be shot as a spy. You never needed to pray as much as you need to pray now." The soldier dropped on his knees and offered such a simple, earnest prayer of faith and love that the tears sprang from the commander's eyes. He turned to the guard and said: "Let that soldier go. He is telling

the truth. He must have often been on his knees in prayer drill or else he could not have prayed so well in public review." The great Heavenly Commander judges the sincerity of our professions by the earnestness and consecration of our private devotions.

The closed lids of God's Bible are often used to extinguish the divine flame burning within the Christian's heart. They can become the barred and bolted doors of superstition, barred and bolted by gross ignorance, endowing the most monstrous of heresies in the darkest of cells. They may become red-hot irons putting out the calm, deep blue eyes of faith and love. By an ancient eastern law no blind prince is allowed to sit upon the throne of Persia. By a divine law no Christian can reach that stage of enlightenment fitting him to occupy one of God's spiritual thrones without earnest and prayerful study of the Bible.

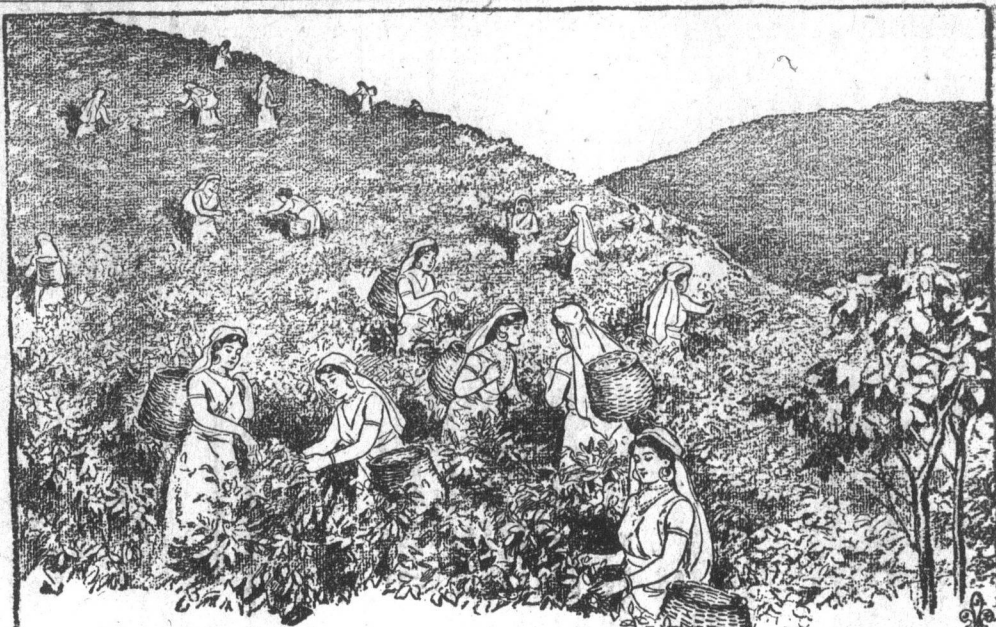
My friends, how are you going to find out what is the law of God and the will of God unless you read his holy word? In Isaiah he distinctly says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." Are you and I trying to find out by studying the Scriptures what are God's thoughts and to harmonize our lives with his life? Are we trying to find out what is the deeper, richer meaning of the Saviour's name? Are we seeking to understand what is the mission of the Holy Spirit and how God with the weak things of this world is going to confound the mighty? Or are we going around day after day singing a senseless, silly, siren song: "Jesus will save! Jesus will save! Oh, I am so happy, Jesus will save!" when some of us merely look upon the name of Jesus as an amulet, because we do not know or care who Jesus is or take the trouble to read the words which he has spoken for us? Are we going to look upon the closed lids of the Bible in a superstitious way, as did the peasants of Europe during the dark ages, as though they were something they had no right to touch? Or are you going to look upon the Holy Scriptures as a divine letter written by the Heavenly Father to his children, which letter ought to be carefully studied and its commands to be strictly followed out?

Supposing that your mother died of consumption when you were a child of four years. Supposing that when the hectic roses of that fatal disease were blooming in the garden of her pale, sunken cheek she one day had you, her sleeping baby, placed by her side. Then while you slept she wrote you a long letter. In this letter she gave her maternal advice and parting benediction. Then she folded that letter and gave it to your father, saying: "Husband, give this to my baby boy on the day he graduates from the public school. Before he decides upon life's work I want to give him my advice and tell him what I want him to do." Supposing twelve years had now passed and you, at sixteen, were now given that letter. What would you do? First you would kiss it. You would say: "Mother wrote it with her dying hand! Mother wrote it with love! Then you would reverently open the yellow leaves and carefully read that letter, line by line. If you were a true son, if possible you would follow out the desires of that maternal letter word by word. Now convert in the gospel life and Christian of older standing, the Holy Scriptures are God's letter to us. If we are the Heavenly Father's true children we will take the letter and study it. We will translate the desires of that letter into our own lives. We will make God's thoughts our thoughts and his ways our ways.

"But," some new convert says, "if the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is essential to a truly developed spiritual character then I am not a true Christian. I practically know nothing about the word of God except that 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' That is all I know. Cannot I now accept Christ as my Saviour? Oh, yes, my brother, you can. You are now a Christian, if you want to be. If you accept and truly believe that one verse just quoted, you are as much a Christian as a little fledgling just hatched out of an egg is a bird. If you accept truly with your whole heart that profound truth and should die to-night, he who promised salvation to every soul who believes and trusts him would take your soul into his safe keeping. But if you live you should grow and develop. You are saved that you may serve him as an example and as a soul winner, and this you can never do unless you learn to know him and his teaching through the study of his word. Remember you are now a Christian only as the bird just hatched out of the egg is a bird. You are a spiritual fledgling; you must eat spiritual food. That spiritual food is to be found in the Word of God, as the breath for your spiritual lungs is to be found in the atmosphere of prayer.

Paul said to young Timothy, "Preach the word!" I say to you, "Study the word." Study it in the church and in the home. Study it on your knees and at your desk and in your bed. Yes, new convert, read the Bible and continue to read it, because God commands you to read it. Read it, because your deeper spiritual life depends upon your reading it or in having it read to you. Study it, and continue to study it, because when you read the Bible God is talking to you, as when you pray you are talking to God.

But there is still another way for the Christian to quench the spiritual flame which is now burning within him. That way is to neglect the family altar, which should be raised in every home. That way is for the husband and father to hurriedly arise in the morning and quickly dress, and then off to business without gathering his children about him for family worship and without having any blessing asked at the breakfast



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table. That way is for every father to think that all that he has to do is to say his own prayers and do his own Christian work, and then his children will say their own prayers and fulfill their own Christian tasks.

Every man's home to a certain extent is his own castle. He can lift what standards he pleases over his own fireside. He can emphatically say, as did God's servant of old, "Let others do as they will, but as for me and my house we shall serve the Lord." Or he can open his own home to shelter and entertain evil temptations of all sorts. But let no man think if he surrenders his house to evil practices and yields himself and his home to the seductions of the world that he can at the same time live a spiritual life, nor can he expect that those around him, who are bound to him by ties of blood and love, will lead spiritual lives. He must, if he would live right, not only consecrate his own life every morning to God, but in the presence of his children he must offer a petition to God for them to consecrate their lives to Christ also.

So completely do I believe the true spiritual life to be dependent in many ways upon the family altar that I would have the fathers and mothers, as soon as possible, teach their little children to publicly pray at family worship and to publicly ask the blessing at the daily meals. I remember, many years ago when traveling in Scotland, noticing how general was the custom for the youngest child of the household who could utter the words being called upon to ask the blessing at the family meal. I thought then, as I think now, that it was an excellent practice, tending to accustom the child from its earliest years to acknowledge the goodness of God and to address him in prayer.

Thus, no matter which way we may look at the Pauline word "quench," the whole trend of the matter is this: As Christians we cannot live a true spiritual life unless every moment of every day we are in touch with Christ. We cannot preach to others unless by searching God's word we hear Christ preaching to us. We cannot pray for others in public review unless we have had much knee drill in ourselves wholly to God's service unless at the same time at the family altar we give our loved ones also to him.

In welcoming the church members to Christ's altar I have but one more question to ask and to answer. In what, O struggling friend, does the chief definition of being a Christian consist? Ought you to say, "I want to be a Christian to escape the evil effects of sin?" I want to be a Christian to be happy? "I want to be a Christian in order that I may reach heaven?" Oh, no. You should want to be a Christian, not for your own beatification, but in order that God may be glorified. In order to glorify God we should work for him. In order to glorify God we should give to him of our temporal substance. In order to glorify God we should pray to him. We should read the Bible that we can further find out how Christ may continue to be glorified. May our lives be filled with holy zeal for the glorification of the blessed Saviour on earth and in heaven. I congratulate you in this, the supreme moment of your life, when you start in the service of Jesus Christ. Christian brother, give me thy hand.

Tom—You called on Miss Milyun last night, didn't you?
Dick—Yes.
Tom—Spent the evening indulging in small talk, eh?
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THE G. T. P. DEPOSIT

Continued from Page 9.

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Drummond and Arthabaska	1,112,100
Gaspé	767,075
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Labelle	773,275
Laprairie and Napierville	438,075
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Laval	493,575
Levis	655,250
L'Islet	360,975
Lotbinière	500,975
Maisonneuve	1,629,450
Maskinonge	395,325
Megantic	590,525
Missisquoi	462,050
Montcalm	325,025
Montmagny	368,925
Montmorency	307,775
Montreal—St. Anne	584,200
Montreal—St. Antoine	1,191,325
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Montreal—St. Mary	1,015,775
Nicolet	664,750
Pontiac	643,050
Portneuf	678,975
Quebec—Centre	509,150
Quebec—East	983,125
Quebec—West	228,725
Quebec—County	552,525
Richelieu	464,400
Richmond and Wolfe	853,425
Rimouski	1,003,925
Rouville	399,750
St. Hyacinthe	538,575
St. Jean and Iberville	488,400
Shefford	590,700
Sherbrooke	460,650
Soulanges	248,200
Stanstead	474,950
Temiscouata	729,625
Terrebonne	670,400
Trois-Rivières and St. Maurice	654,175
Vaudreuil	261,125
Wright	1,120,000
Yamaska	405,100

UNORGANIZED DISTRICTS.

Abitibi, Ashuanipi and Mistassini..... 60,125

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES.

Alberta..... 1,646,900
Assiniboia—East..... 1,242,325
Assiniboia—West..... 442,300
Saskatchewan..... 641,975

UNORGANIZED TERRITORIES.

Arctic..... 165,375
Franklin and Keele..... 213,650
MacKenzie..... 130,400
Ungava..... 127,825
Yukon..... 680,475

No matter how it is looked at, the above constituencies will have to contribute the amounts set opposite them.

These figures are appalling, and are worthy of the serious consideration of every resident of Canada, no matter whether he be a voter or not, for every single soul in the Dominion will have to contribute to this scheme in one way or another. If all the constituencies were asked to declare by a referendum whether they wanted these mortgages placed on them, can any one doubt the result?

A SIGNIFICANT CENTENARY

Continued from Page 9.

cided to raise a centenary fund of 250,000 guineas for Bible translation and Bible circulation throughout the world, and the Congress of Canadian Societies decided to raise a fund of at least \$50,000 as this Dominion's contribution to the same cause. Much of this, it is hoped, will be raised by special offerings in the churches throughout Canada on Sunday, March 6th, next, to be celebrated as Bible Sunday all over the British Empire, and in all foreign countries where the Society's operations are carried on.

DISLOCATED HER SHOULDER.

Mrs. Johanna Soderholm, of Ferguson Falls, Minn., fell and dislocated shoulder. She had a surgeon get it back in place as soon as possible, but it was quite sore and pained her very much. Her son mentioned that he had seen Chamberlain's Pain Balm advertised for sprains and soreness, and she asked him to buy her a bottle of it, which he did. It quickly relieved her and enabled her to sleep, which she had not done for several days. For sale by all druggists.

A sentry, an Irishman, was on post duty for the first time at night, when the officer of the day approached. He called, who comes there? Officer of the day, was the reply. Then what are you doing out at night? asked the sentry.

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until spring to let your contract for your new residence, if you intend erecting one, or repairs to your old one if you propose remodeling same. Remember if we receive the contract now we will be able to do it much cheaper than if you wait until our spring rush. Every part of the work done under our personal supervision. Leave particulars of work at office or phone 52 and we will be pleased to call on you and give you our estimate. Grilles, mantels and all interior fixtures supplied on shortest notice.

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