

## LAMPS WITHOUT OIL

Ask, and it shall be given you;  
Seek, and ye shall find;  
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

The necessities of the times demand that most earnest efforts be put forth for the advancement of the third angel's message. Evil angels are endeavoring by every ingenious method to counterwork the work of God. Heavenly agencies are laboring to make effective the message of light and truth. Yet at such a time a lack of consecration and faith is manifest among God's people that is grieving the Holy Spirit. Many of our workers seem to be sleeping.

To many the Bible is as a lamp without oil, because the knowledge of the Word is turned into channels of speculation that bring misunderstanding and confusion to minds. This has been done by some to such a degree as to give occasion for those who are watching us to make of none effect the message of truth. I am instructed to ask our leading men and ministers, Are you laborers together with God? or do you place your own interpretation upon the Word? It is the duty of every worker to ask himself the question, Whom am I serving?

Beware, brethren, lest self be interwoven with your exposition of the Word.

Beware lest you lead any soul to a misunderstanding of the Word.

The Lord now calls for the truth to be presented in its simplicity, that all, even the most ignorant, may understand its requirements.

The psalmist writes: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word."

Let the young men and women study these words, and encourage a spirit that will desire to heed the way of the Lord.

David continues: "Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. . . . Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I will keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I will observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way. Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear. Turn away my reproach which I fear: for thy judgments are good. Behold, I have longed after thy precepts: quicken me in thy righteousness."

Such prayers as this the Lord's servants should be continually offering to him.

This prayer reveals a consecration to God of heart and mind; it is the consecration that God is asking us to make.

The Word of God brings plainly to view two classes of people, the wise and the foolish. Let those who profess to know the truth for these last days take heed that they be not found among the foolish, whose lamps are going out because they have failed to supply themselves with the holy oil, the spirit and grace of Christ. Through the agency of the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth, provision has been made that every soul may be abundantly supplied.

Unless there is a connection with heavenly agencies, the strong, pure influence which should be exerted by every worker in the field will be lacking. They will be no more prepared to do the work which the Lord expects them to do than were the foolish virgins prepared to answer the call, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." The Holy Spirit will not be represented in their labors. They have the form of the truth; they have the lamp, but they have no oil in their vessels. The power of a godly example is lacking. There is no living experience to give power to the truth presented.

If the influence of heavenly agencies is not combined with human effort, the word of truth presented will be ineffective. Great zeal may be manifested, but if the daily example is not a living, powerful influence for good, the zeal will be worthless. Unless the Spirit of God accompanies the worker to correct every unsanctified way, his work will be superficial and weak.

Spiritual things, the apostle Paul declares, are spiritually discerned.

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

I am instructed to say to many professed believers, Unless you look upon your religious experience in an altogether different light than you have, you are going to meet with keen disappointment.

The righteousness of Christ is revealed from faith to faith; that is, from your present faith to an increased understanding of the faith which works by love and purifies the soul. Those who endure trial for the truth's sake, who make sacrifices to help those in need, do so because of the presence of the love of God in the soul. When men and women give themselves unreservedly to the exercise of unselfish works, it is because the grace of Christ is in the heart, molding the life to his example.

But if the heart is destitute of the Spirit of God, if it does not possess the rich grace of God, there is no oil in the vessel with the lamp, there is no treasure in the earthen vessel.

Those who are genuinely converted will not act like the worldling, but their experience will answer to the words of the apostle Paul when he declared: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."

When Christ imparts to any the blessings of his grace, he lays the recipients under special obligation to place their capabilities and powers at the service of God. They are called so to relate themselves to the work of the Master, that they will reveal in all their actions that they are converted. In their reverence and homage for the character of Christ, they will reproduce that character in their own, thus testifying to the attributes of the Father.

There is need that we study carefully the evidence we give in our own lives that we are Christians.

On the part of some, evidence has been given of an unchristian spirit.

They have revealed that they need a reconversion if they would not be disappointed in the great day of final award.

There are troublous times before us, when everything that can be shaken will be shaken.

For this conflict with the powers of evil we are bidden to arm ourselves with all the armor of God, "above all," the apostle exhorts, "taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

We have reason for great thankfulness that we have the perfect example of the life of Christ.

As he did, so day by day we are to obey the word of the Lord.

Let us cultivate a grateful spirit. Let us make sure work for eternity. The humility and benevolence of Christ's life revealed in ours, is the testimony we give to the world that we are his disciples.

Through a life of obedience and self-sacrifice we are to reveal the love of God for fallen man.

Those who would have the life that measures with the life of God, must be workers in this life. They must watch unto prayer. They must not fail nor be discouraged. By faith they must work out their own salvation. By faith and complete submission to the will of God, they must become partakers of God's love and doers of his will.

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-LET US NOT BE LAMPS WITHOUT OIL-

-SEARCH THE TWO ANOINTED ONES WHO STAND BY THE LORD-  
-WATCH UNTO PRAYER-

SOURCE:

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