

Chapter 8 Faith: The Key to Wigglesworth's Ministry

selected from: "Wigglesworth: A Man Who Walked With God" by George Stormont

Comments and blue highlighting have been added for emphasis, most particularly in reference to His Rest and phrases that flow from related understandings. Tom Plumb

Wigglesworth many times was called "the apostle of faith" because he believed God unequivocally.

Many today use the title "apostle" very freely and loosely, when it needs safeguarding. Even the Apostle Paul was careful in his use of the term. In Romans 1:1, he said he was *called* to be an apostle. In Second Corinthians 12:11, he said he was nothing behind the chiefest of apostles, and in First Corinthians 15:9, he said he was "least" of all the apostles and was not "meet" to be called an apostle

Obviously he viewed the title differently at various times in his life, but the marks of an apostle — the reality that is more than a name — were ever present. (2 Cor. 12:12.)

Wigglesworth also recognized that it is not the title you have, nor the gift you claim, but the manifestation of the power of God that counts. (1 Cor. 1:31.) The manifestation of the power of God was shown in his life through faith.

Seeing the evidence of his faith, we are moved to ask, "is such a faith within my reach? **Can I possess like precious faith?**"

I trust this chapter will help and encourage those true seekers after that kind of faith. I have two important observations to make concerning such faith:

First, Wigglesworth did not arrive at his degree of faith in one leap. He reached it by a process of failure and success. Whoever you are, whatever situation you are in, however weak your faith is at this moment, *your faith can grow*.

Secondly, Wigglesworth believed that *God has no favorites*. He believed *all* Christians have the potential to grow into strong faith. This matter of favorites was illustrated quite sweetly for us by a Swiss friend of my wife's named Martha:

In broken English, she said one day, "I was cross with Jesus because He had favorites, and I told Him so. He asked me why I said that, and I told Him, 'Because you let John lean on your bosom: Do you know what Jesus said? He said, 'Martha, *all* the disciples could have leaned on My bosom. Only John wanted to.'"

Every believer can have enough faith for the fulfillment of God's will in his or her life. Wigglesworth had a noble concept of God's plan for him and was determined to seek God for the faith required to exercise his ministry.

Not all will have the same calling; not all will need the same dramatic faith. But all Christians have the potential for the gifts of the Spirit to operate through them, and all Christians can possess faith for the effective exercise of whatever gift He chooses to operate through them.

William Hacking, a pastor in the north of England, had Wigglesworth in his church for meetings. One day some of the young men of his church, soul-winning young men, accompanied the evangelist on a walk.

He said, “Well, young men, you can ask me any question you like, and I’ll answer it best as I can”

One of them asked the inevitable question, “Mr. Wigglesworth, how can we come to possess great faith?”

“Now, listen;” said Wigglesworth, “here is the answer: ‘First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear’”. Mark 4:28’

Wigglesworth saw three degrees of faith. [The first degree](#) is *saving* faith. All who receive Jesus as Savior have received that faith. This faith is seed that, nourished by hearing the Word of God, can grow: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8

[The second degree](#) he saw was *the faith of the Lord Jesus*. In Galatians 2:20, Wigglesworth saw that it was the faith *of* the Lord Jesus being spoken of, not faith *in* the Son of God. It is Christ’s own faith imparted to His children:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith *of* the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

[Thirdly](#) he said, there is the gift *of faith*:

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. . . to another faith by the same Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:7,9

There were those who quibbled over these distinctions, but Wigglesworth blithely ignored their quibbles and went on demonstrating he had a faith that glorified God in practical results.

Faith that saves is a faith that works. [Faith that achieves is a faith that acts](#). (James 2:18-20.)

For Wigglesworth, there was [one thing more](#): He pressed through by faith in the Word of God to faith in the God of the Word. There *is* a distinction. Romans 4:3 says that Abraham believed *God*. The Apostle Paul did not write that Abraham believed *about* God nor even believed *in* God. [Abraham believed God as a Person](#).

It follows inevitably that if you believe God as a Person, you will believe every word that He speaks. Faith in God Himself is direct contact with God. It is a confidence that inspires action.

For Smith Wigglesworth, Hebrews 12:2, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith~ meant unbroken communion with Jesus, dwelling deeply in the presence of the Lord. As he gazed on Jesus, his faith grew, and he was changed from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18.) That same place of abiding, that same privilege of gazing on the Lord, is open to us!

He believed that faith means action. Once while preaching, he said, “if there is anything in your heart in the way of condemnation, you cannot pray the prayer of faith. [Purity is vital to faith](#). How is faith received? It is received by your acting with what you now have. If you act with what you have, your faith will be increased. You can never increase faith but by acting”

Once a lady wrote a long letter to Wigglesworth telling about her problems and quoting a large number of scriptures.

He sent the letter back to her with these words written on it, “Believe your own letter”

She did — and was healed. In other words, she *acted* on what she already had.

He told me of the first time he ever prayed for the sick. It was during the time he and Polly were operating a mission in Bradford, Yorkshire. Wigglesworth heard of a meeting in Leeds, nine miles away, where they prayed for the sick. Each week, he took people there from his mission to be prayed for and miracles took place.

One day, the leader of the meeting said, “Brother Wigglesworth, I have to be away next week, so you must take the meeting:”

“I can't!” said Wigglesworth, “I have never prayed for the sick” The leader replied, “God has shown me that you are the one to take the meeting. You must do it”

When he arrived the next week, there was no one else to take charge, so he did his best. This is what he told me:

I don't know what I preached, but I do remember that when I called for the sick, about twelve people came forward for prayer. The first was a large-framed man leaning on two sticks. As soon as I touched that man, the power of God hit him. He dropped his sticks; he started to jump; then he started to run, and ran all around the place. The faith of the others — *and* mine — was so quickened that everyone I prayed for that day was healed.

Wigglesworth saw it as God's compassion, helping him in a time of need, and helping his faith to grow. He began in trembling and fear but he acted on what faith he had, [and God honored his acting in faith](#).

John Wesley taught his preachers, “Preach faith until you have it, and then because you have it, you will preach faith”

Faith is reciprocal — act in faith, and you will have greater faith. So many people, seeing Wigglesworth in his later ministry forgot, or most likely never knew of, his early struggles.

He knew poverty and hard work, even as a youngster of six beginning to work in the turnip fields by 6 a.m. and staying at it for ten to twelve hours. But from a child, he was determined to know God, “precept upon precept; line upon line” (Is. 28:10).

He said, “Great faith is the product of great fights. Great testimonies are the outcome of great tests. Great triumphs can only come out of great trials”.¹

The tests he went through led him to a simple, basic faith startling in its simplicity. He had such confidence in God that he took him at His Word. Consequently, he was not moved by human opinion. He knew the danger spoken of by the Lord:

How can ye believe, which received honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?
John 5:44

Wigglesworth knew that Hebrews 12:2 — Jesus is the “author and finisher of our faith” — was the basis of “New Testament faith” faith based on total trust in Jesus. That is the faith that supported the early Christians, the faith that Wigglesworth had, and [the faith we need today](#).

Chapter 9 [New Testament Faith](#)

Faith is not mental acquiescence, nor even the ability to count a thing done. It is the deep awareness imparted by Jesus that a certain thing *is* done.

Early in his ministry, Wigglesworth was called to pray for a young woman who obviously was demon-possessed. He went into the home, and the woman's husband was there with the baby. When they tried to bring the baby to the woman to nurse, she flung herself away. Wigglesworth was moved deeply with compassion. He knew the situation was desperate and needed desperate remedy.

He got on his face before God, and his faith was quickened. He began to penetrate the heavens. He saw in the presence of God the limitations of his own faith. As he tarried there, another faith came to him, a faith that could not be denied. He came back from that experience of the immediate presence of God a changed man.

With authority, he commanded the demons to come out of her. The young lady rolled over in bed and went to sleep for fourteen hours. Then she woke completely free.

This "storming of heaven" (spiritual warfare) was vital in his view. By it Wigglesworth pressed through into the presence of God against every satanic attempt to hinder.

He gazed on Jesus, and his faith grew strong. He had eyes for Jesus only. He communed with Him through the Word, through prayer, through speaking with other tongues. His faith was not a formula, but came of discipline, through "pressing through:" (Heb. 4:11, 10:20.)

The real issue is that, for Smith Wigglesworth, faith flowed out of a relationship with Jesus.

I once asked him if the Holy Spirit operated the "gift of faith" listed in First Corinthians 12:9 through him, and his reply was, "It is not for me to claim that I have a gift. If I have it, the manifestation of it will be the evidence that it is there. It's not what I claim, but what God does"

He saw danger in claiming a gift or a title. It could cause people to look to the person through whom the gift operates rather than at the true Giver of the gift to the Body, to look at the instrument rather than the One who is using the instrument. Then there may be the temptation to get into pride or to move into areas not of God's choosing. Furthermore, he saw that a man could lose touch with God and be left with an empty title.

Let me conclude this chapter with the account of some unusual demonstrations of faith.

Faith in Operation

The Rev. J. E. Stiles, an Assemblies of God minister and author, had a remarkable ministry of leading people into the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This ministry began when he saw and heard Wigglesworth minister in California at a large camp meeting.

To a large company of people gathered that night, Wigglesworth taught two lessons on faith. First, he asked all those who had not received the baptism in the Spirit to stand. Then he asked all those who had been baptized but not spoken in tongues for at least six months to stand. Finally, he called all of the several hundred people standing to come forward and crowd around the pulpit.

"Now," said Wigglesworth, "I'm going to teach you the first lesson in faith. You will speak with tongues by faith. I want you to lift your hands and press forward"

When everyone did, he said, "I'm going to pray a simple prayer When I've finished, I'll say, 'Go' and you will all speak in tongues"

Stiles said to the man standing next to him, "This might work in Britain, but it will never work here."

The next thing he heard was Wigglesworth praying. Then he heard him say, "Go!" To his astonishment, the next

sound was like that of many waters. Everyone was praising God in tongues, “and” said Stiles, “I myself was speaking louder than anyone else.”

Presently, Wigglesworth cried, “Hold it!” in stentorian tones. Things quietened down, but a few people kept speaking in tongues. Again he said, “Hold it!” Finally all was quiet. Then he told them he was going to teach them the second lesson on faith, and that was how to sing in the Spirit by faith.

He commanded them to press forward again and raise their hands. They did.

He said, “I’m going to pray a simple prayer. When I’ve finished, I’ll say, ‘Go!’ and you will all begin to sing in tongues by faith”

Again Stiles demurred, saying, “That cannot happen. The other did happen, but not this. He hasn't given us any tune. We don't know what to sing. It will be utter confusion.”

But Stiles said that when the evangelist prayed, then said, “Go! Sing!” the sound was like a vast glorious choir. The group sang in perfect harmony and at other times in unison. He said it seemed as if there were solos, sometimes groups, and sometimes a full choir, all under the baton of the greatest conductor. He had never heard anything like it.

Stiles said he learned a bigger lesson than speaking and singing in tongues by faith. He learned that [the Holy Spirit operates on faith](#), and from that moment, he was launched on a ministry of faith which extended throughout the United States and Canada, a ministry that saw thousands baptized in the Spirit by faith.

A few years ago, I met a daughter of J. E. Stiles, who confirmed to me this story.

One day Wigglesworth was being shown around a farm by the owner, a dear friend. Visiting one field, he commented on the beauty of it. But his friend said, “It’s not what it looks. The whole field is ruined by blight.”

Wigglesworth lifted his heart to God. Faith flowed in, and he stretched out his hand over the field in the name of Jesus. The field was completely cleansed of blight and the entire crop was saved. In fact, that was the best crop his friend had from any field!

A lady with advanced cancer asked Wigglesworth to pray for her. He went to her home with James Salter his son-in-law, and they prayed. She was immediately and gloriously delivered. Later, as she cleaned out a closet, she came across an old Bible that she had not seen in twelve years.

Glancing through it, she saw that years before she had underlined part of Isaiah 58:8, “Thine health shall spring forth speedily” She realized that God had spoken to her all those years ago, but she had never actuated her faith. She could have been spared those years of suffering.

Bishop Ronald Coady and his wife were ministering in New South Wales, Australia, in 1950 where they met a Methodist deaconess called “Sister Mary”. She brought them large quantities of tracts to use in their crusades.

While there, they were reading Stanley Frodsham's book, *Smith Wigglesworth — Apostle of Faith*. The incident of his raising a young woman from the dead especially had gripped them, and when Sister Mary came in, they read it to her, adding, “How we should love to meet that lady!”

She said, “You know that lady”

They protested that they did not, but she persisted, “You’ve known her for some time. I am that lady.”

The three of them laughed together with holy joy at God’s “coincidences”. She then told them of being paralyzed from the waist down in 1922 and of being seriously ill. Wigglesworth was holding meetings in her town, and her friends urged her to let them take her to a meeting for prayer. However, she did not believe in divine healing and did not wish to be prayed for.

She soon became worse and, in fact, was dying. Her friends asked if she would allow the evangelist to pray for her if they brought him to the house. She finally consented, but he was delayed. Before he arrived, she died.

Sister Mary Pople related that she went to Heaven and was allowed in the throne room. She saw the Lord Jesus sitting on His throne. She saw light such as she had never seen and heard music such as she had never heard. Her heart was filled with rapturous joy.

As she looked at the Lord, He pointed to the doorway by which she had entered, and she knew she had to go back even if she did not want to. When she went through that door, she heard a voice that later she knew was Smith Wigglesworth’s.

He was saying, “Death, I rebuke you in the name of Jesus”.

Then he commanded Mary to live. Her eyes opened, and those who had been weeping around her bed began to rejoice. She arose and dressed, and there was a knock at the door. Some girls from her Bible study group had arrived, thinking she was dead. To their surprise and joy, Mary herself opened the door to them. She continued in the Lord’s service for many years. Not only was she raised from the dead, but she was totally healed of her sickness that had been unto death and of the paralysis that had bound her for years.

“Without faith, it is impossible to please Him.” Hebrews 11:6

Chapter 10 Sanctification: Unbroken Communion With God

I heard American author-pastor-teacher Judson Cornwall say once concerning Smith Wigglesworth:

“I will never forget the sense of awe I felt at the authority that man had. **It was an absolutely glorious, positive authority in God.** He knew the voice of his God. He knew what God was about to do, and he was always there at the right time when God did it. He had the ability to speak it just as God did it; or, as he spoke it, God did it.

The secret lay, I believe, in the large degree to which Wigglesworth had entered into **the inmost life of the Lord Jesus** as revealed in John 5:19,20. Jesus said in those verses that He did nothing on earth that He had not seen the Father do in heaven. That is an increasing revelation. Perhaps the emphasis on the miraculous in Wigglesworth’s life and ministry has obscured to a large extent **his insistent call for holy living.** (I agree. The unshakable foundation of His Rest was the key that allowed Smith his astonishingly bold access to His Throne. TP)

Kathleen Chambers, daughter of Oswald Chambers, heard a great deal about holiness in her home when she was a small girl. One day, while playing with a rag doll, she tried to make it stand up. Its limp rag legs collapsed every time.

In disgust, she exclaimed, “He ain't sankified yet!”

That is sadly true of many oft-collapsing Christians! However what joy there is in true holiness. The pure in heart see God. Samuel Chadwick said:

Holiness brings the soul into fellowship with the redeeming Son of God. When believers rejoice in its possession, sinners are awakened and saved.¹

The truth of the great prayer of the writer of Hebrews needs to be experienced by us all:

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen. Hebrews 13:20,21

There is a winsomeness in the Greek word *katartizo* translated “make you perfect”:

In Matthew 21:16. it means to set in order as in music.

In Galatians 6:1, it is translated “restore” and carries the idea of putting back in place a dislocated limb.

In First Thessalonians 3:10, it means to supply what is “lacking”.

In Hebrews 11:3, it is translated “framed” and implies setting in order as in a machine.

In Matthew 4:21, the translation is “mending” This carried a double idea: repairing what was broken and arranging for future use.

In Ephesians 4:1-2, the thought is of equipping for service.

Wigglesworth achieved the goal of holiness because he determined not to settle for anything less. He “prayed through”. *His experience of “sanctification by faith” was fundamental to his later life and ministry.* Teachers in the “holiness movement” called it the baptism in the Spirit, and so did he at first.

Later, he came to see what the true baptism in the Spirit is, but he never denied his earlier experience. It was an essential part of God's plan. **For the rest of his life, he associated holiness and power.**

Wigglesworth lived *so* close to God in the last years of his ministry. **He dwelt in the secret place of the Most High.** *Unbroken communion* best describes his relationship with God. In that intimacy, he entered deeply into the experience of Jesus. He, too, saw what God did in heaven, then in Jesus’ name, he did it on earth.

Comparatively few dwell where he dwelt. **It is an “awe-full” place.** Isaiah expressed this vividly in Isaiah 33:14:

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

David asked the same question in Psalm 24:3,4. **(Answer: the purified soul with all dross already burnt away. TP)**

Wigglesworth knew that without holiness, no man can see the Lord (Heb. 12:14), so with all his heart, he sought holiness. There was no “shilly-shallying” no playing games, no pretense. He meant to *see* God. (Matt. 5:8.) One of his great joys in the baptism of the Holy Spirit (that includes entire sanctification) was the sense of cleansing. He had a vision of an empty cross and Jesus glorified. He cried out in ecstasy, “Clean, clean, clean”.

Recently, I heard an excellent definition of the word, “dirt”. Dirt is “matter out of place”. By this definition, Smith had a vision that He had now ordered **all** things within according to His will. There was **nothing** out of place. All was now **pristine and pure**, as well as **empowered**. TP

His Life in the Spirit

His life in the Spirit began with the certainty of the new birth he experienced as a young boy. Yet he felt that was not all there was to a relationship with God. He was eager to grow spiritually. A few months after his fourteenth birthday, when he was confirmed in the Church of England with the bishop laying hands on him, he was filled with an overwhelming joy. Afterwards, he came to believe this was the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in his life that culminated in the baptism of the Spirit nearly forty years later.

Yet even that was not enough. As he grew older, he came to realize that he had to face up to temptation and defeat in his Christian walk. Perhaps, as we have already seen, his greatest weakness was his temper.

His temper was at times all-consuming. He would go pale and shake with rage over sometimes trivial matters, almost losing control.

Also, there was a period in his life when he turned almost completely from their mission ministry to business. A plumber by trade, he became very busy and successful. He and his employees worked from early morning until late at night, and he began to prosper greatly. As a result, his private devotions and church attendance suffered.

His love for Jesus, prayer, the Word, and the fellowship of believers lessened until he was gripped by materialism. In the meantime, Polly increased in spiritual fervor. As he grew colder she grew hotter. This irritated him. One night, when she was very late returning from a service, he said to her in a severe tone, ‘This must stop.’

She said, “Smith, you’re my husband, but Jesus is my Lord’

This angered him so much that he put her out the front door and locked her out. But he had forgotten that the back door was unlocked. She ran around the house and came in the other door laughing. He could not resist her laughter and joined in. That was the beginning of his restoration.

He said to himself, “**This won't do in a child of God**” and he determined to meet God at every opportunity. Setting aside ten days, he presented his body a living sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1,2.) He prayed, wept, soaked in the Word, and pleaded the promises. He faced up to the cross until he began to understand what Paul meant in Galatians 2:20.

This is how he described the experience to me: “God worked the old Wigglesworth-nature out and began to work the new Jesus-nature in”.

The transformation was obvious to all who knew him. He became the calmest, purest man I ever knew. What he taught after that, he lived. His grandson, Leslie Wigglesworth, saw him in the relaxed environment of family life and he bears witness that he never saw him moody or out of sorts.

Wigglesworth’s failure at that point in his life was real. His sin was real, but it brought him to the end of himself and caused him to cry mightily unto God. **He reached the place of brokenness**. Such brokenness may well be the prerequisite of full spiritual development.

He faced the love of business and consequent love of money that took him away from God for a while.

He faced his almost uncontrollable temper surrendering it to Jesus until it was totally conquered.

If you have spent time in the testimonies section of this website, you will agree the author here has provided a sketchy and wholly inadequate description of the crisis that normally precedes this precious advanced work of grace. (called His Rest or entire sanctification) TP

The Baptism in the Spirit

Over the next few years, however, Wigglesworth realized there was still more for him in God. **Holiness was vital, but God had promised power.** Acts 1:8 kept returning to his mind, the passage where Jesus promised the disciples power *after* the Holy Spirit came upon them: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...”

So here we have it. **“Holiness was vital, but God had promised power.”** Amen. But those after Wigglesworth went on to forget the vital in their fascination with power; and then wondered why their results were insufficient for fullness. In fact, holiness and power are two different sides of the same coin found in Luke 3:16 “John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit **AND** fire.” A coin with only one side would be a deceptive two-dimensional image of a coin without purchasing power- not a coin at all.... **Smith demonstrates that a soul obtains His promised fullness with both purity and power being diligently poured out together at His Word.** TP

Then he heard that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon people at All Saints Church, Sunderland. This was the spreading wave of Pentecostalism that followed the 1907 Azusa Street, California, revival. He attended the meetings, and here is the story in his own words, as he related it to John Carter:

When this Pentecostal outpouring began in England, I went to Sunderland. I was as certain as possible that I had (already) received the Holy Spirit and was absolutely rigid in this conviction. I met with people who had assembled for the purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit, and I was continually in those meetings causing disturbances, until the people wished I had never come. But I was hungry and thirsty for God and had gone to Sunderland because I had heard that God was pouring out His Spirit in a new way, and that God had visited His people and manifested His power, and that people were speaking in tongues as on the Day of Pentecost.

When I got there I said, “I cannot understand this meeting. I have left a meeting in Bradford all on fire for God. The fire fell last night, and we were all laid out under the power of God. I have come here for tongues, and I don’t hear them”

“Oh’ they said, “when you get baptized in the Holy Spirit, you will speak in tongues”.

“Oh, that’s it” said I, “When the presence of God came upon me, my tongue was loosed. When I went into the open air to preach, I felt I had a new tongue”

“No’ they replied, “that’s not it”. “What is it then?” I asked.

They said, “You’ll know when you’re baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

“I am baptized;’ I interjected, “and there’s no one here that can persuade me that I’m not baptized”.

So I was up against them, and they were up against me. I remember a man saying, “I’d been here three weeks, then the Lord baptized me with the Holy Spirit, and I began to speak with tongues”.

“Let’s hear it” I said, “that’s what I’m here for” But he would not talk in tongues.

As the days passed, I became more and more hungry. I had opposed the meetings so much, but the Lord was gracious. I shall ever remember the last day, the day I had to leave for home. God was with me so much as I went to the last meeting. But I could not rest. I went to the vicarage, and there in the library, I said to the vicar’s wife, Mrs. Boddy, “I can rest no longer I must have these tongues”

She said, “It is not tongues. It is the baptism you need. If you will allow God to baptize you, the other will be all right”

“My dear sister,” I said, “I know I am baptized. You know I have to leave shortly. Please lay your hands on me that I may receive tongues”.

She rose up and laid her hands on me, and the fire fell, (Just then) she had to go out to answer a knock on the door. It was the best thing that could have happened. I was alone with God. Then He gave me a revelation. Oh, it was wonderful!

He showed me an empty cross and Jesus glorified. Then I saw that the Lord had purified me. It seemed that God gave me a new vision, and I saw a perfect being within me with mouth open, saying, “Clean, clean, clean.” When I began to repeat it, I found myself speaking with other tongues. The joy was so great, I could not utter it in my own tongue, and I worshipped God in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. It was all as beautiful, as peaceful, as when Jesus said, “Peace, be still” (Mark 4:39). The tranquility of that moment and the joy surpassed anything I had ever known.

What had I received? I had received the Bible evidence.

This was Wigglesworth’s real baptism in the Holy Spirit that allowed him to become the man and minister that he was in later years. He constantly urged others to seek a similar experience for themselves, then to move on into a life of continuous receiving of more and more of the blessed Spirit of God.

However, both Smith and Polly recognized that the evidence of the baptism was *more* than tongues. A prayer language was the initial evidence, but Jesus had promised power. Polly showed her perception of this when — in response to his testimony about having received the baptism in the same way as the apostles —she said, “[If you’ve got what they had, you can do what they did.](#)”

Yes, Polly, you've hit the nail on the head! Let us receive both His Spirit and His Rest. Let us walk in the fullness of His resurrection life that toppled empires and established the church! TP

Wigglesworth, for his part, began to pray, “Lord, show me what you baptized me for”.

One day, when he was still working as a plumber, he returned to his home to find an old man had been brought there who was in need of ministry. The man was crying out that he had committed the unpardonable sin.

Immediately, Wigglesworth heard the Lord say in his heart, “This is what I baptized you for.”

With this confidence in his spirit, he went into the room where the old man lay, still crying, “I’m lost, lost! I’ve committed the unpardonable sin”.

Wigglesworth went up to him, and in the name of Jesus commanded the tormenting, lying spirit to come out of the man. Immediately, the old man was delivered, and his peace and assurance returned. And Wigglesworth heard the echo in his heart, “This is what I baptized you for”.

He was not content with the *blessing* of Pentecost, he wanted to know the *power* of Pentecost. Many years after his baptism, he was taken to a resort in New Zealand for a rest after a great campaign. One evening his host asked him the secret of his power and success.

In a broken voice, and with tears slowly trickling down his face, he replied:

“I am sorry you asked me that question, but I will answer it.

I am a broken-hearted man. My wife, who meant everything to me, died eleven years ago (in 1913). After the funeral, I went back and lay on her grave. I wanted to die there. But God spoke to me and told me to rise up and come away. I told him if he would give me a double portion of the Spirit — my wife’s and my own — I would go and preach the Gospel.

God was gracious to me and answered my request. **But I sail the high seas alone.** I am a lonely man, and many a time all I can do is to weep and weep.”

Here was a secret indeed.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psalm 51:17

In this context, the full blessing of Pentecost was to him a costly enduement. If he went farther than others in seeking its outworking “in demonstration and power” it was because he did not want to have paid the price in vain.

For himself and others, he was utterly discontented with a baptism that did not fundamentally change a person and impart a power that had not been present before. Perhaps today we have seen too many “easy baptisms” -baptisms lacking life-changing force.

Wigglesworth prayed for and received a real baptism and went on to prove and demonstrate its mighty effects.

Wigglesworth did not lack for power nor purity. Holiness leaders before him just did not have the luxury of this eye-popping power. Pentecostal leaders after him seldom had the luxury of the unshakable foundation of His Rest to bring life-saving conviction on the impure. Holiness stream believers were prone to losing their purity for lack of power and compensated for lack of power with patience and prayer. Pentecostal stream believers were prone to lose His Spirit for lack of purity and compensated for lack of purity by being forgiven and rehabilitated in tears as many times as necessary. Many were offended. Let us discontinue this incomplete equipping. Let us embrace His full equipping *so we can get the job done!* We have had enough failure already! TP

In one city a man invited him to his home in order to be prayed for to receive the baptism. Wigglesworth arrived to find a beautiful meal had been prepared for him. The man and his wife suggested they eat first and pray afterwards.

Wigglesworth bluntly asked, “What do you want most, a stomach full of food or a soul full of God?”

The man was shocked into the realization of his wrong priorities. Wigglesworth immediately began to share the Scripture, showed the man the need of cleansing and faith, then prayed for him. In no time at all, he was filled with the Spirit, the glory of the Lord filled the room, and the couple and Wigglesworth rejoiced together. The meal, so kindly prepared, was forgotten.

Wigglesworth's son-in-law, James Salter, later a powerful and outstanding missionary to Central Africa, told on one occasion of his experience of the need of cleansing as a prerequisite for the full baptism in the Holy Spirit. When he was in prayer, seeking the fullness of the Spirit, it seemed there was only one thing he could think about — carrots.

The more he tried to pray, the louder “carrots” echoed in his mind. He realized that God was speaking to him about something that had to be dealt with. He rose up out of the prayer meeting and went to a green grocer's shop (in America, what would be called a produce or vegetable shop) kept by a friend's father.

He waited until the shop was clear of other customers, then the shopkeeper said, “Well, Jim, lad, what do you want?”

Salter told him that often when he had stopped by the shop to see his friend, he had stolen a carrot. He had come to confess and make restitution.

“Jim, lad, we all take a carrot from time to time. It doesn't bother me,” the man said.

Salter replied, “But God is bothering me about it. I must put it right”.

He did, then went to the prayer meeting, sought the Lord and, in a very short time, was filled with the Holy Spirit.

This sort of thing is also common to those seeking His Rest since a complete consecration is a pre-requisite. TP

Chapter 11

Standing on Holy Ground

Wigglesworth was the purest man I have ever known, a man who lived daily in the immediate presence of God.

Here are two illustrations:

- At one time Wigglesworth was ministering at Zion City Illinois, founded by John Alexander Dowie. There, he called the ministers to a special prayer meeting and was already praying when they arrived. As he continued in prayer sometimes in English and sometimes in tongues, the awesome presence of God filled the room. One by one, the ministers were smitten by the power of God and fell prostrate on their faces. The reality of God's presence so gripped them that they were unable to move for at least an hour. Wigglesworth was **the only one who remained standing** as he continued in praise and prayer. A cloud, like a radiant mist, filled the room where the ministers were.
- In 1922, Wigglesworth was in Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand. One afternoon at a special meeting, eleven prominent Christians gathered for prayer at Wigglesworth's request. One after the other they prayed, until all had taken part except the visiting evangelist. He then began to pray for their city and country and as he continued, the sense of God's presence and power so filled the room that one by one the others left, unable to continue in the blazing light of God's holiness.

One minister, hearing of this from one who had been there, greatly desired to be in a similar meeting — but with the determination that whoever else left, he would not. An opportunity soon came for him to attend such a meeting. Several people prayed, then Wigglesworth began to pray.

As he lifted up his voice, it seemed that God Himself invaded the place. Those present became deeply conscious that they were on holy ground. The power of God in its purity was like a heavy weight pressing on them. One by one, the people left until only the man remained who had set himself to stay.

He hung on and hung on until at last the pressure became a compulsion, and he could stay no longer. His own testimony was that with the floodgates of his soul pouring out a stream of tears and with uncontrollable sobbing, [he had to get out of the Presence or die](#). He added that Wigglesworth, a man who knew God as few men do, was left alone in an atmosphere in which few men could breathe.”

This closeness to God, seeing what God was doing and hearing what God was saying, then doing and saying the same on earth, is clearly seen in an incident related by William Davies when pastoring in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England.

Wigglesworth was conducting a crusade for Davies. One night in the healing line, there was a young man with a bandage around his throat.

“When the evangelist asked him, “‘What’s up?’” he replied in a hoarse whisper “‘Can God do anything for me?’”

“Of course He can” answered Wigglesworth, “unless He has forgotten how to make voice boxes”.

He placed his hands on the young man's throat, prayed in his usual way, then turned the young man around, saying, “Go home and eat a meal of meat and potatoes”

The young man turned back, saying, “I can't, Sir! I feed myself through this”, pointing to a tube in the side of his throat.

Wigglesworth turned him around again, gave him a gentle push, and said, “Go on your way. Do as you’re told. Be not faithless, but believing”

The next night, the young man was again in the healing line. When he came forward, Wigglesworth said, “What are you doing here? I prayed for you last night!”

The young man answered in a normal voice, “I’ve come to tell you what God did for me last night”.

Turning him to face the audience, Wigglesworth said, “You don't need to tell me. Tell them.” and this was the young man's testimony:

“After receiving the preacher’s stern rebuke (to do as he was told), I went home and asked my mother to cook me a solid meal. She argued with me, but I told her to please prepare it. I *was* going to eat it. She prepared the meal. I sat down and took the first mouthful, chewing it a long time, hesitating to swallow it. Finally with fear and trembling, I swallowed that first mouthful. It just slipped down my throat, no pain, no obstruction, no trouble at all. Since then, I’ve had more meals, and am looking forward to one after this meeting

Wigglesworth asked, “Then what are you doing with that bandage around your throat?”

The young fellow explained that it covered the tube through which he had been receiving food and that he was going to the hospital the next day to have it removed.

The evangelist quietly but confidently said, “What the Lord has begun, He can complete.’ Calling Pastor Davies and other helpers to come near, he said, “Now watch this, for you will never see the like of it again.”

He removed the bandage, gently drew the tube out of the young man's neck, then placed his thumb and forefinger each side of the hole. Those who were watching were astonished. Before their very eyes, the hole healed right up. What he had seen God do in heaven, he had done on earth.

“He often said, “What I have, you can have” And we can! But there is the same price to pay. **We must be holy. We must live very close to Jesus. We must dwell in the presence of God.**

Beyond contradiction, Wigglesworth’s emphasis on holiness was a **major factor** in the amazing results of his ministry: There was a sense of awe in his meetings.”

One businessman had his unsaved secretary attend those Wellington meetings to record what was said and what took place. Later, this was his testimony:

During the address, the evangelist suddenly burst into tongues and then gave an interpretation. I said to my typist, “Take that down’ and a few moments later, “Did you get that down?” She said, “I’m sorry, but everything went strange, and I couldn’t lift my hand.” A little later, another message was given, and I again made request, but the pencil had fallen from her hand, and she was trembling like an aspen leaf. At the end of the meeting, she responded to the evangelist’s plea and accepted Christ as her Savior.²

Chapter 12 To Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness

Moses Copeland, a British preacher, said that in his youth he was given this word by Smith Wigglesworth: “When the child of God ceases to hunger after righteousness and purity, then Satan gets in.”

His own way of preventing so sad a development was to nourish his life by communion with God. Once he had heard a godly minister tell this story:

There was a time in my life when I sensed that God was calling me to come apart and seek his face. But I was busy, and I would go on with those things that were keeping me busy. God was gracious and persisted in calling me. Bit by bit, I began to respond until I formed the habit of going aside at the slightest breath of the Spirit to spend time with God.

This impressed Wigglesworth, and he developed the same habit. At home with his family or even in other people’s homes, if he sensed a prompting in his spirit, he would quietly withdraw from company, go to his room, and enjoy the Lord’s presence.

Leslie, his grandson, told me that his grandfather would pray a while, then lie on the bed and open his Bible “to see what Father had to say.” Then he would meditate and worship, often in other tongues. Then he would pray again and repeat the process, until sometimes several hours would pass. He was following the advice of the psalmist David: “When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said with thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek” (Ps. 27:8).

In his earlier years, he prayed for long periods. At times, he spent whole nights in prayer for souls. He told me in later years, “These days (when he was traveling long hours, staying in different homes, and holding meetings all

over the world) I cannot pray for half an hour on end. But there is not a half hour of my waking life that I am not in prayer some time.”

Everything he did was bathed in that communion with God — conversation, letter writing, preparing for ministry, preaching, or bringing healing and deliverance to multitudes. His chairmanship of meetings was likewise saturated with God.

For long years one of the largest Pentecostal conventions in England was at Preston, Lancashire — the Easter Convention I have referred to earlier in this book. The convention was four days long with three meetings scheduled each day. The local pastor, Dick Coates, was a precious brother but not gifted in leading large meetings.

He and the elders invited Wigglesworth to be chairman. And what a chairman! He imparted something of the Spirit from the moment he entered the building. Few people knew, however, that every year before the convention he went away for a week to a quiet place to seek God’s face for His anointing on every meeting, every preacher, every song.

“The consequence was that every meeting he conducted was in the Spirit from the opening moment. No almost endless singing of choruses to get the people in the “right mood” and no tiring standing for long periods so that the congregation was too weary to appreciate the ministry of the Word.”

Often the first speaker was up and preaching ten minutes after the service began, preaching to a Spirit-quickened, fresh, and responsive audience. Often, after the first song, Wigglesworth would ask the congregation, “Who wants a blessing? Put one hand up” The congregation would respond. Then, “Who wants a double blessing? Put two hands up: Again, there would be a response. Finally, he would say, “If you want a blessing you can take home with you, everyone stand up. Now, pray out loud: There were congregations up to two thousand, and when they obeyed Wigglesworth’s instructions, it was like the sound of many waters, and the glory of God filled the place.

A friend who had been a “high churchman” told me of being at one of the conventions and being so horrified at what he thought was irreverence that he left the building.

He had not gone far when God spoke to him, “If you don't go back and enter into that prayer and praise, I will cease to bless.”

He hurried back and entered into the worship as God had commanded. His testimony to me was that the worship time at the convention became a powerful force for change in his life. And it flowed out of Wigglesworth’s communion with God.

That communion was nourished by partaking of holy communion. He did this every day whether he was at home or not. If other believers were with him, he would share with them. If not, he would partake alone.

He kept from spiritual stagnation by eagerly pursuing the Lord. Following is his own testimony to the various ways he was led as he followed on to know the Lord. All of those ways meant some measure of upheaval in his life, but he felt no price was too high to pay to live in ever-deepening communion with God.

When I was in the Methodist Church, I was sure I was saved and sure I was right. The Lord said to me, “Come out.” and I came out. When I was with the people known as the Brethren, I was sure that *now* I was right. But the Lord said, “Come out.” and I went into the Salvation Army. At that time (the founding days of the Army) it was full of life and there were revivals everywhere; but the Salvation Army went into natural things, and the great revivals I had known in the early days ceased. The Lord said to me, “Come out.” and came out. I have had to “come out” three times since. (3+3= 6 times he came out! TP)

I believe this Pentecostal revival we are now in is the best thing the Lord has on earth today. Yet I believe that out of this, the Lord has something still better. God has no use for any man who is not hungering and thirsting for yet more of Himself and His righteousness. The Lord has told us to covet earnestly the best gifts, and we need to be covetous for those that will bring the most glory to God.”

His eager pursuit after God led to [an unbroken sense of the presence of God](#). He would tell us, “You have to live ready. If you have to stop to get ready, you are too late. The opportunity will have gone.”

A good illustration of this, is the time a sick man asked me to bring Wigglesworth to his home to pray for him. I did, and introduced them to each other.

After only a few minutes, Wigglesworth said, “God has told me not to pray for you till you repent of your sin, your backsliding, your pride, and your unbelief.”

The man said, “I don’t know what you are talking about.”

Wigglesworth said, “You do. The Holy Spirit is not a liar.”

The man’s wife pleaded with him, but he told her to keep out of it.

Wigglesworth prayed, “Lord, give this man repentance” and walked out. When we were outside, he began to weep and said, “Why did I have to say that?”

I told him the man had been a deacon in our church, but he had left us and joined a liberal church where he was publishing literature against the baptism in the Spirit.

“Then why did you take me there?” he asked.

I replied, “Because he asked me, and I felt a fresh voice might help him back to God.”

The next day Wigglesworth sent me to see if the man was ready to be prayed for, but his wife greeted me at the door saying, “I don't think you had better see my husband today. He’s still angry at Wigglesworth and you.

I said, “I'd rather see your husband than go back and tell Smith Wigglesworth that I didn't see him!”

When I entered the sick room, the man said, “You don't agree with Wigglesworth, do you?”

I replied, “I know, and you know, that what he said is true, but I didn't have the courage to say it to you before.”

“Get out, and don't come back!” he shouted. That was the last I saw of him. He died shortly afterwards. But that incident showed me that Wigglesworth was always ready to hear God and follow his instructions.

[The Importance of Praise](#)

It would be a serious omission if I did not tell of the importance of praise in Wigglesworth’s life. A. L. Hoy shortly after he was saved, had tea with Wigglesworth and asked him what he thought pleased God most.

Wigglesworth looked at him, his eyes shining, and instantly replied, “Worship! No man enjoys more the riches of divine grace and performs the Lord’s will to a higher degree than the man who walks with God in continuous worship”¹

He had unique ways of bringing home this truth. Once as he came to the platform before a large congregation, he said, “How many of you came in properly tonight? I mean with both hands in the air, praising the Lord.”

No one raised a hand.

He then said, “Go out, the lot of you, and come in properly. The Scripture says ‘Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise!’” (Ps. 100:4):

Out they all went and came back joyfully praising the Lord. They had a most wonderful meeting. More than forty years later, I told this story in one church, and a lady came up excitedly to say that she had been in that meeting and that it happened just as I had reported it.

At Lullingstone, Kent, England, there is the excavation of a Roman villa, the foundation of which was laid A.D. 90. As the work proceeded, they found a chapel, and on the wall of the chapel, a plaster painting. It depicted a man and woman standing with hands in the air obviously singing. The work dates back to 320 A.D., and the archaeologist gave it the title, “Early Christians at Worship” From earliest times, Spirit-filled people have been a praising people.

Ministering the Spirit

One of his joys in his experience of the consciousness of God's presence was that it enabled him to “minister the Holy Spirit.”

On more than one occasion, he said to me, “If you don't minister the Holy Spirit, you minister death.

When Jack West was a young Canadian evangelist, he called to see Brother Wigglesworth at his home in Bradford, Yorkshire, England. Wigglesworth was away, but Jack was invited to stay overnight. He slept in the evangelist's bed and declared, “I verily felt the power of God in that bedroom.”

The next day, Wigglesworth arrived home and prayed for West, “Lord, don't let this man be ordinary. Make him extraordinary.”

Jack said that he remained under the power of God for many days and began a ministry that God confirmed “with signs following” because God's servant had “ministered the Holy Spirit”.

Pastor George Miles, who lived for many years only a short distance from Wigglesworth, often visited him. This is his witness:

“Mr. Wigglesworth was so filled with God that his little home in Bradford seemed to be holy ground, and like Moses of old, I wanted to remove the shoes from my feet in an act of reverence.”

The best way I can clarify what he meant by “ministering the Spirit” is to say that he “believed into” what he spoke, whether in conversation, preaching, prayer, or prophecy. With him, [there were no idle words](#). He, by faith, actively associated the Holy Spirit with his ministry. He believed God was with him, was anointing what he was saying and doing, even as he was in the act of ministering. His faith communicated this fact to many of his hearers.

In one church, he said, “I'll go out, and come back in. Everyone who touches me will be healed. Sad to say, only one woman touched him, but she was healed.

Wigglesworth believed it was possible, and often necessary, to begin in the natural and by faith rise to the spiritual. His total acceptance of the verse in Second Timothy that talks of “stirring up the gift in you” (2 Tim. 1:6)

led to his sometimes criticized statement, “If the Holy Spirit doesn’t move me, I move the Holy Spirit.”

Anyone with the slightest knowledge of Smith Wigglesworth could never imagine there was the least bit of flippancy or irreverence in that remark. [His deep sense of the awesomeness of God’s presence](#) would preclude that. But he knew there were times when, without a conscious awareness of being moved by God, he had to step out in faith. He knew that as he moved towards God in faith, God would move toward him in power. In this sense only, would he say that he “moved” the Holy Spirit.

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13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.
17 [Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.](#)” Philipians 3:13-17 NKJV
