

We thus see clearly, from these facts, that Paul's old defence of the gospel, instead of being weakened, in the lapse of centuries, has been strengthened. Paul, after witnessing the influence of the gospel on men for a few years, and experiencing its transforming power over himself, could find no better apology for preaching it than declaring it to be "the power of God unto salvation." And so we, after witnessing the influence of this same gospel in the world for past centuries, and, at the present time, over greater areas than Paul ever dreamed of, and experiencing its influence in our own lives, can find no better defence of it than the words of the apostle. The unbeliever, with his sophistry and his philosophy, falsely so called, may meet us. He may raise many difficulties which we cannot solve in connection with Christian teaching. He may worry us considerably. But, if we meet him with Paul's argument, he is silenced, if an honest man. No honest man will deny that virtue is better than vice; and if we, as honest, truthful men, can declare to him that, by accepting the gospel as true, our lives have been changed, that a consideration of God's love in giving His Son for us has filled us with purer motives and nobler aspirations, that, as a consequence of our belief in Christ, we delight to do right and hate to do wrong, how dare he say anything against our belief? When we point out to him the transformation in the lives of men and nations that has followed the preaching of and belief in the gospel, how can he, as an honest man, urge us to cease proclaiming it?

Thus far, for the defence of the gospel. I know of no better, nor do I ask for better. It is one calculated to strengthen the faith of those who already believe the truth. It will also serve to silence the opponents of our faith and to bring them, if they are really honest seekers after knowledge, to a knowledge of the truth.

In the second place, we are taught in our text the prominence that should be given to the gospel message in our preaching and teaching. Paul was not ashamed to preach it continually,