

the outcome of effort, even if that effort can go no further than enforced *waiting*.

It is asserted by many that the one hundred and twenty were not prepared for the advent of the Spirit till the ten days were expired; that Peter had not yet ceased from his impulsiveness, nor John from his thunderings, nor Thomas from his doubts, and that, therefore, it was necessary that they should keep praying and emptying themselves of these selfish tendencies until all were gone; and that, therefore, these days would have been shortened if they had accomplished their preliminary work sooner. Hence is founded, on this fancy picture, an exhortation to go and do likewise. "Get emptied of self," say they, and then will come a baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Here it will be at once seen how this speculation works in the interests of the teachings and practice of the apostles of effort. God's way, as brought out in every part of the Scriptures, and as confirmed by every one who walks in the Spirit, is that of simple, glad acceptance, and requires no preparation further than willingness to accept. This gospel of effort must have some room for display, for action, and refuses right of way to the Holy Ghost except under stipulated restrictions. The fact that all efforts to get rid of self are about as successful as the effort of the substance to flee from its own shadow seems not to dishearten such enthusiastic workers, still the eternal ding dong is ever on their lips and in their life's practice, *do, do, DO* something, even if you know beforehand that you can't do it.

If the disciples had taken ten years to get rid of self they would not have succeeded any better than the modern apostles of dying to self do—it would have been a dying which exhibits the most lively kind of living.

It was only when they received the Holy Ghost that they really did die to self, for then they followed the Spirit as a distinct object of obedience, in place of their own desires or notions, which is the only dying to self the Scriptures seem to have any knowledge of.

But, suppose that this speculation about the necessary occupation of the

disciples during these ten waiting days is true to facts, see what tremendous drafts it will make upon our credulity in other directions. These disciples had been favored with all the advantages which Christ's three years' personal ministry secured for them. They had, moreover, enjoyed the presence of the risen Saviour during the forty days intervening between His resurrection and ascension. They were present and saw Him ascend from earth, after listening to His latest words of command and comfort. Moreover, we can safely presume that they represented the most spiritual of the Jews at this time. And yet so far were they from being emptied of self, that ten days additional were required to be devoted exclusively to this result.

But now contrast with these, Cornelius and his friends, who required only a few hours for their preparation; or the twelve Ephesian converts, who required not even so long as that, the work being apparently crowded into minutes, and how the apostles and their first friends begin to sink in our estimation. Why, even Paul, red-handed with the blood of the proto-martyr, required but three days' preparation, the Almighty Himself being judge. And what shall we say of the rashness of Peter, who, on the day of Pentecost, promised the multitude that they might *immediately* receive what required so much laborious waiting on their part! Verily the apostles of laborious effort must have vast capacity for swallowing absurdities before they can become established in their creed.

In conclusion, as a practical application of the whole subject, contrast the simple way of faith in securing and retaining the Pentecostal gift with this cumbrous way of effort, and the scripturalness of the way of faith will be more readily realized. The way of faith obtains it this—any—moment; the way of effort requires an indefinite period of time. The one preaches true humility, the other fosters spiritual pride, even if it is covered up with the garments of voluntary humility. Finally, whilst the one secures perfect and lasting victory, at best the other obtains only an armed truce, and is always ready for another