

We find Christ's own words, in giving the great commission, in John 20:21: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

I take these few words to be the highest commission of honor that was ever bestowed upon man. Jesus came into the world to reveal and interpret the Father to us, and to begin a work which ~~we~~ should ultimately triumph in the completed work of the gospel and His return to gather His people unto himself.

The first verse in this commission is not a mere form,--"Peace be unto you." If a man is rightly to represent Christ, and to do His work, that peace that passeth all knowledge or understanding must constantly possess his soul and his spirit, under every kind of circumstances. So I take it that there is just as much promise in the word "peace" as there is in that sentence where He puts it another way,--"Lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the work I have given you to do. It is the indwelling of Jesus, the Master Teacher, abiding within that brings that constant peace without which we cannot respond and fulfil this high and sacred commission.

Note that He puts the commission on the same basis as His own. "As the Father hath sent me, for the same purpose as He sent me, to do the same work He sent me to do, so send I you. You are familiar with that oft-repeated story of Dr. Gordon's imagining a conversation between Gabriel and Jesus after the ascension, where Gabriel is represented as saying to Him, 'You have left the work to be com-

pleted that you began with men."

"Yes," says Jesus, "I have sent out my disciples, and their followers to complete the work."

"But," says Gabriel, "suppose they make a failure of it. What then?"

Jesus responds, "I have no other plan."

I do not think the picture is overdrawn. He reveals no other plan. And so all heaven is looking down upon you and upon me as personal ambassadors for the great Master Teacher to carry on and bring to a completion the work that He so wonderfully began and carried on in His person while He was here.

"So send I you." But, thank God, He does not send us out without the safeguard against this failure. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." He said it was expedient for him to go away, that the Holy Spirit might come and dwell with us individually, dwell in our hearts, giving just the help that our individual temperaments need, give us the guidance and the self-restraint that we need, minister to us the gentleness that we need, and the patience that we need, the meekness in instructing others that we need, the courage that we need, the vigor that we need in pursuing this work, to minister to us all those elements in our experience that will safeguard us against failure.

The Holy Spirit, He promises in other places, will be He who will guide us along the pathway of ~~xxxxx~~ truth,--not merely along the pathway of truth, but guide us into all the truth that He has to give us for us to pass on to the world. That is His promise. And He has promised that in the personal absence of the great Master Teacher this same Holy Spirit will teach us all things.

How comprehensive that is,--promises to guide us into all truth, and to teach us all things we need to know to fulfil this great commission. I thank God for that wonderful promise this morning anew.

In order to do this work, we need the same kind of vision that Isaiah had. Let us read afresh the first few verses of the 6th chapter, where Isaiah describes his call and the vision that he received before he took up his work. That applies equally to us as the successors of the great Master Teacher. You remember how it begins in the 6th chapter:

"In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim; each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone [the margin says "cut off"]. He saw himself, in comparison with what the Lord opened to his vision, as a lost man, without the grace and salvation that must come from some other source than himself]; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

That is the vision I want.

"Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."

That is the description of a scene that takes place in every individual case with you and with me if we know God as it is our privilege to know him.

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

In the commission Jesus says, "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you; receive the presence and the guiding and the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the work I have left for you."

In John 4:34 Jesus characterizes His own attitude toward that wonderful work in those wonderful monosyllables: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" That is what his mission was, that is what He expects you and me to do, to make it more pleasant than our food to do the will of God and to complete His work that He left us to do.

Then there comes in this personal experience that is so well phrased by the Psalmist in the 40th Psalm and the 8th verse: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Then putting that together with the great commission, "Go ye therefore,--because of this great commission, because of the promises that are put right along with it of the assurance of the presence of Christ and of the Holy Spirit with us continually,--"Go ye therefore and teach all nations,"--That is a worldwide commission to the ambassadors of Christ,--"baptizing them in the name of the Father and the son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

So I feel this morning, brethren, that there has been conferred upon you and me, if we accept it, a commission of the greatest honor that can possibly be conferred upon men. When our government appoints an ambassador to the Court of St. James, or some other notable

court, we look upon that as one of the greatest honors that can 1153
come to an American citizen to represent this great government to
another government of equal standing and dignity, to be a mouth-
piece of this government, to watch its interests, to study for its
advancement. But such a commission ~~is~~ as that cannot compare with
one like this. This one lacks the outward pomp and ceremony and
show, that that one has, but "still waters run deep," and the silent
forces in the world are the real forces. The unseen forces are the
ones that achieve the great things, that win the victories of the
world; and so He chooses that this silent, indwelling power and
blessing that He promises to you and to me shall accomplish the
great work that He has left to be done.