

A WITNESSING MINISTRY.

Rev. Joseph H. Smith.

This is the pulpit need of the hour.

Creed is important.

Theology is necessary.

Testimony is imperative.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me." "Be not ashamed of the testimony of the Lord." "He saved us!" is climatic to that other declaration, "He is able to save."

Testimony ends controversy. What one man knows, counts for more than what a hundred men think. Experience eclipses opinions. Critics don't like to have us testify. It throws them off their base. But though Christ has not retained many of us as His lawyers, He has subpoenaed all of us as His witnesses. We may be excused from arguing, we must not refuse to tell what we know.

And what shall we witness to? Sensible experience is the subject of Christian testimony. "What we have seen and heard declare we unto you." "Him that aforetime was blind" withstood his philosophical critics with his "One thing I know." Then he got his witness-fees in a still higher knowledge of his Saviour when Jesus found him after he was cast out for his testimony.

When Paul was before King Agrippa, he gave him the best things he had found in the Christianity for which he stood. And that was the experience of Christ's personal appearance to him in the conversion of his soul.

Theological education, even of the older, sounder kind, can never make an efficient ambassador of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ apart from a personal experience of salvation, and an open testimony to the same.

Scholars say, "we can never be sure of anything, and hence ought not to bear positive testimony." They cannot be sure, but saints can!

The conflict between modern scholarship and Christianity began in conflict with the Holy Ghost. With his miracles, his prophecies, and His inspiration of the Scriptures. And the Holy Ghost is known only by experience. We cannot combat his foes successfully by counter-philosophy alone, any more than that blind man could out-argue the Pharisees. But like him, we can successfully withstand these modern persecutors of the Holy Spirit with testimony to what we know.

Yet this is not the main objective of a witnessing ministry. John states it. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us."

Evangelism, or the bringing of others into the experience of salvation, is the proper end of all ministries; and while preaching and teaching have important places in this ministry, even these will fail of the end of the saving and sanctifying of souls if the witnessing factor be neglected.

The devil has two master tricks. One is to get us discouraged. Then for a time at least we can be of no service to others, and so are defeated. The other is to make us doubt, thus breaking the faith link by link which we are bound to our Father. Look out! Don't be tricked either way.

THE BIBLE HOLY GHOST.

It isn't a choir of trained voices,
It isn't a fine church-bell,
It isn't a set of cushions,
And carpeted aisles as well.
It's none of these things, my brother,
That we're in need of most;
But it's good St. Paul's religion,
And the Bible Holy Ghost.

It isn't organization—
We're organized 'most to death—
We've societies big and little,
But somehow it don't stand the test;
And so I've made up my mind
That what we're in need of most
Is the good St. Paul religion
And the Bible Holy Ghost.

It isn't a choir of trained voices,
With solos and anthems and such,
That will bring lost souls to the Saviour,
And build up our Churches much.
They might sing till the day of judgment,
And sinners go down in a host,
Unless the Church gets acquainted
With the Bible Holy Ghost.

But the time when the Church shall prosper,
And the class-rooms be full to the brim,
And the prayer-meetings no longer lifeless,
And sinners coming in,
Will be when the Church can say truly.
The thing that we have most
Is the good St. Paul religion
And the Bible Holy Ghost.

Sel.

GOD'S PERFECT WILL.

God's perfect will ever has human happiness in view, and holiness as the means thereto. Sin secures shadows, shame, suffering and sorrows; and God wills our saving from all of these. The perfection of His will is therefore in the perfecting of holiness in us, and for the fulfilment of this, His perfect will, He has made ample provision.

But we must understand that the perfecting of holiness does not wait freedom from our bodies, or of all inconvenience from our estate; for perfect holiness is simply freedom from sin, fullness of love, and fittedness to God's permissive Providences.

God has made the condition of perfect holiness so simple that the way-faring man though a fool need not err therein. None too poor to have it; for "it is without money and without price." As we have believed in His mercy for pardon and have not been disappointed, so do we trust now in His love for cleansing, and according to our faith it is unto us.—
J. H. S.

"Fullness is proved by overflow. Theoretically it may be possible to have a vessel absolutely filled with some liquid, without a drop to spare. Practically, the only way we can make sure that a vessel is really filled is by seeing it overflow—unless, indeed, it is hermetically sealed. And so the only way we can make sure that a Christian is filled with the Spirit is by the overflowing life."

"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."

Dougan Clark.

Christ's baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire is intended for all believers. It is what the church of the one hundred and twenty men and women received at Pentecost, and it was by means of this that they experienced the purifying of their hearts by faith, which is the same thing as entire sanctification; and they obtained also the endowment of power, which is the qualification for doing whatever God wants us to do.

When the Holy Ghost, in answer to the prayer of faith, is poured out in baptising power upon the consecrated heart, He first consumes the sin, and cleanses the temple, and then He does not go away, but fills up the cleansed heart with Himself and remains a continual, ever-present, abiding Guest; and where the Holy Spirit is, there also are the Father and the Son. Wonderful thought! that the infinite God condescends to dwell in a sanctified heart.

Beloved, are you consecrated wholly to God? Do you desire Him, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, to come and abide with you—not as a visitor, but as a permanent Guest? Then open the door, give Him the keys, ask Him in faith to come in and remain. Most assuredly He will do so, and will sweep out all that antagonizes Him; and then you may rest assured that He has come to stay. He will not be anxious to leave you, after so prolonged an effort to find entrance into your heart. Nothing but sin can dislodge Him. He will fill you, and energize you, and use you, and make your life full of active and joyous service for Him.

By the baptism with the Holy Ghost you are instantaneously filled, and then if you will abide in Him, and do not grieve Him by unbelief, or disobedience, you will remain filled. You may not always be conscious from your feelings of His presence in your heart, but remember that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, not by feeling.

He is always there, whether your emotional nature responds to His presence or not. He is there, whether you have rapture and ecstasy or whether you are almost or quite devoid of feeling. Learn to regard the indwelling Spirit, then, as a constant personal presence in your heart. Look upon Him by faith as a present Guide, Keeper, Counsellor, Comforter, and Sanctifier. "Be filled with the Spirit."—Sel.

A visitor to a lighthouse once said to the keeper. "Are you not afraid to live here? It is a dreadful place to be in all the time."

"No," replied the keeper; "I am not afraid. We never think of ourselves here."

"You never think of yourselves! How is that?"

"We know that we are perfectly safe," was the answer, "and we think only of having our lamps brightly burning, so that those in danger may be saved."

Is your life a brightly shining light?

"The way to do a great deal for Christ is to keep on doing a little."