

Fordoche Lejeune	Maringouin	Madisonville	New Prospect
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STANDING WHERE THE FIRE HAS BEEN
A WARNING TO THE CHURCH
BY MARK GUY PEARSE

Sermon Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:1

**Much has been said about
the purpose of Christ concerning the church,
and the promise by which he would fulfill that purpose -**

**"YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER
AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU". (ACTS 1:8)**

THE HOLY GHOST IS COME.

**But there is another terrible possibility:
INSTEAD OF OUR BEING FILLED WITH POWER,
WE MAY TURN FROM ALL THIS,
AND WE MAY QUENCH THE SPIRIT.**

These words are to the church:

**we may have thought of them
only as a warning to the unconverted;**

**but if we turn to the beginning of the epistle
we find that it is written**

**"TO THE CHURCH WHICH IS IN GOD THE FATHER,
AND IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST". (1 THES. 1:1)**

□

It would seem that these people
would not need to be reminded
that they may quench the spirit:

**"WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD ALWAYS FOR YOU ALL... REMEMBERING WITHOUT
CEASING
YOUR WORK OF FAITH, AND LABOR OF LOVE,
AND PATIENCE OF HOPE
IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." (1 THES. 1:2)**

But, as he came near to the end of this letter he writes to these the words:
"QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT".

It is to the church
that the most terrible words of this book are spoken?

When Jesus Christ came:

HE had pity for the outcast:

He bent over the harlots;

He welcomed the prodigals;

He prayed for the murders...

But there were some
to whom He could only speak words of
black and hopeless condemnation;

and they were members of the church,
(the religious people),
religious in their washing,
religious in their dressing,
religious in their looks,

**YET THESE WERE THE PEOPLE
WHOM CHRIST GREETED
AS A GENERATION OF VIPERS,**

**AND HIMSELF WONDERED
HOW THEY COULD ESCAPE
THE DAMNATION OF HELL.**

So it was in the time of Isaiah.

To the people who came to prayer,
and who brought sacrifice and offered incense.

God spake words of terrible reproof:

"WHEN YE SPREAD FORTH YOUR HANDS,
I WILL HIDE MINE EYES;

WHEN YE MAKE MANY PRAYERS,
I WILL NOT HEAR. (ISAIAH 1:15)

What are you saying preacher?

**Is it better to be a drunkard, a harlot, a murderer,
than to be a Christian?**

**Well, yes, it is,
unless your Christianity makes you like Jesus Christ.**

**The greatest responsibility in this world
is the responsibility of knowing Christ.**

**There is no position or gift
which will ever bring upon any man
as great a responsibility as the knowing of Christ.**

□

And now, GOD holds us responsible:

**Not for what we have,
but for what we might have.**

**Not for what we are,
but for what we might be.**

**Jesus Christ has opened to us
the kingdom of heaven,**

**and now, if we who ought to be princes
are only beggars.**

**Then there is no pity,
and these words are sterner words
than is used of any other.**

**Think of how GOD sees us
as two standing side by side:**

1. One that is:

**poor,
earthy,
selfish,
shriveled,**

like most of us are.

**2. One that is what we could be in Christ Jesus,
rich with the gifts of God,
strong with His strength,
full of grace and truth -**

**the Christ like man
into which god is ever seeking to transform us.**

It is by God's offers and by our opportunities
that we shall be judged
and by which we shall be condemned.

The work of the Holy Ghost exposes us
for what we really are; quencher of the spirit!

Paul wrote over and over again to the church, warning them of the pitfall.

Turn, to the epistle written to the Ephesians.

He does not once pray for them
that their sins may be forgiven,
but that they would know the hope of their calling.

Eph. 1:15-18

**After I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,
and love unto all the saints,
I cease not to give thanks for you,
making mention of in my prayers,**

that ye may know what is the hope of His calling ...

That we may see
what we may be ...

that is the great work
of the Holy Spirit in the church.

The Christians of today
are apt to make the hope of our calling:

a poor thing,
only an escape from hell.

□

Not a power which is to make us like God
and ready for His service,

but only to take us to heaven when we die.

To be content with religion without Christlikeness,
is that what Jesus so terribly denounced !

Now the Holy Spirit is come
to open up to us glorious possibilities.

What we will make of all these
revelations and promptings depends upon ourselves.

He will not drag us;
He will not force us;

but if we are willing to go with Him,
then shall He bring us into the large and wealthy place.

We may be content with vague wishes and idle dreams,

and live with just the memories
of what was begun in us,

With THE SPIRIT QUENCHED !!

God hath called us, and is calling us unto holiness;

HE THAT DESPISETH, DESISETH NOT MAN, BUT GOD

The Holy Spirit may set before us
these further possibilities of grace,
the richer things of the gospel;

and you may try to blame your lack of devotion
on a bad teacher
or unhappy experience.

Not matter what the EXCUSE . . .

He that despiseth extends his scorn to God
who hath called.

This is the way the church
most frequently and most terribly quenches the spirit -
DESPISING THE CALLING OF GOD.

We profess to be Christ's soldiers and servants,
purchased by His blood
and going onward into His presence;

yet we don't make His service
the great purpose of our lives;

we don't surrender everything to it.

Isn't this despising our calling
and quenching the spirit?

Another way of putting out the fire of God
and quenching the spirit is to:

LET IT ALONE.

The laziest men are usually richest in desires;
they have so much time for wishes,
and it takes so little trouble.

□

**There is no more miserable way
of cheating the soul,

than being content,

not trying to reach the heights of
God's plan for our life.**

**There is nothing promised for wishing
Seek, and ye shall find;
ask, and it shall be given;
knock, and it shall be opened.**

**Seeking, expecting, claiming,
these are the steps up to possession.**

**Yet, we often put out the Fire of God
with shovelfuls of trash and dirt.**

**There are some fires
that don't need cold water to be put out:
ashes, or dust, will choke the fire out !**

**You have to continue to rekindle the fire,
to renew,
to rededicate

or you, who were on fire for the lord
will become the very one
that chokes or smothers the fire.**

□

**And they pile up
the list of their complaints and failings,
and they put the fire out.**

**Have you ever thought
that you may be letting the fire go out
with all those "Luke Warm ashes" around you.**

Can you see the Higher Calling that God has for you?