

## To Superintendents.

In the first place you have now the highest motive for living near to Christ. *Your success depends chiefly on this.* Go into your school next Sunday and look around. Your spirit will be the spirit of this school. If you are indifferent in your treatment of sacred things, so will these teachers be. If your heart is not near to Christ, this school will be cold and dull and barren. Look at the upturned faces. Look down even into the upturned hearts that are watching you. If you were nearer to Christ, what might you not do? By these souls committed to your care, by these teachers who will not be more in earnest than you are, by the judgment-seat of Christ, *by eternity itself*, I beseech you be a better Christian man than you are.

Do not affect piety. If there is any abomination in the world it is the superintendent who "puts on" pious ways. It is hypocrisy. Even if you do it from a mere desire to be impressive, it is cant. Children see through it. It repels them. Away with your pious tone and precise, solemn face and prayer-meeting phrases. The children are not to be impressed with sounding brass. They penetrate the sham. And if they do not, God does. But the children do, and all the unnatural mouthing makes them hate the religion that you burlesque.

Do not say that the responsibility is too great, and that you will resign. No shallower deceit does Satan palm off upon us. *You cannot shirk responsibility.* Go, bury your talent in a napkin, and then tell the Judge all that hypocritical stuff about your being afraid of responsibility. How terrible will your cowardice look to you in the day of judgment!

But feel your accountability none the less. Cry out with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Let the burden of souls rest upon you. Carry it in your devotions. Let it lie down with you upon your bed. Let the picture of these upturned eyes and hearts never leave you. But do not let them drive you from your

work. Let them drive you to Christ. The same Paul who said, "Who is sufficient for these things?" said also, "Our sufficiency is of God."

I plead for a more profound and tender piety in superintendents. You may have a large school without it. You may have a good picnic without it. You may have order without it. You may even have well-learned lessons without it. But the truest, highest, most Christian-like success you cannot have unless you have more of Christ in your heart.

I can go into your school when you are away, and know just what sort of a man you are. There is an aroma of a good superintendent in some schools. But in others there are life, and order, and outward prosperity, but there is no feeling of Christ's presence in his word. The observer feels that there is a superintendent who either does not live near to Christ, or who fails to make his Christian spirit felt in the school.

As the superintendent is, so are the teachers. If Christ is vividly present in his prayers and other exercises, if he feels the presence of God in his word, then will the teacher teach thus, and the scholar study in the same spirit. The atmosphere through which a scholar will regard the Scriptures for all the rest of his life is often fixed by his teacher's way of teaching, and that is very generally the reflection of the superintendent's spirit.—*Baptist Superintendent.*

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