

A horrible "fear of man" seems to be gripping thousands! It is both in the pulpit and the pew!

Pastors are afraid of the congregation and the congregation is afraid of the pastor. The pastors are afraid of one another.

Churches everywhere are afraid to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth; afraid of being branded as "fanatic" or "holy roller." Fear of persecution or ridicule has caused many a good pastor and church to draw into a shell of formality, with now a mere form, ceremony, or ritual; where at one time in the past, the "power fell" and "the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off."

Churches that at one time were filled with personal workers can today furnish but a few for the great campaigns. Why? The people are bound with fear; afraid they will say or do the wrong thing and drive people away.

The Spirit of God still moves today with all his former sweetness, power, and glory in congregations where He finds the necessary humility among the people. But the majority of people who sit in these services are afraid to enter into the moving of the Spirit and to actually worship God in Spirit. Many of these have a deep longing and hunger in their hearts to actually enjoy the real moving of the Spirit, and many of them have felt the Spirit's moving in their heart at times, but through fear have QUENCHED THE SPIRIT, and have refused to yield, and enter in. Why? Because they are afraid they might "do something in the flesh." Many have been so fearful of "getting in the flesh" that they have never yet GOTTEN IN THE SPIRIT! It is true, I have seen

some who needed some good, sound, down to earth instructions in order to avoid doing those things which are unseemly, but this instruction should be in the form of guidance in the proper response to the moving of the Spirit. Too often, the teaching that is given takes the form of teaching FEAR of any moving of the Spirit whatsoever! True, it may be safer to sit still and do nothing. But that sort of cowardice will never win the battle for God! The gifts and manifestations of the Spirit are God's provision for our warfare. How much would we admire the soldier's prudence who carefully refused to touch his gun and ammunition because "used wrongly, it could be dangerous." What he needs to do is learn how to use it rightly! John Wesley, in praying for revival, cried out to God, "Lord, send us revival without fanaticism if possible, BUT AT ANY RATE, SEND US REVIVAL."

Many today are afraid to make a new consecration, even when they know their lives will never count for God without it. They are afraid they will be persecuted and ridiculed BY THEIR OWN FRIENDS IN THE CHURCH. One young lady said to me, "Brother Allen, I know this thing is wrong. But if I put it on the altar, all the rest of the young people in my church youth group will laugh at me, and make fun." SHE WAS TELLING THE TRUTH! At one time, the persecution for righteousness sake came from outside the church. Today, our people—laity and preachers—who are determined to go "all out" for Christ are finding that the persecution comes FROM INSIDE THE CHURCH! Their enemies have proved to be "they of their own household."

In our local churches today, there are many who