

around. They are designed to be nurseries of strong men and women, full of courage and zeal, armed in the panoply of truth and of faith, who do worthy deeds in the name of their Lord, being faithful, valiant and skilful. They are intended to be a spiritual, but mighty leaven, powerfully affecting and at length wholly leavening the mass. It is most clear, however, that they cannot be thus unless they are churches of the saints.

3. *It is also important in order to effective effort to advance throughout the world the Kingdom of the Redeemer.*

Gideon's three hundred picked men are far more potent in the Lord's army than would be three or thirty thousand promiscuously gathered. A small company of right hearted friends of Christ, full of faith and of prayer will do more to allure men from the sway of Satan and bring them to Jesus than could be effected by a host of nominal adherents, though they should make great noise in their movements and march amid pomp and parade. The matter is at once seen where a powerful appeal is addressed to an audience on behalf of immortal souls perishing, and of the glory of the Redeemer in their salvation. If the audience have no real godliness, no faith in Christ, no love for souls, no spiritual aspirations; not a single chord of sympathy is touched, and the speaker prophesieth in vain. There does not exist a fulcrum whereon to place the lever that would move them. His appeals fall pointless in such presence. But if his audience be such as a Church ought to be, the principles he advances meet with an earnest response in their convictions, and his appeals excite them to prompt and vigorous measures. It is such an assembly only that can be expected so to pray for the descent of the Holy Spirit, as to secure the boon without which the Kingdom of Christ makes no progress in the earth.

The best means of securing this important object have been hinted as we have proceeded. They are the faithful enlightened preaching of God's Word—diligent regard to credible evidence of regeneration in admission to the churches—mutual spiritual culture and watchfulness among the members of the churches—and the exercise of a godly discipline. In the mutual spiritual culture and watchfulness mentioned should be included giving prominence to the idea that church membership is of itself no evidence of a new heart and right spirit: our meaning is that appropriate instruction should often call attention to the fact that real godliness is a matter of the heart—that it has to do primarily with the relation between the soul and God—and that