

heart of the sinner in order to conversion? From the discussion of these and similar interesting and important questions we, in the meantime, purposely abstain; our object being to concentrate due attention upon *that work of the Spirit* which, in connexion with the text, has been brought under consideration. Let the important practical doctrine be deeply impressed upon every Christian mind, that the energy of the Holy Spirit is put forth *efficaciously* for the *conversion of sinners*, in the way of strengthening those whom he employs to preach the gospel to all nations for the obedience of faith; and that every Christian should be more or less a preacher—every man teaching his neighbour and his brother to know the Lord, until the time when such teaching will be no longer necessary, because all shall then know the Lord—the object of the teaching *now* so urgently required being then fully attained.

The work of the Spirit, as it has been at present under consideration, is the *chief* work of the Spirit with which Christians have practically to do. It is this work of the Spirit to which SCRIPTURE PRINCIPALLY DIRECTS ATTENTION. While other modes of the Spirit's operation (miraculous endowment excepted) are at most but incidentally alluded to in Scripture, that to which we have at present directed attention, meets us more or less in almost every page. Theories and disputes about a direct and mysterious operation of the Spirit have *sadly diverted attention* from that which is *emphatically the Spirit's work in conversion*, and hence the few conversions that take place among us. Facts furnish abundant evidence that, where due attention is practically given to what we have denominated the work of the Spirit, the people of God, instead of having to cry, with sorrow, "Why art thou a stranger in the land!" are constrained, with thankful joy, to exclaim, "What hath the Lord wrought! Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." Children of God, be entreated. Wait upon God that you may renew your strength. Be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might—then, having put on the whole armour of God, take the sword of the Spirit and wield it on all sides in his strength. Then shall the work of the Lord appear unto his servants, and his glory unto their children. But what is the sword of the Spirit, by which the sinner's heart is to be subdued? What is the bread of life, with which the renewed spirit is to be fed? The *Word* of God is quick and powerful. The gospel is the *power* of God unto salvation. The Spirit does not convert by power *accompanying* the gospel. The gospel itself is the power of God. The Most High does not ripen the fruits of the earth by power accompanying the sunshine. The sunshine is the power of God to ripen the grain. In like manner, food is the power of God to nourish the human body, and so is the gospel itself the power of God to convert the sinner. The spirit *testifies of Christ* through the instrumentality of his own people, in whom he dwells.

Let Christians, then, filled with the Spirit, declare good news to