

Again, Mr. Chairman, Sunday School teachers need an inspiration equal to the subject which they teach. Their theme is Christ, and this is no side-line subject, but one that should have "right of way" over every other; for it is the chief one—the most important one—on the main line of mental travel, where our thoughts journey into the region of Sunday School working. Their theme, Christ!—the unspeakable gift of God to man! They can never exhaust this theme; they can never tell all the wonders of this Morning Star; nor all the glories of this Son of Righteousness; nor all the grandeur of the kingdom of this King; nor all the wisdom of this Teacher; nor all the meekness of this Lamb; nor all the victories of this Conqueror; nor all the perfections of this Saviour, whose gentle face "hangs over many a text, and is painted on many a psalm," for the Book Divine is full of Christ, and longs its glorious matter to declare. And teachers should know this Book. Know it! not simply in an International-Lesson-Help way—know, not something about the Book, but know the Book itself. "A Scotch minister, speaking to his people about the Urim and Thumim, said, 'He didna ken whether it was this or that, but,' holding up his little Bible, he said, 'if you'll change one letter, you will get it exactly: Use him and thumb him.'" So, Mr. Chairman, let us search the Scriptures—use him and thumb him, and we have true preparation.

And now, sir, pardon me if you think it not needful for me to utter a word of warning as to the spirit to be possessed in order to be properly qualified to teach. One of the dangers of Sabbath School teachers is very much like the danger which is incident to the pulpit or to the preacher. The functions of the Christian ministry, so generally thought to encircle their possessors with peculiar protection, present temptations more than ordinarily perilous.

The systematic study of Holy Scripture, to which the Christian minister is necessarily called, unless he carefully guards his own spirit, endangers his devout reverence for its sacred teaching, tempting him to endeavor to rationalize its holy mysteries, and to forget, in the legitimate claims of reason, the imperative demands of faith. It is a fact, surely not without its full-voiced admonition, that the various heresies which have arisen to vex, divide, enfeeble and waste the Christian Church through her more than eighteen eventful centuries—centuries more or less crimsoned with the martyrs' blood, and brave with the confessors' testimony—have originated chiefly with those dedicated to her sacred offices. How shall we best get away from this danger? How shall we vanquish, or have not, the desire to adulterate the purity of our message, or dim the splendid purpose of our embassy as teachers for God? How shall we do this? Only by cultivating simplicity of spirit, reverence of mind, purity of heart, prayerful reliance on Him who alone is "mighty to save"—only by filling our minds with those subjects which stir the deepest pulses of our being, and, as we stand beneath Calvary, we can go the better