

men to find acceptance with the Father, but is simply to perfect the purification of the life of the individual by leading him to exercise a control over the passions, appetites, and propensities of the physical nature, and at the same time while doing this, to impart to him a knowledge of the Divine Spirit, and His object in demanding or requiring a strict discipline of human powers.

In this work or training the willingness to obey such impressions or directions is called out, and the individual may be said to be passing under or through a season of proving to test whether he can be trusted to perform such services as may in after time be required, and whether there will be maintained so close a watchfulness as to readily and willingly do the bidding of the Divine when the command is given and understood.

During this preparatory period, there are opened, to some minds, views of truths and testimonies, the spiritual meaning and application of texts of scripture, and not unfrequently the mental and spiritual conditions of those with whom they may be assembled for public Divine worship; but such revelations do not by any means carry with them the word of command, that they must be communicated to others, for they are often only thus given as lessons to be fully learned by the scholar in the Lord's school, or by the individual under the preparing hand for the ministry, and not yet to be imparted; and sometimes this proves to be a severe test of our faithful allegiance and obedience to the Divine one, that we may prove our willingness to wait until the command be given; or until it is shown us it is the right time to communicate what we have seen or received.

The young and inexperienced mind, in this service, often regards this work of preparation for the call to minister, and the reception of the immediate direction, as coming from some supernatural or mysterious agency, and that its operation upon the minds of those who are thus called to minister is too

mysterious to be easily comprehended by the ordinary mind, and it is to be lamented that, perhaps unconsciously, and without such a design, many of those who have been rightly called to minister have given such impressions in their testimonies.

There is nothing any more supernatural in the call and preparation for the work of the ministry than there is in the inspiration received by any individual to regulate and direct their course of action in the present life, so as to meet the approval of our Lord and Father, and thus secure our true happiness, as we know we have different fields of service allotted to us, corresponding to the endowments given, so those called to the ministry have their field of labor; and to fit them for that labor, and enable them to perform the required service, just such an inspiration is given them as is necessary, first, for the work of preparation for, and then for the performance of the service.

One of the common fallacies that has existed in the Society of Friends regarding the nature of the inspiration received for the work of the ministry is, that the Lord reveals to the one called to minister every word which the instrument is required to deliver, and that all that is needed when the individual receives the command is for them to rise upon their feet, and the *words* will be given them, and consequently every *word* uttered is from direct Divine inspiration; and in consequence of the entertainment of this thought we have so many rambling, disconnected and pointless expressions in our meetings, which are unprofitable both for the speaker as well as those spoken to, and tend to discourage and lessen the confidence in inspiration as the promptings for the deliverance of the ministry.

The truth is, according to the experience of the writer, the Lord opens by inspiration or impression upon the mind of the true minister the *idea, thought, truth to be delivered*, or condition of the individual or individuals to