Subject: "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoughts
Posted by unclebob_5 on Sat, 20 Jan 2007 15:55:30 GMT
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I have recently been (re-)reading HEF's book, "Deeper Life In The Spirit"; this was a book that has always blessed me, so I thought I would just excerpt from it a bit for the benefit of those who have never (or recently) read it - starting at the beginning...

Deeper Life in the Spirit
Preface
The message of the Deeper Life in the Spirit soars on wings to heights far too lofty to be seen by many modern-day Christians whose consecration is shallow and whose vision seldom reaches into the highest heavens. Jesus' call to total commitment and His emphasis upon the crucified life will seem far too demanding and mystical, if not in fact impossible, for the followers of popular religion, to whom the term "discipleship" has lost all real meaning. Indeed, the cultivation of the inner life, devotion to such disciplines as sincere prayer and fasting, the serious study and practical application of the teachings of Christ to everyday life, are things too tedious and impractical to be given serious consideration by contemporary, institutional Christianity with its devotion to externalism and emphasis upon religious activism. A Church which long ago left its first love and in whose heart the fire of the Holy Spirit has gone out will not feel at ease in the company of those saints who advocate the need of a new baptism of power from on high, and a return to the apostolic message, faith, and practice.

A message of holiness and crucifixion of the self-life is still as unwelcome at present as when first advocated by Christ and the apostles, who insisted this to be the ultimate goal of the Christian experience. But for an increasing number of those saints who are being brought into higher realms of experience and truth by the Spirit now at the consummation of the age, the present-day outpouring of the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, and the renewed emphasis upon the Spirit-filled life, come as refreshing rain in the midst of a dry wilderness.
â€” Hobart E. Freeman. 1970

Introduction
The Nature of the Deeper Life
What exactly is meant by the Deeper Life in the Spirit? As God in this present hour is pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh, fulfilling the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29, thousands of believers are discovering that there is a deeper experience with God after salvation, namely, the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Yet, astonishingly few Christians, including most who have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, have the remotest idea what is meant by the deeper life in the Spirit. While countless thousands in all denominations have experienced the reality of the promise in Acts 2:38-39, it comes as a surprise to most of them to learn, after they have received this experience, that they still have not attained God's highest purpose for them.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is, in reality, the "means" to a greater spiritual experienceâ€”the

fullness of God Himself (Ephesians 3:19). The deeper life in the Spirit is the Spirit-led life (Romans 8; Galatians 5:16-25); it is the crucified life (Galatians 2:20); it is a life of total faith in and dependence upon God (Matthew 6:33); and it is the Spirit-filled believer's growth "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

How is this deeper life in the Spirit to be attained? The subject will be more fully discussed in the following chapters where it will be shown that the message of the deeper life is basically the message of the cross. The way into the deeper life in the Spirit is the way of the cross. It means to take up the cross and follow Jesus. In a word, it is the death of the self-life. God, in this hour, is calling a people to walk on a higher spiritual level than they have ever experienced before, and He is offering them nothing less than the fullness of Himself! The deeper life is walking in the Spirit in total commitment as disciples. The future goal is the fullness of God.

More and more disciples who have entered into the glorious experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit are now being brought by the Spirit into a place of the crucifixion and death of "self." This is the essential condition to receiving the fullness of God, because to whatever extent one is filled with "self," he cannot be filled with the presence of God. The deeper life in the Spirit is not some mere doctrine to be studied with the intellect, discussed, and then forgotten; but it is a real experience with Christ, as the Holy Spirit brings us into conformity to the death of Christ, so that His resurrection life and power may be manifested fully in us. This is the message of the hour. God is at this very moment preparing a body of believers which He intends to bring into the fullness of Himself. They will experience the fullness of Christ's resurrection life and power and be used to fulfill His glorious purposes in the restoration of all things now at the consummation of the age (Acts 3:21). For those who are unfamiliar with this great truth we suggest a reading at this point of some of the more significant passages dealing with the deeper life: Matthew 5:1-7:29; 20:25-28; Mark 11:22-24; Luke 9:57-62; 14:25-35; Romans 8; 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25; 6:14; Ephesians 3:1-19; 4:7-16; Philippians 2:5-8; 3:10; Colossians 3; I Peter 2:19-23; 4:1-16; Revelation 2:1-3:22.

My thoughts (see text in bold) --
--One thing I find striking about this teaching is HEF's instance - constantly - that the DESIRE, the HUNGER, for the things of God is paramount. It is to those who are SEEKING, who will find. I cannot speak for others, but this is a (much needed) standing rebuke of my all-too-often coldness and lukewarmness.

--Another thing I find very edifying is the emphasis that the Baptism/Gifts of the HS are not the end, but the beginning, of our life in Christ.

--Finally, HEF understood just how ESSENTIAL the message of the Cross was - where there is an emphasis on miracles, deliverance, gifts, ect., without the crucifixion of the self-life, there will be an inevitable drift towards spritual pride, arrogance, and selfishness. Is this not what we see today in large sections of the Charismatic/Pentecostal community? "God give me that high-paying job!" "This is my ministry." But no service for Christ, no real desire to see His Kingdom furthered. May

God help us!

"He being dead...YET SPEAKETH!"

Your thoughts?

Subject: Re: "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoug
Posted by william on Tue, 23 Jan 2007 19:17:13 GMT
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Hi Bob,

I believe that the Deeper Life book/message was and is a key to understanding much of the ministry of HEF.

If you'll notice, just in the section that you quoted, there is an emphasis on the rarity of those who are interested in true discipleship.

True, this can produce an elitist mentality if one simply wants to go against the popular notion of Christianity, without taking the whole message seriously. It seems fairly easy to find certain personality types that embrace the "deeper life" because of non-conformist tendencies they harbor. It is a badge of pride to "go against the herd". Of course, this personality type misses almost completely the point of the "deeper life" message, which is the certain death of those self-inflating tendencies.

Many of us probably fell into that non-conformist category.

On the other hand, if one actually puts the principles that Jesus taught into practice, daily choosing the cross, we find that the road is pretty lonely. Those passages that emphasize the narrowness of the way, and the few that will find it, will inevitably either generate pride (in those who "think" they have found it) or humility (in those who "know" they deserve nothing!)

The deeper life message, properly viewed, shows both man's responsibility (yielding) and God's sovereignty in choosing a people for Himself. Any serious contemplation of God's sovereignty should deal a blow to the idea of pride with regard to our willingness to embrace things few seem to want to embrace and generate humbleness of heart in its place.

Back to the book... we find that much of the end-time purposes of God are highlighted through the exposition of Rev 12. This, to my mind, was a great motivation in actually embracing the message. We seemed to have an unusual degree of excitement in the imminent return of the Lord

that brought along a strong desire to leave nothing undone in our obedience to the message.

Separating those elements of the message of FA that were biblically based, as opposed to opinion based, is something that we all should be in the process of doing. Some of these areas we have attempted to cover in this forum.

Blessings,

William

Subject: Re: "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoug
Posted by mark1124 on Wed, 24 Jan 2007 00:48:52 GMT
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If I may add a little something here:

I am currently listening to the Sermon on the Mount tapes by Brother Freeman. In those tapes, he states that the sermon is the way a Christian should live in a sinful world. How true.

The deeper life message is one that very few Christians want to live by. Many Christians tend to believe in "easy believism" and not walk the road to total discipleship. I have read where the term "disciple" means "learner". That is true. But a disciple of Jesus is one that is totally obedient to what Jesus taught. Remember when Jesus said that we are His disciples if we do what He said? To be a Christian is to be a disciple and to be a disciple is to be obedient to everything Jesus taught.

It should be our desire and goal in our Christian walk to be more in conformity to the teachings of Jesus. I know I have a ways to go personally. But thank God we have a road map to get us there.

Mark

Subject: Re: "God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." (Heb. 11.4) Thoug
Posted by unclebob_5 on Wed, 24 Jan 2007 19:01:54 GMT

Very good reflections...and the following came to mind as I read your post --

Quote:On the other hand, if one actually puts the principles that Jesus taught into practice, daily choosing the cross, we find that the road is pretty lonely. Those passages that emphasize the narrowness of the way, and the few that will find it, will inevitably either generate pride (in those who "think" they have found it) or humility (in those who "know" they deserve nothing!)

Which is, I suppose, one reason why being a part of a fellowship - where folks are learning to live out our faith together - is so vitally important. We need each other, both for the correction (when we are off) and the encouragement (when it gets lonely).

Quote:Back to the book... we find that much of the end-time purposes of God are highlighted through the exposition of Rev 12. This, to my mind, was a great motivation in actually embracing the message. We seemed to have an unusual degree of excitement in the imminent return of the Lord that brought along a strong desire to leave nothing undone in our obedience to the message.

Would you say that things at FA have changed at all in this regard?