

This is needful, that you may know the truth, that you may preach it with power, and that you may commend it to the reception of others. The word of Christ is the alone instrument of your efficiency as a minister, and you cannot *know* it, unless you have a love for it in your heart. It is a profound observation of Pascal, "that natural things must be known to be loved, but divine things must be loved in order to be known." We cannot discern saving truth by the mere power of natural reason, or through the acquirements of human learning; it can be seen by us, only through the illumination of the Holy Ghost. This is the order of spiritual attainment, set forth in the inspired prayer, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Loving sympathy with the truth opens the eye to its Divine glory, and is like looking on a great picture in a proper light for appreciating its pre-eminent excellence. We are then, the watchmen of promise that see eye to eye the things of the Spirit, beholding Christ in the *centre*, and all saving in his light, "We thus speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen. Moreover this earnest faith is necessary that you may preach the truth with power. It is a feeble as well as a heartless thing, to preach a gospel to others, that we do not believe or love in our own souls. We stand in this case, outside the truth, Balaam-like, looking on it from afar, and preach it rather as an acquired science, than as a cherished faith. It does not move our sensibilities with the power of an inner life, and we cannot declare it in its native might. They who have preached the word with saving power have all acted on the principle of the apostolic ministry, "We believe and therefore speak." This was the secret of the success of the Apostles' preaching at Pentecost. They were filled with the Spirit; they had a short time before, seen Jesus die; they had a few days before, seen Jesus ascend to His throne, and they "so spake," with the fervent earnestness of faith, "that a great multitude were turned to the Lord." This too, was the secret of the marvellous power of the preaching of Whitefield. It was not that there was anything so remarkable in the thought of his sermons, it was not the mere charm of his eloquence that produced the extraordinary effect; but it was under God, the *spirit* of the preacher thoroughly possessed with the living truth, burning with earnestness, melted into pathos, speaking as if he saw the realities of eternity. It is here, where we often lack power in preaching the gospel of grace; we speak of the love of God, of the death of Christ, of the danger of sinners, of salvation through the cross, of the glories of heaven, of the woes of hell,—as if they were common things, seen by us afar off. We need to rise more to living faith in these grand realities, and to preach like him who said, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Once more, this earnest faith is necessary, that you may commend the truth you preach to the reception of others. I have seen a