

them," and it was upon "them all." The prayer offered for them (John xvii. 20-23) was answered on them in all its fulness.

There is no contemplation so ennobling and elevating as the triumphs of Christianity, as they are described in the New Testament. Behold the Jewish elders, occupying the seat of judgment, with their long robes, their broad phylacteries, invested with all the pomp and power of office. Yet how they quail before two uneducated fishermen, in mean attire, who plead the cause of Christ with a broad Galilean accent, holding up their rough and horny hands, rendered hard by daily toil. The fact is, the fishermen were armed with the truth and Spirit of God, and hence their words of life and power.

We learn here the true secret of the Church's power. It is the depository of the truth of God,—the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit, the ministry of angels, also the grand theory of his providence and grace. Among its members there is *prayer, faith, unity, and love*, and an efficient ministry—such a combination of agencies as renders the Church of God invincible.

Why should we not, in the present day, witness displays of the power and grace of Christ, in connection with the preaching of the Gospel, equally as successful? Is there not a danger lest we should think of the coming of the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, *simply* as a *past fact* in the history of the Divine dispensations? It is such a fact, but it is more than this. The fulness of the Spirit was designed to pervade all ages,—was to be the heritage of the Church to the end of time. We have not to ask for another Pentecost. We have to claim, in humble faith, the Pentecostal blessing which the Spirit waits to impart.

Is it too much to say that if the universal Church of Christ, since those times, had lived, as had the first Church, for example, that Christianity at this day would have been the one religion of the world? The world could not have stood before it. But Christians were unfaithful. They became worldly in their spirit. They weakened the truth by admixtures of error and unsanctified opinion,—they affected secular greatness,—sought to have them large instead of good,—quarrelled about ceremonies and trifles,—lost their first zeal and love; they grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and in a measure forced his departure from them. They became the scorn and laughter of the heathen for their foolishness. Instead of converting the world, the world encroached upon them; and in many instances, both in individuals and communities, extinguished the heavenly light.

How important that we should return to first principles,—study Christianity as found in the New Testament. Our power to bless the world does not consist in beautiful churches, in a splendid ritual, in secular greatness, in outward pomp, in great numbers; but in deep and solid piety, the effects of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This will press into God's service and the Church,—property, influence, learning,—everything that is available for so important an end (see *Wesley's Hymns*, 16 and 707.)

MINIMUS.