

D.L. Moody:

Mr. Moody on the Special Gift of the Holy Spirit - Experience of the Apostles - Repeated Anointing - Why we Lack Power - The Great Need of Modern Christians - Are we "Filled with the Spirit," and Ready to Go Anywhere?

I SUPPOSE if I could put the question and ask those who are filled with the Spirit to respond, very few if any would be heard from. And yet we read in Ephesians 5:18 that this is a command: "Be ye filled with the Spirit." God commands us to be filled with the Spirit; and if we are not filled, it is because we are living beneath our privileges. I think that is the great trouble with Christendom today: we are not living up on the plane where God would have us live. In the 20th chapter of John's Gospel, and the 22nd verse, are these words: "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Now, those men had already the Holy Ghost dwelling in them. They would never have left their fishing smacks and followed Christ during those three years of humiliation and suffering if it hadn't been for the Spirit of God working in them. But almost the first thing after the resurrection, when our Lord appeared to His disciples and showed them His pierced hands and His wounded side, He breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Yet again, after that, as we see in Luke 24:49, He said: "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." If those men needed to be endued with power, do you think we are going to be used without it? The great trouble with many of us is, that we are working for God without power. We are sons of God - no doubt about that - and daughters of God. We can "read our titles clear to mansions in the skies," but we are sons and daughters without power. That is the trouble.

Now look at Acts 1:8: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Notice, Christ said that to the Apostles after they had been with Him three years, and after He had breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." There are two ways in which the Holy Spirit comes to a man. The Spirit dwelling in him is one thing, and the Spirit on him for power is another thing. I think that is where Christian people are misled. The trouble is, they are not looking for the Spirit of God for service. When the disciples were about to begin their great work, our Lord said: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." How many, do you suppose, would have been converted on the day of Pentecost if Peter had gone and preached without this power? Not one. The disciples were commissioned to go and preach, but they were to wait till they were recommissioned and endued with power by the Holy Ghost. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." How quickly this whole world would be reached if we were just looking to God for this same Apostolic power! Turn to the second chapter of Acts and see how the promise was "Our Gospel that we are preaching is a supernatural Gospel, and we have got to have supernatural power to preach it."

fulfilled. They tarried as they were bidden, waiting and praying for the Holy Ghost, when suddenly the power came, and they were ready for work. And there was more work done in one day than in all the three years while they were with Christ. The Lord had said: "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father." "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." When the power came upon the Apostles, they did greater things than the Master ever did. There was a time when I thought the raising of Lazarus was the greatest work ever done on this earth. But I think the conversion of those 3,000 Jews on the day of Pentecost was more wonderful still. Those hard-hearted Jews were full of hatred and unbelief; many, no doubt, were the same men who murdered Christ. And yet they were swept down by the mighty power of the Spirit. We have got the same obstacles to contend with as the Apostles had. Our Gospel that we are preaching is a supernatural Gospel, and we have got to have supernatural power to preach it.

There is a class of people who say: "Yes; I know the Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, but He came in miraculous power; and we are not warranted in looking for anything like that today." If you turn to the fourth chapter of Acts you will find that this wonderful work went right on after the day of Pentecost. Peter and John were cast into prison, and brought before the Sanhedrim. The Council didn't dare to stone them to death because there were so many young converts. So they gave them this order: "Now, you can preach in the Temple or wherever you like, but upon one condition - don't you preach any more in this man's name." The Apostles went forth from the Sanhedrim to the other disciples, and they had a little prayer meeting. What was the result? "The place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." In the second of Acts it says that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," and here, in the fourth of Acts, it says again, "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." They had either lost their power or had got greater capacity - I don't know which. There are a great many men

who had power five years ago that haven't got it now. They are like Samson robbed of his strength, or like fishermen working with old, broken nets. Notice, again, that about ten years after, Peter went out to Caesarea and told Cornelius the words whereby he and his house were saved. While he was speaking, what happened? "The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word." That was about ten years after the day of Pentecost, and yet they received the special gift of the Holy Ghost. I firmly believe that if we had this building filled with men and women expecting the Pentecostal power, we would get it. I believe if this building was filled with men and women hungry for the Spirit of God, we would have this place shaken, and there would be an influence felt not only in this land, but in foreign lands. It wouldn't take long to reach the whole world. Talk about twenty years. It needn't take twenty years if the Church of God is baptized and quickened.

"Notice that those who are filled with the Holy Ghost immediately begin to testify of Jesus Christ." Notice that those who are filled with the Holy Ghost immediately begin to testify of Jesus Christ. Elisabeth, when visited by the Virgin, was "filled with the Holy Ghost," and spoke of the coming Lord. Zacharias also was "filled with the Holy Ghost," and quoted Scripture in reference to the Messiah. Stephen was "filled with the Spirit," and received such unction that the men of the synagogue "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." He was able to stand before the whole Sanhedrim, and the power of God was on him in a wonderful degree while he testified of Christ. When Peter was "filled with the Spirit" he went out to preach Christ - he couldn't help it. All through the New Testament we are told that the Apostles were again and again filled with the Spirit. And as they preached "much people were added to the church." That always follows. There will be conversions breaking out in all the churches if we are filled with the Spirit. Let us pray that we may receive power for service. Let us not be satisfied with only the power by which we are "sealed unto the day of redemption;" but let us pray that we may be baptized with that power from on high by which we can do great things for the Master.

It is important to know whether the work we are doing is the work God would have us do. I remember that one time when Dr. Kirk came to Chicago, his old power came back upon him, and he just shook that city as I had never seen it shaken. I suppose if he had stayed, there would have been thousands and thousands converted. The Mayor of the city and the leading men all came to hear him, and they said: "If we could have that kind of preaching we would be glad to hear it." But he went back to his pastoral work. I believe that man was meant for an evangelist; yet he went back to visit the widow and the fatherless. That was an important work, but others could have done it. Some men are gifted one way and some another. One man has got gifts as a pastor, and another has got gifts as an evangelist, while another is specially qualified to stir up Christians. Let every one ask, "Am I in the right place? Am I where God wants me to be?" If we would do that, it might break up a good many pastorates. Are you ready - ready to cut the tie? When I was in Chicago I used to take a circuit out in the country, and preach during the week evenings; but I think I made a great mistake in binding myself too closely to my regular work. There was time after time when there would be a hundred inquirers in the country, and yet I would hurry away so as to preach in my own place in the city on Sunday night, and then perhaps only find myself beating against the air. Let us be ready to go anywhere - to go wherever the Master calls.

If you want this power for service God will give it to you. Just say: "Here I am, Lord. Send me where you please - only give me souls. Give me power to win souls for Jesus Christ." When that is the uppermost thought in our hearts He won't disappoint us. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things." If He gave us His Son, will He withhold the Spirit? "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Are you toiling all night and catching nothing? Cast the net on the right side. Come, my friend, are you ready to go anywhere? Can you say: "Lord, send me to whom you will - only send me. Let that power come upon me, that I may win souls for Jesus Christ?" May we have no will but God's sweet will. Oh, that our wills may be swallowed up in God's will. I believe if Gabriel should tell me that for the rest of my days I could have my way, I wouldn't have it. I don't know enough about the future. I want to pray: "Father, not my will, but Thine." May we all be ready to run if He wants us to run, or to stand still if He wants us to stand still. May we say: "Here we are, Lord; take us - take us - fill us - use us." I think, if I know my own heart, I would rather die at once and be buried right off than to live without power. Oh, it is an awfully sad thing for a man to outlive his usefulness - to be laid aside as a vessel no longer meet for the Master's use. There are a good many Christians God can't use as He used them once. He has got a good many children that were full of power a year ago or five years ago, but they are not right now. How He wants to use them! Oh, I pray from the depths of my soul that as long as I live I may be filled with the Holy Ghost. Let us pray that we may be filled with this power from on high; and that we may be always ready - ready for anything.