

descended, and gave them power to speak burning words of truth and salvation. It was not then a mere ministerial gift, but one that was given to the whole Church; the weak as well as the strong; the rude in speech as well as the learned and eloquent; the lowest believer as well as the chief Apostles.

What a rebuke we have in this fact to the false and unscriptural notion, so prevalent amongst many, that God only gives the tongue of the Spirit's power, for the conversion of souls, to a particular class in the Church; and that it is vain for any one but those called to the work of the ministry to look for such a gift. Are not these ideas, thoughts of unbelief, and want of a clear apprehension of God's purposes of love to the world? Is it not limiting the power of God in a way that he has not done himself? From the present passage we are plainly taught that God is willing to give tongues of fire and hearts of love to all who seek it in the appointed means. His ministry for the conversion of souls, and the building up of the Church, includes the whole body of the faithful; and very often we see that from the very lowest ranks of society, from the weak and ignorant, God raises up men, and gives them a power and influence for good over their fellows such as is not exercised by the most learned and eloquent ministers that the Church has sent forth. "Yes, in these last days," saith the Lord, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." Be it ours then to seek this tongue of fire, and learn from God's word that it belongs to no particular class, but is poured out upon all whose hearts are prepared for its reception.

Behold now the effects of this divine influence upon the disciples. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. It came upon them in no partial manner, but filled the souls to overflowing, so that they were brought completely under its influence. Filled with the Holy Ghost! What a grand and elevated position to be in? Every faculty illuminated, every affection purified, the whole nature transformed into the likeness of Jesus, the soul endued with divine power, and the tongue uttering forth words that pierce through the hearts of the unconverted and cause them to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Is not this a position to be coveted by every believer, and one concerning which we may well ask the question, "Is it within our reach?" That it is something *special, something not enjoyed by all God's people, is quite evident, if we look abroad upon the Church.* Are we, however, to conclude from this fact that it is not within the reach of all? God forbid that we should form such a low and unworthy view of the willingness of our Divine Father to pour out his Holy Spirit. He is able and willing to bless us more exceedingly abundant above all that we can ask or think. It is his wish that we might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God: strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. It is the privilege of every believer to know the love of Christ, which surpasseth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God. This divine power will work in us, and all grace shall abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good word and work. How many of us, however, come to occupy this glorious position, of being filled with all the fulness of God? As believers, no matter how weak we may be, we receive the Holy Spirit at our conversion; but we are not thereby filled with its divine influences. Our bodies become temples of the Holy Ghost; but still every part of that temple is not always illuminated and warmed up by the fire of God. There is many a dark crevice, many a nook or chamber of the Christian's heart, which is often very far from being filled with the Spirit.

In proof of this, look at the imperfections and shortcomings of God's people. How many, though sincere and earnest, are yet so weak as to be constantly falling away under the power of temptation, making themselves miserable, and dishonouring the Lord's cause? How many live far below their privileges; are cold,