

ment of the mind into the new experience. The first question, then, is answered by all the facts, thus: there is a gradual preparation, and even partial anticipation, unconscious or semi-conscious, and there is a distinct culmination made known in a consciousness which can never again be forgotten. To our second question, both Scripture, reason and history again unite in the same answer. The culmination is not a finality. Perhaps in many experiences the first moment of distinct consciousness of God's love to me is supremely distinguished and remembered above all subsequent movements. But from the New Testament history it seems very clear that in the Apostolic Church there was this new and higher culmination which the reason of the case, and God's general law of acting, would lead us to expect. But a few days after Pentecost the young Church, still rejoicing in its newly acquired experience of the knowledge of God's love, was called to pass through its first experience of persecution, and its leaders were called before the Sanhedrim. How bravely they conducted themselves there you all know, but with that we have only incidentally just now to do. But returning to their own company, they told their experiences, and then "they, when they had heard it, lifted up their voice to God with one accord; and when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they had gathered together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness." Now, here is evidently a renewal of their conscious apprehension of God under new circumstances, with more especial reference to work for God, and to the courage needed to face the danger of that work. A little further on in the history of the Acts we see Stephen in the pains of martyrdom; and in that hour of extreme trial we read as follows: "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."