

We are not among you as lords over God's heritage but as those who have heard the voice from heaven saying "take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own Blood." Feeling ourselves sobered and encouraged by this mighty commission we meet you with words of cheer and blessing. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ praying always for you." We live if ye stand fast in the Lord

Many of you have been sorely tried during the past year, you have received the mark of your Father's love, "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." He hath caused you to pass under the rod." Some of your homes have been stript of all their poetry and sunshine.

We have mingled our tears and cries with those families some of whom fell victims to the almost unparalleled accident the past spring, when forty-eight of our brave seamen perished whilst seeking their bread. Those troubles are too deep for human aid to reach. We commit you to Him, of whom it is said "in all their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them, and carried them all the days of old." Our God of love is unchanged. That promise is current gold to day. Claim it as your heritage. But let this accident be heard as God's trumpet blast saying, "be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Your pastors have not been without encouragement in their effort to win souls for Christ during the past year, but they have not seen those general refreshing showers they have looked for. Our church membership stands as follows: on trial—total membership, 1060. When you come to the preaching of the Word, do you expect God to convince of sin, and save souls there and then under the Word? It used to be so. It was under the Word at Penticost the three thousand were saved. It was while Peter preached to Cornelius and to his company that "the Holy Ghost fell upon them that heard the Word." It was under the Word that the early Methodists had most of their conversions. It was under the preaching of the Word by the late Charles Spurgeon that souls were saved until it was said there was not a seat in that great building but some one had been saved in it. In those days both pastors and people expected it, and got it. Is it so to-day? Is there not too much waiting for an after-meeting? When you come to Divine Service, come direct from your closet praying for God to save under the Word.

Let your life be one of prayer. It is said of Cornelius, a Roman soldier that "he prayed to God always." St. Paul says, "pray without ceasing." Christ "spake a parable to this end that man ought always to pray and not faint." Guard jealously the spirit of prayer lest there be a restraint. A restraining of prayer means weakness of the soul, it opens the door to temptation, it produces spiritual drowsiness when the locks of modern Sampsons are cut off. Form a habit of daily private prayer at set times—your soul can't prosper without it as it should. Satan keeps his