

any more than all food is strength. Knowledge that only fills the head and is not incorporated into a man's inner self is like undigested food. Until it lays hold upon the heart it is like the coal lying cold and dead in the bunkers. It is only as it is set on fire in the heart that it becomes power. Truth to be transmitted into energy must come into contact with a sensitive soul. We need alert minds that we may lay hold on truth; we need alert hearts that the truth may lay hold upon us before we can become practically strong strengthening the mind, even strengthening the will, may be, but like strengthening the machinery of an engine while the furnace fires are out. Mind and will are rather instruments of power than power itself. The real power is down in the deeper depths where motive leaps back upon thought and resolve, with impelling and compelling force, and all the fiery intensities are set loose in kindling might. The button which lets on the inner power responds to the touch of truth and God. It is only then that a man's nature becomes like a live wire along which the electric volts of power are thrilling. But to be more specific:—

In the first place, it is only as knowledge lays firm grasp upon conviction that a man can be strong. The man who acknowledges that truth is truth, but says it makes little practical difference, can never rise above weakness. He can never stand fast at the expense of self-denial and suffering. It was only as Paul not only said "I know, but also I am persuaded" that he made his way onward with blood in his tracks as he faced danger and death. It is only as truth lays hold with such a grip upon conscience that "I ought" becomes to a man "I must" at all costs, that he becomes strong. The sense of right and of its supreme obligation will put iron in a man's blood. Behind the right is God and the sense of right becomes a sense of God. And what courage have these given as men have faced self-denial and agony and been strong.

But while conviction with its sense of unconditional obligation to do right has a tremendous compelling power, it is hard and stern. A man has to hold himself to duty with tension of will which may exhaust, however much he may love the right for which he sacrifices. If a man is to be the strongest, there must be impulsion as well as compulsion, so that the activity shall be glad some and free. The emotions must be kindled to a steady glow. There must be the impelling power of a supreme love. When truth comes which unites the compulsion of conscience with the impulsion of the heart, a man becomes doubly strong.

But there needs also be the attractive power of a high aim and a great purpose, if there is to be the development and intensest use of all the cultured forces of our being. It is this which gives concentration of energy. It is this which compresses all a man's might and thus makes it more mighty like that of the steam. It is this which lures forth the all that is in a man of strength. Those three, the compulsion of conscience, the impulsion of love and the attraction of a grand aim are the great triumvirate of might. Let all these combine in highest degree in a man's being and his life will go throbbing on in ever fuller realization of its highest possibilities and in ever fuller blessing to men.

And where are there three mighty impulses combined, and combined in such immeasurable measure, as in "the faith" in which the Corinthians are urged to stand fast. I can but glance at the subject thus opened up. This faith of the Gospel, this recognized body of Christian truth, as apprehended by Paul and assumed by him to be within the competency of these simple believers at Corinth, how it appeals to all the manhood of men and the womanhood of women! Where is there teaching which lays such hold upon conscience and the sense of right and duty? Ethics are good, but it is only as a man finds his obligation to the right root down into a sense of obligation to a personal and infinite and holy Being that it will grip his soul with hooks of steel. The rules of a family may be excellent, but they will not appeal very strongly to the child until they are backed by the will of his parents. It is in "the faith" of the Bible that rightness of its teachings is reinforced by the personal will of the great and holy God.

Is it any wonder that men have been pervaded to supreme strength and heroism by the grand grip of the thought that right and God were on their side. How has this thought made men royal and mighty in all ages! It was this conviction which nerved little bands of shepherds to shatter armies of veterans, as they fell upon them like a thunder-bolt. It was this sense of right and God which made the Swedes such terrible fighters as they rose upon their knees to rush upon outnumbering foes. What strength to endure and courage to do did this give the Dutch as they starved and died among the dykes and in the ditches of their towns! And those old Ironsides of Cromwell, what grim resolve did the thought that God would it give them, as they stood like a rock before the onslaught of the Cavaliers, or swept them away before their stern enthusiasm, why is it that the right has been winning its way, slowly it must be, but surely as ages have passed on laden feet. Yes it is because God is on the side of right: but still the victory has ever been won by the strength and courage which a deep conviction has given its champions. Nay, nay, let no man think he can lead a strong life and be brave with bravery which will not shrink, unless he has a conviction of right and truth which

be strong, we must avoid the uncertainty and indifference of to-day, as we would a hateful miasma. Those who stand fast in this grand old faith are still the strong men to-day, as they have been in the past. There may be those who give an assent to its truth who are not strong, for this may be done and there be little of conviction through realization of its teachings. But without its steady power, and the iron grasp of its obligations upon a man, he may have the impulse of passion, but he will never be persistently strong.

And where is such an appeal to love with its impelling power as in the faith which Paul proclaimed? Who can tell its depth or breadth or height? The Son of God who thought it not a prize to be equal with God. He who was greater than all the stars because he made them all. He who was higher than the heavens because they were the work of his fingers. He that was grander than all the throbbing and shattering forces of the universe, because they are all but the withholdings of his might. He who supplies the universe with its titanic energies from the over flow of his power, as in him all things consist. For him to be filled with a love so mighty that it impelled him to empty himself of all his might and majesty. For him to become a babe. For him to live the life of an humble man. For him to abase himself to sorrow and exile and mockery and scourging, and agony and shame and death. For him to bear our very sin, and in bearing it endure the wrath of holiness against iniquity until his heart broke and he died. For him to do all this and more for a man, for every man, for you and for me. Here is an appeal to love which fills angels with awe before its boundless mystery. This is what has kindled up cold souls into intensest heat of deathless enthusiasm in all the ages. Thus it was this love of Christ which constrained Paul to live the life he lived and die the death he died. It was this appeal of love to love which made weak men and delicate women face spear thrust and sword stroke and wild beasts fang and blazing faggots and hellish torture chambers with the light of heaven upon their faces and the might of giants in their hearts. This is still the electric pole of the best life of the world as its currents of power stream forth everywhere, thrilling hearts in lowly as well as high places, with a quiet but steady and often an overmastering enthusiasm. If men can face the cross of Christ with all it means and have the love from the heart of God flow in through it upon them and still have hearts of ice, it is the brutality of iniquitous indifference.

Men and women before me today, open your souls to the unspeakable appeal of this unspeakable love and it will kindle up the furnace fires of the soul to a white heat, and give tension to will and impulsion to the whole being, would that it might ever stir our hearts with its supreme night!

And where can be found the object in life like that revealed in "the faith" of the New Testament? It opens a possibility for human life of grandest dignity and transcendence reach. A man may come to the help of the great God over all. He may become the medium through which the glory of him who dwells in light unapproachable may shine forth. He may link his doings, even though his sphere may be a lowly one, with the onward and all-conquering march of God's beneficent purposes. He may send forth a stream of blessed influence which shall go on with ever widening and deepening flow as the ages go sweeping past. He may not only stamp the impress of his life deep upon this world and on down through its time, but he may set his mark upon the world to come with its eternities. This faith of the gospel makes it possible for this earth life to be a seed bed for what is only less infinite than God, as it helps to shape destiny for the growth of the immortal spirit upward towards ever nearer approach to deity. This faith makes it possible for a man with feet upon the earth to have his head among the stars. In whatever legitimate calling a man or woman may be, even though it be humble, this faith shows how the life—worthily lived—and its opportunities improved, may do all that we have attempted to outline in few words. The thought that a life may be made all that this faith reveals should draw a true soul toward the fullest realization of such possibilities, blessing and dignity and power for the present and the future, for this world and the world to come.

Before objects like these, how little do the aims of a life appear which is centred in self and has thought for nothing which reaches beyond the thud of the earth upon the coffin lid? How can men be satisfied to veer around in the small mill-pools of their own selfishness, when they might launch forth upon the great illimitable sphere of divine purposes.

The faith then, if we will but heed Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians and stand fast in it, will grip us with the might of its obligation to the right which will give us convictions with fibre of steel, it will lay hold of us with a love which will keep the soul in a white heat of steady devotion which will impel to the most glad some sacrifice and effort, and it will give an object in life which should help to lure forth all the forces of a man. This is the great triumvirate of power.

As nowhere else than in "the faith," they are all at their supremacy, and, as nowhere else, they are all united in one harmonious wholeness of might for the inner man, around the revelation given of God, of immortality and of human life and destiny. The soul that feels their combined com-

and inspiration to the highest use of the best powers of his being.

I can do little more than use as application the third thought.

III. The strength thus gained enables us to quit ourselves like men and be really strong.

We wonder whether there are any of you young men before me to-day who hold the belief that the faith of the Gospel is for the weak, and to stand fast in it is to condemn oneself to feebleness. Is there one here who thinks Christianity fitted for only women and children—those who are ruled by sentiment and are quick to show emotion? Is there one who thinks the tenderness of heart which would yield to the appeal from the cross and be convinced of sin, unmanly? Is there one who supposes that to be unfeeling and hard-hearted is to be strong? I have but poorly presented to you the underlying thought of this stirring passage, if you still think that there is not the union of stern conviction and a high aim with the impulse of love which will embrace and stir all that is manly as well as womanly in the soul.

The truth is that the roughness and violence of passion and brute strength is but weakness and the very first step in real manliness is self interest. No one can play the man, so long as he is selfish and shrewd and self willed and self seeking. The man who allows his appetites, his passions, his anger his ambition his desire for self indulgence to carry him away is not strong at all much less with a manly strength. Real manly strength is not force like that of the lightning which may blast because uncontrolled, but it is as the electricity which is directed to useful ends. What transforms men into manhood is a higher strength of the very self to lay strong hand upon all its forms and master, and direct it. He who says that the subjection to the will, the love and the purposes of God which the faith makes known is weak and unmanly must believe our Lord to have been weak and unmanly, and puts himself out of the account with men who think and men who feel.

Nay, nay, to have convictions of right and truth which will make you stand like a rock and let currents of wrong and error fall dashed and broken at our feet that is to be manly with the highest manhood. To lie in lowly self-abasement before the cross of Christ until the rising tide of an answering love heal the heart which has there been broken with penitence is to be manly with a very divine manliness. To rise from the crosses foot and with a soul surcharged with the mightiest motive that even heaven knows throw all the cultured powers of mind and soul to help, on the purposes of God which are to sweep all envy and evil from the world and fill heaven with ever-increasing joy. On this is all manly, here you can play the man indeed and vie with angels and arch-angels even though your sphere may be lowly if the devotion abides.

What shall I say more; as I speak the final word to you strong young lives we are in the hey day of hope and possibility. As some of us older people look upon you, we feel like veterans who will soon be fit for but garrison duty as they see a regiment march away with flying colors to take its place in the advance line.

The fate of the future is chiefly with those of your class. Never was there greater need of manly consecrated Christian strength. Never was a greater need to be alert as mind and heart are intense. Never was there greater need of having the steady foot holds of assured belief, for thought is restless, and this new age, if it is not coerced, as Dr. McLaren says, it is at least suspicious of the old. And what need is there of convictions like steel for the sense of right seems to be going down in many quarters, before the greed for gain and the strife for position. While regal truth is not so valued as it once was, gained and held at all costs as of yore. This age is given up to the present world, and the higher world and God are not near and real to the eager throngs of striving men and women. May it be for you to have a hallowed ambition to quit you like men and be strong. As the first need, let the truths of the faith lead you all to secure a new life from God, if you have not already obtained it from him. And may you all be men and women to whom a call of duty will be the highest privilege, because it is backed by the will and love of Christ, even though it be a call to self-effacement in a lowly sphere. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

The best education, the most scriptural instructions, and the brightest examples are sufficient of themselves to convert the soul. It is easier to build temples than to be temples of God.—Selected

Remember that if the opportunities for great deeds should never come, the opportunity for good deeds is renewed for you day by day. The thing for us to long for is the goodness not the glory.—Farrar.

There is in England a Spurgeon Memorial Sermon Society which does nothing but sell and give away Spurgeon's sermons. They dispose of a quarter of a million weekly. They have recently established branches in Spain and Italy, and these have the sermons translated into Italian and Spanish. They have been greatly cheered by the number of conversions reported to them as the result of reading the