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I. LITERARY.

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ADDRESS BY DR. A. T. PIERSON.

ENTHUSIASM A DIVINE PASSION.—THE BASIS OF ENTHUSIASM SINCERITY, IN THE TWOFOLD ASPECT OF INTELLECTUAL CONVICTION AND HEART PERSUASION.—SELF-SURRENDER ALSO NECESSARY.—LACK OF RELIGIOUS ENTERPRISE THE GREAT DIFFICULTY IN THE WAY OF THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD.—ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR PERSONAL OBLIGATION BY THE YOUNG MEN OF THIS GENERATION WOULD EVANGELIZE THE WORLD IN TEN YEARS.

MY subject is enthusiasm. Some think the word "enthusiasm" is from two Greek words, $\epsilon\nu$ and $\theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$; that is, the inworking of God. It is at least a magnificent conception. Enthusiasm is a divine passion. It is finely illustrated in such men as Michael Angelo, when he took that block of marble, declaring an angel was imprisoned in it, and undertaking to release the angel. It is illustrated in Da Vinci, who took ten years to paint that "Last Supper." He was so absorbed for days that he took not a morsel of food. He would sometimes put on a single spot of color, and then leave the work till another day. It is illustrated by Columbus, when he walked the deck amid a mutinous crew, and besought them to wait three days, and, if land did not appear, he would give up the search. This enthusiasm is illustrated in James Watt, studying when a boy the mysteries of steam. It is illustrated by Agassiz, who said: "I have no time to make money; I am on the search for truth." This is what I mean by enthusiasm, only giving it a divine direction; and personally I do not believe that there ever was a man who was able to accomplish much for God or man who had not this divine enthusiasm.

CHRIST'S ASCENSION CHARGE TO HIS CHURCH.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE REV. W. W. MOORE, D. D., IN THE CHAPEL OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, AT THE OPENING OF THE TERM.

"But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."—ACTS i. 8.

THE environment of truth is a matter of no small importance in the interpretation of Scripture. The inspiration of the Bible extends not only to its separate propositions, but also to the collocation of those propositions. Therefore no man who disregards the context and confines his attention exclusively to detached passages is a faithful interpreter. Isolated texts often *seem* to teach what the scope of the paragraph shows they cannot teach; and even where the apparent meaning is the true meaning, it gains fulness and color by a due regard to its position and its relation to contiguous truth. The arrangement is significant. The surroundings are designed to enhance the effect of the central truth. Just as the beauty of a picture is enhanced by a rich frame, or the brilliance of a diamond by a handsome setting, so the force of a statement is frequently augmented by its attendant circumstances. A lake embosomed among mountains is more beautiful than a lake in the basin of a plain, not because the water is more transparent and sparkling, but because the surroundings are more picturesque. So the effect of truth depends in a measure upon its surroundings. "A word *fitly* spoken," says the proverb, "is like apples of gold in baskets of silver." Golden apples are beautiful, but golden apples in silver baskets are more beautiful. Truth is effective, but timely truth is more effective. "A word spoken in due season, how good it is!"

Now, the words of our Saviour are characterized in a preëminent degree by this trait of timeliness. There is always a felicitous congruity between his utterances and the occasion. He not only spoke truth, he spoke opportune truth. And by this we do not mean merely that the truth was uttered so as to fit the circumstances, but also that the circumstances were ordered so as to

fit the truth, so that in some cases the circumstances would be unmeaning and incomplete if the truth had not been spoken, just as the two springing sides of an arch would be incomplete and valueless if the key-stone were not inserted. The niches in a temple wall were not more certainly designed to receive the statues which fill them than were some of the adjustments of Providence to frame the teachings of Christ. The setting of the statement before us was evidently chosen with divine skill. The preceding question and the succeeding event both serve to deepen the impression of words uttered at this particular juncture.

After the resurrection of our Lord, his disciples had gathered around him, with all their hopes of a national deliverance and a temporal kingdom intensified by his conquest of death, and now, as they are walking with him over the slopes of Olivet towards Bethany, apparently unconscious of his contemplated ascension, they return once more to their cherished ambition: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" In answer, he rebukes incidentally all speculation about the *date* of the millennium, but seizes the opportunity afforded by their question to state with everlasting force the *way* in which his kingdom was to be established in the world. "It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in his own authority. *But* ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." It was not necessary, nor even proper, that they should know *when* his kingdom was to be established, but it *was* necessary that they should know *how* it was to be established, viz., not by his own military leadership and their physical prowess, for the restoration of Jewish supremacy in Palestine, but by the power of the Holy Ghost through their testimony to him, given in all the world. Nothing could have stamped so indelibly upon their minds this final and full commission of the church as the event which took place immediately after the words were uttered. "When he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." The ascension was the great seal of the church's commission. Every speaker knows the value of true cli-

max and the power of a striking conclusion. The great Teacher knew it better than all, and the setting of this conclusion seems to me a master-piece of divine rhetoric. It is the grand peroration of all his discourses, pulsing with the last tones of his voice on earth, glowing with the last light of his personal presence. It is the final recapitulation of all his teaching concerning his church and her work, emphasized as no other had ever been, by his immediate and final withdrawal, by a solemn and eloquent pause of thousands of years.

Can we doubt that he meant it to be the chart of his church through all the ages, till he comes again in like manner as they saw him go into heaven?

This estimate of the importance of this pregnant declaration, based on the unique circumstances attending it, is justified by a detailed examination of its contents. It sets forth in one compact period three great truths, stated, as we have just seen, in the way best calculated to make his people remember them, to-wit: the *power* of the church; the *work* of the church; and the *field* of the church. Let us consider these in succession:

I. *The Power of the Church.*

Every institution that does work in the world depends for its efficiency upon some living force which we call its "power," just as every machine depends upon some mechanical force to accomplish the true end of its being. For instance, a watch may be furnished with all its other parts, wheels and cogs in proper adjustment, but the mainspring is the power of the watch, and if that be lacking it is merely a useless mass of metal—it fails of the purpose for which it was made, viz., to measure time. A. T. Stewart, of New York, built up the largest mercantile business in America, with branch houses in London, Paris, Berlin, and all the principal cities of Europe, but in course of time Mr. Stewart died, and in just a few years that great business went to pieces. Why? There were the same stores, the same goods, the same salesmen; but the power that controlled and energized all was now lacking, viz., the marvellous mercantile genius of A. T. Stewart. One of the most interesting phenomena of recent European history is the rapid rise of Germany to the highest rank among continental na-

tions. How do you account for it? The people are the same, their resources are the same, their form of government is practically the same. But there is now a power behind the throne, the wonderful political genius of Count Otto von Bismarck, a man whose diplomatic foresight is such that ten years before the Franco-Prussian war he predicted that conflict, and made every preparation, so that when the time came he shattered the empire of Napoleon III. by a single blow. The political sagacity of Bismarck is the power that has thrown Germany to the front. Now, just as there is a power which drives the wheels of a watch, and without which they are motionless; just as there is a power which holds together and controls all the parts of a great business, and without which it falls to pieces; just as there is a power which energizes the appliances of government, and without which the nation makes no advance; so there is an indispensable power which gives life and vigor to the equipment of the church, and without which she fails of the end for which she was established. What is this power? What is the real cause of her progress?

Those of you who have read the celebrated chapter of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," in which he attempts to account for the rapid spread of Christianity, will remember that he first describes with his usual elegance how "a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and obscurity, derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the cross on the ruins of the Roman capital; how after the lapse of eighteen hundred years that religion is still professed by the most distinguished portion of humankind, has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa, and been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients." Then the skeptical historian endeavors to show that this marvelous progress is due to five causes: 1, The inflexible zeal of the Christians; 2, The doctrine of a future life; 3, The miraculous power ascribed to the primitive church; 4, The pure and austere morals of the Christians; 5, The union and discipline of the Christian republic. But a very little reflection will show that this explanation is inadequate. Gibbon has not reached the core of the

subject; he has merely skimmed the surface. He has not grasped the real cause of Christian progress. The apostles possessed all the requisites specified by him—inflexible zeal, belief in a future life, miraculous gifts, pure morals, and perfect union—but they were destitute of power until Pentecost; their religion made no advance in the world till they received the fulfilment of the Master's promise: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The church before Pentecost was like a great cannon, strongly moulded, heavily charged with truth, but cold and helpless till the fire from heaven touched the powder; this was the divine energy that hurled the conquering shot and caused an explosion, the reverberations of which shall be heard till the end of time. The Holy Spirit is the power of the church, my brethren, and Gibbon's attempt to account for the spread of Christianity without the influence of this supernatural agent is the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out.

It is easy for us to see this mistake on the part of the infidel historian, but do we not ourselves make the same mistake? Upon what do we depend for success in our church work? Do we not rely too much upon the human instrumentality? And is not this the reason that so much of our revival work is superficial and the effects evanescent? Do we not look too much to the means and too little to the cause? God's own ordinances are unavailing without the Spirit. Good music is a valuable part of the public worship of God, but the power is not in the music. Sankey may sing with all his matchless tenderness and expression and pathos, but unless the Holy Spirit is present no sinner is touched and drawn to Christ. Faithful preaching is an indispensable part of the church's work, but the power is not in the preaching. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase. Not by might nor by power, but by *my Spirit*, saith the Lord. Intelligent exposition of the Scriptures is essential to the growth of Zion, and an educated ministry to the development of the highest type of Christian character. But the power is not in the ministry, nor even in the word. We call it the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, but unless the Spirit wields it no good is accomplished. The proofs of this statement come under our own

observation from Sabbath to Sabbath. How else do you account for the different effects of the same truth on different persons, or the different effects of the same truth on the same person at different times? Why is it that when Christ speaks to this congregation through his word some hearts respond in repentance, faith, love, and renewed vows of consecration and service, while other hearts make no response whatever? Is it not because the Holy Spirit is moving upon some hearts and not upon others? Why is it that a man will sit unmoved under the sound of the gospel for twenty, thirty, or forty years, and then suddenly a change occurs, and that same man is all broken up and sends out his very soul in the prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner"? Is it not because the Spirit of God has at last touched his heart? If it was the word that did it, why hadn't it done it long before?

My brethren, the prime condition of a successful ministry is the power of the Holy Ghost.

What is success? Is it the applause of the multitude? Is it intellectual brilliancy of style? Is it the attendance of the Athenian crowd? Is it comfortable surroundings and splendid church buildings and sensuous forms of worship? God forbid! *Repentance, faith, holiness*—these are the results of a *successful* ministry.

It is said that when the Athenians listened to one of the polished orations of Isocrates, they went home praising the rounded periods, the musical sentences, the exquisite style. What beauty of diction! What skill of arrangement! What splendor of imagery! But when they heard Demosthenes, their eyes flashed, their bosoms heaved, their eager muscles twitched, and the cry was, "Let us fight Philip." Which of these two achieved the truest success? The aim determined the achievement in each case. Rhetorical finish was the end with Isocrates. With Demosthenes it was but a means. His end was to move his countrymen to patriotic action.

Let us in the outset of our ministry aim higher than the mere adjuncts of success which may be won by human endeavor. Let us aim at moving sinners to repentance and faith. And this is possible only by the power of the Holy Ghost in our ministry.

If all this be true, what men of *prayer* ought we to be!

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." There it stands in the creed as prominent and plain as words can make it. Is it more distinct in the creed than it is in our hearts and work?

II. *The Work of the Church.*

There *is* a work for the church as well as for the Holy Spirit. Power doesn't supersede the necessity for means. "This heavenly gift does not circumscribe our own exertions. These gracious influences descend," as Guthrie says, "not to set us idle, any more than the breeze blows to send the sailor to his hammock, and rock him in the arms of sleep. On the contrary, he shakes out every yard of canvas on the bending mast, and works the harder to gain the full advantage of propitious winds. So it should be with us. The more full the gifts and divine breathings of the Spirit, the busier let us be—busier in the use of prayer, of sacraments, of the Bible, and of all those ordinances through which the Spirit works and impels souls onward and homeward in a heavenly course." It has ever been so, my brethren. Prayer without effort is mockery, as effort without prayer is presumption. In that first battle of Israel against Amalek, which was designed to be the model for all subsequent conflicts with the enemies of the church, it was the combination of Moses' prayers on the hill-top with Joshua's sturdy blows on the plain that secured the victory. Either would have been unavailing without the other. The brawny soldiers of Joshua could do nothing but for the power given in answer to the uplifted hands of Moses. Nor would the victory have been secured by the prayers alone. The exertions of Joshua's troops on the field were necessary. It is certain that God's power is the efficient of success; but it is equally certain that he exerts that power through suitable instruments; and not less certain that he requires us to vindicate the sincerity of our prayers by the faithfulness of our work. Our weapon is not only the sword of the Lord, it is the sword of the Lord *and of Gideon*.

So much, then, to remind us that the foregoing ascription of all the church's power to the Holy Ghost doesn't diminish an iota of the church's responsibility and the necessity for earnest faithful work on her part. The Holy Spirit does exercise the power,

but he exercises it through the activity of the church. She has a work then. What is it? It is bearing witness to Christ. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and *ye shall be witnesses unto me.*"

Bernard, in his masterly book on "The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament," has pointed out with his usual clearness and force a significant difference between the preaching done by Christ himself and that done by his apostles after receiving this final charge. He had preached "the kingdom." They preached *him*. It is a difference emphasized again and again in such passages as these: "They ceased not to teach and to preach *Jesus the Christ.*" "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached *Christ* unto them," and when he met the eunuch reading Isaiah, "he opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture and preached unto him *Jesus.*" And Paul, after his conversion, "straightway preached *Christ* in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." "No such announcements as these are heard in the gospels. The preaching spoken of there is not of the person, but of the *kingdom*. Jesus comes 'preaching the kingdom of God;' 'preaching the gospel of the kingdom;' and his parables and common teaching are not prominently about himself, but about 'the kingdom of heaven.'"

Bernard, as we have said, points out clearly this change of phase in the preaching, and yet, strange to say, he nowhere refers to the *immediate* cause of the change. From what was said in our introductory remarks, we must refer the change to the explicit command of Christ given in the text: "Ye shall be witnesses unto *me.*" They had before followed his lead and preached the kingdom because he had *told* them to do it. They now change and preach *him* because he had *told* them to do it. He had not only indicated the indispensable *power* of a successful ministry, he had also prescribed the *staple doctrine* of a successful ministry, and that was, not the kingdom, but Christ. Their inquiry invited attention to the kingdom chiefly, his answer directs attention to himself chiefly. They asked, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He answered, "Ye shall be witnesses unto *me.*" While rebuking their curiosity, he *does* answer

their question, which was a perfectly natural one, considering the prominence given to the kingdom in their preaching and his up to that time. He shows them that the kingdom *is* restored in *him*, and that therefore they are no longer to preach the kingdom so prominently, but to preach him. And they never forgot it, as we have already seen. The history of doctrine had reached an epoch, a turning point, aye, a climax; henceforth they preach no more preparatory phases of truth, but him who is the embodiment of all saving truth. And this is the ground of his charge, the reason for his command. They are to preach him because he is the fulfilment and embodiment of every abstract blessing promised in the gospel. He *is* the Way, the Truth, the Life. "He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." Therefore this apparent limitation of the subject-matter of their preaching, so far from being a restriction of theme is an enlargement of theme. Having him we have all things. Preaching him we preach the whole body of revealed truth, for he is the truth and he is the *logos*.

And besides, regarding the effect to be produced, who does not know that abstract truth, however valuable and appropriate, often falls flat and forceless on the mind, whereas the incarnation of that truth in the personality of a magnetic leader fires the great popular heart with enthusiasm, and sweeps the masses on to action. Is it the platform or the candidate that evokes the enthusiasm of the political party? No set of abstract principles ever wrought a revolution, but the personification of those principles in a Luther, a Cromwell, or a Washington, has changed the history of the world. The response of the world's heart and action is not to principles, but to principles represented by and embodied in men. Accordingly, the great moral revolution of the universe is not to be accomplished by truth merely, but by truth embodied in the personality of Jesus Christ.

We trust that we have now shown that success in the ministry depends not only upon the power of a divine agent, but also upon the presentation of a divine subject, albeit embodied in a human nature. The Spirit exerts the saving power, but he does not put it forth at random. He puts it forth along one line—along the

rocky eastern slope of Mount Hermon, the traveller in Syria catches a view which has been likened in every age to a glimpse of the paradise of God. Immediately below him, through a narrow cleft in the bare mountain, rushes the Barada, clear as crystal, its course being marked for miles by a narrow thread of rich green foliage, stingily shut in on each side by the sterile cliffs. And then it bursts forth, and, as if in a moment, scatters all over the plain, through an area of two hundred and forty square miles, the same glorious verdure which had hitherto been confined to its single narrow channel. It is like the bursting of a rocket, whose slender thread of fire suddenly spreads into a blaze of light. But as Dean Stanley, in his description of this scene, has said, this is an eruption, not of death, but of life. Far and wide in front spreads the plain of deep verdure, and in the bosom of this mass of living green, "like a handful of pearls in a goblet of emerald," stands the city of Damascus, with its white minarets piercing the blue sky of Syria. "There is not a scene like it anywhere else in the world, and no other would illustrate so well that river of water of life which flowed for many centuries pent-up between the narrow walls of Judaism, confining its life and greenness to one nation, and then, at the gracious command of Christ, burst forth over all the world, spreading its freshness and verdure and life among all the nations of the earth. And in the midst of this boundless plain, this true paradise of God, stands a city, "having the glory of God, and her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And the nations—not one, but many—the nations of them which are saved, shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth—those made kings and priests unto God by Christ—the redeemed, the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

That is the destiny of the universal church—the church of Judea, of Samaria, of the world.

How faithfully the apostles followed this chart drawn by the hand of Omniscience! And how mightily grew the kingdom while these instructions were fresh in the memory of the church! In just a few years the deep darkness of the Roman Empire was sparkling everywhere with points of light—Jerusalem, Samaria,

Alexandria, Damascus, Antioch, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth, Rome. They had received power. They were witnessing to Christ—to the uttermost part of the earth.

My brethren, we have the honor and privilege to live in an age which has realized in large measure the catholic mission of the church. Ours is preëminently a missionary era. John Wesley touched the high-water mark of Christian zeal and sounded the key-note of the age when he said, "My parish is the world." Let us see to it that we also reach the requirement of this word of Christ—"to the uttermost part of the earth."

This text is a trinity of truth. Not only three truths, but three in one, in such a sense that one involves the others. A church that is energized by the Holy Ghost *will* preach Christ, and will preach him to all the world. No church that ignores either of these truths is the ideal church of Christ. That ministry whose motor is the Holy Ghost, whose staple doctrine is Jesus Christ, and whose watchword is "the world for God," is the only ministry that may expect the full blessing of him whose last and weightiest charge to his church was this: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."