

assistance of the Holy Ghost. Readily and joyfully do they attribute their success to HIM who made men obedient to the faith. No preachers ever enjoyed such advantages as they did, who learned their divinity from the lips of the Saviour, and had for their imitation his living example. Yet, with all the knowledge and wisdom they possessed, never did they think of converting souls without the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. Are we better prepared than they were? Is the work of converting sinners so much easier now, that we need not the power which they felt to be indispensable? We are not to look, it is true, *now* for the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. The end for which these were given has been fully accomplished. But the power necessary in the days of the Apostles for converting sinners is equally necessary still, and ever will be while the human heart is the seat of antipathy to God. And we have just as good a right to ask, and expect the Divine agency in conversion as they had, who received the grand promise from the Saviour. If common usage does not warrant us to call it a miracle, we may, nevertheless, with the utmost propriety, say, that the greatest work done by the Holy Ghost, in the days of the Apostles, was the conversion of a sinner. This is His work still,—a work which He alone can and will accomplish.

What madness, then, for us to expect by the mere force of moral suasion or reason to break the hard heart; to purify the affections; to enlighten the understanding; to make the Saviour lovely in the eyes of sinners, and to bring them to bow at the foot of the cross. Nor must we suppose, my brethren, that there is no danger of us falling into this folly, and impiety because we avow, in words, our dependence on Divine aid. Never until we are completely emptied of self,—never until we go from our knees to the pulpit, in utter self abasement, willing there, to be nothing that Christ may be all; never until we have felt our own strength to be very weakness, and are profoundly convinced, that God's Spirit alone can do the work, are we free from what, in words, we would shudder to name. Shall man do the peculiar works of God? Shall man put forth his hand to effect what Omnipotency alone can accomplish? Presumptuous effort! But never is this presumption manifested in a more appalling manner, than when man puts on the armour boastfully, and goes forth, hoping by the strength of reason or *ingenious management* to convert sinners to God. Miserable men that we are! and miserable work do we make, when we forget that it is "the Sword of the Spirit," wielded by an Omnipotent arm, which can alone