

17th. So likewise is the Holy Spirit a witness of these things, which Spirit God has given to them that obey him. Note the language *to them that obey him.*

The cardinals of the whole good news are spoken thus fearlessly at the high priest's Council—the chief points of the same story which “Peter and the other apostles” always told when announcing the message of life. And the rehearsal of these simple yet potent facts at this crisis very nearly cost them their lives. As it was, they escaped from his lordship the high priest, after having been soundly and very religiously “beaten.”

As the masterly discourse of deacon Stephen, recorded in Acts vii., was principally designed to refute charges against himself and his position, taking his enemies upon their own ground and disconcerting them with their own weapons, we shall pass by Stephen's address, and pay respectful attention to another deacon—afterwards the evangelist Philip. We must therefore turn over to another page of the Acts, chap. viii. Two discourses are given to us in this chapter, but one of them must satisfy us at this time. With the new chapter and the new preacher we shall begin anew to count the facts:—

1st. Philip goes down to the city of Samaria, situated over forty miles north from Jerusalem city.

2nd. When in the city of Samaria he preaches Christ: preaching the things concerning the new kingdom, and the name or authority of Jesus.

3rd. He works miracles. Evil spirits come out of many, and numbers of the palsied and lame are healed.

4th. The people unanimously give heed or pay earnest attention to *those things which Philip speaks.*

5th. They believe Philip.

6th. When they believe him preaching the things he did, they are baptized, both men and women.

7th. They are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

8th. When the news of all this came to the brethren at Jerusalem, they expressed the whole in a word; for they said, “Samaria had *received the word of God.*”

Let us pause and reflect upon this Jerusalem phrase in respect to receiving the word of God. O! it sounds sweet, and solid, and substantial. This is not the style approved of and currently used in the nineteenth century. Doubtfulness and conjecture form the soul of modern expression in speaking of conversion. Place a church of Canada or New Brunswick evangelicals in Jerusalem, and let them receive intelligence of the favorable labours of a person called a “clergyman” in Samaria, and what would be the style of remark? It would be the language of dubity, such as, ‘We have reason to hope some are regenerated,’ ‘It is hopeful this is the work of God among the Samaritans,’ ‘There are some hopeful cases in Samaria,’ ‘We have reason to think that a number of the Samaritans are hopefully awa-