

The Azusa Street Papers – Wayside, Stony, Thorney and Good Ground Christians
Message 25 – October 2nd, 2022

The Azusa Papers says;

“TRANSFORMED BY THE HOLY GHOST. Publishers receive the Pentecost and it Transforms a Paper and Changes a Whole Movement.

The position of Live Coals has been completely changed. God unmistakably revealed to the editorial staff the unscripturalness of the views they entertained, and entire renunciation of the same took place. Speaking in tongues as an evidence of Pentecost was stoutly opposed and rejected. The paper did not oppose the speaking in tongues as such, but to make a distinction between this and the gift of tongues seemed to be an unscriptural distinction to sustain a fanatical proposition. But when this distinction was seen, and that speaking in tongues evidenced Pentecost in every instance where it was given in the Bible, we all with one accord accepted that view and instantly fell into line with joy. Two of those working on the force have at this writing received the baptism, and the others are earnestly seeking, and it is hoped that they will have obtained their Pentecost ere this reaches the eye of the reader. Henceforth the paper will be unqualifiedly committed to the truth that Pentecost is evidenced by speaking in tongues, and will forever defend it against all opponents of same, and will publish nothing contrary thereto.”

The Christians that gave birth to the what we call the Church, were continually ministering the Gospel, sowing the word of God in order for people to become not only born again, but baptised in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues and operating in the gifts of the Holy Spirit as He willed for them to do individually as part of a corporate body of believers. They worked to preserve what Jesus taught them about the power of the baptism of the Holy Spirit which they received in the upper room on the day of Pentecost, and were met with much opposition from the religious leaders who not only kicked them out of the Temple, but persecuted their powerful home church and street gatherings that continued on without the pomp of the big Temple with all its powerless, religious tradition.

Jesus was a great example of a preacher who worked all day sowing the word of God with demonstration of not only people receiving salvation, but signs, wonders and miracles.

Acts 10:38 says; *“38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”*

Jesus worked day and night, even if being rejected in the morning by the Pharisees and Scribes, He didn't stop when met with opposition, He continued on through the afternoon and evening and won many souls and performed many healings, deliverances etc.

Jesus not only left us an example to follow as Christian workers in the harvest, but also promised them the baptism of the Holy Spirit to enable them to operate in not only the power of the Holy Spirit that He operated in, but to do greater works than He did in His short time of ministry. Don't let things that may try to hinder you in the morning, hinder you to preach the gospel in the afternoon and evening. Don't let the religious opposition to the teaching of the baptism in the Holy Spirit hinder you to keep preaching it throughout the day. The Word says to *“In the morning sow your seed, And in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, Either this or that, Or whether both alike will be good.,” Ecclesiastes 11:6*

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You're to keep casting the seed of the gospel, regardless of where it lands, as you don't know what will grow and what won't. Don't stop preaching if you meet with opposition, because there will be those throughout the day that will be willing to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be healed, willing to experience God's supernatural power. If Jesus is our example, then we too need to preach all day long at every opportunity.

We have to keep in perspective that the disciples of Christ while He was alive were preaching, casting out devils and healing the sick in Jesus's name, but Jesus knew that after He was gone, they would need the baptism of the Holy Spirit's power to be able to not only continue the supernatural work but also to endure the persecution that would follow preaching in His name.

John 14:12-14 says; *"12 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. 13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you [a]ask anything in My name, I will do it."*

That last phrase, "ask anything in My name, I will do it", would be a good thing to teach the parrot to repeat all day! It would be a good reminder. Someone needs that reminder. Greater works you'll do. Some would say that you can't do greater works than Jesus, but Jesus said you would. Greater doesn't mean bigger. Jesus had a short ministry time on earth, three and a half years, but adding up all the years of your life to work the works of Jesus, it will be as great in both volume and power. I know that rattles many that are reading this, but who is living in you today? Who said, "I'll never leave you as an orphan?". Who wants to do greater works in You? That's the Holy Spirit, that's Jesus. The works He didn't get to do He wants to do in and through you. Jesus didn't live in the 21st century, but you do, and those are the greater works He's talking about.

This is why Jesus commanded His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the power of the Holy Spirit, for He knew it was needed in order for them to build His Church after He was gone. We've read this in almost every message, **Acts 1:4-8** says; *"4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be [a]witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Let's read the parable of the Sower that Jesus Himself left us as an example of the harvest field of souls that we would be working in as Christians.

Matthew 13:1-9; *"13 On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. 2 And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. 3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. 5 Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. 6 But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. 8 But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

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Wayside Ground; this is explained by Jesus in **Matthew 13:18-23**; “18 Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.”

The wayside is the highway Christian. They're the ones that show up once in a while for religious holidays, but really are on the outside looking in, they come primarily for religious image, they have the appearance of being a Christian yet they haven't totally committed themselves. Remember how Jesus said in **Matthew 22:9-10**; “⁹ So go into the highways and byways, and invite everyone you find to the wedding feast.’ ¹⁰ And those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was filled with guests.” These ones referenced in the highways came into the wedding feast, but in the parable of Matthew 13, the wayside Christians, are ones who stay in the highway, they rarely come to church and as a result, they don't grow because they can't grow because the devil comes and snatches the seed right away.

With the Wayside Christian you have to be very clear without backing down. They're not coming in through the front door, but the Lord will make a way to get in through their back door; be it through media, flyers, pamphlets, Bibles etc., He'll make a way to get in into their lives. Be obedient, sow the word, preach and teach, be instant in season and out of season, preach in the morning, afternoon and evening. You don't know what it's going to yield.

It's very important to preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit with clear understanding of its origin found in the Bible, because there are illiterate Christians, that have no understanding on the baptism in the Holy Spirit and have been withheld this teaching or taught to reject it as false doctrine from their religious leaders. This is why so many Christians hear preachers teaching thru the media, the teaching about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and Fire are not able to receive it and it falls by the wayside and the devil snatches away what was sown in their heart. On the other hand, I'm convinced that deaf and dumb spirits are on many Christians today who are not able to understand or receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a result, and are in need of being set free from these demons that religious tradition has them bound to.

[Matthew Henry's Commentary](#) says this about the Highway Ground.

“1.] The highway ground, v. 4-10. They had pathways through their corn-fields (ch. 12 1), and the seed that fell on them never entered, and so the birds picked it up. The place where Christ's hearers now stood represented the characters of most of them, the sand on the sea-shore, which was to the seed like the highway ground.

Observe First, What kind of hearers are compared to the highway ground; such as hear the word and understand it not; and it is their own fault that they do not. They take no heed to it, take no hold of it; they do not come with any design to get good, as the highway was never intended to be sown. They come before God as his people come, and sit before Him as his people sit; but it is merely for fashion-sake, to see and be seen; they mind not what is said, it comes in at one ear and goes out at the other, and makes no impression.

Note, The devil is a sworn enemy to our profiting by the word of God; and none do more befriend his design than heedless hearers, who are thinking of something else, when they should be thinking of the things that belong to their peace.”

How many Christians have heard the teaching of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, but they can't hear it and they're not making any effort to hear it? Whose fault is it? It's not the preacher's fault if he has taught clearly what it is and how to receive it. If you still can't hear, it's because you're not making any effort to hear it or

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showing any interest in it, you're not questioning it, you don't want more knowledge about it nor are you studying about it; then that would make you the illiterate Wayside Ground Christian.

Stony Ground is next as we read in **Matthew 13:20-21**; “20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.”

There are Christians who have heard and understood clearly what the Bible says about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire, and received the teaching with joy without having experienced it, and while waiting on the Lord to receive it, they come under persecution from their nominal church leaders, and as a result stumble and cave to the stony religious traditions of men and the word has no place to take root.

Mark 9:42 says; “42 But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me [a]to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.”

I'm putting that out there for the religious leaders that are causing those who have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit teaching to stumble, and have taught against it.

Matthew Henry's Commentary says the following about the Stony Soil Christians;

“They have no root in themselves, no settled, fixed principles in their judgments, no firm resolution in their wills, nor any rooted habits in their affections: nothing firm that will be either the sap or the strength of their profession. Note, (1.) It is possible there may be the green blade of a profession, where yet there is not the root of grace; hardness prevails in the heart, and what there is of soil and softness is only in the surface; inwardly they are no more affected than a stone; they have no root, they are not by faith united to Christ who is our Root; they derive not from him, they depend not on him.

Observe, Persecution is represented in the parable by the scorching sun, (v. 6); the same sun which warms and cherishes that which was well rooted, withers and burns up that which wanted root. As the word of Christ, so the cross of Christ, is to some a savour of life unto life, to others a savour of death unto death: the same tribulation which drives some to apostasy and ruin, works for others a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

This clearly explains that even if they had more soil, they wouldn't be able to root down because they don't have it in their heart, it's not within them, they don't have the ability to. It's not so much the stony ground but rather the stony heart. It always come back to the heart and the will of man.

Thorney Ground follows this as we read in **Matthew 13:22**; “22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. “

When you study the lives of those who gave birth to the early church, as well as those who gave birth to the Azusa revival, it appears that with exception of a few, (ie: Mary's sister Martha, Ananias and Saphira, Simon the Sorcerer, Judas, Demas, etc...), they were careful for nothing except fulfilling God's call on their lives and the deceitfulness of riches had no place in them, and the stewardship of money was a means to preach the gospel and build the church. If the cares of this world and deceitfulness of riches are keeping a Christian from receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, it's pretty evident that they are living out what I would call Christianity lite. This is a worldly brand of Christians that make up a large portion of nominal and evangelical

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Churches these days known as the seeker-friendly, seeker-sensitive movements that build their churches to appeal to worldly non-Christians, instead of sound Bible doctrine. This is what Jesus referred to in the parable of the wheat and tares in **Matthew 13:24-26**; “*24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.”*”

The preachers are asleep in the pulpit while the devil has built a powerless, seeker-sensitive Church that preaches gospel lite sermons. The tares have crept into the church through this movement.

Matthew Henry’s Commentary says this about the Thorney Ground.

“Care for another world would quicken the springing of this seed, but care for this world chokes it. Worldly cares are fitly compared to thorns, for they came in with sin, and are a fruit of the curse; they are good in their place to stop a gap, but a man must be well armed that deals much in them (2 Sam 23: 6, 7); they are entangling, vexing, scratching, and their end is to be burned, Heb 6: 8. These thorns choke the good seed.”

The deceitfulness of riches. Those who, by their care and industry, have raised estates, and so the danger that arises from care seems to be over, and they continue hearers of the word, yet are still in a snare (Jer 5: 4, 5); it is hard for them to enter into the kingdom of heaven: they are apt to promise themselves that in riches which is not in them; to rely upon them, and to take an inordinate complacency in them; and this chokes the word as much as care did. Observe, It is not so much riches, as the deceitfulness of riches, that does the mischief: now they cannot be said to be deceitful to us unless we put our confidence in them, and raise our expectations from them, and then it is that they choke the good seed.”

It's like we said in the last message, it's not money itself but the love of it.

Good Ground concludes these four examples that Jesus gives in **Matthew 13:23**; “*23 But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”*”

Again, Matthew Henry’s Commentary says the following;

“Now that which distinguished this good ground from the rest, was, in one word, fruitfulness. By this true Christians are distinguished from hypocrites, that they bring forth the fruits of righteousness; so shall ye be my disciples, John 15 8. He does not say that this good ground has no stones in it, or no thorns; but there were none that prevailed to hinder its fruitfulness. Saints, in this world, are not perfectly free from the remains of sin; but happily freed from the reign of it.””

It's one thing to hear what the Bible teaches about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire, but it's another thing to understand and obey what Jesus said in Act 1:4-8, His last command to His disciples before He ascended. The fruit of being baptised in the Holy Spirit and Fire is about fulfilling the call of God on a Christians life, and depending on how much a Christian yields to obey the call to ministry, be it full-time or part-time will determine the fruitfulness produced.

Here's a testimony of a person who received the seed on Good Ground.

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“Beloved, I was saved about 17 months ago from a wretched life. When I called on God, He heard my prayer and saved me instantly. What convinced me of the reality in salvation, was the peace that came into my heart. The desire for opiates went out immediately, and I was cured of the drug habit. The Lord has also healed many others of the drug habit. And God has healed my body, after being afflicted over six and a half years. When all physicians failed, the Man Christ Jesus healed me. The devil had me bound hand and foot for years. Thinking myself wise, I became foolish. But, beloved, God sent His transforming power through the Blood of Jesus and burst all the shackles, and shook off the handcuffs of hell, and today I am a free man in Christ Jesus. Then He sanctified me wholly and gave me a clean heart. Then He baptized me with the Holy Ghost on Jan. 22, at Azusa Mission. Dear ones, all I live for is Christ. I sold out, body, soul, and spirit to Him. My desire is to point souls to the bleeding Lamb of Calvary that takes away the sin of the world. The Holy Ghost, the third person of the Trinity, speaks through me in the languages of the nations whenever He chooses. And He is now engaged in pulling the rope which rings the joybells of heaven in my heart. And there is a revival going on in my soul continually, and the choir is singing and praising God in the unknown tongues. The Holy Ghost is the leader and is well qualified. He came from the college in heaven. Beloved, it is no more I but Christ. To Him be all the glory.” -- Tom Anderson, 312 Azusa St., Los Angeles.”

You need to examine your heart today and see what kind of ground you are; Wayside, Stony, Thorney or Good Ground Christian. It's up to you, you don't have to remain on the Wayside, or continue to have a Stony or Thorney heart. It's not your destiny to stay on the first three examples. Don't let your heart become so Stony that you can't hear the word when it's preached, when it comes your way; don't become a Stony, hard-hearted Christian. When the baptism in the Holy Spirit is taught to you, don't harden your heart. He's given you everything you need to walk upright, to fulfill the call on your life, to bear fruit, to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit's power to overcome the Stony, Thorney ground, or the Highway Christians that would try to influence you.

You need to be the Good Ground Christian and that's where you should want to be, where you can bear fruit. Don't stand before God with no fruit to show, giving an account as He judges you. You don't want everything to burn up like wood, hay and stubble. Don't miss out on all the opportunities to preach His word, to minister throughout the day, to sow the word all day long. No matter the opposition, sow the word, no matter the religious opposition of you teaching on the baptism in the Holy Spirit, continue to teach it and sow it. Pray for the sick, cast out devils, speak in tongues. Jesus came to do the work of His Father; He came to fulfill His call. There was nothing part-time about Jesus, it was all full-time. No matter how much religion is trying to hinder you, move on. Preach, sow, sow, sow and sow some more.

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