"And David said there is none like that; give it me" I Samuel xxi. 9.

THE setting is known to us all. David is talking about Goliath's sword, and he asks for it, "Give it me." We read the passage in Deuteronomy where Moses said to the children of Israel, "the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it" (Deuteronomy i. 17). I want to take these two Old Testament mighty men of God as types of what the worker for God must be like to work for the cure of souls.

With regard to the sword that there is none like it, if you will turn to Hebrews iv. 12, you will see how I want to take Goliath's sword and spiritualize it in the hands of a worker for God among the children of men: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." Now it is quite obvious that if you are not David and are trying to use Goliath's sword, you will do far more harm to yourself than damage to the enemy. You must be in the direct line of succession to David. David and Moses were mighty giants, but we have to be of the same family connection. What is the same family connection in this dispensation? Why, those who are born again of the Spirit of God, and those who are so identified with the Lord Jesus that they have entered into the experience of entire sanctification. When they use the word of God they do not damage themselves, nor hurt other souls; but they do great damage to the kingdom of the devil and bring benefit to the souls of men.

Before we take up the question of the kind of souls we shall have to deal with, we must deal with the worker. Now there are big difficulties in the way. The first difficulty is that we are not dealing with men's bodies. If we were, we could be taught in special schools and colleges, trained and developed in such a way that we should know fairly well how to apply principles to the various ailments of people, because physical ailments have a wonderful likeness to each other. This has led many Christian workers astray, they think that because men's bodies and bodily ailments are alike, and because one cure, carefully and judiciously prescribed by a physician who diagnosed the case aright was successful and can be applied to other cases with similar results, that man's souls can be treated in the same way. But you cannot deal with the human soul and with the ailments and difficulties of the human soul according to any principle whatever. I think that any of you who have worked for God know this, that immediately you get into the way of using certain verses of Scripture and applying them to those who are seeking new birth, and certain other verses to those seeking sanctification, you will find suddenly that God's Spirit will depart from you and He will not use those verses in your hands any more. The reason is this, that immediately we get wedded to a short-cut in dealing with souls, God leaves us alone.

The first thing I want to lay down for the worker (I am talking about one who really is born again of the Spirit of God and has been entirely sanctified) is that he or she must rely on the Holy Spirit to direct them as to what to say in the case of every soul that comes. Do not rely on your memory, do
not remember how you dealt with cases in the past, but recognize and rely on the Holy Spirit that He will bring to your remembrance the particular verse for you to apply at this time. You will find over and over again that God will bring confusion to your methods and will make you apply a text to sanctification which you in your system have said can only be applied to new birth; and He will make you apply a text which you have said can only apply to sanctification to something else, and you will make incessant blunders in work for God if you are not careful and watchful and heedful of the guidance of the Holy Spirit and of His bringing the word of God to your remembrance. Remember, then, that the worker who is rightly related to God must ever rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance in each individual case.

Then I want to apply Moses' statement: "The cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me." Do you know how to bring your cases to God? We all know how to bring them to one another and how to talk to Christian workers about dealing with souls, but just as there are quack doctors in the medical profession, so there is the same thing in the spiritual domain. Beware of anything that does not fling you straight back in reliance on the Holy Spirit as the most practical factor you know in bringing to your remembrance the word of God and how to apply it.

Then another thing—the worker must live among the facts he has to deal with. Regarding the training of workers, take the highest class we know of, ministers. One of the greatest difficulties in most of our colleges for training ministers, who are supposed to work for the cure of souls, is that they are never taught how to deal with souls. There is hardly a college anywhere for training ministers where the question of dealing with souls is ever mentioned. Ministers will bear me out in this, that everything they have learned they have had to learn out of their own experience. They are trained in everything but how to deal with the facts they have to deal with.

There are two kinds of facts the worker must be amongst—he must go to school among human souls. I mean we must keep ourselves in touch, not with theories, but with people, and never get out of touch with human beings, if we are going to use the word of God skillfully amongst them, and if the Holy Spirit is to apply the word of God through us as workmen needing not to be ashamed. Live among your human facts, and you will find how continually God stirs up your nest. If you are a worker, He will constantly surround you with different kinds of people, with different difficulties, and He will constantly put you to school amongst those facts. He will keep you in contact with human stuff, and human stuff is very sordid; in fact, human stuff is made of just the same stuff as you and I are made of; do not shut yourself away from it. Beware of the tendency to live a life apart and shut away. Get amongst men. Jesus prayed, "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

Then there is another series of facts, viz., Bible facts. We have to go to school among human souls, and we have to educate ourselves in Bible facts. A remarkable thing about this Book of God (and I hope, by God's grace, to point this out) is that for every type of human being we come across there is a distinct, clear line laid down here as to the way to apply God's truth to it. The stupid soul, the stubborn soul, the soul that is mentally diseased, the soul that is convicted of sin, the soul with the twisted mind, the sensual soul—everyone of the facts that you meet in your daily walk and business has its counterpart here, and God has a word and a revelation fact with regard to every life you come across.

Let me emphasize these three things again: First, the Christian worker who is right with God must rely every moment on the Holy Spirit when dealing with another soul. Second, the worker must live among human facts, men and women, not theories. Do not let us tell ourselves what men and women are like, let us find out what they are like. One of the greatest mistakes in the world is to tell yourself what a man is like; you do not know what he is like. The only One Who can teach you how to deal with the various specimens around you is the Holy Spirit. / The third thing is, ransack this old
Book from cover to cover in the most practical way you know—by using a concordance, by re-writing the Psalms, or by any other immediate practical method.

I know it is customary to ridicule certain ways in which some people say God guides them, but I am very chary about ridiculing any methods. For example, it is easy to ridicule this kind of method: 'Lord, direct me to a word, I am just going to shut my eyes and open the Book and put my finger on a passage.' I say it is easy to ridicule it, yet it is absurd to say that God has not led people in that way; He has. Why I mention these facts is to knock certain theories to pieces. You cannot tie God down to a particular line. You will find that God does use the most extraordinary methods people adopt; only do not take anyone else's way, get to know how God deals with you, and how He deals with others through you in the most practical way.

Keep these three things in mind—reliance on the Holy Spirit of God, keeping in contact with people, and above all, keeping in contact with the revelation facts in God's Book; live amongst them, and ask God how to apply them.

Another thing I want to mention—never believe what people tell you about themselves. There is only one person in a thousand who can actually tell you his or her symptoms; and beware of the people who can tell you where they are spiritually. I mean by that, never be guided by what people tell you; rely on the Spirit of God all the time you are probing them.

Let me read you this in regard to medical treatment,—
"Recent evidence in the law courts has pointed to a fact which the medical profession holds of great value—the necessity, not only of personal and private interview with a patient, but of the penetrative ability to get at the real facts and symptoms. In other words, successful diagnosis depends on the doctor's acumen in cross-examination.

'Cross examination of a patient is almost always necessary,' says an eminent medical man. 'They will give me causes or rather what they think are causes, instead of symptoms. The rich patient is more troublesome in this respect than the poor, for he has had leisure in which to evolve a sort of scheme of his illness, based on "popular" medical knowledge.

'Patients always color facts, speaking absolutely instead of relatively. They never tell the truth about the amount of sleep they have had or as to appetite. They frequently say they have had nothing to eat. Casually you find there were two eggs at least for breakfast. A minute or two later they remember stewed steak for dinner.

Perhaps the greatest need for cross-examination is that it gives an extended opportunity to the medical man to examine the patient objectively. The most important symptoms are generally those the patient never notices.""

If that is true in the medical profession which deals with men's bodies, it is a thousand fold more true about spiritual symptoms when it comes to dealing with a man's soul. Do beware, then, of paying too much attention to the talk of the one that is in trouble, keep your own heart and mind alert on what God is saying to you; get to the place where you will know when the Holy Spirit brings the word of God to your remembrance for that one.

Now there is a wrong use of God's word and a right one. The wrong use is this sort of thing—someone comes to you, and you cast about in your mind what sort of man he is, and then hurl a text at him like a projectile, either in prayer or in talking as you deal with him. That is a use of the word of God that kills your own soul and the souls of the people you deal with. The Spirit of God is not in that. Jesus said, "The words I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Do remember to keep your soul in unsullied touch with the directions of the Spirit.
Another thing that is very puzzling is this. Probably all of you have had experiences as I have on this line: you listen to clear Bible teaching, unmistakably clear, almost taking people by the hand and leading them straight into the Kingdom of God, but they never come. Another time a man gets up and twists everything, and to your astonishment people are born again. That frequently happened in Water Street Mission in New York, a man who had been wonderfully saved would get up and tell what he had been and what he was now, then others would do the same, and the Spirit of God got hold of the people before you knew where you were, out they came to the altar, and these rough men knelt down and prayed with them and they 'struck something,' as they say out there, and something 'struck them,' and they were wonderfully born again.

Now these are facts we have to look at. You cannot put God down to a prescribed method. These souls were real, living, good specimens of what God had done, and the Spirit of God worked through them. I mention that because it confuses a great amount of our reasoning in Christian work; over and over again you will find that some poor, ignorant servant, or artisan, who seems scarcely to know how to put anything together, is used of God mightily in the salvation of souls, and others who have a clear understanding of the whole thing and put the way of salvation ever so clearly, yet nothing happens. So all we can get at is the main methods laid down in God's Book about the worker. Let us ask ourselves, 'Do I experimentally know what the salvation of God is? Do I know what entire sanctification means in my own experience?' The worker for God must be in a healthy, vigorous, spiritual condition himself.

I want to say one word of criticism about the choosing of Sunday-school teachers. The way Sunday-school teachers are chosen is that immediately a person gets introduced into the Kingdom of God, they are given a Sunday-school class to teach. When you come to God's way, you will find something very different; immediately a soul gets introduced into the kingdom of God, it has got to do something, but it is something along the line of the new life it has received, obedience and walking in the light, until it is consolidated in the ways of God. Why is this necessary? Because dealing with souls is tenfold more dangerous than dealing with bodies. Unless you are in a healthy, vigorous condition with God, you will catch the disease of the soul you are dealing with instead of helping to cure it. Unless you are out amongst the tremendous facts of God's revelation in the Bible, unless you know how to take breezy walks through that Book, unless you know how to walk up and down that country and take in the air of God's hills and get thoroughly robust and continually change your walk amongst those facts, you are sure to catch the diseases of the souls you are dealing with. So remember, it is absolutely necessary to be like the cedars of Lebanon. Do you know the characteristic of a Lebanon tree? The cedars of Lebanon have such extraordinary power of life that instead of nourishing parasites it kills them, the life within is so strong and so robust that instead of feeding the parasites it chokes them off. God grant that we may be so filled with His life, may flourish as the cedars of Lebanon, so that He can trust us down in all the dark, difficult places amongst the souls of our brother men and be able to pour His tremendous health and power through us.

How sad it is to see men and women who did begin to work for God, and whose work God honored, slowly fall off. Why? They have caught the disease of death amongst the people they have been dealing with. In the medical profession, particularly doctors who deal with the insane, have continually to be changed, continually shifted. Why? Because they take the diseases and troubles they live amongst, and you will find that God the Holy Ghost has an amazing power of shifting His workers. Some wonder why God keeps shifting them, why He shifts their circumstances; the reason is not only to keep them in touch with the great sphere of work, but to keep their souls alive.

Do remember, then, that it is necessary for the worker to be healthy, and beware of this mistake, that by working for God amongst men, you develop your own Christian life; you do not unless your
Christian life is there first. It is so obvious that it needs to be said over again—you cannot develop your own Christian life unless it is there. The advice given that if you work for God you develop your own life often means that if you work for God you get right yourself; you do not, you have to be right with God first.

The next time you deal with a soul at the penitent form, remember it is one thing to tell him to receive the Spirit of God, to recognize and rely on Him, but quite another thing for you to do the same thing. Unless you recognize the Spirit of God, and rely on Him, and expect Him to bring to your remembrance some word that is going to apply in that case, you will be of very little use as an expert soul-curer and for putting people in the way to get right with God.

Then do live among human facts! Thank God He has given the majority of us the surroundings of real, definite, sordid human beings; there is no pretence about them, the people we live among and come in contact with are not theories, they are facts. That is the kind of thing God wants us to keep among. Then third, see that you get into this Book. I feel more than hungry to see men and women roused up to get hold of this Book and live among its facts, then the Spirit of God will bring to your remembrance how to apply the truth in each case.

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