

systematizing its operations, we leave the whole matter in their hands.

Were it not for making our letter too lengthy we would gladly notice other important conditions of growth in our churches, such as *Scriptural Discipline*, Union and the like. But prudence forbids. In conclusion, brethren, we would remind you that the condition of conditions of spiritual growth, is our continued *looking to and dependence* upon the *Holy Spirit*. That has ever been a principle cardinal in the Baptist faith, and the glory will have departed from us if we ever lose sight of it. We may have our church and denominational machinery perfected, our educational institutions well furnished, and equipped. Our Missionary enterprise Home and Foreign prosperous in men and money. Our churches supplied with an educated ministry and our creeds groaning beneath the weight of an unexceptionable orthodoxy, but unless all be energized by the *Holy Spirit*, it will prove a dead mass or like the bones in Ezekiel's Valley, "dry, very dry."

Here lies the greatest danger of our times, not in too much machinery, not in too much learning, but in placing our dependence in them. In substituting the outward and visible for the inward and spiritual. In losing sight of God the Spirit, and trusting in an arm of flesh. Brethren, be on your guard, an insidious foe is crouching near, while we plead for all outward helps, for the consecration of our best talents to the service of Christ, and for the best possible training for our work, let it never be forgotten that talents and training will only serve to heighten the emphasis of condemnation, if we are found relying upon them instead of the Holy Spirit. God's ancient rule was, to "choose the weak things of this world to confound things that were mighty." He has given us no intimation by revelation or otherwise of an intention to supersede that rule. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord."