

make any saving impression. "I would then set apart," he says, "a day for private fasting and prayer, fearing that this power had departed from me, and would enquire anxiously after the reason of this apparent emptiness. After humbling myself, and crying out for help, the power would return upon me with all its freshness." Such, said Mr. Finney, was the experience of his life, and he adds, "This power is a great marvel; it sometimes seems to pervade the atmosphere of one who is highly charged with it. Sometimes great numbers of persons in a community will be clothed with this power when the very atmosphere of the whole place seems to be charged with the life of God." This power "was doubtless the great and main thing promised by Christ, and received by the apostles and primitive Christians; it has existed to a greater or less extent in the Church ever since."

A minister stated to the writer that for two years no soul was converted under his preaching, to his knowledge. He took the matter seriously to heart. He could savingly impress no one that he was aware of. He went to God in prayer, and told Him of his troubles. It was revealed to him that he was not consecrating himself wholly to the work of the Lord as he should do; and he asked the assistance of God to enable him to give up as far as possible everything that was of a selfish character. Soon after his ministry was remarkably successful in the conversion of souls. Mr. Finney says:—

"It is amazing to witness the extent to which the church has practically lost sight of the necessity of this endowment of power! Oh! for a conviction of the necessity of this *endowment*, and faith in the promise of Christ. * * * I have known ministers, who had laboured many years without it, at last come to possess it in an eminent degree. No human eloquence can ever convert a soul. This endowment is *nothing* or it is *everything*, in the sense of being wholly indispensable to success. The want of it should be regarded by the churches as a disqualification for the pastoral office, or for superintendent of the sabbath school, or for a deacon of the church. Pastors should urge the necessity of this endowment upon the churches, and raise up helpers in the Gospel."

If there is truth in the statements of Mr. Finney, then the subject is well worthy the attention of every minister of the Gospel in the Congregational denomination. If his views are unscriptural, then they can be ignored. No harm can come of any minister asking himself and asking the Lord to give him a greater baptism of the Holy Spirit than he possesses at the present time. The word of God, and not that of man, must be the true standard of doctrine. And if an endowment of power from on high can be obtained by the minister, it can also be obtained by the layman. Oh! that all the laymen would consecrate themselves, their service, their time, their talents, their properties, to the Lord God of Hosts and His service.

If the Christian men of the present day can receive a baptism of the Holy Ghost as well as the primitive Christians, it is well to study how to obtain it. In discussing this question, Mr. Finney says:—

"Christ expressly promised it to the whole Church, and to every individual whose duty it is to labour for the conversion of the world. No one has at any time a right to expect success, unless he first secures this endowment of power from on high. The text informs us that it is infinitely easy to obtain the Holy Spirit, or this endowment of power from the Father. Everybody prays for this, and yet how few comparatively are endued with this spirit of power."

§ And the reason assigned for the lack of this power is unbelief, self-indulgence, uncharitableness, censoriousness, self-dependence, worldly ambition, selfishness, dissension, evil temper, impatience, indolence, negligence in prayer, and want of entire consecration. Says Mr. F.:—

"We shall receive the promised endowment of power from on high, and be successful in winning souls, if we ask, and fulfil the plainly revealed conditions