

The day of affected superiority in the pulpit is past, and should be only a memory now. In some things, the pulpit is ahead of the pew, and in its own domain of biblical teaching should be worthy of respectful attention, but in many things the pew could teach the pulpit. Pulpit and pew should act upon the Pauline teaching, "In honour preferring one another." While Apollos was preaching at Ephesus, eloquently, scripturally, fervently, diligently, there sat in the congregation two members of the Church, husband and wife, Aquila and Priscilla. They loved Apollos, they prayed for him, but they saw his spiritual immaturity. Aquila and Priscilla had been taught by Paul, and they knew more than Alexandria could teach Apollos, and more than the baptism of John. They expounded the way of God more perfectly. Apollos saw it, and entered into the richer, fuller blessedness of the Christian dispensation, the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Like Apollos learning from Aquila and Priscilla, our eloquent Apollos was glad to sit at the feet of any who could lead him into the holiest of all of the higher spiritual truth of the Gospel. How he yearned for the realization of the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." His attitude was thirsting for God, and often he referred to the helpfulness of those in the ministry and laity of the Church who were unknown to fame, but who knew the secret of the abiding comfort of the Holy Ghost, and who had inscribed upon their hearts, "Holiness unto the Lord."

In the second division of this discourse let me refer to the success of the ministry of Apollos. Here we see what Apollos did with his eloquence, with his large Scriptural knowledge, his fervency of spirit, and his diligence in teaching. The success of the ministry of Apollos was twofold. (1) It helped the Church. The historian puts it thus: "Helped them much which had believed through grace." What a glorious mission that is! The Church is out in the world all week, the Church is tempted, is chilled in its fervour, and is often discouraged. A voice says to the preacher, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." How successful was the ministry of Dr. Douglas along the line of helpfulness to the Church. His Sunday morning and week-day evening services were specially adapted to establish the Church in holiness, and to refresh and comfort the children of God. As they sat under the tender and stimulating ministry of our friend, they could truthfully say, as one of old testified, "He brought me to the banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love." They departed from the house of God, not only glad in heart, but invigorated and strengthened for the burden-bearing of life.