

Work of Holy Spirit in Reforms

#0848
Frazee

Study Given by W. D.

I want to talk to you tonight concerning some very practical things in connection with accomplishing our mission. For the last few weeks we have been studying intensively this matter of getting ready a people prepared to meet Jesus. And those people who are ready to meet Jesus will reflect His image to what extent? Fully. They will be like Him. And in order that this may be so a great work of reform is necessary. That is, of reshaping the character, molding it after the pattern of the divine--a very important work of reformation.

We have been studying certain practical details in that work of reform. We have studied, for example, how God's message presents truth instead of fiction. It calls for witnessing instead of acting. It leads to the natural, rather than the artificial. It presents love as a motive rather than rivalry.

It calls for separation from the world rather than compromise with the world. It uplifts that which is beautiful, something better than anything the world can offer. It presents the genuine rather than the counterfeit.

The thing I want to study with you and pray that God will bless us as we meditate together is this fact, dear friends, that all the studies in the world concerning principles of reform will never in themselves make ready a people prepared for the Lord. No.

Concerning John the Baptist it was said by the angel Gabriel who announced his birth, He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. That is what it took to make him successful in his mission. Nothing less than that baptism of the Spirit in its fullness will accomplish in us the work of reform. Nothing less than that will accomplish through us the work of reformation.

We can never be fully reformed ourselves unless we experience the revival that the presence of the Spirit of God brings about in our lives. Neither can we be successful in reforming others unless that wonderful work of the Holy Spirit is being wrought out in us, unless the appeals we make are inspired by that Spirit, unless that truth we teach is sent home to the heart through the imparting of that Spirit. Those facts I would like to study with you a bit tonight.

In Acts the first chapter we have the interesting statement of Jesus to His chosen band of apostles upon whom He had bestowed His most earnest efforts. These men were the men that He had chosen out of the world and drawn close to Himself. He had given them His best. Himself. But I want you to notice how utterly unprepared He recognized them to be unless they should receive the gift of the Spirit of God.

"And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" Acts 1:4-5.

What were they to wait for? Wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Now remember that they had already had the greatest education that any group of men had ever had, ever could have--Personal association with Jesus Christ. But mark it, He did not say to them, "Now men, I have told you the things that you need to know. I have given you the instruction that you need. Now go tell everybody what I have told you and that is all that is necessary."

No. No. He said, "I have given you the truths, but tarry, wait in Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high. Wait until you receive that baptism of the Spirit."

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" Acts 1:8.

Now what would have happened if they had not received that gift. Just what is happening with a great many efforts to spread the truth today, my friends. Just what is happening today in many efforts. Very little. But because those men believed what Jesus said, and because they got down on their knees and pled with God as if everything depended on that gift, and it did, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and in one day three thousand souls were converted, and a few days later, five thousand more. And within forty years every creature under heaven had heard the message.

Wonderful story, friends! I never get over marveling at how rapidly the message spread. They had no radio or television. They didn't even have any telegraph or telephone. They didn't even have a steamboat or a steam engine. Every mile they traveled over the earth was either with a slow sailing vessel or walking. Walking.

But they got there because they were impelled by the Spirit of God and because the Spirit of God that impelled them convicted the people, there was marvelous results. Great persecution too. That is what you and I will have when we receive this gift in its fullest.

In *Acts of the Apostles*, page 50, commenting on their experience and speaking to us today, the Lord's messenger says:

"Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit?"
Acts of the Apostles, page 50.

Do you know what would happen, friends, if in are different homes on this campus we quit serving meals for about two days? Why there would be people coming to those who are leading out here and saying, "What is the matter? We are not getting any food to eat. What are we going to do? We can't work if we don't get some food to eat." There would be an earnest request, I was about to say a demand, for something to eat if we would just go forty-eight hours without serving any meals here.

Do you think I am correct? That wouldn't mean that anybody would starve to death. It probably wouldn't mean anybody would faint. It would just mean they were hungry.

"Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children" *Ibid.*

Oh friends, let's have this gift. What do you say?

I want to go back to the schools of the prophets for a few minutes. Here in the commentary, the second volume, page 1037, I read a significant statement about this work of reform.

"The history of Elijah and Elisha needs to be brought out in clear lines, that our people may understand the importance of the work of reform to be carried on in this age" *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, page 1037.

Now what will help us to understand the importance of this work of reform? Studying what? About Elijah and Elisha. Now there are a number of interesting things in the lives of Elijah and Elisha, but one of the most important things and one of the most significant things was the interest they took in reestablishing and carrying on and strengthening the schools of the prophets. That is the pattern for this type of training. We do well to look at it.

On the same page I read further.

"Samuel had founded the first regular establishments for religious instruction and the unfolding of the prophetic gifts" *Ibid. page 1037.*

Listen to the curriculum.

"Among the chief subjects of study, were the law of God with the instructions given to Moses, sacred history, sacred music, and poetry. In these "schools of the prophets" young men were educated by those who were not only well versed in divine truth, but who themselves maintained close

communion with God and had received the special endowment of His Spirit. These educators enjoyed the respect and confidence of the people both for learning and piety" *Ibid.* page 1037.

Now listen.

"The power of the Holy Spirit was often strikingly manifest in their assemblies, and the exercise of the prophetic gift was not infrequent" *Ibid.* page 1037

What does it mean not infrequent? Well, it was frequent. Often. The Spirit of Prophecy was manifest right there in the assemblies of the schools of the prophets. As the teachers and students got together and studied the Word of God and opened their hearts to the divine influences emanating from the sanctuary above, oh friends, I cannot be satisfied with the thought of any thing less than that today. Can you?

Do we need it as much as they did? More? Oh yes. Evil is more firmly entrenched. The end is oh so much nearer, and a great work is to be done in a short time. And my dear friends, the sacrifice of Jesus, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His intercessory priesthood are all for the purpose of making available that matchless gift of the Holy Spirit.

And there in the schools of the prophets established by Samuel, and later strengthened by Elijah and Elisha, the Spirit of God was poured out again and again.

Now let me read you something very interesting from *Loma Linda Messages*. This is taken from a talk that Sister White gave right there on the campus of Loma Linda in the early days. Loma Linda was established as a center of reform, dear friends. Listen to this statement about the ancient schools of the prophets.

"The school of the prophets was a special school to get the endowment of the Holy Spirit of God" *Loma Linda Messages*, page 535.

What was the purpose of the schools of the prophets? To get the endowment of the Holy Spirit of God. You know, friends, if people went to medical school and didn't get a degree, it would be considered that they had missed the purpose of their going. Wouldn't it? And if people go to the schools of the prophets and don't receive the endowment of the Holy Spirit in an infinitely more serious way, they have missed the purpose.

The more I meditate on this, friends, the more I see a great and subtle danger. And I think I should speak of it plainly. In all these trappings and pageantries that are associated with graduation, students are made to feel that if they put in certain time, and pass certain examinations, that they are to be honored. They have achieved something. They have arrived at a certain point. They are fitted for something.

Well you say, "Brother Frazee, isn't that so?" Not necessarily. Let me read a statement here from *Desire of Ages*, page 672.

"No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the cooperation of the Spirit of God" *Desire of Ages*, page 672.

No amount of education! An eighth grade diploma won't do it. A high school diploma won't do it. A B.A. degree won't do it, nor an M.A., nor a Ph.D., nor any other degree. Don't misunderstand me, I am not trying to depreciate education. That is not my purpose. If you think that, you will get the wrong thought.

I simply am seeking to echo what the voice from heaven says that no amount of education, in itself, can make a man a channel of light and successful in getting ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord. And I repeat that there is a great and subtle danger in all that goes with these, I was about to say modern graduations, much of it is borrowed from old Egypt and Greece, not so modern. But this whole idea of display and showing off the students who graduate.

It doesn't make any difference whether it is in a college or a high school or grammar school. Why somebody even sent me a newspaper clipping of some students graduating from Kindergarten and they had fixed them all up with caps and gowns graduating from Kindergarten.

But that is not my subject, friends. Let's not miss the point. The great danger in all this pageantry and put-on, and show off, is that students will feel that if they go to school long enough and learn enough, then they are ready to go out and give this message, and they are not! Unless and until they receive the baptism of the Spirit of God. That is what Jesus knew. That is why He said to His disciples after He had given them the most wonderful training. You are not ready yet men. You are not ready. Tarry ye until ye be endued with power from on high.

And their commencement exercises were on the day of Pentecost, my friends. They didn't need any caps or gowns. They didn't need anything like that. They had the sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven and it cut its way through prejudice and unbelief. Thousands were convicted. Thousands converted. Thousands joined them in heralding that wonderful message over the length and breadth of the world.

Will it happen again? Oh yes.

"So it may be now"
Testimonies for the Church, Vol 8, page 21.

So it may be now.

I want to go back to this statement from Loma Linda Messages that I started to quote. The school of the prophets was a special school to get the endowment of the Holy Spirit of God and then go forth into the dark places of the earth and seek for those who would listen to the testimony that they had to bring.

Oh dear students and teachers, every one here tonight, do you see that without this gift of the Spirit all your training and all your teaching are ineffectual? Unavailing? Insufficient? The Spirit of God must fall upon us as the fire from heaven fell upon Elijah's sacrifice at Mt. Carmel.

Now the schools of the prophets taught students to feel their need of that gift and to stay there and pray for it and plead with God and get it. They got it. Again and again the Spirit of God was manifested. And God is more anxious to give it to us today than He was back then. That is the kind of graduation I am interested in.

I want to see men and women, young and old, going forth from this place filled with the Spirit of God. No matter how many weeks and years they have been here and no matter how many examinations they have passed, it is of little moment. If they are filled with that Spirit, friends, they can go and go a work for God. If they are not, I don't care what examinations they can pass, they are not ready.

And again, I plead not to be misunderstood, I believe in examinations. I can read that out of these books. There is a place for testing what men know in their heads and what they can do with their hands. My point is that without the baptism of the Spirit of God, all they can know in their minds, and all they can do with their hands, is not sufficient. And because of that, there must be in our very souls a deep hunger, a burning thirst for the baptism of the Spirit of God.

"When teachers are willing to sit in the school of Christ and learn of the Great Teacher, they will know far less in their own estimation than they do now. When God becomes the teacher, He will be acknowledged, His name will be magnified. The students will be as were the young men in the schools of the prophets, upon whom the Spirit of God came, and they prophesied" *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, page 373.

Did you notice what this said? If we are willing we can have the same experience that they had back there in the schools of the prophets. Back there the Spirit of God came upon the students and they prophesied. This says it will be that way again today.

Will you turn please to Acts the second chapter and note verses 17 and 18? See what God is planning to do in these latter days.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" Acts 2:17-18.

Will it happen? Yes. Sometimes people say to me, "Brother Frazee, do you think we will ever have another prophet?" Another one? No. Dozens. Scores.

Hundreds. If I understand this text. I don't mean some great leading prophet to speak for the whole movement like Sister White. I have no light as to whether there will or will not be such a thing. I certainly have no message that there will. But here, my dear friends, is a clear promise of God that in the last days He is going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh and sons and daughters, old men and young men will dream dreams, have visions, and prophesy. Isn't that what it says? I believe it. I believe it.

Oh I want to see it. I don't mean just to see something marvelous. Friends, I think we need it as parched ground needs rain. As hungry children need bread and milk. As thirsty souls need water. We need this wonderful, powerful working of the Spirit of God to give us what it takes to reach sin-hardened souls in this modern age and bring them to conviction and conversion. It is coming, friends. It is coming in connection with the schools of the prophets just as it back in the days of Samuel, and Elijah, and Elisha, and that is what Jesus had with His twelve. He had a school of the prophets. Didn't He?

And this says that we can have it today.

"The students will be as were the young men in the schools of the prophets, upon whom the Spirit of God came, and they prophesied" *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, page 373.

Why you remember what Sister White says there in Volume Five. She says:

"When you gather up the rays of light which God has given in the past, then will He give an increase of light"
Testimonies for the Church, Vol 5, page 666.

So we do well to study these books to the extent that we mold our educational program by these books, we are to schools of the prophets. Are we not? That is right. To the extent that we fail to do it, we are not, my friends. It all hangs right there. So I plead tonight that we plead for the baptism of the Spirit of God, that we feel our great need of it.

I want to read the setting to that sentence that I read a moment ago from *Desire of Ages*. I will turn to the preceding page:

"The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail"
Desire of Ages, page 671.

Did you notice that? Unless the Spirit would come, even the sacrifice of Christ would be what? Of no avail. What does that mean "of no avail?" It wouldn't accomplish anything.

"Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power" *Ibid.* page 671

Tell me then. Do you think all the study of the principles of reform in itself will ever make men to be restored to the image of Jesus? No. No. No. The study can only set the goals. But I could point out to you that lofty mountain across the valley there tonight, and I could talk to you by the hour, but all my talking would never get you to scale those heights. That takes energy. Energy. And some of you would frankly confess, "I am afraid I can't make it."

Some of you would just run right up there like these mountain goats, but there are others who would say, "I am just too weak to attempt it. I can't climb up that mountain. It is too much." And when we set before human beings the lofty heights of perfection that God presents to us, when we present the standard for translation which is perfection, any mind that has the least comprehension of what is being presented will have to say, "It is too much for me. I can't make it. I can't do it."

If these principles of reform that we have studied seem within your grasp and within your reach, then, my dear friends, either I have failed to present them in their perfection, or you have utterly failed in your comprehension of what it really is. The standard is higher than any human thought can reach. Godliness, God-likeness is the goal.

That doesn't mean that we have to resign ourselves to remain in the lowlands. There is a power that can take the weakest and enable him to scale those mountain heights and stand with the Lamb on Mt. Zion with the Father's name in their forehead. It can be done, friends. May I tell you, we are going to scale those heights too, on our two feet? We are not going to be carried up on angel wings. The walking step by step along in the path that leads to perfection will be done in human beings through the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

It is in these human bodies that the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Do you see then how much we need that priceless gift, God's Holy Spirit? Oh let us never think that no mere reiteration of facts, no mere presentation of principles will ever do it. They have their place. When we study these things, God speaks to the mind and oh He speaks to the heart, and He says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

When will it come? Well, friends, there are two things we need to do. We need to open our hearts to the Spirit of God by surrendering everything, all the bad things and all the good things. Just making way fully for the Spirit of God to come in. You know, one of the greatest problems in this matter of the Holy Spirit? We are told here what the problem is:

"There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk *about* Christ and *about* the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use

the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us" *Desire of Ages*, page 672.

Why yes, how many there are like Simon Magus that have some wonderful plan and they think that if they could just get that power of the Spirit that then they could do a wonderful work. But God is not interested in giving His Spirit to Simon Magus or anybody like him. To all such the words of Peter apply,

"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter." Acts 8:21

The purpose of the Spirit is not to come and help us carry out our plans. No. No. We need to come to the place where we lay down our plans at the feet of Jesus and say, "Lord, there is just one thing I want and that is to be an empty, clean, surrendered channel for the operation of the Spirit of God. I don't ask, dear Lord, that I shall be a doctor, or a preacher, or a nurse, or a teacher, or anything. I am willing to be anything you want me to be or nothing if only souls may be one to Christ. That is all."

The purpose of the Spirit of God is not to come in and help you make a brilliant career in the third angel's message. It is not to get you ready to be some leading worker that will thrill the hearts of thousands of people. No. No. The purpose of the Spirit of God is to take you, dear young friend, dear old brother or sister, and make you what God wants you to be. There is nothing really greater.

Oh how many are sighing for something that looks great and missing the one thing worth while, receiving the Holy Spirit of God. But along with that surrender there must be also the claiming in simple faith of the blessing of God.

Dear ones, right here tonight we can receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. If we will do those two things, if we surrender ourselves, our sins, our plans, our careers, our ambitions, surrender everything to Jesus, pleading for the Holy Spirit, and then, claiming.

I want to read a little statement here that impressed me very much as I was reading it.

"The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, ...and as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 54.

Several places the Lord's messenger speaks of the message swelling into the Loud Cry. While there will doubtless be direct and wonderful interpositions as on the day of Pentecost when the glory just seems to shine out suddenly, yet, again and again, the work is pictured as swelling into the Loud Cry. In other words, it is possible for us here tonight to receive more than we have ever had before, and that in turn to open the way to receive more tomorrow, and more next week, and more

the following week. That is possible, dear friends. That is what this page indicates. That is what I want tonight, don't you?

Oh notice these simple things. To plead with God for the gift of His Spirit. In doing that to lay down our lives, our plans, our ambitions, our sins, lay everything at the feet of Jesus and believes He takes them. And third, having asked Him for this gift of the Spirit, having surrendered all, to believe that He gives it to us. To thank Him for it.

This is not presumption. It is what He told us to do.

"What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*" Mark 11:24.

Let's do it, friends. What do you say? To claim it without meeting the conditions is presumption. To claim it having met the conditions is faith. Faith must be mixed with our prayers or we can pray for fifty years and never get the answer. Oh God wants some people here tonight to take a step of surrender and yield all to Christ. The Spirit of God is here tonight to convict of sin as He puts His finger on the point, give it up, dear friends.

But the Spirit of God is also here tonight to help some people to take the step of faith. I often think of it as the two steps of our two feet. You know that is all God gave us just two feet. That is all we need. We can walk from here to the sanitarium with two feet. We can walk from here to Chattanooga with two feet. That is all it takes. Just putting first one then the other. One then the other.

And that one step is the step of surrender, and the other step is the step of faith. The first step is to give all. The second is to receive all. Claim all. The first step is to lay down our lives at Jesus' feet. The second step is to claim and thank God for this gift of the Spirit which He has promised and told us that He wants us to have.

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