

the word is still one of the great agencies of our modern Christianity, we may instance three or four conditions that, duly existing, would give to ministers, both as preachers and guides, a larger measure of usefulness than no inconsiderable portion of them seem now to possess.

The first condition we would name is an all-controlling conviction of the absolute truth of the religion of Jesus. This is essential to the best performance of every function of the minister; without it there can be no real success in preaching. Public speech that is to move any one must be vital with emotion—emotion springing from the heart, emotion that can be generated only by a conviction that has no shadow of doubt resting on it. Nor will the semblance of emotion suffice. Intellectual enthusiasm, the usual accompaniment of active mental energy, and the product of vivid thinking, has its uses, and may be mistaken for real emotion; but it begets no religious emotions in others. Feigned emotion, however skillful the counterfeit, is easily detected by the discerning, and is only and always mischievous in its influence on both him who feigns it and on those whom it aims to affect. Deep feeling, like real courage, is never noisy nor anxious to display itself; shallow feeling, like a shallow brook, is often noisiest where there is least of it, and where nature most obstructs its movement. Profound emotions, like the tides of the sea, moving silently though perceptibly, lift up and carry on their bosom with ease all that comes within their reach. It is the deep-sea feeling of the heart, and not the effervescence of animated speech, that gives power to move assemblies, to change the currents of social thought and shape the character of a generation; and it is also a feeling that can justify itself by appeal to the grounds of conviction, and so justify as to awaken like convictions and feelings in all who hear. A clearer and stronger conviction of the truth of all that the New Testament makes known to us would insure a more effective ministry alike in the pulpit and in all the manifold walks of daily life.

A second condition that may be named, is a higher degree of illustration in the minister's own person of what he would have other people become; and this for two reasons: First, truth always takes a coloring from the mind through which it comes to us. Only from Jesus, who Himself was the truth, did it come in its own pure white light. Even the apostles, repeating it, gave it each his own personal coloring. Individual minds, endeavoring with utmost honesty to represent Christ and His apostles aright, impart to the truth each his own spiritual hues. The more completely the truth controls and models them, the more exactly and effectively do they represent it. Secondly, every personality has its own power. The power may be unconsciously exerted and unconsciously felt, but it is none the less real. The exterior semblance, which has its own influence, may belie