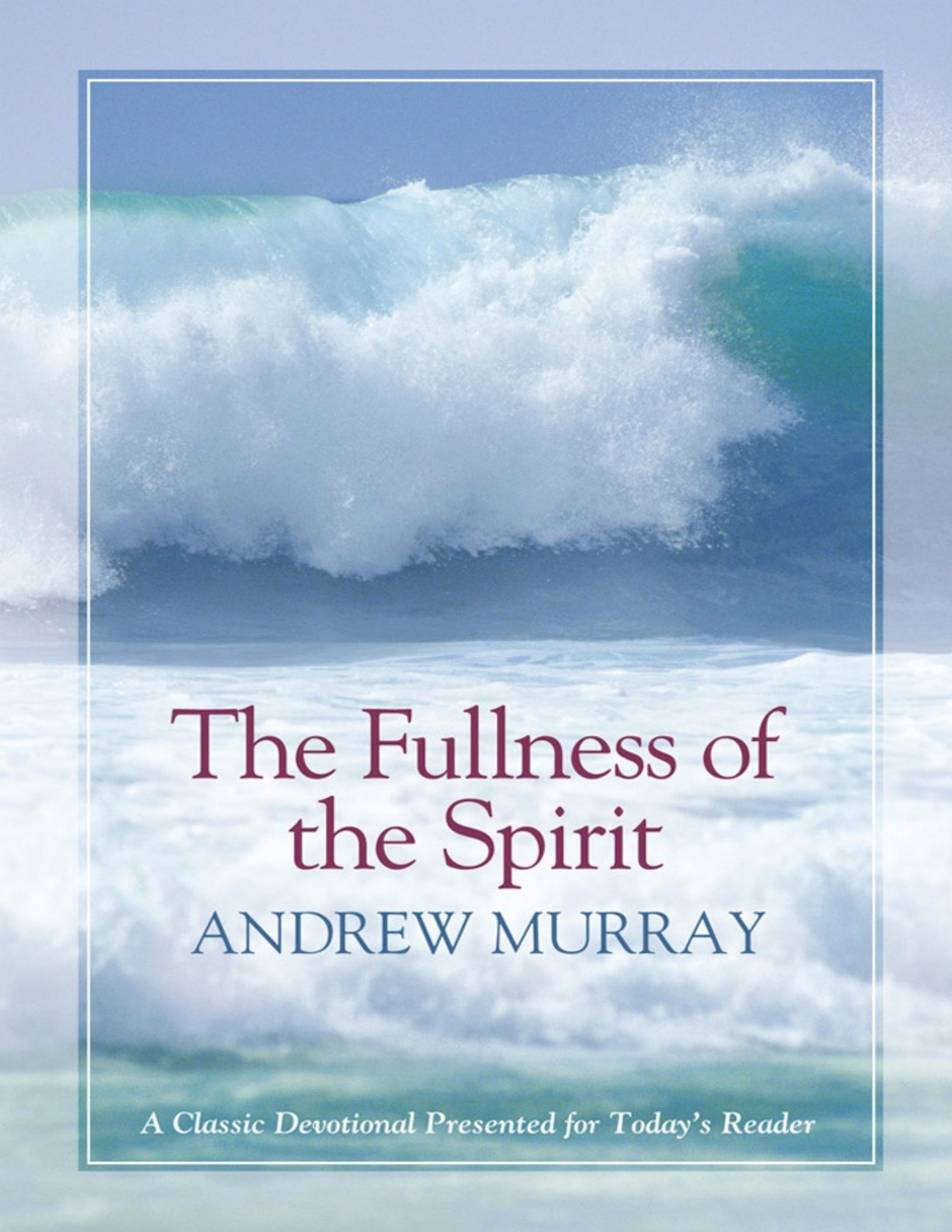


The Fullness of the Spirit

ANDREW MURRAY

A Classic Devotional Presented for Today's Reader

Books by Andrew Murray

Abiding in Christ
Absolute Surrender
Believing Prayer
The Blood of Christ
Divine Healing
The Fullness of the Spirit
Humility
A Life of Obedience
Living a Prayerful Life
The Ministry of Intercessory Prayer
The Path to Holiness
Teach Me to Pray

The Fullness of the Spirit

Andrew Murray



BETHANY HOUSE PUBLISHERS
a division of Baker Publishing Group
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Published by Bethany House Publishers
11400 Hampshire Avenue South
Bloomington, Minnesota 55438
www.bethanyhouse.com

Bethany House Publishers is a division of
Baker Publishing Group, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
www.bakerpublishinggroup.com

Ebook edition created 2012

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ISBN 978-1-4412-6180-9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file at the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

Cover design by Danielle White

ANDREW MURRAY was born in South Africa in 1828. After receiving his education in Scotland and Holland, he returned to South Africa and spent many years there as a missionary pastor. He was a staunch advocate of biblical Christianity and is best known for his many devotional books. He and his wife, Emma, raised eight children.

Contents

Cover
Books by Andrew Murray
Title Page
Copyright
About the Author
Introduction
1. What Is to Be Taught
2. How Glorious Is the Experience!
3. It Is Poured Out From Heaven
4. It Is to Be Enjoyed
5. What Hinders the Blessing?
6. How It Is to Be Received
7. How It Is Kept
8. How It May Be Increased
9. How It Comes to Full Manifestation
10. God Assures Us of Its Coming
11. It May Be Experienced by All
12. Everything Must Be Sacrificed for It

Back Cover

Introduction

The message of this book is simple but serious. It is the greatest need of the church, and that which all believers ought to seek after with one mind and their whole heart: to be filled with the Spirit of God.

In order to focus our attention on this message and the blessing it contains, I have placed particular emphasis on six main points:

1. It is the will of God that every believer should live entirely and unceasingly under the control of the Holy Spirit.
2. Apart from the fullness of the Spirit, it is impossible for a believer or a church to live and work as God desires.
3. The lives and experiences of believers everywhere demonstrate that this blessing is greatly neglected by the church and is seldom sought after.
4. This blessing is promised to us and prepared for us; God longs to give it to us. Because it is God's gift, our faith can expect it with confidence.
5. The biggest hindrance to receiving it is that the self-life and the world take the place that Christ ought to occupy.
6. We cannot be filled with the Spirit until we yield ourselves to be led by the Lord Jesus to forsake and sacrifice everything that stands in the way of His rule.

Despite the imperfection of my writing, I trust that this work will be a great blessing to all believers. Let the reader be aware that because of the spiritual darkness that prevails in the church today, unless we take time to devote our hearts and minds to this subject, the promise of God will make no deep impression upon us. I hope through these chapters to demonstrate that God's blessing of the Holy Spirit is *the one thing necessary,* and that to receive it we must be prepared to sacrifice everything else we hold dear. I invite believers to study the contents of this book carefully more than once. The prevailing lack of the presence and operation of the Spirit in the church is a sign that His fullness in individual lives is deeply resisted. It is only through self-sacrifice and focusing our minds on these truths that we can obtain what the Spirit has to offer us.

Reflecting on what I have written, I feel there is one point on which I could

have spoken more definitely. I refer to the role that persevering prayer must occupy in connection with the Spirit's blessing. This book was not exclusively written for prayer at the celebration of Pentecost. Every day ought to be a Pentecostal season in the church of Christ. Throughout the book I refer to that original outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples in the Upper Room, which prevailed in the church throughout the book of Acts. This season is meant to prevail throughout the year; and I don't want to be lax in sufficiently exhorting my readers to always call upon God in the confidence that He will answer.

When we read the book of Acts, we can readily see that the filling of the Spirit and His mighty operation was always received through prayer. Recall, for example, what took place at Antioch. It was when the believers there were engaged in fasting and prayer that God regarded them as prepared to receive the revelation that they must separate Barnabas and Saul; and it was only after they had once more fasted and prayed that these two men departed, sent by the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2–3). They realized that the power and direction needed must come only from above. Should our attitude be any different from theirs? I think not. We in like manner, even with fasting, must liberate ourselves as far as possible from the demands of our earthly life, even in that which otherwise appears quite lawful. Certainly our wholehearted commitment to God in prayer must not be less than that of the believers in Antioch. Let us never become weary or lax in prayer, but in union with other believers let us call upon Him at every opportunity so that the Holy Spirit may again take His rightful place and exercise full dominion in our lives and the church as a whole. To the believer who sincerely prays this, God's answer will certainly come.

True prayer is God's designed method of searching and cleansing the heart. Through it He searches our motives: Do I really desire what I pray for? Am I willing to cast aside everything to make room for what God is prepared to give me? Is the prayer of my lips the prayer of my life? Do I continue in intercession with God, waiting upon Him in quiet faith until He gives me this supernatural gift: *His own Spirit?*

Our greatest urgency is always to pray and not to give up, setting ourselves before God with supplications and strong pleading as His priests and the representatives of His church.

> In my distress I called to the Lord;
> I cried to my God for help.
> From his temple he heard my voice;
> my cry came before him, into his ears.
> He rescued me from my powerful enemy,

from my foes, who were too strong for me.
He brought me out into a spacious place;
he rescued me because he delighted in me.

—Psalm 18:6, 17, 19

Believer, do you understand God's character? He desires to be trusted. He is often very near to us without our knowing it. He is a God who loves to reveal himself and His desires to us. Our place must be that of waiting on Him: "I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:13–14).

Chapter 1

What Is to Be Taught

> While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."
>
> Acts 19:1–2

It was nearly twenty years after the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit that the incident referred to in Acts 19 took place. In the course of his third missionary journey, Paul came to Ephesus and found some disciples in whom he observed something lacking. Accordingly, he asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Their reply was that they had never heard of the Holy Spirit. They had been baptized by disciples of John the Baptist, a baptism of repentance with a view to faith in Jesus as the One who was to come; they were still unacquainted with the great event of the outpouring of the Spirit or the significance of it. They came from a region of the country where the full Pentecostal preaching of the exalted Savior had not yet penetrated. Accordingly, Paul took them under his care and instructed them in the full gospel of the glorified Lord, who had received the Spirit from the Father and had sent Him down to this earth so that every one of His believing disciples might also receive Him. Hearing this good news and believing it, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. Then Paul prayed for them and laid his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them. Because this whole transaction was a heavenly reality, they obtained a share in the Pentecostal miracle and "they spoke in tongues and prophesied" (19:6).

In these chapters it is my desire to bring to readers the message that the Christian life is twofold. The first is that we experience something of the operation of the Holy Spirit but do not yet receive Him as the Spirit of Pentecost, as the personal indwelling Guest who comes to abide permanently in the heart. The second is that there is a more abundant life in which the indwelling is

known and the full joy and power of redemption are a fact of personal experience. It is essential that believers come to fully understand the distinction between these two conditions and discern that the second of these is the express will of God concerning them and therefore a possible experience for every believer. Only then will they humble themselves and confess the sinful and inconsistent elements that still mark their life; only then can we dare hope that the Christian community will once more be restored to its Pentecostal power. With our eye focused on this distinction, we desire to ponder the lessons presented to us in the record of this incident at Ephesus.

For a Healthy Christian Life, It Is Indispensable That We Know That We Have Received the Holy Spirit and That He Dwells in Us

Had it been otherwise, Paul would never have asked the question, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” (Some versions render this “Have you received the Spirit since you believed?”) These disciples were recognized as those who believed in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. This belief, however, was not enough. The disciples who walked with the Lord Jesus on earth were also true believers, yet He commanded them not to rest until they had received the Holy Spirit. Paul had seen the Lord in His heavenly glory and was by that vision led to a conversion experience; yet even in his case the work of the Spirit was not complete. Ananias had to go to him and lay his hands upon him that he might receive the Holy Spirit. Only then could he become an effective witness for Christ. These facts teach us that there are two ways in which the Holy Spirit works in us. The first is preparatory, in which He acts on us but is not yet dwelling in us. The second is the higher phase of His working, when we receive Him as an abiding gift, an indwelling Person; we know that He has assumed responsibility for our whole inner being, working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. This is the ideal of the full Christian life.

There Are Disciples of Christ Who Know Little or Nothing of the Conscious Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

It is of utmost importance to comprehend this. The more we come under the conviction of its truth, the more completely we will understand the condition of the church in our times and be enabled to discover where we stand.

The condition I refer to becomes very plain when we consider what took place at Samaria. Philip the evangelist had preached there; many had been led to

believe in Jesus and were baptized in His name; and there was great joy in that city. When the apostles heard this news, they sent Peter and John, who, when they came to Samaria, prayed that these new believers might receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:16–17). This gift was quite distinct from the working of the Spirit that led them to conversion and faith and joy in Jesus as their Savior. It was something higher: for now the Holy Spirit was imparted in power with His abiding indwelling to consecrate and fill their hearts.

Without this new experience, the Samaritan believers would still have been Christians, but they would have remained weak, lacking in power; and so it is that in our own day there are many believers who know nothing of this gift of the Holy Spirit. In the midst of much that is good and to be admired, often with a great deal of energy and zeal, the life of believers is still plagued by weakness and stumbling and disappointment. The reason for such failure is often simply because they have never been brought into contact with fresh power from on high; they have not received the Holy Spirit as the gift of Pentecost to be possessed by Him, kept, and filled again.

It Is the Great Work of the Gospel Ministry to Lead Believers to the Holy Spirit

Wasn't it the aim of the Lord Jesus, after He had personally educated and trained His disciples for three years, to lead them up to the place of waiting for the promise of the Father and receiving the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven? Wasn't this the chief objective of Peter on the Day of Pentecost, when, after charging those who were convicted in their hearts to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, he assured them that they should receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)? It was Paul's aim when in his epistles he asked his fellow believers if they did not know that they were personally a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) or reminded them that they had to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Yes, the supreme need of a believer's life is to receive the Holy Spirit, and when we have Him, to be conscious of the fact and live in harmony with Him. An evangelical minister cannot simply preach about the Holy Spirit from time to time but must teach his congregation that there can be no true worship except through the indwelling and daily operation of the Holy Spirit.

To Lead Believers to Receive the Holy Spirit, the Lack in Their

Life Must Be Pointed Out to Them

This was clearly Paul's intention when he asked if they had received the Holy Spirit when they believed. Just as only those who are thirsty will drink water with eagerness and only those who are sick will ask for a physician, so it is that only when believers acknowledge the sinful nature of their spiritual condition will the message of the full blessing of Pentecost find entrance into their hearts. As long as believers think that the only thing lacking in their life is more commitment or zeal or strength, and that if they only attain to these they will become all they ought to be, the preaching of a full salvation will be of little use. It is only when they discover that they are not standing in a full relationship with the Holy Spirit—they may have His initial working but do not yet know Him as an indwelling presence—that the way to something higher will ever be seen as a possibility. For this discovery, it is indispensable that the question be put to every believer as clearly as possible: "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" When the answer is a straightforward no, the time of revival is not far off.

Believers Must Receive Help to Appropriate This Blessing by Faith

In the Acts of the Apostles we often read about the laying on of hands and prayer. Even a man like Paul—whose conversion was the result of a direct revelation of Christ—had to receive the Spirit through the laying on of hands and prayer. This implies that there is to be among ministers of the gospel and believers in general a power of the Spirit that makes them a channel of faith and courage to others. All who have this blessing, as well as those who desire to have it, must realize and acknowledge their absolute dependence on the Lord.

The gift of the Spirit is imparted only by God himself. Every fresh imparting of the Spirit comes from above. Both the servant whom God uses for communicating the blessing of the Spirit as well as the believer who receives it must acknowledge God as the giver of the blessing. Every good gift comes from above: it is faith in this truth that will give us hope to expect with confidence and joy that the full Pentecostal blessing is for us and that a life under the continual leading of the Holy Spirit is within our reach.

The Proclamation and Appropriation of This Blessing Will Restore the Christian Community to Its Original Pentecostal

Power

On the Day of Pentecost, speaking with other tongues and prophesying were the result of being filled with the Spirit. Here at Ephesus, twenty years later, the very same miracle is again witnessed as the visible token and pledge of the other glorious gifts of the Spirit. We should expect that where the reception of the Holy Spirit and the possibility of being filled with Him are proclaimed and received, the life of the believing community will be restored to Pentecostal power.

In our day there is increased acknowledgment of a lack of power in the church. Despite multiple improvements in Christian literature and education, there is a shortfall of true conversion experience, power for witnessing, and honest dealing with worldliness and unbelief, which, according to God's Word, we are to expect. The complaint is well justified. What is needed is that the children of God, driven by an overwhelming sense of powerlessness, cast themselves upon the Word of God and seek the full Pentecostal blessing where it is lacking. Only then will there be sufficient power to accomplish the will of God.

The Current Need of the Church Is That Those Who Are Equipped to Bear Testimony to the Blessing of Pentecost Sense the Importance of Sharing This Truth With Others

Whether it be teachers like Peter and Paul, deacons like Philip, or ordinary believers like Ananias, who came to Paul, this is a felt need. It is abundantly clear that congregations must call upon God, seeking that both in preaching and in daily witness there may be more evidence that those who declare Christ Jesus as Savior also declare Him as the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. It is only those with a personal testimony and living proof of the ministry of the Spirit whose word will have full effect in the hearts of the people and exercise any influence over them. The first disciples received the baptism on their knees. It will be on our knees that the full blessing will come to us today. Let this be the attitude in which we await the full blessing of God, both in our private and collective life.

Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? Let every reader submit himself to this heart-searching question. To be filled with the Holy Spirit of God, to have the full enjoyment of the Pentecostal blessing, is the will of God concerning us. Let us examine our life and our work before the Lord in the light

of this question and return the answer to God. Do not be afraid to confess before your Lord what is still missing. Do not hold back, even if you do not yet fully understand what the blessing is or how it comes. The early disciples did not know either, yet they called upon the Lord and waited for it with prayer and supplication. Let your heart be filled with a deep conviction of what is needed, a desire for what God offers, a willingness to sacrifice everything for it, and you may rest assured that the marvel of Jerusalem and of Samaria, of Caesarea and Ephesus, will once again be repeated. We may, we shall, be filled with the Spirit.

Chapter 2

How Glorious Is the Experience!

> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
>
> Acts 2:4

Whenever we speak of being filled with the Holy Spirit, and desire to know exactly what it means, our thoughts return to the Day of Pentecost. In Acts we see how glorious the blessing was that came from heaven by the Holy Spirit and with which He filled the hearts of all who were present.

What makes the great Day of Pentecost doubly instructive for us is that we have learned to know very intimately, because of their training for three years with the Lord Jesus, those who were filled with the Spirit at that time. Their failures, their character weaknesses, and their sins are all recorded for our perusal. But the blessing of Pentecost worked a complete transformation. They became entirely new men, so that one might truly say of them: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Close study of them and their example helps us in more than one way. It shows us that the Spirit will come to weak and sinful men. It teaches us how to be prepared for the blessing. It teaches us also—and this is the main point—how complete is the transformation that is wrought when the Holy Spirit is received in His fullness. We see how glorious the grace is that awaits us if we press on to the full blessing of Pentecost.

The Ever-Abiding Presence and Indwelling of the Lord Jesus Is the First and Principal Blessing of the Spirit-Filled Life

During the Lord’s training of His disciples, He spared no pains in teaching and exhorting them with the goal to renew and sanctify them. In most respects, however, they remained just what they were. The reason they did not change was

that up to this point He was to them only the "external" Christ, one who stood outside of them and sought to work in them through His Word and His personal influence. With the advent of Pentecost, this relationship was entirely changed. Through the Holy Spirit He came as the indwelling Christ, to become in the very innermost recesses of their being the life of their life. This is what He promised: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! … On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you" (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 14:18, 20). This was the source of all the other blessings that came with Pentecost. Jesus Christ, the crucified, the glorified, the Lord from heaven, came in spiritual power by the Spirit to impart to them the ever-abiding presence of their Lord that had been promised to them, and in a way that was intimate, all-powerful, and wholly divine: by the indwelling that truly made Him their life. Jesus, whom they had known in His earthly ministry, they now received within by the Spirit in His heavenly glory. Instead of the Jesus they knew near to them, He became Jesus within them.

From this first and principal blessing sprang the second: The Spirit of Jesus came into them as the life and power of sanctification. At this point I will note only one feature in this change. Do you remember how often the Lord rebuked His disciples for their pride and exhorted them to humility? Yet they remained unchanged. Even on the night before His death, while gathered around the table at the Lord's Supper, there was strife among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest (Luke 22:24). The teaching of Christ, whatever other influences it may have exercised, was not sufficient to redeem them from the power of indwelling sin; this could only be achieved by the *indwelling* Christ. Only when Jesus entered into them by the Holy Spirit did they undergo a complete change. They received Him in His heavenly humility and subjection to the Father and in His self-sacrifice for others as their life. Henceforth, all was changed. From then on they were motivated by the Spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus.

This, in truth, is still the only way to real sanctification, to a life that actually overcomes sin. Many believers keep their minds occupied only with the external Christ on the cross or in heaven, and wait for the blessing of His teaching and His working without understanding that the blessing of Pentecost brings Him *into us,* to work His life *in us*. Is it any wonder that they make so little progress in sanctification? Christ himself is made unto us sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:30 KJV), and in no other way can it be accomplished in us.

A Heart Overflowing With the Love of God Is Also a Part of the

Blessing of Pentecost

Next to pride, a lack of love was the second sin for which the Lord repeatedly rebuked His disciples. These two sins have the same essential root: the self-seeking *I*, or the desire for self-pleasing. The new commandment that He gave them, the token whereby all men should know that they were His disciples, was love for one another (John 13:34). How gloriously this was manifested on the Day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of the Lord shed abroad His love in the hearts of His own. The multitude of them that believed were as one heart, one soul: "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had" (Acts 4:32). The kingdom of heaven with its life of love had come down to them. The spirit, the disposition, the wonderful love of Jesus filled them, because He himself had come into them. All this remarkable change came with His presence.

The prayer of Paul on behalf of the Ephesians, in which he asks that they might be strengthened with power *by the Spirit* in order that *Christ might dwell in their hearts,* reveals how closely the mighty working of the Spirit and the indwelling of the Lord Jesus are linked. Then he adds: "That you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:17–19). The filling of the Spirit and the indwelling of Christ bring a life that has its root, its joy, its power, and its evidence in love because the indwelling Christ himself is Love. How the love of God would fill the church and convince the world that the gift of heaven has entered her life, if the fullness of the Spirit and the indwelling of Christ were recognized as the blessing the Father has promised.

The Coming of the Spirit Transformed Weakness and Fear Into Courage and Power

Fear rose in Peter's heart at the word of a woman and he denied his Lord; that same night all the disciples fled and forsook Jesus. Their hearts were full of love for Him and they were sincerely willing to do what they had promised, even to die with Him, but when it came down to the moment of testing, they found that they had neither courage nor power. They had to say, "For to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not" (Romans 7:18). After the blessing of the Spirit of Pentecost, there was no more question of merely willing apart from performing. By Christ dwelling in us, God works both the willing and

the doing. It was a transformed Peter who would on the Day of Pentecost dare to confidently preach the Crucified One to thousands of hostile Jews. With amazing boldness he was able to say, in opposition to the leaders of the people, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). With what courage and joy Stephen and Paul and so many others were enabled to encounter threatening and suffering and even death; and they did so triumphantly! It was because the Spirit of Christ, the Victor—yes, the glorified Christ himself—dwelt within them. It is the joy of the blessing of Pentecost that gives courage and power to speak for Jesus, because by it the whole heart is filled with Him.

The Blessing of Pentecost Makes the Whole Word of God New

We see this fact distinctly in the case of the disciples. As with nearly all the Jews of that time, their concept of the Messiah and the kingdom of God were utterly external and carnal. All the detailed instruction of the Lord Jesus over a three-year time period did not separate their minds from these external thoughts. They were unable to comprehend the doctrine of a suffering and dying Messiah or the hope of His invisible spiritual dominion. Even after His resurrection, He had to deal with their unbelieving spirit and their backwardness in understanding the Scriptures. On the Day of Pentecost, an entire change took place. The ancient Scriptures opened up before them. The light of the Holy Spirit in them illumined the Word. In the preaching of Peter and Stephen, in the addresses of Paul and James, we see how a divine light literally shone upon the word of the Old Testament. They saw everything through the Spirit of Jesus, who had made His abode within them.

So it is meant to be with us. We agree that it is absolutely essential that we daily study the Scriptures and meditate upon them, keeping the Word of God in our minds and hearts. But let us remember that it is only when we are filled with the Holy Spirit that we can fully experience the spiritual power and truth of the Word. He is the Spirit of truth. He alone guides us into all truth when He dwells in us (John 16:13).

It Is the Blessing of Pentecost That Gives Power to Bless Others

The divine power of the exalted Jesus to grant repentance and the forgiveness of sins is extended through His servants whom He sends forth to proclaim these blessings. The believer who desires to proclaim repentance and forgiveness through Jesus to the end that souls might be saved, must do so in the power of

the Spirit of Jesus. The primary reason why so much evangelism is fruitless lies in the fact that these elements of truth are presented only as a doctrine. The mere power of human determination, reasoning, and eloquence cannot convey the truth with any lasting effect. The one who makes it his chief desire to be filled with the Spirit of God, and then by faith in the indwelling Christ is assured that the glorified Lord will speak and work through him, will see fruit. It is true that the blessing of the fullness of the Spirit will not always be given in the same measure or in the same manner, but it will always come when the believer allows the Lord to work in and through him. Both in proclaiming the truth and in daily life, the full blessing of Pentecost is the sure way of becoming a blessing to others. "'Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him'" (John 7:38). This He said of the Holy Spirit. A heart filled with the Spirit will overflow with the Spirit.

It Is the Blessing of Pentecost That Will Make the Church of Christ What God Would Have Her to Be

We have spoken of what the Spirit will do in individual believers. We should also consider what will happen when the church as a whole apprehends her calling to be filled with the Spirit and then exhibits the life and the power—the very presence—of her Lord to the world. We must not only seek and receive this blessing for ourselves, but we must remember that the full manifestation of what the blessing itself is cannot be given until the whole body of Christ is filled with it. "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). If many members of the church of Christ are content to remain without this blessing, the whole church will suffer. Even in individual believers the blessing cannot come to its full manifestation. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we should not only think of what being filled with the Spirit means for ourselves, but also consider what it will do for the local church and the church worldwide.

To this end, let us think about the morning of the Day of Pentecost. At that point the church in Jerusalem consisted of only 120 believers, most of them uneducated fishermen, publicans, and a few women, an insignificant and humble gathering (Acts 1:13–15). Yet it was by these believers that the kingdom of God was to be proclaimed and extended—and they did it. By them, and those who were added to them, the power of Jewish prejudice and pagan hardness of heart was overcome, and the church of Christ won glorious triumphs. This grand result was achieved simply and only because the first Christian church was filled with

the Spirit. The members of it gave themselves wholly to the Lord. They allowed themselves to be filled and consecrated, governed and used only by Him. They yielded themselves to Him as instruments of His power. He dwelt in them and worked in them all His wondrous deeds.

It is to this same experience that the church of Christ in our age must return. This is the only thing that will help her in the conflict with the darkness and power of sin and the world. She must be filled with the Spirit.

Beloved believers, this call comes to you: “One thing is necessary.” Both for you and for the whole church: We must be filled with the Spirit. Do not feel that you must understand it all before you seek and find it. For those that wait upon Him, God will do what they could not even imagine. If you would taste the joy, if you would know by personal experience the blessedness of having Jesus in your heart, of having within you His Spirit of holiness and humility, love and self-sacrifice, courage and power, as naturally and continuously as your own spirit; if you would have the Word of God in you as light and power and be enabled to share it effectively with others, if you would see the church of Christ stand arrayed in her first splendor—then separate yourselves from everything that is of this world and cast it from your heart; fix your desire on this one thing: to be filled with the Spirit of God. Depend upon receiving this as your rightful heritage. Appropriate it and hold it fast by faith. It shall be given to you.

Chapter 3

It Is Poured Out From Heaven

> "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."
>
> John 14:15–17

A tree grows according to the nature of the seed from which it springs. Every living being is guided and governed by the nature it received at birth. The same holds true in the church of Christ. She received the promise and the law of her existence and her growth by that which was bestowed upon her in the Holy Spirit on the day of her birth. This is why it is so important for us to thoroughly understand the Day of Pentecost and not to rest until we receive and experience what God did for His people on that day. Seeing how the blessing was first given from heaven and the attitude of heart that enabled the disciples to receive the Spirit, we have a scriptural precedent to know what remains to be done in order for us to enjoy the same blessing. The first disciples serve as biblical examples and forerunners on the way to the fullness of the Spirit.

What was it that enabled them to become the recipients of these heavenly gifts? What made them capable of receiving the unspeakable grace of the indwelling Trinity? Understanding the answer to this question is the key to being filled with the Holy Spirit.

What do we find in these first disciples?

In the first place, *they were deeply attached to the Lord Jesus*.

The Son of God came into the world to enable men and women to partake of the divine life that He had with the Father. When He had completed the work in His own person by His obedience, death, and resurrection, He was exalted to the throne of God in order that in spiritual power, in the might of the all-penetrating sovereign presence of God, His disciples and His church might participate in His

very life. We read that “the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified” (John 7:39). It was only after His glorification that the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the complete indwelling of God in man could be given. It is the Spirit of the glorified Jesus that the disciples received on the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit of the Head, permeating all the members of His body.

It is self-evident that if the fullness of the Spirit dwells in Jesus, *a personal relationship to Him is the first condition for the reception of the full gift of the Comforter*. It was toward this goal that the Lord Jesus throughout His three years’ work on earth kept the disciples in close relationship with himself. He desired to unite them to himself. He wanted them to feel truly one with Him. He wanted them to identify themselves with Him as far as possible. By knowledge and fellowship, by love and obedience, they became intimately related to Him. This was their preparation for participating in the Spirit of His glorification.

The lesson taught here is extremely simple, but it is also one of profound significance. There are believers who trust in the Lord and are zealous in His service who eagerly desire to become holy but who fall short of this standard. It seems they cannot grasp the promise of the Spirit. The thought of being filled with the Spirit is beyond them. More than likely, what is lacking is a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus, so characteristic of the disciples. This is absolutely indispensable. It is only the heart that is entirely occupied with the Lord Jesus and depends only upon Him that can hope for the fullness of the Spirit.

They Left All for Jesus

“Nothing for nothing” is a proverb that contains a deep truth. Something that costs me nothing may nevertheless cost me a lot. It may bring me under an obligation to the giver and so cost me more than its worth. I may have so much trouble receiving it and maintaining it that I may pay much more for it than the original price. The maxim holds true also in the life of the kingdom of heaven. The parables of the Pearl of great price and the Treasure hid in a field teach us that in order to gain possession of the kingdom within us, we must sell all that we have. This is the renunciation that Jesus demanded of the disciples who would follow Him. This is the requirement He so often repeated in His preaching: “Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33). The two worlds between which we stand are in such direct conflict with one another, and the world system in which we live exercises such a mighty influence over us, that it is often necessary for us, even by

external and visible sacrifice, to withdraw from it. It was through their withdrawal from the world that Jesus trained His disciples to long for that which is heavenly. Only then could He prepare them to desire and receive the heavenly gift with an undivided heart.

The Lord did not leave us specific instructions as to how much of the world we are to abandon or in what manner. But by His Word He teaches us that without sacrifice, without a deliberate separation from the world, we will never make progress in our spiritual life. The spirit of this world has penetrated so deeply into us that we cannot comprehend it. We share in its desire for comfort and enjoyment, for self-pleasing and self-exaltation, without our knowing how impossible these things make it for us to be filled with the Spirit. We must be ready, even anxious, to live as entirely different people, those who literally represent heaven on earth because we have received the Spirit of heaven.

They Despaired of Themselves and All That Man Alone Can Accomplish

Man has two great enemies through whom the devil tempts him and with whom he has to contend. The one is the world without, the other is the self-life within. This last, the selfish *ego,* is much more dangerous than the first. It is quite possible for a man to have made much progress in forsaking the world, while the self-life retains full dominion within. This is graphically illustrated in the disciples. Peter could say with truth, “We have left all and followed you.” Yet how manifestly did the selfish *ego,* with its self-pleasing and its self-confidence, still retain its influence over him.

The Lord at their first calling led them to the point of forsaking their outward possessions and following Him, and shortly afterward He began to teach them that a disciple must deny *himself* and lose his own life if he would be worthy of receiving His. He must hate not only father and mother, where this was necessary, but even his own life (Luke 14:26). It was love for this self-life even more than love for family that hindered Jesus from doing His work in their hearts. It would cost more to be redeemed from the selfish *ego* within than to forsake the world around them. The self-life is the natural life of sinful man. The only liberation from it is death—that is, by first dying to it and then living in the strength of the new life that comes from God.

The forsaking of the world began at the outset of the three years’ discipleship training. It was at the end of that period, at the time of the cross of Jesus, that dying to self first took place. When they saw Him die, they learned to despair of

themselves and of everything on which they had based their hope. Whether they thought of Him in contrast to the redemption they had expected, or whether they thought of themselves and their shameful unfaithfulness toward Him, everything tended to fill them with despair. Little did they know that it was this despair that was to prove the breaking up of their hard hearts—a death blow to self and to self-confidence. This brokenness enabled them to receive something entirely new: divine life through the Spirit of the glorified Jesus in the innermost depths of their souls.

We need to understand that there is nothing that hampers us more than a secret reliance on something in ourselves or in the church that we imagine can help us. At the same time, there is nothing that brings so much blessing as entirely despairing of ourselves and of all that is on this earth by way of teaching us to depend completely on God and His gift.

They Received and Held Fast the Promise of the Spirit Given by the Lord Jesus

In His farewell address on the night before His death, Jesus comforted His disciples in their sorrow over His departure with one great promise: the mission of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). The presence of the Holy Spirit would be better than His own bodily presence among them. It would be to them the full fruit and power of His redemption. At His ascension from the Mount of Olives, this promise of the Spirit was the subject of the last words He addressed to them (Acts 1:8).

It is evident that the disciples still had little idea of what this promise meant. But however lacking their understanding of it was, they held fast to it; or rather, the promise held them fast and would not let them go. They all had only one thought: Something has been promised to us by our Lord; it will surely give us a share in His heavenly power and glory; we are confident of its coming. What it truly was or how they would experience it was unknown. It was enough for them that they had the word of the Lord. He would make it a reality in due time.

It is this same disposition that we have so great a need of now. We also have the word of the Lord concerning the Spirit who is to descend from the throne in the power of His glorified life. He has said that those who believe in Him will know rivers of living water flowing from their hearts. We need to hold fast to His word as the disciples did, to set our hearts upon the fulfillment of it, and to lay aside all else until we inherit the promise. The word from the mouth of Jesus concerning the coming of the Spirit in such measure that we shall be endued

with power from on high must encourage us and fill us with joyful assurance.

They Waited Upon the Father Until the Performance of the Promise Came and They Were Filled With the Spirit

The ten days of waiting were for them days in which they “all joined together constantly in prayer” (Acts 1:14). It is not enough for us to try to believe something and hope to receive it. We must put ourselves in close fellowship with God. The blessing will come from Him; God himself must give it to us. What is promised us is a wonderful work of divine power and love. What we desire is the personal indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. God himself must bestow it.

When we give someone a piece of bread or a sum of money it is given and forgotten. We have nothing further to do with it. But this is not the case with God’s gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is God. God is in the Spirit who comes to us, even as He is in the Son. The gift of the Spirit is the gift of God himself. That is why we receive it when we are in very close personal contact with God.

The clearer our understanding of this, the more deeply we will grasp the fact that we cannot receive the blessing by our own desire or effort. All our striving can only make us more certain that in ourselves we can do nothing to receive it. It is the goodness of God that makes it possible. Our disposition must be one of rest and assurance that the Father desires to give us His Spirit, and He will not keep us waiting a moment longer than is absolutely necessary. There shall be no one who persists in waiting in the place of self-sacrifice and complete dependence that shall not be filled with the glory of God.

Every tree continues to grow from the root out of which it first sprang. The Day of Pentecost was the planting of the Christian church, and the Holy Spirit became the power of its life. Let us return to that experience. The power is still there. We learn from the disciples what is really necessary: abandonment of everything in the world for His sake, despair of self and of all help from man, holding on to the Word of promise, and then waiting on God—this is the way to know the joy and power of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 4

It Is to Be Enjoyed

> My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:4–5

Notice that Paul speaks of two kinds of preaching and two kinds of faith. The spirit of the preacher will have a great influence on the quality of the faith of the congregation. When the preaching of the Cross is given only in the words of human wisdom, the faith of the hearers will be in the wisdom of men. When the preaching is in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, the faith of the believers will be in the power of God, both firm and strong. Preaching in the demonstration of the Spirit brings the double blessing of power in the Word and power in the faith of those who receive it. To determine the quality of a church's spiritual life, we must consider the preaching and the faith that springs from it. These criteria are sure indicators as to whether the full blessing of Pentecost is being manifested.

There are very few who are prepared to say that this is really the case. We hear complaints of believers' weaknesses and sin everywhere we go. Others who are not complaining should be—their silence is due to the prevalence of ignorance or self-satisfaction. We want to concentrate our thoughts upon this fact until we come under the full conviction that the condition of the church is marked by ineffectiveness, and that nothing can restore her but the return to a life in the full enjoyment of the blessing of Pentecost. The extent to which we know our deficiency will determine how much we desire and obtain restoration. Evaluating the church in the light of what Jesus is willing and powerful to make her should awaken our hearts with longing for the path to receive the full life of the Spirit.

Think, for example, what little power over sin there is among believers. The Spirit of Pentecost is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God's holiness. When He

came upon the disciples in the Upper Room, their lives were transformed. Their carnal thoughts were changed into spiritual insight, their pride into humility, their selfishness into love, their fear of man into courage and loyalty. Sin was cast out by the inflowing of the life of Jesus.

The life the Lord has prepared for His people is a life of victory. It is not victory to the extent that there will be no temptation; nor will that victory destroy the strong natural desires that we call desires of the flesh (desires common to our humanity, which if allowed to rule will produce the works of the flesh). But there is to be victory of such a level that the indwelling power of the Spirit who fills us, and the presence of the indwelling Savior, shall strengthen us against temptation and keep the natural desires of the flesh in subjection—a victory comparable to the light of day subduing the darkness of night.

Yet to what extent do we see power for victory over sin in the church of Christ today? Even among firm believers, we see a lack of integrity and honor, a certain pride, selfishness, and lack of selfless love. How faint are the traces of the image of Jesus—obedience, humility, and entire surrender to the will of God—even among the people of God. The truth is that we have become so accustomed to the confession of sin and unfaithfulness, of disobedience and backsliding, that it is no longer regarded as a matter of shame. We make the confession before each other, and after the prayer are comforted and content. Rather let us feel humbled and mourn over it! It is because so little of the full blessing of the Spirit is enjoyed or sought for that believers still commit so much sin and have therefore so much to confess. Let every sin, whether in ourselves or in others, serve as a wake-up call of a lack of the Spirit of God among us. Let every instance of failure in the fear of the Lord, in love, holiness, and entire surrender to the will of God, only urge us all the more to call upon God to cause His Spirit to once more have full dominion over the whole church of Christ.

Think, too, how little there is of separation from the world. When the Lord Jesus promised the Comforter, He said, “Whom the world cannot receive.” The spirit of this world, which is devotion to the visible, is at irreconcilable odds with the Spirit of Jesus in heaven, where God and His will are everything. The world has rejected the Lord Jesus, and no matter how spiritual it may appear, the world at its heart is still the same untamable foe. It was for this reason that Jesus said of His disciples, indicating one of their distinctive marks: “They are not of the world, even as I am not of it” (John 17:16). This, too, is the reason why Paul said, “We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God” (1 Corinthians 2:12). The two spirits, the spirit of the world and the Spirit of God, are engaged in a life-and-death conflict with one another.

Therefore, God has always called on His people to separate themselves from the world, and to live as pilgrims whose treasure and whose heart are in heaven. But is this what we see among believers? Most, when they attain a measure of stability in their walk and have assurance of heaven, think that they are at liberty to enjoy the world as fully as others. There is little to be seen of true spirituality in conversation and walk, in character and commitment. Could the result be any different when the fullness of the Spirit is so little sought after? Nothing but light can drive out darkness; and nothing but the Holy Spirit can expel the spirit of the world. Where we do not surrender ourselves to be filled with the Spirit of Jesus, there can be no other result than that we remain under the power of the spirit of the world. The cry of the church might be, “Who shall rescue us from the power of the spirit of the world?” Our answer must be: “No one but the Spirit of God.”

There Is a Lack of Steadfastness and Growth in Faith

There is nothing that plagues pastors more than those believers who for a time are full of zeal and then fall away. This is seen not only among the young or in times of revival, but even among those who for years have maintained a good confession. When they enter a new circle of influence or are tested by prosperity or some unusual form of temptation, they seem to stop maintaining their faith. What is the cause? It may be the result of preaching that is more with the wisdom of persuasive words than in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. As we have said, as a result, the faith of the people stands in the wisdom and work of man rather than the power of God. As long as they have the benefit of enthusiastic and instructive preaching, they continue to push on, but when this ceases, they begin to backslide. Because preaching so often has little demonstration of the Spirit, believers are failing to make vital contact with the living God.

For the same reason, much of the current faith among believers is not in the power of God. Even the Word of God—which should only be a guide pointing *toward God*—frequently becomes a veil behind which the soul becomes occupied and is thus kept from meeting with God. The preaching, the Word itself, and the minister of the gospel can become hindrances instead of helps if they are not under the power of the Spirit. All external means of grace inevitably change and fade. It is the Spirit alone that works the faith that stands in the power of God and so remains strong and unwavering.

Let every discovery, whether in large congregations or in smaller groups, of individuals that do not remain steadfast or that do not grow in grace, serve as a

wake-up call to us that the full blessing of Pentecost has not come, or it is lost. This is what we long for and this is what we must have from God. Let all that is within us cry out to God for His full blessing upon His people.

There Is Little Power for Service to the Lost

What an immense army of workers there is in Christian countries. How varied and unceasing is the preaching of the Word. Sunday school teachers are numbered in the hundreds of thousands. How great is the number of Christian parents that teach their children the Word of God and desire to bring them to the Savior. Yet how widespread is the acknowledgment of the little fruit that springs from all this work. How many there are who, notwithstanding all they hear and in spite of the fact that they are by no means indifferent, are never touched by God's power and helped to make a definite choice of salvation. How many also there are who from youth to old age are well-grounded in the Word of God but are never gripped by it in the depths of their heart. They find it good, pleasing, and instructive to attend church, but they have never felt the power of the Word as a hammer, a sword, a fire. The reason they are so little moved is that the preaching they listen to is not in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. How much evidence does it take to convince us that there is a great lack of the full blessing of Pentecost?

Where does the blame lie? With pastors and ministers, or with the congregations? My conviction is that it belongs to both. Pastors are the offspring of the Christian community. They are very dependent on the life of their congregations. When a body of believers finds satisfaction in the merely acceptable and instructive preaching of a young minister, it encourages him to go forward on the same path, while he should be helped by its elder or more advanced believers to earnestly seek the power of the Holy Spirit. When a minister does not lead his congregation (either in public worship or in private prayer) to expect everything from the Spirit of God, he is tempted both for himself and his people to put confidence in the wisdom of man and the work of man. If only we could see that in the midst of all our lamentation over increasing worldliness and widespread indifference, the great cause is the lack of the full blessing of Pentecost among us. It is the power that can break down and touch the hard hearts of men.

There Is Little Preparedness for Self-Sacrifice on Behalf of the Extension of the Kingdom of God

When the Lord Jesus at His ascension promised the Holy Spirit, it was power given so that we could work for Him: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The goal of Pentecost was simply to equip His servants for His work on the earth. No sooner did the Spirit descend upon them than they began to witness for Him. The Spirit filled them with the desire and the impetus, the courage and the strength, to brave all hostility and danger, to endure all suffering and persecution, to succeed in making Jesus known as Lord. The Spirit of Pentecost is the true missionary Spirit that seeks to win the whole world for Jesus Christ.

Even when the missionary spirit is on the increase, if we reflect on how little effort is given toward the missionary enterprise compared to what is given to our own interests, we see what improvement is needed in this area. “What more can I sacrifice for Jesus? He offered himself for me. It has been well said that the Lord measures our gifts not according to what we give but according to what we retain. He who stands beside the treasury and observes what is cast into it still finds a few who, like the widow, cast in all they have to live on. How many are there who have given only what they will never miss and what costs them little or no sacrifice. How different it might be if the full blessing of Pentecost began to flow and have its intended effect. How the hearts of many would burn with love for Jesus and out of joy and thanks be impelled to give everything that He might be made known as Savior throughout the world.

Stop and consider the condition of the church, the Christian community around you, and your own heart. Is there a cry for the full blessing of Pentecost? Ponder the present lack of sanctification, of separation from the world, of steadfastness among professing believers, of new conversions, and of self-sacrifice for the kingdom of God, and let the reality sink into your soul. We are in a low period, where the power of the Spirit is lacking. There will be neither healing nor restoration except by the fresh visit and filling of the Spirit of God.

Let us then never cease to speak, think, mourn, and pray over this lack until the “one thing necessary” becomes the one thing that occupies our hearts. Restoration is not easy. It will perhaps not come all at once; it may be a slow process. The disciples of Jesus required every day with Jesus for three long years to prepare them for it. We should not be unduly discouraged if the transformation we long for does not take place immediately. Let us feel the need and take it to heart. Let us continue steadfastly in prayer. Let us stand fast in faith. The blessing of Pentecost is the birthright of the church, the pledge of our inheritance, that which belongs to us here on earth. Faith will never be put to

shame. Cleaving to Jesus with purpose of heart can never be in vain. The hour will surely come when, if we believe it with all our hearts, there shall from within us flow rivers of living water.

Chapter 5

What Hinders the Blessing?

> Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.”
>
> Matthew 16:24–25

Many sincerely seek the full blessing of Pentecost and yet do not find it. The question comes, What causes this failure? The answer varies—every person is different. Sometimes the answer is the presence of some sin that is still permitted. Worldliness, lack of love or humility, ignorance of intimate walking in the way of faith—these and many more causes could be mentioned. There are, however, many who think they have come to the Lord with the source of their failure and have sincerely confessed it and put it away and yet complain that the blessing does not come. For them it is particularly necessary to point out that there remains one great hindrance—the root from which all other hindrances come. It is nothing other than self with its varied forms of self-seeking, self-pleasing, self-confidence, and self-satisfaction. The more one strives to receive the blessing and to know what prevents it, the more certainly she will be led to the discovery of where the fault lies. She may be her own worst enemy: she must be liberated from the self-life to which she clings. Only then can the life of God entirely fill her.

This is taught in the words of the Lord Jesus to Peter. Peter had uttered such a glorious confession of his Lord that Jesus said to him: “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven” (Matthew 16:17). But when the Lord began to speak of His death by crucifixion, Peter was seduced by Satan to say: “Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!” (v. 22). The Lord then said that not only must He lay down His life, but that this same sacrifice was to be made by every disciple. Everyone must deny himself and take up his cross in order that he may die to himself. He

that desires to save his life will lose it; and he that is prepared to lose his life for Christ's sake will find it.

You see here what the Lord teaches and requires. Peter had learned through the Father to know Christ as the Son of God, but he did not yet know Him as the Crucified One. Of the absolute necessity of the cross, and death on it, he as yet knew nothing. It is the same with many believers today. They know the Lord Jesus as Savior; they desire to know Him better; but they do not yet understand that it is necessary to have a deeper discernment of the death of the cross as a death that he also must die; that he must actually deny and lose his life before he can receive the full life of God.

This is a difficult requirement. Why should a Christian be called upon to deny himself, his own feelings, his will, and his pleasure? Why must he part with his life—so precious to him that he is prepared to make any sacrifice? Why should a man hate his life? The answer is very simple. It is because that life is completely under the power of sin and death. It must be utterly denied and sacrificed. The self-life must be wholly taken away to make room for the life of God. He who would have the full, overflowing life of God, must utterly deny and lose his own life.

Do you see it now? There is only one great hindrance to the full blessing of Pentecost. It lies in the fact that two diverse lives cannot occupy the same place at the same time. Your own life and the life of God cannot both fill your heart. Your life hinders the entrance of the life of God. When your own life is set aside, the life of God will fill you. So long as *I* am still someone, *Jesus* cannot be everything. The self-life must be put down; then the Spirit of Jesus will flow in. Let every seeker of the full blessing of Pentecost accept this principle and hold to it. The subject is of such great importance that I want to make it still clearer by pointing out the words of Jesus regarding the subject:

1. Our life is entirely and completely under the power of sin.

"'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me'" (Matthew 16:24). When God created the angels and man, He gave man a separate personality, a power over himself, with the intention that he should of his own free will present and offer up that life, that individual self, to Him—that He in turn might fill him with His life and His glory. This was to be the highest blessedness of the creature. It was to be a vessel filled with the life and perfection of God. The fall of both angels and men consisted of nothing but the perversion of their life, their will, their personality, away from God, in order to please *themselves*. This self-exaltation was the pride that changed the angels

into demons and cast them out of heaven. This pride was the infernal poison that the serpent breathed into the ear and the heart of Eve. Man turned himself away from God to find delight in himself and in the world. His life, his whole individuality, was perverted and withdrawn from the control of God that he might seek and serve *himself*. It was no wonder that Jesus said they must utterly lose *that life* before the full life of the Spirit of God could be theirs. To the minutest detail, always and in everything, they must deny that self-life; otherwise the life of God could not possibly fill them.

This deep conviction of sin's corruption of our personality, manifesting itself in the fact that even the Christian still pleases himself in many things, is still lacking in many people. It appears to them both strange and harsh when we say that the believer is never free to follow his own feelings, that self-denial is a requirement that must prevail in every sphere of life without exception.

2. Our own life must be utterly set aside to make full room for the life of God.

The Lord has never withdrawn His words: "'In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple'" (Luke 14:33). Let the believer take these words to heart. At the time of his conversion the new believer has little understanding of this requirement. He receives the seed of the new life into his heart while the natural life is still strong. This was Peter's condition when the Lord addressed to him the words that have been quoted. He was a disciple, but how defective and incomplete he was. When his Lord was to die, instead of denying himself, he denied his Lord. But that grievous failure brought him at last to that despair of himself that caused him to go out and weep bitterly, and so prepared him for losing his own life so that he could be wholly filled with the life of Jesus.

This is the point to which we all must come. As long as the believer imagines that in some things—for example, eating and drinking, spending time or money, thinking and speaking about others—he still has the right and the liberty to follow his own wishes, to please himself, to maintain his own life, he cannot possibly receive the full blessing of Pentecost.

My friends, it is an unspeakably holy and glorious thing that we can be filled with the Spirit of God. It demands inevitably that the present occupant and governor of the heart, our self, shall be cast down, and that everything within it, wholly and entirely, shall be surrendered into the hands of the Spirit of God. I wish that we could understand the joy and power of being filled with the Spirit. It will come when we comply with the first and principal condition: that He

alone shall be acknowledged as our Life and our Leader.

3. It is absolutely impossible for the believer to bring about this great transformation on his own.

"'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 4:6). At no stage of our spiritual career are the power and deceitfulness of our self and the self-life more manifest than in our attempt to grasp the full blessing of Pentecost. Many try to appropriate this blessing by a great variety of efforts. They do not succeed, and they are not able to discover the reason why. They forget that self-will can never cast out self-will: that self can never mortify self. Happy is the man who is brought to the point of acknowledging his helplessness and impotence. Here he must cease to expect anything from his own life and strength, but rather lay himself down in the presence of the Lord as one who is helpless, even dead, that he may receive the blessing from Him.

It was not Peter that prepared himself for the Day of Pentecost or brought down the Pentecostal blessing from heaven; it was the Lord that did this for him. His part was to despair of himself and yield himself to his Lord to accomplish in him what He had promised. This is your part too, believer, while yielding obedience to this call, to deny *yourself* and to lose *your own life* and in the presence of the Lord to bow down in your helplessness and powerlessness. Set your heart before Him in deep humility, quiet patience, and childlike submission. The humility that is prepared to be nothing, the patience that will wait for Him and His time, and the submission that will yield itself wholly that He may do what He desires is all that you can do. Jesus calls you to follow Him. Remember how He first sacrificed His will, laid down His life into the hands of the Father, and went to the grave, waiting until God raised Him to life again. Be prepared to lay down your life, and be assured that God will raise it up again in power with the fullness of the Spirit. Be done with the strength of personal effort; abandon the dominion of your own power of accomplishment.

4. It is the surrender of faith to Jesus in His self-humiliation and death that opens the way to the full blessing of Pentecost.

But, you say, "Who can do this? Who can sacrifice everything and lay down his life and die as Jesus did? To mere human flesh, such surrender is impossible." I agree. But "*with God* all things are possible." You cannot literally follow Jesus and like Him go down to death and the grave. That is beyond your

power. Your self will never yield itself to death or rest quietly in the grave. But listen to the good news: *In Christ* you have already died and been buried. The power of His giving up His life, of His willing surrender of His spirit into the hands of the Father, of His silent resting in the grave until the third day, *works in you*. Faith in this working of the Spirit in you—however little you may understand it—and the power of the death and life of the Lord Jesus, will allow you to yield yourself to it.

Toward this goal, begin to regard the denying of self as the first and most necessary work of each day. Remember that the biggest hindrance in the way of the life of Pentecost is the self-life. It is not on account of its gross external sins, but because it sets itself in the place of God; seeks, pleases, and honors itself more than God. Occupy yourself in what Jesus calls you to do, and regard your self-life as your worst enemy and as the enemy of God. Begin to realize what blessing Jesus has prepared for you—that which He bestowed at Pentecost—namely, His own life, His indwelling; count nothing too precious or too costly to give in exchange for the Pearl of great price.

Are you certain that you want to be filled with the Spirit of God? Is it your desire to know what hinders you from obtaining it? Take the word of the Lord and guard it in your heart. Take it and go to Him with it. *He is able to help you understand, to consider and experience it. It is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit*. Let everything in you that belongs to self be sacrificed to Him, to be counted as loss, to be set aside to make a place for Him. He who by His death obtained the Spirit, who prepared Peter for Pentecost in the fellowship of His suffering, has your best interest in mind. Trust Him. He will baptize with the Spirit. From Him and through you will flow rivers of living water.

Chapter 6

How It Is to Be Received

> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.
>
> Ephesians 5:18

The command to be filled with the Spirit is just as imperative as the command not to be drunk with wine. As clearly as we are not to be guilty of the vice are we bound to obedience to the positive command. The same God who calls upon us to live in sobriety urges us with equal urgency to be filled with the Spirit. His command is the sure guarantee that He will give what He desires us to possess. With full confidence in this fact, let us ask for insight into the way we should live in the will of God as those who would be filled with the Spirit. Allow me to suggest some direction for those who desire to receive it.

1. The full blessing of Pentecost is the inheritance of all the children of God.

This is the first principle we want to clarify. There are many believers who do not believe this. They think the Day of Pentecost was merely the birthday feast of the church and that it was a time of blessing and power not destined to last. The command to be filled with the Spirit has little significance to them. The result is that they never seek to receive the blessing for themselves. They sit back as it were, content with the fragile, defective life in which the church of the day exists.

Is this true of you? Far be it from us! In order to carry on her work in the world, the church absolutely requires the full blessing of the Spirit. To please God and to live a life of holiness and joy and power, you need it too. To manifest His presence, His indwelling, and His glory, Jesus commands that you be filled with the Spirit. Come to terms with this requirement as a sacred reality. A child of God simply must have it. Take time to contemplate this fact and allow

yourself to be consumed by the thought of its glorious significance and power. A firm confidence that the blessing is actually within our reach is the first step toward obtaining it and a powerful impulse for its pursuit.

2. I do not as yet have this blessing.

This is the second step toward receiving it. You may ask why it is necessary to make such a statement. Let me briefly state why I consider it so important.

There are many believers who think they already have the Holy Spirit and that all they need is to be more faithful in their commitment to know and obey Him. They think they are already standing in God's power and that they only need to make better use of the life they possess. They imagine that they have all that is necessary for continued growth. On the contrary, it is my deep conviction that they are in a deceived state and have need of healing as divine and effective as that which the blind and lame received from Jesus' ministry. Just as the first condition of my recovery from a physical illness is the knowledge that I am sick, so it is absolutely necessary for them to discover and acknowledge that they do not have the life of Pentecost, and that they do not walk in the fullness and joy of the Spirit.

Once this first conviction is thoroughly clear to them, they will be prepared for another consideration: They need to acknowledge the guiltiness of their condition. They need to see that if they have not yet obeyed the command to be filled with the Spirit, it could be because of laziness, self-satisfaction, or unbelief. If this is true, it should be acknowledged with shame: they have rejected what God has prepared for them. When the confession that they have not yet received the full blessing is acknowledged, there will more likely be a stronger desire to attain to it. Take this thought and allow it to sink in: *It is true that I do not yet have the full blessing*.

The thought that should come next is:

3. This blessing is for me.

I have mentioned those who believe the full blessing of Pentecost was only for the first Christian community. There are others who acknowledge that it was intended also for the church of later times but still think that all are not entitled to expect it. They say, eminent believers, the leaders of the church, and such as have time and abundant opportunity to occupy their minds with such attainments may well cherish the hope of receiving this blessing, but it is not to be expected by ordinary members of the churches. Or they might reasonably think: *My*

unfavorable circumstances, my unfortunate disposition, my lack of ability, and similar difficulties, make it impossible for me to realize this ideal. God will not expect this of me: He has not destined me to obtain it.

Do not be deceived by such shallow thoughts. All the members of a body, even to the very least, must be healthy before the body as a whole can be healthy. The indwelling, the fullness of the Spirit, is nothing but the healthy state of the body of Christ. Be assured that the blessing is for you. In your own small measure you can at least be full. In this respect the Father makes no exceptions. A great distinction prevails in the matter of gifts, calling, and circumstances; but there can be no distinction in the love of the Father and His desire to see every one of His children in full health and in the full enjoyment of the Spirit of adoption. Learn, then, to express and to repeat over again the conviction: "This blessing is for me. My Father desires that I be filled with His Spirit. The blessing lies before me to be taken with my full consent. I will no longer despise by unbelief what falls to me as my birthright. With my whole heart I will say, This blessing is for me."

4. I cannot grasp this blessing by my own power.

Whenever a believer begins to strive for this blessing, he generally makes a variety of efforts to reach the faith, obedience, humility, and submission that are the conditions for obtaining it. Then when he does not succeed, he is tempted to blame himself, and if he does not become utterly discouraged, he stirs himself to still stronger effort and greater zeal. All this struggling is not entirely without value or usefulness. It is useful, however, in ways other than most anticipate. It does the very work that the law does: it brings us to the knowledge of our entire helplessness; it leads us to that despair of ourselves in which we become willing to give God the place that belongs to Him. This lesson is entirely indispensable: "I can neither bestow this blessing on myself nor take it. It is God alone that must work it in me."

The blessing of Pentecost is a supernatural gift, a wonderful act of God in the soul. The life of God in every soul is just as truly a work of God as when that life was first manifested in Jesus Christ. A believer can do as little to bring the full life of the Spirit to function in his soul as the Virgin Mary did to conceive her supernatural child (Luke 1:38). He can only receive it as the gift of God. The impartation of this heavenly blessing is as entirely an act of God as the resurrection of Christ from the dead was His divine work. As Jesus Christ had to entirely go down unto death and lay aside the life He had in order to receive new life from God, so must the believer abandon all hope of receiving this blessing

on his own and take it as a free gift from God. The acknowledgment of our utter powerlessness, this descent into true self-denial, is indispensable if we would enjoy this supreme blessing.

5. I must have this blessing at any cost.

To gain possession of the pearl of great price, the merchant sold *all he had*. The full blessing of Pentecost is to be obtained at no smaller price. He that would have it must sell all, must forsake all: sin to its smallest expression, love of the world in its most innocent form, self-will in its simplest and most natural manifestation, every faculty of our personality, every moment of our life, every pleasure that feeds our self-complacency, every exercise of our body, soul, and spirit—all must be surrendered to the power of the Spirit of God. In nothing can independent control or independent force have a place: *everything* must be brought under the leading of the Spirit. One must say, "Cost what it may, I am determined to have this blessing." Only the vessel that is utterly empty of everything can be filled to overflowing with this living water.

We know that there is often a great gulf between the desire and the act. Even when God has worked in us the desire, the action does not always come at once. But it will come whenever one has surrendered himself to the desire that God has instilled and openly expresses his consent in the presence of God. This, accordingly, is what must be done by the believer who intends to part with everything, even though he feels he has no power to accomplish it. The selling price is not always paid at the moment; nevertheless, the purchaser may become the possessor as soon as the sale is concluded and security is given for the payment. May this be your declaration today: "Cost what it may, I will have this blessing. Jesus is my guarantor that I will have power to abandon everything." Express your decision in the presence of God with confidence and perseverance. Repeat it before your own conscience and say, "I am a purchaser of the Pearl of great price: I have offered everything to obtain the full blessing of Pentecost. I have said to God that I must, I will have it. By this decision I will abide."

6. In faith that God accepts my surrender and gives this blessing as a gift, I appropriate it for myself.

There is a great difference between the appropriation of a blessing by faith and the actual experience of it. Because believers fail to understand this, they often become discouraged when they do not immediately experience the feeling and the enjoyment of what is promised. From the moment that you have chosen

to forsake all and count it but loss for the full blessing of Pentecost, your part is to believe that He receives your offer and that He bestows upon you the fullness of the Spirit. You may say at that time you did not notice any marked change in your experience. It is as if everything in you remained in its former condition. Now, however, is the time to persevere in faith. Learn by faith that God has accepted your surrender as a certain and completed transaction. In this faith look upon yourself as one who is known to God, one who has sold everything to obtain the heavenly treasure. Believe that God has bestowed upon you the fullness of the Spirit. Regard yourself as on the way to knowing the full blessing in feeling and experience. Believe that God will order this blessing to be fully revealed in you. Let your life be a life of joyful thanksgiving and expectation. God will not disappoint you.

7. Now I count upon God and wait upon Him to reveal within me the blessing He has bestowed upon me.

Faith must lead me to the actual inheritance of the promise, to the experience and enjoyment of it. Do not rest content with a belief that does not lead to experience. Rest in God by faith in the full assurance that He can make himself known to you in a manner that is truly divine. At times the whole process may appear to you too great, too wonderful, and truly impossible. Do not be afraid. The more clearly you discern the amazing elements of the fact that you have said to the Eternal God that He may have you and make you full of His Holy Spirit here on earth, the more you will feel what a miracle of the grace of God it must be. There may be things in you that you are not aware of, things that hinder the breaking forth of the blessing. God is committed to putting them aside. Let them be consumed in the fire of burning desire. Let them be eliminated in the flame of God’s countenance and His love. Let your expectation be fixed upon the Lord your God. He who in a frail woman revealed the divine life of the infant Jesus, He who raised the dead Jesus to the life of glory, will just as miraculously bring this heavenly blessing to fruition in you so that you may be filled with the Holy Spirit, and that you may know—not by reasoning but by experience—that you have actually received the Holy Spirit.

Dear believer, I entreat you to this summons. God promises, He desires to make you full of the Holy Spirit. He desires that your whole personality and life be under the power of the Holy Spirit. He asks if you on your part are willing, if you really desire to have it. Let your answer be not in uncertainty but with all that is within you cry: “Yes, Lord, with all my heart!” Let this promise of God become the primary element in your life, the most precious, the only thing you

seek. Do not be content to think and pray over it, but this very day enter into a transaction with God that will permit no doubts concerning the choice you have made.

When you have made this choice, hold firmly to it—expect this blessing as a miracle of divine proportions. The more earnestly you exercise that faith, the more it will teach you that your heart must be entirely emptied and set free from every bond, to be filled with the Spirit, to be occupied by the indwelling Christ. Consider yourself in faith as one who is fully surrendered to God and who must receive the full blessing. You may take it for granted that it will come.

Chapter 7

How It Is Kept

> But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.
>
> Jude 20–21, 24–25

Is it possible for someone who has the full blessing of Pentecost to lose it? God does not bestow this gift with such constraint that a man retains it whether he desires it or not. This blessing is entrusted to him as a talent that must be used; and only by use does it become secure. Just as the Lord Jesus after He was baptized with the Holy Spirit had to be perfected by obedience and submission to the leading of the Spirit, so the believer who has received the blessing of Pentecost must see that he guards safely the deposit that has been entrusted to him.

Scripture points us to the fact that our keeping the blessing consists in our entrusting it to the Lord to be kept by Him. Paul places these two ideas alongside one another in his second letter to Timothy: "That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us" (1:12, 14). Jude also, after saying, "Keep yourselves in God's love" (v. 21), adds the doxology: "To him who is able to keep you from falling … be glory" (vv. 24–25). The secret of preserving the blessing is the exercise of a humble dependence on the Lord who keeps us and on the Spirit by whom we ourselves are kept in close fellowship with Him. It is with this blessing as with the manna that fell in the wilderness: it must be renewed from heaven daily. It is

with the new heavenly life as with the life we live on earth: the fresh air that sustains it must be drawn in every moment from without and from above. Let us look at how this sustained life takes place.

Jesus, Who Gave Us the Blessing, Will Maintain It for Us

Jesus is the Keeper of Israel. This is His name and this is His work. God not only created the world but also keeps and upholds it. Jesus is not content with simply giving the blessing of Pentecost: He will also maintain it. The Holy Spirit is not a power that in any sense is subordinate to us or given to us for our personal use; He is a power that is over and above us, that possesses and energizes us, a power by which Jesus in heaven will carry forward His work from moment to moment. Our proper place and attitude must always be that of deepest dependence. Our primary concern is to allow Jesus to do His work within us.

As long as a believer does not discern this truth, there will always be in him a certain dread of receiving the full blessing. He will be inclined to say, "I will not be able to continue in that holy life. Such a life may be experienced from time to time, but never maintained." These thoughts only show what a frail grasp such a one has of reality. When Jesus comes by the Spirit to dwell in my heart and to live in me, He will work out the maintenance of the blessing and my whole inner life will be in His special care. Those who believe this see that the life in the blessing of Pentecost, while it is never relieved of watchfulness, is a life free of anxiety and characterized by continued gladness. The Lord desires only one thing of us: that we know and honor Him as our faithful Shepherd, our Almighty Keeper. Jesus, who gives the blessing of Pentecost, will maintain it in us.

By Faith

The law that prevails at every stage in the progress of the kingdom of God is "according to your faith." Our faith at our first reception of the Lord Jesus was as small as a grain of mustard seed. In the course of the Christian life, that faith must grow in order that it shall see more and receive and enjoy more of the fullness that is in the Lord. Paul wrote to the Galatians: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (2:20). His faith was as broad and boundless and unceasing as were the needs of his life and work. In everything and at all times, without ceasing, he trusted in Jesus to do all. His faith was wide and abundant—like the glorious energy that

flows from Jesus for the enrichment of His people. He had surrendered his whole life to Jesus: he himself no longer lived. By a continuous and unrestricted faith, he gave Jesus the liberty of energizing his life without ceasing and without limitation.

The fullness of the Spirit is not a gift that is bestowed once for all. It is rather a constantly flowing stream of the river of the water of life that issues from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It is an uninterrupted communication of the life and love of Jesus, the most personal and intimate association of the Lord with His own upon the earth. It is by the faith that discerns this truth, assents to it, and holds to it with joy that Jesus will do His work of keeping.

In Fellowship With Himself

The single aim of the blessing of Pentecost is to reveal Jesus as Savior so that He may exhibit His power to redeem souls. The Spirit did not simply come to occupy the place of Jesus, but to unite the disciples with their Lord more closely, deeply, and completely than when He was on earth. The power from on high did not come as a power that they were then to consider as their own: the power was inseparably bound up with the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Every operation of the power was a direct working of God in them. The fellowship the disciples had with Jesus on earth—following Him, receiving His teaching, doing His will, and participating in His suffering—was to continue to be their experience, but in greater measure.

So it is with us. The Spirit in us will always glorify Jesus; He will always make it plain that He alone is Lord and all that is glorious comes from Him. Close communion with God in the inner chamber, faithfulness in searching His Word and seeking to know His will in the Scriptures, sacrifice of time and business and fellowship with others in order to bring us into touch with the Savior—all this is indispensable for the keeping of the blessing. Jesus keeps us through our fellowship with Him, being occupied with himself. He that loves His fellowship above everything will know His keeping power.

Through Obedience

When the Lord Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, He stated repeatedly that the blessing was for the obedient: “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter” (John 14:15–16 KJV). Peter speaks of “the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey

him" (Acts 5:32). Of our Lord himself we read that He "became obedient unto death … therefore God exalted him" (Philippians 2:8–9). God demands obedience. It is the only true relationship of the creature to its Creator. It is obedience that attains what was lost by the Fall. It is the power of obedience that Jesus came to restore. It is His own life. Apart from obedience the blessing of Pentecost can neither come nor abide.

There are two kinds of obedience. The one is very defective, like that of the disciples previous to Pentecost. They desired from the heart to do what the Lord said, but they did not have the power. Yet the Lord counted their desire and purpose as obedience. On the other hand, there is a more abundant life, which comes with the fullness of the Spirit, where new power is given for full obedience. The characteristic of the full blessing of Pentecost, and the way to keep it, is surrender to obedience in the minutest detail. To listen to the voice of Jesus, to the voice of the Spirit, to the voice of conscience, this is the way Jesus leads us. The way to make the life of Pentecost within us sure and strong is to know Jesus and to love Him, to receive Him as the Obedient One.

It is the exercise of this obedience that gives the soul confidence and power to trust God and to expect all from Him. A strong will is necessary for a strong faith, and it is strengthened to trust God to the uttermost. This is the only way in which the Lord can lead us to even richer blessing.

In Fellowship With His People

The believer's initial seeking of the full blessing is usually for himself. Even after he receives the blessing as a new experience, he is still inclined to maintain it for himself. But the Spirit will teach him that a member of the body cannot enjoy the flow of a healthy life in a state of separation from others. He begins to understand that "there is one body and one Spirit." The unity of the body must be realized to enjoy the fullness of the Spirit.

This principle teaches some important lessons about the condition on which the blessing received can be maintained. All that you have belongs to others and must be employed for their service. All they have belongs to you and is in turn indispensable for you. The Spirit of the body of the Lord can work effectively only when the members of it work in unison. You should confess to others what the Lord has done for you, ask for their intercession, seek their fellowship, and help them with what the Lord has given you. You should consider the troubled condition of the church in our day not in the spirit of judgment or bitterness, but in the spirit of humility and prayer, of gentleness and willingness to serve. Jesus

will teach you what is meant by the words “the greatest … is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13); and by the degree of your surrender to the welfare of His church He will both keep and increase the blessing in you.

In the Service of His Kingdom

We have often stated that the Spirit comes as power for our work. The very name of Jesus Christ involves entire consecration to God’s work, utter devotion to the rescue of souls. It was for this cause that He lived: it is only for this that He lives in heaven. How can anyone possibly dream of having the Spirit of Christ other than for the work of God and the salvation of souls? It is impossible. It is vital, then, that we keep these two aspects of the Spirit’s operation closely connected. *What the Spirit works in us is for the sake of what He works through us*. Our seeking for the blessing will be to no avail if we do not present ourselves to be used by the Spirit in the doing of His work.

The blessing of Pentecost does not always come with equal power or all at once. God often gives preparatory experiences and awakenings that lead to the full blessing. Every attempt to keep such gracious gifts for ourselves will mean loss. He that does not follow his own inclinations, but presents himself to the Lord and waits upon Him with an undivided spirit, will experience the work of God that will make him effective in service.

One more thought: *It is as our indwelling Lord that Jesus maintains the blessing of Pentecost in us*.

Whenever mention is made of Jesus as our Keeper, it is often difficult to believe that we can always be in His hands and under His power. How much clearer and more glorious does the truth become when the Spirit reveals to us that Christ is *in* us. His indwelling is so a part of us as to be compared to the soul animating the body. It is thus that Christ dwells in us, permeating our whole nature with His nature. The Holy Spirit came for the purpose of making Him deeply present within us. As the sun is high above me and yet by its heat penetrates my bones and marrow and quickens my whole life, so the Lord Jesus, who is exalted high in heaven, envelopes my whole nature by His Spirit in such a way that all my thinking, feeling, and choosing are quickened by Him. We will no longer think of an external person in heaven keeping us, but One who is in us, occupying and filling our heart. We can then see how natural, how certain, how blessed it is that the indwelling Jesus maintains the fullness of the Spirit.

Are you longing for this life in the fullness of blessing, and yet are afraid to enter upon it because you do not know how you will continue? Just as Jesus

Christ was daily with His disciples in physical presence, so He will be with you by His Spirit every day. No one can fully understand how things look from the top of a mountain until he has been there. Trust yourself to Jesus who sees everything as God sees it. Trust Him for this. Lay aside every burden and receive from Him the full blessing of Pentecost, a fountain that will spring up in you unto everlasting life.

Chapter 8

How It May Be Increased

> "He who believes in me will never be thirsty."
>
> John 6:35

> "Whoever believes in me … streams of living water will flow from within him."
>
> John 7:38

Can the full blessing of Pentecost be increased? Can anything that is already full become fuller? Absolutely. It can become so full that it overflows. This is especially true of the blessing of Pentecost.

The words of our blessed Lord Jesus point us to a double blessing. First, Jesus says that he who believes in Him shall never thirst: he shall always have life in himself—that is, the satisfaction of all his needs. Then He speaks of something that is greater still and more glorious: He who believes in Him will have streams of living water flowing from within to others. It is the distinction between full and overflowing. A vessel may be full and yet have nothing left over for others. When it remains full and yet has something for others, there must be an ever-flowing supply. This is what our Lord promises. At the outset, faith in Him gives them the blessing that they will never thirst. But as they advance and become stronger in faith, they become as a fountain of water out of which streams flow to others. The Spirit who at first fills us will overflow to souls around us.

Before a natural spring is opened up, it will seem weak, but when fully uncovered, the waters will rush up and overflow. Just so with the rivers of living water—as we draw on them they increase and overflow. I would like to explore this principle in the realm of the spiritual life and try to discover what is necessary for the fullness of the Spirit to flow more abundantly from us. There are some simple directions that may help us toward this knowledge.

Hold Fast to What You Have

See to it that you do not misunderstand the blessing God has given you. Be sure that you do not form any wrong conceptions of what the full blessing is. Do not imagine that the joy and power of Pentecost must be felt and seen immediately. Restoration takes time and often comes slowly. At first, one receives the full blessing only as a seed: the full life is wrapped up as it were in a capsule. The believer has longed for it; he has surrendered himself unreservedly for it; he has believed that God has accepted his consecration and fulfilled His promise. In that faith he goes on his way, saying to himself: "The blessing of the fullness of the Spirit is for me." But the actual experiences of the blessing did not come as he had anticipated; or they did come but lasted for only a short time. The result was that he began to fear that his surrender was not a reality; that he had been rejoicing in what was only a fleeting emotion and that the real blessing was something greater and more powerful than he had yet received. The result is that he moves further back rather than forward through discouragement or disappointment.

The cause of this condition is simply a lack of faith. We tend to judge God and His work in us by sight and feeling. We forget that the whole process is the work of faith. Even in Christians who have made the greatest progress, faith rests not on what is seen of the work of God or on the experience of it, but on the deep, hidden work, not always obvious at once. If you have entered a time of discouragement and desire to return to the true life according to the promise, my counsel is not to be surprised if it comes to you slowly. If you know that you have given yourself to God wholeheartedly and you believe that God waits to fulfill His promise in you with divine power, then rest in Him and hold fast to your hope. Although the cold of winter appears to bury everything in death, you can with the prophet Habakkuk say, "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior" (3:17–18). Do this, and you will know God, and God will know you. If you have set yourself before God as an empty, separated, purified vessel to become full of His Spirit, then continue to regard yourself so and rest in His presence. If you believe that God has received you through Jesus Christ and by your entire surrender to Him, then abide in this attitude day by day, and you may depend upon it that the blessing will grow and begin to flow. "The one who trusts will never be dismayed … and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame" (Isaiah 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6).

Persevere in the Denial of Yourself

If I wish to have a reservoir of water, the greater the excavation I make for it, the greater the quantity of water I can collect and the stronger will be the stream that flows from it when the floodgates are opened. In your surrender for sanctification or for the full blessing of the Spirit, you have said in all honesty that you are prepared to sacrifice and forsake all in order to win this Pearl of the kingdom of heaven. This consecration is acceptable to God. But perhaps you have not fully understood the words you have used. The Lord has much to teach you concerning what self is, how deeply it is rooted, and how utterly corrupt and hidden it is as the secret source of many things you say and do. Be willing to make room for the Spirit by a daily, entire denial of the self-life and you may be sure that He will always be willing to fill the empty place. You have forsaken and sacrificed everything as far as you know, but keep your mind open to the Spirit and He will lead you further and let you see that only when the entire sacrifice of everything after the example of Christ is the rule in His church shall the blessing again break forth like an overflowing stream.

It is surprising how small a thing may hinder the continuing increase of the blessing. It may be, for example, a disagreement between friends in which they are not willing to forgive one another. Or it may be yielding to undue sensitivity or ambition that is not prepared to take the servant role. Or it may be the possession or use of earthly property as if it were our own. It could be the enjoyment of food and drink in excess or a connection with things that are innocent in themselves but do not reflect our profession of being led by the Spirit of God. Or it may be in connection with doubtful things, in which we give way to the lust of the flesh. Here, just as our Lord did in His earthly ministry, we must demonstrate that the heavenly portion is sufficient to satisfy all our desires.

Do you really wish to enjoy the full measure of the blessing of the Spirit? Then before temptation comes, train yourself to understand the fundamental law of the imitation of Christ and full discipleship: *Forsake all*. Be strengthened and drawn into the discipline of it by the promise of a “hundredfold in this life.”

Regard Yourself As One Who Lives to Bless Others

God is love. His whole being is a surrender of himself in love to be the life of His creatures, to enable them to participate in His holiness and blessedness. He blesses and serves all that lives.

Jesus Christ is God’s Bearer, Bringer, Dispenser of love. What God is in heaven, Christ was on earth. He came, He lived, He suffered, and died to glorify

the Father—that is, to let it be known how glorious the Father is in His love and His purpose to bless men. The highest honor of any being is to give back to God.

The Holy Spirit came as the Spirit of the Father and the Son to make us partakers of this divine nature, to shed abroad the love of God in our hearts and to secure the indwelling of the Son.

When a believer has the fullness of the Spirit, and desires to have it increased, let it be clear that he can enjoy this blessing to the degree that he is prepared to give himself to the service of love. The Spirit comes to expel the life of self and self-seeking. The fullness of the Spirit presupposes a willingness to consecrate ourselves to the blessing of others. The Spirit is the flowing out of the life of God. If we will but yield ourselves to Him, He will become in us rivers of living water.

The secret to having the blessing increased is to live as one who is left on earth that the love of God may work through him. We can love all those around us when the love of God is in us through the Spirit. We can love the children of God cordially, even the weakest and most despised. Exercise this gift in you in every possible way. Love the lost, the unlovely. Let love constrain you to give, to work, and to pray. If there is no open door for other ministry, the door of prayer is always open. Embrace the whole world through prayer. The love of Christ belongs also to the heathen. The Spirit is the power of Christ for redeeming them.

Let Christ Be Everything

The Scripture says, “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him” (Colossians 1:19); “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God (2 Corinthians 1:20). The “rivers of living water” spoken of by Christ were always connected to faith in himself. If we understand the word *believe*, we should require no other answer to the question of how the blessing is to be increased.

Faith is seeing by the Spirit that Jesus is a fountain of divine love, and the Spirit flows from Him as the Bearer of the life that this love brings. Embrace the promise, appropriate the blessing as it is provided in Christ, rest in the certainty of it, and thank God for what He is yet to do. Faith keeps the soul open so that Christ can come in and take possession and fill all. Faith maintains unbroken communion between the soul and Christ himself, who by the silent, effectual work of the Spirit is enthroned in the heart.

If you believe, you shall see the glory of God. Let every doubt, every weakness, every temptation find you trusting in Jesus and depending upon His working in you. There are two ways to face up to and fight against sin. One is to try to ward it off with your own strength, meditating in the Word and in prayer. In this way we are using the power of the will. The other way is to turn at the very moment of the temptation to the Lord Jesus in a quiet exercise of faith and say to Him, “My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:2). This is the way of true faith. “This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). It is by the exercise of faith without ceasing that the blessing will flow without ceasing.

Christ must be all to us every moment. It is of no avail to me that I have life on earth unless that life is renewed every moment by my breathing in fresh air. Even so must God actually renew, uphold, and strengthen the divine life in me every moment. He does this for me through my union with Christ. Christ is the fullness of God, the life of God, the love of God prepared for us and communicating itself to us. The Spirit is the fullness of Christ, the life of Christ, the self-communicating love of Christ, surrounding us as the air surrounds our physical body.

Let us believe that we are in Christ, that He surrounds us with His power, longing to make the rivers of His Spirit flow through us to the world. Let us endeavor to be filled with the joyful assurance that the Almighty will fulfill His Word in us: “Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.”

Chapter 9

How It Comes to Full Manifestation

> For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.
>
> Ephesians 3:14–19

I have said before that every blessing God gives is like a seed with the power of an indissoluble life hidden in it. Let no one think, therefore, that to be filled with the Spirit is a condition of perfection that leaves nothing more to be desired. This is in no way the case. It was even after the Lord Jesus was filled with the Spirit that He had to be further tested and perfected by temptation and so learn obedience. When the disciples were filled with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, power from on high was given them that they might know victory over sin in their own lives. The Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and He must guide us into all truth. But it will be step by step that He leads us into the eternal purposes of God, into the knowledge of Christ, and into true holiness and full fellowship with God. The fullness of the Spirit is preparation for living and working as a child of God.

From this viewpoint we see how indispensable it is for every believer to seek this blessing. Paul offered his prayer in Ephesians on behalf of all believers without distinction. He did not regard it as a spiritual luxury intended only for those who were prominent or favored among believers. No, it was for everyone. When he prayed for them to receive the Spirit at their conversion, it was for everyone. The prayer of Paul quoted above is regarded as one of the most glorious representations of what the Christian life should be. Let us endeavor to

learn what the full revelation and manifestation of this blessing of the Spirit is.

The Father Will Strengthen You With Power by His Spirit

From a previous statement it is clear that these Christians had received the Spirit when they believed in Christ (Ephesians 1:13–14). But he sees that they do not yet know or at least have not yet experienced all that the Spirit can do for them, and because of their ignorance they may make no further progress. Therefore, he kneels and prays fervently that the Father would strengthen them by the power of the Spirit in the inner man. This strengthening by the Spirit is equivalent to being filled with the Spirit; in fact, it is another aspect of the same blessing. It is the indispensable condition of a healthy, growing, and fruitful life.

Paul prays for a new operation of the Spirit of God. He asks that He would do this *according to the riches of His glory*. He desires that God bring to bear all the wealth of His grace in a fashion consistent with the divine glory of His power, and as the living God to strengthen these believers with might by His Spirit in the inner man.

Our daily life depends on God's will, His grace, His omnipotence. Every moment He must work in our inner life and strengthen us by His Spirit in order that we might live as He would have us to live. No creature in the natural world can exist for a moment without God's sustaining power. The gift of the Holy Spirit is God's pledge that He will work everything in us every day of our lives. Our dependence must be entirely on God. He alone can finish the work He has begun in us.

Paul tells these believers what he prays for them so that they may be aware of what they need and begin to ask for it themselves. We can expect everything from God alone, but we must ask. He will strengthen you with might by His Spirit, the same Spirit who was already in you at your conversion. Let this become your one desire, the strong confidence of your soul: "God will fill me with His Spirit: God will strengthen me and be in me all that I need to be pleasing to God."

Christ Will Dwell in Your Hearts by Faith

The glorious fruit of the power of the Spirit in the inner man is the manifestation of the Son. The Father's work in all eternity is to magnify the Son.

In Him alone is the good pleasure of God realized. The Father has no fellowship with His creatures except through His Son. He can have no joy in us

except as He beholds us in His Son. Therefore, it is His great work in redemption to obtain a dwelling place for His Son in us that *our life might be a visible expression of the life of Jesus*.

That is His goal in strengthening us with power by the Spirit in the inner man. It is that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith.

The indwelling of Christ involves the possession of our hearts, a truly divine quickening of our inmost being with His life. The Spirit brings our will into agreement with the will of God. The result is that our heart, like the heart of Jesus, bows before Him in humble surrender; we seek only His honor; our soul is filled with love for Jesus. This inward renewal makes the heart a proper dwelling place for the Lord. By the Spirit He is revealed within us and we come to know Him as our life. He is truly one with us as we are with Him.

Believer, God longs to see Jesus in you. The Spirit has come, and the Father is willing to work mightily by Him so that the living presence of His Son may always abide in you. Jesus loves you and longs for you, so that He cannot rest until He makes His abode in your heart. This is the great blessing the fullness of the Spirit brings to you.

It is by faith that you receive and know the indwelling of the Spirit and the operation of the Father through Him. By faith, which discerns things invisible as clearly as the sun, you receive and know the living Jesus in your heart. As constantly as He was with His disciples on earth—even more so because He is in you—He will be with you and you will enjoy His presence and His love. Pray that the Father would strengthen you by the Spirit, open your heart for the fullness of the Spirit, and enable you to appropriate it. At last you will truly know what it means to have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith.

Rooted and Grounded in Love, You Will Know the Love of Christ That Passes Knowledge

By the Spirit the love of God is shed abroad in the heart. By Christ who dwells in the heart, the love whereby God loved Him is revealed to us, and we learn that just as the life between the Father, Son, and Spirit is only infinite love, so the life of Christ in us is love. Thus we become rooted and grounded in love. We are implanted in the soil of love; we strike our roots in love; we have our being in it and draw our strength from it. Love is the supreme element in our spiritual life. The Spirit in us and the Son in us manifest through us the matchless love of God. Love is the first among the streams of living water that flow from us.

We discover the truth that “love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love

is the fulfillment of the law" (Romans 13:10); that love "is not self-seeking" (1 Corinthians 13:5); that love lays down its life for its brothers (1 John 3:16). Our heart becomes larger; our friends and our enemies, the children of God and the children of the world, those that are worthy to be loved and those that are unlovely, the world as a whole and every individual creature in particular—all are embraced in the love of God. We find that our happiness lies in the giving up of our own reputation, our own advantage and comfort, in favor of others. No sacrifice is too great for love; our greatest joy will be to love. It becomes our nature and our life. We are enabled to love because of the mighty work of the Father within us; because the Son, who loved us and gave himself for us, dwells in us, and He, who is Love personified, has filled our heart with himself. We are rooted in love and live in accordance with the nature of the root of God, which is love.

That you may be strong to know the love that passes knowledge; that is, to know love not with your own knowledge and understanding but with that of Christ himself—so far as this is possible before God, in order that He may fill you, an earthen vessel, with His own love to overflowing.

"God is love"; He has provided everything to the end that you may know love fully. It is for this reason that the Spirit is in you and that the Father will work mightily in you: it is with this aim that Christ desires to have your whole heart. Let us begin to pray, as never before, that the Father would strengthen us with power by the Spirit; that the Father would grant us to be filled with the Spirit and to know the love of Christ.

That You May Be Filled With All the Fullness of God

What an impenetrable mystery! What a divine announcement! To be *filled* unto all the fullness of God: this is the experience of the fullness of the Spirit.

Filled with all the *fullness* of God: who shall ever unfold to us the meaning of this expression? Will we ever comprehend what it signifies? God has made provision for our enlightenment. In Christ Jesus we see a man full of God, a man who was perfected by suffering and obedience, filled unto all the fullness of God; a man who in the solitariness and poverty of an ordinary human life, with all its needs and infirmities, has nevertheless allowed us to see on earth the life enjoyed by the inhabitants of heaven as they are filled with all the fullness of God. The will and the honor, the love and the service of God were always visible in Him.

When God called the world into existence, it was in order that it might reveal

Him. In it His wisdom and power and goodness were to dwell and be visibly manifested. We say that God can be seen everywhere in nature. The Seraphim sing, “The whole earth is full of His glory.” When God created man in His image, it was in order that He might be seen in man—that man should serve as a reflection of His likeness. The image of a man never serves any other purpose than to represent the man. As the image of God, man was destined to simply receive the glory of God in his life, to bear it and make it visible. God was to be all to him, to be all in him: he was to be full of God.

Through sin this divine purpose was frustrated. Instead of being full of God, man became full of himself and the world. Sin has blinded us to such an extent that it appears impossible ever to become full of God again. Even many believers see nothing desirable in this fullness. Yet it is for this blessing that Jesus came to redeem and bring us; and this is the end for which God is prepared to work mightily within us by His Spirit. This is no less the result for which the Son of God desires to dwell in our heart, and which He will bring to accomplishment: it is that we may be filled unto the fullness of God.

This is the highest aim of the Pentecostal blessing. To attain this, we can count upon the Spirit’s ministry. He will open the way for us and guide us in it. He will work in us the deep humility of Jesus, who always said, “By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work” (John 5:30; 6:38; 12:49; 14:10). Amid this self-emptying and sense of dependence, He will work in us the assurance and the experience that for the soul that is nothing, God is all. By our faith He will reveal to us Jesus—who was full of God—as our life. He will cause us to be rooted in the love of God. Thus it will be with us as with Jesus: Man is nothing; God’s honor, God’s will, God’s love, God’s power are everything.

Do not say that this is too high an experience for you or that it is not for you. In truth, it is the will of God concerning you: the will both of His commandment and of His promise. He will fulfill His promise. He himself will work it out. Today then, in humility and faith, take His word “Filled unto all the fullness of God” as the purpose and the watchword of your life and see what it will do for you. It will become a powerful lever to raise you out of the self-seeking that is quite content with only being prepared for blessing. It will urge you to enter into

and become firmly rooted in the love of God that gives everything to you and thereby in the love that gives everything back to Him. It will convince you that nothing less than Christ himself dwelling in your heart can keep such a love abiding in you and actually make the fullness of God a reality within you. It will train you to focus your only hope on the mighty operation of God by His Spirit. It will also move you to go to your knees and call to your aid the wealth of God's glory that it may prepare you for this great wonder. This it will continue to do until your heart is enabled to utter the response, "Yes, I shall be filled with all the fullness of God; it is what my God has prepared for me."

With this glorious prospect before us, let us join with the apostle in the doxology: "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:20–21). Let us desire nothing less than these riches of the glory of God. Today, if you have never done it before, make a beginning and appropriate for yourself the full blessing of the Spirit of God.

When God said to Abraham, "I am God Almighty," He invited him to trust His omnipotence to fulfill His promise. When Jesus went down into the grave and its emptiness, it was in the faith that God's omnipotence could lift Him to the throne of His glory. It is that same omnipotence that waits to work out God's purpose in those that believe in Him to do so.

Chapter 10

God Assures Us of Its Coming

> "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"
>
> Luke 11:13

When Jairus came to Jesus to entreat His help for his dying daughter and then learned that she had already died, Jesus said, "'Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed'" (Luke 8:50). Face-to-face with a sorrow in which he was utterly helpless, the Lord called upon Jairus to put his trust in God. There was only one thing that could help him: faith. Countless times this word has been the strength of God's children, where humanly speaking all hope was lost and success appeared impossible. We who desire to know the full Pentecostal blessing have need of this word as well. The inconceivable preciousness of the blessing and of the divine element in it indeed prove that only the wonder-working power of God can make this exceeding grace a reality within us. Let us also be silent before God; here we shall hear the voice of Jesus saying to us, "Don't be afraid; just believe": God will do it for you.

This divine assurance was clearly stated by Jesus' word that much more readily than an earthly father who gives his children bread will God give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. We would call it child abuse if a father refused to feed his children; how much more, then, shall not God give the promised fullness of the Spirit to those who ask Him. Among all the aspects of our spiritual life, the fundamental element should be the firm confidence that the Father will give His child His full heritage. God is a spirit. He desires full possession of us; but He can only accomplish this by giving us His Spirit. As surely as He is God, He will fill you with His Holy Spirit. Without faith you will never receive the blessing. That faith will give you the victory over every difficulty. "Don't be afraid; just believe." Hear the voice of Jesus: "Did I not say that if you believe you will see the glory of God?"

Hear the three great lessons.

1. Although you cannot comprehend or explain everything merely by the power of your understanding, "just believe."

There are many preliminary questions that immediately arise in connection with this subject, and our temptation is to attempt to understand everything about it before we expect the blessing. Two of these questions I will mention now.

The first is: Does this blessing come from *within* or from *above*? Some believers immediately say that it must come from *within*. The Holy Spirit descended upon the church on the Day of Pentecost. At the moment of conversion He comes into our heart. Therefore, we no longer have to pray that He be given to us: we must simply recognize and use what we already have. We should not seek to have more of the Spirit: we have Him in the fullness of the gift as it is. It is rather the Holy Spirit who must have more of us. As we yield ourselves entirely to Him He will entirely fill us. It is from *within* that the blessing must come: the fountain of living water is already there; the fountain has only to be opened and every obstruction cleared—and the water will stream forth. It must spring from *within*.

On the other hand, others say, "No, it must come from *above*. When on the Day of Pentecost the Father bestowed the Spirit, He did not give Him away beyond His own control. The fullness of the Spirit still remains in God. God bestows nothing apart from himself, to work without or independently of His will. He himself works only through the Spirit, and every new and greater manifestation of the Spirit's power comes directly from above. Years after the Day of Pentecost the Spirit came down again from heaven at Samaria and Caesarea. In His fullness He is in heaven still; and it is from God in heaven that the fullness of the Spirit is to be sought.

Dear believer, please do not waste your time deciding which of these is the right one. God blesses men in both camps. When the flood came, all the fountains of the abyss were broken up and the gates of heaven were opened. It came simultaneously from beneath and from above. God is prepared to bless those of both opinions. He desires to teach us to know and honor the Spirit who is within us. He also desires that we wait upon Him in a spirit of utter dependence and to ask our Father, who gives us our daily bread, to give us the new fuller inflow of His Spirit. Do not allow yourself to be held back by this question. *God understands your petition*. He knows what you desire. Believe that God is prepared to fill you with His Spirit; let that faith look up to Him with unceasing prayer and confidence. He will give the blessing.

The other question is: Does this blessing come gradually or all at once? Will it be a silent, unobserved increase of the grace of the Spirit or a momentary, explosive outpouring of His power? Again we find that God has already sent this blessing in both modes and will continue to do so. What must take place at once is this: There must be a conscious decision to unreservedly surrender your life to the control of the Spirit and a conviction of faith that God has accepted your surrender. In the majority of cases this is done at once. It must finally come to this, perhaps after a long period of seeking and praying, that the soul will present itself to God for this blessing in one definite, irrevocable act, and believe that the offering is sanctified and accepted upon the altar. Then, whether the experience of the blessing comes at once and with power, or quietly and gradually, the soul must maintain its act of self-dedication and simply look to God to do His work.

Thus in dealing with all such questions, the primary concern is this: *Have faith, and rest in the faithfulness of God*. Hold fast the principle: God has promised that He will fill us with His Spirit. It is His work to make His promise an accomplished fact. Thank God for the promise as you would thank Him for the fulfillment of it. God has already pledged himself to you. Rejoice in Him. Do not try to play the game of reason. Set your heart on what God will do, on himself from whom the blessing must come. The result will be certain and glorious.

2. Although you may encounter opposition or receive little help from others, "just believe."

One of the saddest tokens of the unspiritual condition of the church is that so many are content with things just as they are and have no desire to know more of the reality of the Spirit's power. They point to the purity of their doctrine, the enthusiasm of their preaching, the generous gifts made to the church, the interest shown in the cause of education and missions, and they say that we ought to give God thanks for all the good we see around us. Such people would condemn the language of Laodicea and would refuse to say that they were rich, had acquired wealth, and did not need a thing (Revelation 3:17), and yet there are traces of this spirit in what they say. They do not consider the injunction to be filled with the Spirit. They have forgotten the command to prophesy to the Spirit and say, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live" (Ezekiel 37:9). When you speak of these things, you will receive little encouragement from them. They do not understand what you are talking about. They believe in the Holy Spirit, but they do not see that the fullness of the Spirit is needed in the church.

Others will agree with you when you speak of this need and yet will actually give you even less encouragement. They have both thought and prayed often over the matter but have come to no concrete conclusions. They look to the church of earlier times and say that it was never much different than it is now. They agree with what you say about the ineffectiveness of the church in its relationship to the world; your representation of the promise of God is glorious; all that you expect from the mighty working of the Spirit is wonderful; *but*—to them, it is not something that is obtainable. These people belong to the generation of the ten spies who were sent to spy out Canaan: The land is glorious, but the enemy in possession is too strong; we are too weak to overcome them. Lack of consecration and of willingness to surrender everything for this blessing is the root of the unbelief and has made them incapable of exercising the courage of Caleb: "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Numbers 13:30).

If you desire to be filled with the Spirit, do not allow yourself to be held back by such reasoning. "Just believe" and strengthen yourself in the omnipotence of God. Do not say, Is God able? Say rather, God *is* able. The God who *was able* to raise Christ from the dead is still mighty in the midst of His people, and *is able* to reveal His divine life, with power, in your heart. Hear Him saying to you as He did to Abraham, "I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless" (Genesis 17:1). Set your heart without wavering on what God has said that He will do, and then on the omnipotence that is prepared to bring the promise to fruition. Pray that the Father would grant you to be strengthened with might by His Spirit. Worship Him who is able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, and give Him the glory. Let faith in the omnipotence of God fill your soul and you will be full of the assurance that however difficult, however improbable, however impossible it may seem, God can fill us with His Spirit. "Just believe."

3. Although everything in you appears entirely ill-equipped for this blessing and unworthy of it, the admonition remains to only believe.

When one prays to be filled with the Spirit, the thought comes, What has my life as a Christian been until now? He may think of all the workings of divine grace in his heart and of the constant striving of the Spirit. He may think of all his efforts and prayers, his past attempts at entire surrender and the appropriation of faith. He looks at what he is at the moment: his lack of faith, his sin, and his helplessness, and he loses heart. So little progress has been made. The past

testifies only of failure and unfaithfulness. Why should he think that the future will be any better? If all his praying and believing in the past have been of so little help, why should he hope that everything will be transformed at once? He imagines the life of a man full of the Holy Spirit, and alongside it his own life as he knows it, and it becomes impossible for him to believe that he will ever be able to live as a man full of the Spirit. For such a task he is completely inadequate and has no courage to make the attempt.

Believer, when these thoughts press in upon you, there is but one counsel: "Believe." Cast yourself into the arms of your Father, who gives His children the Holy Spirit more readily than an earthly father gives bread. *Only believe, and count on the love of God*. All your self-dedication and surrender, all your faith and integrity, though honorable, is not needed to move God or make Him willing to bless you. Far from it. God desires to bless you, and will work everything in you. *God loves you as a father,* and He sees that to be able to live in perfect health and happiness, you need to be full of His Spirit. Jesus has by His sacrifice opened the way to the full enjoyment of this love. You must learn to enter into this love, to abide in it, and by faith to acknowledge that it shines on you and surrounds you, even as the light of the sun illumines and energizes your body. Begin to trust this love. Your Father waits to fill you with His Spirit.

And what does He desire from you? Simply that you yield yourself to Him in complete dependence. He will take charge of all the preparatory work. He will strengthen you in the inner man, silently yet surely, to abandon everything that has to be given up in order to receive this treasure. He will help you with appropriating faith to rest on His Word and to wait for Him; and He will take care of the future. He will provide the wherewithal to walk in the fullness of this blessing.

Perhaps you have already formed a high expectation of what a person must be that is filled with the Spirit, and you see no chance of your being able to measure up to it. Or maybe you have not been able to form any idea of it whatever, and for that reason are afraid to strive for a life that is so unknown to you. Abandon such thoughts. The Spirit alone, when once He is in you, will teach you what that life is, for He will work it in you. God takes upon himself the responsibility of your being full of the Spirit, not as a treasure that *you* must carry and keep, but as a power that carries and keeps you.

In His promise of the blessing and the power of the Spirit, the Lord Jesus always pointed to God the Father. He called it "what my Father has promised" (Luke 24:49). He directed us to the faithfulness of God: "He who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23). He directed us to the power of God: the Spirit was, as

power from on high, to come from God himself (Acts 1:8). He directed us to the love of God: It is as a Father that God is to give this gift to His children. Let every thought of this blessing and every desire for it only lead us to God. It is something that He must do, that He must give, that He alone must work in us. Let us in quiet worship set our hearts on God. Let us joyfully trust in Him: He is able to do more than we could ever ask or think. His love will bestow upon us a full blessing. Humbly pray as Mary did, “May it be to me as you have said” (Luke 1:38).

“The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

Chapter 11

It May Be Experienced by All

> "I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."
>
> Ezekiel 36:25, 27

The full Pentecostal blessing is for all the children of God. "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Romans 8:14). God does not give a half portion to any of His children. To every one He says, "'My son … you are always with me, and everything I have is yours'" (Luke 15:31). Christ is not divided; he that receives Him receives Him in all His fullness. Every believer is destined by God and is actually called to be filled with the Spirit.

In the preceding chapters I had particularly in mind those who are to some extent acquainted with these things and have been already in search of the fullness of the Spirit. But it is quite conceivable that some of you reading this book may have heard very little of the full Pentecostal blessing and yet in your heart the desire has risen to have a share in it. There is, however, so much that you have not as yet understood that you no doubt desire the simplest possible instructions—where to begin and what to do—in order to succeed in your desire. You acknowledge that your life is under the dominion of sin and that it seems that you would have to strive long and hard to become full of the Spirit. I would like to inspire you with fresh courage and direct you to the God who has said, "'I am the Lord; in its time I will do this swiftly'" (Isaiah 60:22). I would like to give you simple instructions from God's Word as to what your disposition and attitude must be in which to receive this blessing.

First, there must be a new discovery and confession and putting aside of sin.

In the message of Ezekiel, God first promised, "'I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols,'" and then, "'I will put my Spirit in you.'" A vessel into which anything precious is to be poured must always first be

cleansed. So if the Lord is to give you a new and full blessing, a new cleansing must also take place. At your conversion, it is true, there was confession and a putting away of sin. Yet the soul was still half held in darkness: its thought was more of its weight of sin and punishment to come. The inward root of sin was hardly known or thought of. After conversion, effort was made to overcome sin, but this proved futile. You could not know what holiness the Lord desired of you; you did not know how pure and holy the Lord could make you.

This new cleansing must come through fresh discovery of sin and confession. The old leaven cannot be purged away unless it is first searched out and found. Do not assume that you already know the sin that is in your life. Spend time in silent meditation and ask God to expose what your life really is made up of. How much pride, self-seeking, worldliness, self-will, and impurity is there? Can such a heart receive the fullness of the Spirit? It is impossible. Consider your home life with your family, your relationship to parents and friends—does your temper, anxiety, bitterness, idle or harsh or unkind words say anything to you about your condition? Consider your life in the church—do you exercise a formal or merely intellectual religion that is people-pleasing, without true humiliation of spirit and a genuine desire for the living God that constitutes worship in spirit and in truth? Consider your life in general—could the people among whom you work testify that by your honorable spirit and freedom from worldly-mindedness, you are one who surely has been cleansed from sin? Contemplate all this in the light of what God expects from you and has offered to work in you, and take your place as one who must be cleansed before God can bestow His full blessing.

This discovery must be followed by the actual putting away of what is impure. You must come with your besetting sins, acknowledge them before God in confession, and then and there renounce them. You must be brought to the conviction that your life is guilty and shameful. You are not at liberty to excuse it because you are weak or because the majority of believers live no differently. You must resolve that your life is to undergo a complete transformation. The sins that still cleave to you are to be cast off and done away with.

Perhaps you say that you are unable to rid yourself of them. You are quite right about that. But you can give them up to God. If there is something in my house that I want to have taken away and I am unable to carry it, I call those who have the equipment to move it for me and I give it over to their capable hands. I am able to say that I have put this thing or those things out of my house. In like manner you can give up to God those sins of yours against which you feel utterly ineffective. You can give them up to Him to be dealt with as He desires and He

will fulfill His promise: “I will cleanse you from all your impurities.” There is nothing so necessary as a definite understanding between you and the Lord that on your part you confess your sin and give it up, and that you wait on Him until He assures you that He has taken it, or rather has taken your heart and life into His own hands to give you a complete victory.

Second, in this way you come to a new discovery, reception, and experience of what Christ is and is prepared to do for you.

If your knowledge of sin at conversion is superficial, so also is your faith in Jesus. Our faith, our reception of Jesus never goes further or deeper than our insight into sin. If since your conversion you have learned to know the inner power of sin, you are now prepared to receive from God a revelation of the inward invincible power of the Lord Jesus in your heart such as you have never dreamed possible. If you truly desire a complete deliverance from sin so as to be able to live in obedience to God, God will reveal the Lord Jesus to you as complete Savior. He will help you to know that although the flesh and its desires always remain with you, the Lord Jesus will so indwell your heart that the power of the flesh will be kept in subjection. Through Jesus Christ, God will so cleanse you from all unrighteousness that day by day you may walk before God with a pure heart. What you really need is the discovery that He is prepared to work this change in you and that you may receive it by faith here and now.

Yes, this is what Jesus Christ desires to work in you by the Holy Spirit. He came to put away sin; not the guilt and punishment of it only, but sin itself. He has not only mastered the power and dominion of the law and its curse over you but has also completely broken and taken away the power and dominion of sin. He has completely rescued you as a newborn soul from beneath the power of sin; and He lives in His heavenly authority and all-pervading presence in order to work out this deliverance in you. In this power He will live in you and carry out His work in you. As the indwelling Christ, He is intent on maintaining and manifesting His redemption in you. The sins that you have confessed, the pride and the lack of love, the worldly-mindedness and vanity and uncleanness, He will by His power take from your heart so that although the flesh may tempt you, the choice and the joy of your heart abide in Him and in His obedience to God’s will. Yes, you may indeed become “more than conqueror” through Him who loved you (Romans 8:37). As the indwelling Christ, He will overcome sin in you.

What then is required on our part? Only this: that when you see that Jesus will carry out this work, you open the door and receive Him into your heart as Lord and King. This can be done at once. A house that has remained closed for

twenty years can be penetrated by the light in a moment if the doors and windows are thrown open. In like manner, a heart that has remained enveloped in darkness and uselessness for twenty years because it did not know that Jesus was willing to take the victory over sin into His own hands, can have its whole experience changed in a moment. When one acknowledges her sinful condition and yields herself to God, and believes that the Son of God is prepared to assume the responsibility of the inner life and its purification from sin, when she ventures to trust the Lord that He will do this work at that very moment, then she may firmly believe that it is done, and that Jesus takes all into His own hands.

This is an act of faith that must be secured in faith. When doors and windows are thrown open, and the light streaming in drives out the darkness, we discover how much dust and impurity there is in a house. But the light reveals it that we may see it and take it away. When we receive Christ into our heart, everything is not yet perfected: light and gladness are not seen and experienced at once; but by faith the soul knows that He who is faithful will keep His Word and will surely do His work. The faith that has until this moment only sought and struggled now rests in the Lord and His Word. *It knows that what was begun by faith must be carried forward by faith*. It says, "I abide in Jesus; I know that He abides in me and that He will manifest himself to me." Just as when Jesus cleansed the lepers with a word and it was only on their way to the priest that they found they were clean, so He cleanses us by His Word.

Third, the soul is then prepared to receive the full blessing of the Spirit.

The Lord first gave the promise *I will cleanse you,* and then the second promise, *I will put my Spirit in you*. The Holy Spirit cannot fill the heart and continue to dwell in it unless a complete cleansing first takes place within it. The Spirit and sin are engaged in mortal combat. The reason that the Spirit is restrained in the church is because of sin, which is all too little realized by the majority. Men do not believe in the power of Christ to cleanse; and therefore, He cannot do His work of baptizing with the Spirit. It is from Christ that the Spirit comes and to Christ the Spirit returns again. It is the heart that gives Christ liberty to exercise dominion in it that shall inherit the full blessing. Therefore, if you have understood the lesson of this chapter and have done what has been suggested to you; if you have believed in Jesus as the Lord that cleanses you and dwells in you to keep you clean, be assured that God will fulfill His Word: "I will cleanse you … *and I will put my Spirit in you*." Cleave to Jesus, who cleanses you; God will see to it that you are filled with the Spirit.

Only keep in mind these two truths: (1) The gift and the fullness of the Spirit do not always come, as on the Day of Pentecost, with external observation. God

often hides himself. Do not be surprised, therefore, if your heart does not feel as you would like it to feel immediately after your act of surrender or appropriation. Rest assured that if you fully trust Christ to do everything for you, He there and then begins to do it in secret by His Spirit. Count upon it that if you present yourself to God as a pure vessel, cleansed by Christ, to be filled with the Spirit, God will take you at your word and say unto you, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). At that moment bow down before Him silently, deeply, in holy worship and expectation, in the blessed assurance that the unseen God has now begun to carry on His work mightily in you, and that He will also manifest it to you more gloriously than ever before.

(2) Keep in mind the purpose for which the Spirit is given: "I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." The fullness of the Spirit must be sought and received and kept with the sole purpose that you will now wholly live to do God's will and work—yes, to live like the Lord Jesus and to say with Him, "Here I am … I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:7–8; Hebrews 10:7). If you cherish this attitude, the fullness of the Spirit may be positively expected. Be full of courage and yield yourself to walk in God's statutes and to keep His judgments and do them, and you may trust God to keep His word that *He will cause you* to keep and do them. He, the living God, will work in you. Even before you are aware that the Spirit is in you, He will enable you to experience the full blessing.

Have you never known the fullness of the Spirit, or have you perhaps been seeking it for a long while without finding it? Here you have at last the sure method of receiving it. Acknowledge your specific sins and renounce them once and for all by yielding them up to God. Acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is ready and able to cleanse your heart from sin, to conquer these sins by His indwelling and to set you free, and that His purpose is to do this now. Take Him as your Lord now and forever. Then you may be assured that God will put His Spirit within you in a way and a measure and a power of which you never thought possible. Be assured that He will do it. Allow Him to begin; let Him do it in you now.

Chapter 12

Everything Must Be Sacrificed for It

> When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.
>
> 1 Corinthians 15:28

When we speak of entire consecration, we are frequently asked what the difference is between the doctrine of sanctification and the preaching of the gracious work of which we speak. One answer that may be given is that the distinction lies solely in the word *all*. That is the secret. The ordinary method of proclaiming the necessity of holiness is true as far as it goes; but sufficient emphasis is not placed on this one point: *all*. The same word *all* also explains why the fullness of the Spirit is not more widely enjoyed. So long as the *all* of God, of sin, of Christ, of surrender, of the Spirit, and of faith is not fully understood, the soul cannot enjoy *all* that God desires to give and be, *all* that God would have it be. In this last chapter, let us consider the full Pentecostal blessing from this standpoint. Let us do this in a spirit of humble waiting on God and with the prayer that He would fully expose where the evil lies and what the remedy is so that we will be ready to give up everything in order to receive nothing less than everything.

The All of God

It lies in the very being and nature of God that He must be all. From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. As God, He is the life of everything: all life is only the result of His direct and continuous operation. It is because all is through Him and from Him that it is also to Him. Everything that exists is meant to serve only as a means of the manifestation of the goodness and wisdom and power of God.

Sin consists in nothing but this, that man determined to be something and would not allow God to be everything; and the redemption of Jesus has no other

aim than that God should again become everything in our heart and life. At the end, even the Son shall be subjected to the Father that God may be all in all. Nothing less than this is what redemption is meant to secure. Christ himself showed in His life on earth what it means to be nothing and to allow God to be everything; and as He once lived on the earth so does He still live in the hearts of His people. According to the measure that they receive and rejoice in the truth that God is all will the fullness of the blessing find its way into their life.

The *all* of God is what we must seek. He must be everything to us: His will, His honor, His power. There should be no use of our time, no word of our lips, nor motivation of our heart, no satisfying of the needs of our physical life that is not the expression of the will, the glory, and the power of God. Only the one who discerns this and consents to it, who desires and seeks after it, who believes and appropriates it can rightly understand what the fullness of the Spirit must produce and why it is necessary that we should forsake everything if we desire to obtain it. God must not be merely *something* to us or even *a lot*, but *all*.

The All of Sin

What is sin? It is the absence of God; separation from God. Where man is guided by his own will, his own honor, or his own power; where the will, the honor, and work of God are not manifested, there sin must be present. Sin is death and misery because it is a turning away from God to the creature or to the world.

Sin may not exist in man along with other things that are good. As God was once everything, so has sin in fallen man become everything. It dominates and permeates his whole being, even as God should do. His nature in every part is corrupt. We still have our natural existence in God and a few good inclinations in nature and character, just as are found in the lower creatures. But of what is *good* in the spiritual and heavenly sense of the word, of what is done out of inward harmony with God or the direction of His Spirit, there is nothing that has its origin in man’s nature. All is in sin and under the influence of sin.

The all of sin: some small measure of the knowledge of this fact was necessary even at the time of conversion. This, however, was still very imperfect. If a Christian is to make progress and become fully convinced of the necessity of being filled with the Spirit, his eyes must be opened to the fact that sin dominates him. Everything in him is tainted with sin: his will, his power, his heart; and therefore, the omnipotence of God must take in hand the renewal of everything by the Holy Spirit. Man is utterly incapable of that which is good in the highest sense: he can do no more of what is good than what the Spirit

actually works in him at any given moment. He learns also to see the *all of sin* just as distinctly in the world around him; for the fairest, the most useful, and the most legitimate possessions or enjoyment are all under the power of sin. Everything must be sacrificed and given over to death: the *all of God* must expel the *all of sin*. God must again live wholly and entirely within us and take inwardly and continuously the place that sin usurped. He that desires this change will rightly understand and desire the fullness of the Spirit, and as he believes, will certainly receive it.

The All of Christ

The Son is the revelation of the Father: the *all of God* is exhibited to our view and made accessible to us in the Son. On this account the *all of Christ* is just as necessary and infinite as that of God. Christ is God come upon the earth to undo the *all of sin,* to win back and restore in man the lost *all of God*. To this end we must know thoroughly the *all of Christ*.

The idea most believers have of the *all of Christ* is that He alone does everything in the Atonement and the forgiveness of sin. This is indeed the glorious beginning of His redemptive work, but still only the beginning. God has given in Him all that we have need of: all of life and grace. Christ himself desires to be our life and strength, the Indweller of our heart, who animates that heart and makes it what it ought to be before God. To know the *all of Christ* and to understand how intensely and how completely and how truly Christ is prepared to be everything in us is the secret of true sanctification. He who discerns the will of God in this principle and from the heart yields himself to its operation has found the pathway to the full blessing of Pentecost.

Acknowledge the all of Christ in humble, joyful thanksgiving: confess that everything has been given by God for us in Him. Receive with firm confidence the fact that Christ is all and the promise that He will work all in you. Consent from the heart that this is true and confirm it by laying everything at His feet and offering it up to Him. The two things go together: Let Him be and do all; let Him reign and rule over all. Let there be nothing in which He does not rule and operate. It is not impossible for you to accomplish this change. Let Him be everything; let Him have everything, in order that by His almighty energy He may fill everything with himself.

The All of Surrender

Leave all, sell all, forsake all—that was the Lord's requirement when He was here on earth; the requirement is still in force.

The discernment of the fact that Christ is all leads to the acknowledgment that He must have all. The chief hindrance in the Christian life is that because men do not believe that Christ is all, they consequently never think it necessary to give Him all.

Everything must be given to Him because everything is under sin. He cannot cleanse and keep a thing when it is not so yielded up to Him that He can take full possession of it and fill it. All must be given up to Him because He alone can bring the *all of God* to its rightful supremacy within us. Even what appears useful or lawful or innocent becomes defiled by the stain of our selfishness when it is held fast in our own possession and for our own enjoyment. We must surrender it into the hands and the power of Christ: only there can it be sanctified.

The all of surrender: It is because believers are so ignorant of the requirement that all their praying and hearing avail so little. If you are truly prepared to turn to God for the fullness of the Spirit, if you have turned to Christ to have your heart purified and kept pure, then be assured that it is your blessed privilege to turn over the responsibility of everything you have and are to Him. The *all of surrender* will be the measure of your experience of the *all of Christ*. In a preceding chapter we saw that surrender may be carried out at once and as a whole; let us not simply give this a nod of assent, but actually do it. Yes, this very day, let the *all of Christ* be the power of surrender on our part that will be immediate, complete, and lasting.

The All of the Spirit

The *all of God* and the *all of Christ* demand as a necessary outcome the *all of the Spirit*. It is the work of the Spirit to glorify the Son as dwelling in us and by Him to reveal the Father; how can He do this if He is not *all* and has not *all* and does not possess and permeate *all* with His own power? To be filled with that Spirit, to let the Spirit have *all,* is indispensable to a healthy Christian life.

It is a source of great loss in the life of Christendom that the truth is not discerned that the Three-in-One God must have *all*. Even the believer often makes it his first aim to find out who he (himself) is, what he desires, what pleases him and makes him happy. Then he brings in God in the second place to secure this happiness for him. The claim of God is not the primary or main consideration. He does not discern that God must have him at His disposal even

in the most trivial details of his life to manifest His divine glory in him. He is not aware that this entire filling with the will and operation of God would also prove to be his highest happiness. He does not know that the very same Christ, who once lived upon the earth as the obedient, lowly servant of God, entirely surrendered to the will of the Father, is prepared to abide and work in like manner in his heart and life now. It is because of this that he can never fully comprehend how necessary it is that the Spirit must be all and must fill him completely.

If these thoughts have made any impression on you, acknowledge without delay that the Spirit must be all in *you*. Say from the heart, "I am not at liberty to make the least exception: the Spirit must have all of me." Then add to this confession the simple thought that Christ has come to restore the *all of God;* that the Spirit is given to reveal the *all of Christ* within us, so that God may again be *all;* that the love of the Father is eagerly longing to secure again His own supreme place with us; and then your heart will be filled with the sure confidence that the Father will actually give you the fullness of the Spirit.

The All of Faith

All things are possible to those who believe: "'Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours'" (Mark 11:24). The preceding sections of this chapter have shown us why faith is so important. It is because God is all. It is because man apart from God is nothing, and thus has nothing good in him except a capacity for receiving God. When he becomes a believer, what God reveals becomes a heavenly light that illuminates everything. He sees what God is prepared to be for him; he keeps his soul quiet before God in expectation and gives God the opportunity to work all by His Spirit. The more constantly and consistently he believes, the more completely can the *all of God and Christ* prevail and work in him.

The all of faith. How little it is understood in the church that the only thing I have to do is keep my soul in a state of openness and dependence upon God that He may be free to work in me; that faith as the willing acceptance and expectation of God's working receives all and can achieve all. Every glance at my own weakness or sin, every look at the promise of God and His power to fulfill it must stir in me the joy of faith, the willing, ready acknowledgment that God is able to work all, and the assurance that He will do it.

Let such faith look upon Christ even now and move you, on the one hand, to make renunciation of every known sin and, on the other, to receive Him as the

one who purifies you, keeps you, and dwells in your heart. O that faith might receive the *all of Christ* and embrace Him with *all* that He is! O that your faith might then see that the *all of the Spirit* is your rightful heritage and that your hope is sure that the full blessing has been bestowed upon you by God himself and will be revealed in you!

If the *all of God,* the *all of Christ,* and the *all of the Spirit* are so immeasurable, if the dominion and power of the terrible *all of sin* is so unlimited, and if the *all of your surrender* to God and your decision to live wholly for Him is so real, then let your faith in what God will do for you also be without reserves. "He that believes in me, out of his inmost being shall flow rivers of living water."

Before concluding this book, let me press on your heart one thing. There is something that can be done *today*. As the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" (Psalm 95:7–8; Hebrews 3:15). I cannot promise that you will immediately overflow with the light and joy of the Holy Spirit. I do not promise you that you will instantly feel holy and blessed. But what can take place is this: Today you may receive Christ as the one who purifies you and baptizes and fills you with the Spirit. Yes, today you may surrender your whole being to Him to be wholly under the control of the Spirit. Today you may appropriate the *all of the Spirit* as your personal possession. Today you may submit to the requirement of the *all of faith* and begin to live only and completely in the faith of what Christ will do in you through the Spirit. This you may do; this you should do. Read again the promises of what Christ is prepared to do, and surrender yourself this very hour as an empty vessel to be filled with the Spirit. In His own time God will certainly accomplish it in you.

Today He will give you the assurance that He accepts your surrender and will seal on your heart the conviction that the fullness of the Spirit belongs to you. Expect Him to give you this assurance today!

Believer, hear my closing words. The *all of God* is calling you. The *all of sin* is calling you. The *all of faith* calls you to make a choice. Come and let the love of God consume you. Come and let His glorious salvation enfold you. Do not refuse the good news that the triune God is waiting to be everything to you; but be quiet and listen until your soul is constrained to give the answer, "Even in me, God shall be all in all." Take Christ afresh today as the one who has given His life that God may be all, and yield your life for this supreme end. God will fill you to overflowing with His Holy Spirit.

A Life-Changing Message for Every Believer

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is an experience for all Christians, for without the Spirit's indwelling, we cannot truly serve God as we should. Beloved devotional writer Andrew Murray teaches believers how to receive the Spirit by faith, surrendering all to the lordship of Christ. He leads readers through a step-by-step process that both inspires and offers practical instruction on how to experience this blessing.

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"God promises, God desires to make you full of the Holy Spirit…. Let this promise of God become the only thing you seek."

ANDREW MURRAY was born in South Africa in 1828. After receiving his education in Scotland and Holland, he returned to South Africa and spent many years there as both pastor and missionary. He is best known for his many devotional books, including *Believing Prayer*, *Humility*, *Absolute Surrender*, and *Abiding in Christ*.

BETHANY HOUSE
PUBLISHERS