



The Soul-Winner's Secret

Chapter 9 – The Renewing Of Power

Though our outward man perishes, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Paul.

To do God's work we must have God's power. Therefore Jesus said: "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49.) And again He said: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you." (Acts 1:8)

The soul-winner receives this power when he is sanctified wholly and filled with the Spirit, and he need never lose it. But while the Holy Spirit abides with the believer, there yet seems to be need for frequent renewals of the power He bestows. And, thank God, He he made ample provision to meet this need. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength," said Isaiah. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord," cries David.

Years ago President Asa Mahan wrote as follows of his old friend: "The extraordinary power which attended the preaching of President Finney during the early years of his ministry was chiefly owing to a special baptism of the Spirit which he received not long after his conversion; hence it was that when through him the 'violated law spake out its thunders,' it did seem as if we had in truth 'come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness and darkness and tempest and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words.' But when he spoke of Christ, then indeed did his 'doctrine drop as the rain, and his speech distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as the showers upon the mown grass.' The reason also why he is bringing forth such wondrous fruit in his old age is that while his whole ministry has been under the power of the Spirit, his former baptisms have been renewed with increasing power and frequency during a few years past."

The need for these frequent renewings and anointings does not necessarily arise from



backsliding. Sometimes the soul feels the need of a renewal of its power when confronted by great opposition, danger and powerful foes. The apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost, and had not only won their great Pentecostal victory, but many others as well, when suddenly a stubborn wall of opposition arose before them. They were arrested by the rulers, thrust into prison, brought before the high priest, sharply questioned by what power and name they were working their miracles, and then when no ground for punishment could be found, they were threatened and commanded to preach no more in the name of Jesus.

When they were let go they went to their own people, told them what had happened, and began a sweet, childlike, heaven storming prayer meeting, told the Lord the story, too, and cried to Him to show forth His power, and then a wonderful thing happened; Pentecost was repeated; "the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness, and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great peace was upon them all."

They waited before the Lord and their strength was renewed, their power reinforced from heaven. their past victories put into the shade and "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

Sometimes the need for this renewal of strength arises after great victories. For victory is usually secured as the result of great spiritual and mental activity, and often physical activity as well, and it is but natural that there should be a reaction; the pendulum, if left alone, swings to the other extreme. Depression may follow, the powers of soul and mind relax, joyful emotions subside, and the inexperienced soul-winner may at this point get into great perplexity, and suffer from fierce temptation; and strain himself to keep up his accustomed spiritual activity, crying out with David, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" And again. "My flesh and my heart faileth," and imagine himself to be backsliding. But what is needed now is not so much anxious wrestling with God as quiet waiting upon God for a renewal of power, saying to his soul, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my



countenance, and my God," and though heart and flesh do fail, "yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." At such times the strength of the soul is to sit still in quietness and confidence. (Is. 30:7, 15)

I once heard a wise old evangelist, one of the mightiest this country has produced, say that while at home after a season of rest, the Spirit of God would come upon him, leading him to earnest prayer and travail for the salvation of men. This was God's way of preparing him for a campaign, and for victory, and away he would go for battle and siege, to rescue the souls of men, and never did he fail to win. But after a while there seemed to be an abatement of power, when he would return home for another season of rest and quiet, waiting upon God for the renewal of his strength. And thus he continued till he was past eighty, still bringing forth fruit in old age.

Again, there is sometimes need of a renewal of power owing to weakness and infirmity of the flesh. Paul must have received a great addition of power when, instead of removing his "thorn," Jesus said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." And such was the uplift that Paul got at that time that ever afterward he took "pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake," glorying in them, since through them the power of Christ rested upon him, and in weakness he was made strong. Spiritual power is not necessarily dependent upon physical energy, and however much he may be afflicted with infirmities there are mighty endurements of power for the soul-winner if he intelligently and with quiet and persistent faith seeks them from on high.

There will be times of loneliness and spiritual agony such as Jesus suffered in the Garden, or Elijah when he felt that all the prophets were slain, and there was none true to God in Israel but himself. Or again, when there is widespread barrenness and desolation, when revivals have ceased, and worldliness sweeps in like a flood, and there is apparently no vision, and God seems silent, and the devil mocks and taunts, then the soul-winner will need to have his spiritual strength renewed. And he may fully expect such a renewal. The angels are all round about him, and the heavens are bending over him, and Jesus has lost none of His tender interest and sympathy for



him. An angel came and strengthened Jesus in His agony (Luke 22:43), and an angel strengthened Elijah for his long and lonely journey, and an angel came to Daniel and said, "O man, greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong." And not only an angel, but the Lord Himself will surely empower His trusting workers. It was Jesus that cheered Paul in the chief captain's castle (Acts 23:11), and John on the lonely Isle of Patmos (Rev. 1:17), and so He still cheers and strengthens His servants and warriors. Bless His name!

These renewals of power are not always necessarily of an extraordinary character. There are sometimes great uplifts of physical strength without any apparent cause, but ordinarily a man's physical strength is renewed by rest and the timely eating of proper food. And so there may be times when the Spirit of God falls upon the soul-winner, giving him great uplifts and visions and courage. But ordinarily power comes by the use of the simple means of much regular prayer and patient, diligent searching of God's Word and a daily listening to God's voice. It is renewed like fire, not by the fall of lightning from Heaven, but by the addition of new fuel; like physical strength, not by some hypodermic injection of fresh blood, but by proper food. David calls upon his soul to bless God "who satisfieth thy mouth with good things so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Ps. 103:5)

This will require time and attention on our part, but it will be time well spent. It is by appropriate food, then, that the soul is strengthened. Jesus told us what that food was when He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matt 4:4) And does not this correspond to Paul's statement that though the outward man was perishing, yet "the inward man is renewed day by day"? and with that passage that says, "The Lord revealed Himself unto Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord"? It is the Lord that renews our strength, but He does it not in some mysterious way, but by means of His Word, which we read and meditate upon and appropriate by faith. Through it we see Jesus and come to know our Lord. Bless His name!

My own strength is usually renewed by the opening up of some new truth, or the powerful



application of some promises, or portion of the Word of God to my soul, which I am enabled to make my own by a definite and bold, affectionate and daredevil act of faith in secret prayer.