

## 'Let It Be'

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph. 4:31). How many have read these words and have thought, “Oh, that it might be so!” and how earnestly they have tried to put away that evil speaking, together with “the root of bitterness” whence it springs, and have failed, because “no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison” (James 3:8).

The same trouble has been found with the similar exhortation, “*Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one” (Col. 4:6). O, if we only could; but how often have we resolved that we would not be betrayed into hasty speech, and have almost immediately been covered with shame because of the foolish things that issued from our mouth “before we thought”!

Again we read the divine exhortation, “*Let* your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one” “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:3, 5). And similar to this is the exhortation, “Let brotherly love continue” (Heb. 13:1). What a blessed state of mind this must be, and what a heaven there would be on earth if such a state of things only existed, especially among those who profess the name of Christ! Yet how many who have set this blessed ideal before themselves, find themselves wondering how it is to be attained!

It is the man who is “carnal, sold under sin,” who is obliged to say, “To will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find” (Rom. 7:18). God is just and kind. He is not a tyrant, and he does not set tasks before his people without showing them the way to perform them. He not only shows the way, but supplies the power, the trouble is with our reading of his commands and exhortations. Let us read one more and see if that does not begin to suggest the way out of the difficulty: —

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful” (Col. 3:15). Surely we cannot control the peace of God. We cannot manufacture it, and put it within our hearts. No, only God can supply peace, and this he has already done. Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you” (John 14:27). “I will hear what God the LORD will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints” (Ps. 85:8). The fact that only God can put his grace into the heart, and cause it to rule there, should indicate to us that it is he who is to fulfill those other exhortations in us.

Once more we read, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom” (Col. 3:16). This, together with the text quoted just before, tells us the whole secret. **It is by the word of God that these things are to be done.** “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts” (Zech. 4:6). **The word of the Lord, which sets before us these desirable attainments of thought and speech, is the agency by which they are supplied.**

What can the word of the Lord do? —Read Ps. 33:6, 9: “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth” “For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast.” “Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you” (1 Peter 1:25). The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; and the power of God is seen in creation. (Rom. 1:16, 19, 20). **Therefore the power by which the commands and exhortations of the Holy Spirit are to be fulfilled in us is the power by which the heavens and the earth were made.**

Turn then to the simple story of creation. God said, “Let there be light: and there was light” (Gen. 1:3). Again, God said, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so” (v. 9). Again, God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth; and it was so” (v. 11). Once more: “God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth; and it was so” (vv. 14, 15. And thus we read throughout the entire story of creation.

The darkness had no power in itself to bring forth light. The waters could not gather themselves together into one place. The earth could not make a mighty exertion, and send forth the trees laden with fruit. Much less could the sun, moon, and stars create themselves. **That which was not, could not bring itself into existence. But at the word of God, saying, “Let it be,” everything came into being. The words, “Let there be” so and so, carried with them the power of being. The ‘thing’ required is in the words requiring its production.**

Now “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). And “it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). We are to remember that the exhortations that we read at first are not the exhortations of a man, but that they are the words of God to us. The same One who in the beginning said, “Let there be light,” and, “Let the earth bring forth grass,” says to us, “Let all bitterness, and wrath. . . . be put away from you.” Just as the first was done, so

must the other be accomplished. “For as the earth brings forth its bud, as the garden causes the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations” (Isa. 61:11). **Therefore when we read the exhortations to let certain evil things be put away from us, and to let certain graces appear, we are not to regard them as commands for us to put them away, but as the agency by which the task is to be accomplished.**

God’s power to create is as great now as it ever was. He who in the beginning caused the ground to bring forth fruit, and who made a perfect man of the dust of the ground, can take these earthen vessels and make them “to the praise of the glory of His grace.” We are to become so familiar with the fact that God is Creator, that when He says, “Let this be done,” we shall at once and continually respond, “Amen; even so, let it be done, Lord Jesus;” and thus the new heart will be created, from which will proceed thoughts and words acceptable in his sight.