

~Other Speakers S-Z: G.D. Watson:

Tears have a language just as definite and emphatic as smiles or gestures. Words do not constitute the only language we speak, for everywhere there are many languages spoken by every human being. There is a language in our gait, our tones of voice, our eyes, smiles, gestures, and our physical movements, in our laughter, facial expression, and in our tears.

The Bible is full of tears. See how the patriarchs "lifted up their voices and wept". Read in the prophets how the tears poured down their cheeks night and day. Go through the New Testament and see Jesus weeping with His friends at the grave of Lazarus. Read Paul's Epistles where the burning tears fell on the page as he wrote. What a vast ocean of heart life and pathos and feeling pervades the whole Bible. It is not a stoical, human, philosophical book; it throbs with deep feeling from beginning to end. It is a wonderful blessing to any human soul to have the Holy Ghost plow up the deep, interior fountains, and melt all the emotions, and cause the heart to pour itself out in tears.

There are different types of Holy Ghost tears. There are the tears which flow from conviction of sin, especially when we see the sin in the light of God and look at it in contrast with the Divine compassion and longsuffering toward us. All truth, to be forcible, must be seen with its two sides as a whole and not as a half truth. And so the sight of our sins, would not of itself break up the depths of the heart into weeping. But when this vision of sin is seen in connection with God's longsuffering and compassion towards us, we get a little glimpse into the tenderness and merciful feeling of God for sinners. Then sin seems heart breaking, and so the conscience is touched to the quick, which produces a flow of tears.

It was this kind of weeping that Mary Magdalene poured out over the feet of her precious Lord. It was this kind of tears that flowed thick and fast from the eyes of Peter when he heard the cock crow. No sinner can be made to weep by a mere cold, formal sight of his sins. Mt. Sinai made the Jews tremble, but did not make them weep, and so the denunciation of sin or the portrayal of it can never of itself produce repentant tears. It is only when the sins are seen under the soft, melting light of infinite pity and love that the heart is broken and the tears flow. Law may reveal sin, but nothing in the universe except love will make a man hate his sins. Water may be locked up in ice, but you cannot drink it till it is melted, and it takes the warmth of the tenderest love to bring forth the waters of repentance.

There are tears we shed out of an intense desire of seeing God, of beholding Jesus. These are tears of a still higher order. These are tears such as David shed when he longed for the courts of the living God during his banishment and when he said his soul thirsted for God as the panting hart after the water brooks. These are the tears Mary shed when she sat at the empty tomb of Jesus with an unspeakable longing to find her dear Lord. There are no tears that give us such a deep and beautiful insight into the preciousness of Christ's person and character as these tears of holy longing. When we get an opportunity for long seasons of secret prayer and pour out our hearts to our Heavenly Father, and then leave ourselves open for the Spirit to work in us as He pleases, He begins to draw us out in pure heart longings after God. It is glorious beyond description to have Him give us glimpses of Himself that seem to entice our souls almost out of the body, and draw us away with such inward pantings, that the heart seems to leap and bound upward into the Heavenly world.

We seem in spirit to be running with all our might to get closer to His blessed face, and at every bound it seems our hearts will break with desire after the living God, till the great fountain of tears is broken up and they flow like hot salt streams down our cheeks. Then the soul cries out, "O my Lord! My Love! Thou infinitely blessed, tender, precious God; when shall I see thee in thy glory, and when shall I drink myself full of thine eternal blessedness!" These tears give to our inner eyes telescopic visions into the beauties of God as they are clustered and set forth in the meek and lowly JESUS. These tears are supernatural, and float us, like Noah's flood, above the highest mountain tops of earth into the deep blue dome of the peace and joy of God.

Another kind of spiritual tears are those we shed out of pure love for our fellows, when we weep over the sins of mankind, the calamities of our neighbors, and out of a heart sorrow, for the salvation of souls. Such are the tears St. Paul shed over the wayward Galatians, and over those persons who had made shipwreck of their faith. It was tears like this that Samuel shed, when the Lord told him that Saul had turned away from God, and was rejected from being king, and the great loving prophet wept all night long. It was such holy, loving tears as these that fell from the eyes of Jesus as He sat on Mt. Olivet, and looked over His beautiful but ill-fated Jerusalem, and said, while the tears trickled down His cheeks, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you, as a hen gathereth her chicks under her wings, and ye would not."

Holy Ghost Tears

These were the kind of tears the weeping prophet, Jeremiah, poured out all his life over the sins and desolations of his people. These are the tears that soul winners who are filled with holy love shed over the souls that they are seeking to save. These are the Holy Ghost tears which the humble and holy ones pour out in the silent night watches before God over the awful backslidings in the churches, over worldly ministers, and over cold, lifeless congregations.

Perhaps these tears take us down deeper in the heart of Jesus because they bring us into the plan of His sacrifice for others and knit us in sympathy with His soul over the lost. There are many professed Christians who seldom weep; in fact, many of them speak slightly of tears, but such persons are leagues away from the true Bible life. May God pity the dry eyed Christians, for if the eye is dry, the heart behind the eyes is dry also. We must never have self complacency in our tears, or look upon them as good in themselves; they are simply the effect which proves the working of a deep spiritual cause, back in the soul. But while we are not to be attached to our tears, we are to thank God that He gives them to us, and above all things, we are to seek that inward tenderness of nature, that lowly contrition of heart, that interior union with the Christ life out of which Holy Ghost tears may flow.