

This constituency is fitted fully to arouse the whole inspiration, spirit and purpose of Sabbath School teachers. They need an inspiration equal to the task they have undertaken, and that task is to win the whole class to Jesus Christ. Anything short of this is simply playing at Sabbath School teaching. If they secure everything else and fail here, they have been defeated. Nothing can atone for failure here. Hence, everything must bear down, converge towards, and lay hold of the one thing—the class for Christ. When the teacher looks the scholars in the face, as those scholars sit before him or her, and the teacher starts with this feeling pressing within: “I must win your hearts for Christ; I am here for this; I cannot be satisfied without it; for this I must put forth my whole strength, and teach with my utmost power.” Oh, then, the very resolve gives readiness, the very determination gives effect, the very purpose gives power! The words of such a heart-feeling teacher will be as goads, or as nails fastened by the Master of Assemblies. The energy, fresh from the teacher’s heart, will awaken energy in the scholar’s heart; there will be something felt between the teacher and the scholar; there will be a sort of indescribable contact between mind and mind, soul and soul, and the end in view will most likely be accomplished.

There is an old saying concerning the Church to which I belong, which is this: “Methodism erects no monuments where she saves no souls.” This saying, sir, will apply to a Sunday School as well as to a church. We may build our churches, fill our schools, form our Bible, missionary and tract societies, temperance organizations and other aggressive movements, yet if souls are not saved, all else is vain; no matter how rich the church, no matter how eloquent the preacher, no matter how beautifully the building is decorated, no matter how fashionably the congregation is dressed—all is vain, if souls are not saved.

This thought, sir, grandly expressed by a master-mind of the past, fits in here, as line upon line, and precept upon precept, illustration and application, viz.: “The glory of a sacred edifice lies not in a vaulted roof, nor in a lofty spire, nor in a pealing organ, but in the glory—i.e., the grace, the growing grace—that fills the house; not in pointed and painted windows, but in Gospel light; not in the choir of singing men and singing women, but in the music of well-tuned hearts; not even in its sacred priesthood, but in its great High Priest. If every stone were a diamond, every window a crystal, every beam a cedar; if the roof were covered with sapphire and the floor tessellated with all manner of precious stones, and yet if Christ and the Spirit be not there, that building has no glory, and the people have no grace.” The house of God must have a glory beyond what Solomon’s cunning workmen can give it, “Even the Lord God, who is the glory thereof.” The same glory we should seek, seek as the supreme thing, to crown the nursery of the Church—the Sunday School.