

Biddenden Centenary

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- [0 : 00] I'm sure there are times when we're very conscious of the past, of the history, and of the privilege that is ours of being, as it were, inherited of the privileges and blessings that come to us through the labours and the self-denying love of our forefathers.
- We meet today in thankfulness to God because of the way in which he blessed those who have gone before us.
- We have a precious heritage, one which is often scorned in these days, but to many of us, I hope, most of us, a heritage which is precious because it is the heritage of God's truth.
- And this evening, as the Lord may help me, I want to speak to you from a word you'll find in the chapter we read in the second epistle of Timothy, and the first chapter, reading verses 13 and 14.
- Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, that good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us.
- [1 : 48] I'm very conscious of the fact that there are a number of ministers here today who have known the chapel here much longer than I have.
- They could have spoken with much more personal knowledge of the past history of this place. But in God's sovereignty, it is appointed for me to speak to you.
- And so, because I don't really know a lot about your history, I shall turn immediately to the word of God. I'm thankful that our dear friend spoke this afternoon as he did, so that you have the background of the history of this place.
- You heard of how men of God have preached the gospel here, preached it with life and feeling, with truth and faithfulness.
- And now tonight I hope we can turn to these words and be stirred and stimulated in regard to the future, because we have in these words a very serious charge, a very solemn commission.
- [3 : 13] You well know that this is the last epistle that Paul wrote. To Timothy it must always be a very precious letter.
- The advice of our friend is always regarded highly, but never so much as when it is the advice of a dying friend. And Paul wrote this letter to Timothy, feeling himself at least to be on the borders of eternity.
- And I've no doubt that Timothy would value very deeply the words of his father in the faith, for Paul had been like a spiritual father to dear Timothy.
- And he looked upon Timothy as one of his spiritual children, one for whom he had a special concern. But although these words are addressed personally to Timothy, and came to him as a parting commission from the apostle, they have in them surely teaching for every generation.
- They have teaching here for every succeeding generation of preachers. Here is a serious and solemn charge given to a minister of the gospel.

- [4 : 42] We also, I believe, can see in these words the spirit of the apostle, his great concern that all believers might live in the spirit of these words, holding fast the form of sound words.
- Now we haven't heard the apostle speak as Timothy did. But I thank God that we have the apostle's word. We have the apostle's teaching.
- We have these inspired scriptures, which we receive as the very word of God itself. And we are commissioned as believers to hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard.
- Because the Holy Spirit moved godly men like Paul and the others to put in writing the things that God had showed them.
- And we are commissioned to hold these truths in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus. We have a good thing committed to us, which we are to keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us.
- [5 : 55] We are living in days described in this epistle, in chapter 3. This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.
- A terrible description, not of the ungodly world that always has been lying in wickedness, but of professed followers of Jesus Christ.
- They have a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof. It's not my intention to spend time tonight describing the world and describing the condition of the professing church called the Christian church.
- That's only too well and too painfully known. The one thing I would stress is that in the light of that development which Paul saw prophetically, he gives to us this commission and this charge.
- And indeed throughout this epistle, throughout the epistles to Timothy and to Titus, we find this recurring theme. Paul is deeply concerned for truth, for doctrine, for the faith.
- [7 : 56] Over and over again, you'll find these expressions. He was deeply concerned that those to whom he wrote, through Timothy, because this letter was a message, as it were, to be carried by Timothy to others.
- As he wrote to these people, he was deeply concerned that they should hold fast to the truth. We might just look for a moment through this epistle and notice how often he speaks of these things.
- In the second chapter, in verse 2, he says, The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.
- Now that verse teaches what we were hearing this afternoon in another way. That God in his wonderful grace and purpose has commissioned men, faithful men, to preach the word.
- And from one generation to the next, the truth has been handed on. The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou.
- [9 : 14] As he, Paul, is committing to Timothy these precious things, so Timothy is to commit to others the precious things he's received. who shall be able to teach others also.
- In verse 15, Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
- And that in contrast to those in verse 18, who concerning the truth have erred. And again in verse 25, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.

In verse 10 of chapter 3, Thou hast fully known my doctrine. Verse 14, Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.

And verse 16, All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

[10 : 34] Chapter 4, verse 2, Preach the word, the instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth.

And verse 7, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. In contrast to Demas in verse 10, For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.

And that only in one of these three epistles. The great burden of Paul's heart then was the truth. And it's very evident from the way he speaks in this, verse 13, that the truth, the form of sound words, God's truth, that we have received, is something that we are going to be under pressure about.

It is not going to be easy to hold the form of sound words. And so the apostle says, hold fast the form of sound words.

[12 : 06] These perilous times, these perilous times when religious men will have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof.

these perilous times when there will be false teachers. These perilous times when men will be so ready to hear these other teachers.

They'll heap to themselves teachers. Their ears will be itching to hear the latest new teacher, the latest new idea. The world of theology is plagued with this.

Constantly plagued by the latest heresy. It's nothing new. They're just old heresies dressed up in a new dress. But it's not easy to hold fast the form of sound words.

Well let me begin right at the beginning and ask a simple question. Can you honestly say tonight as before God that you have received into your heart the love of the truth?

[13 : 16] or are you still quibbling about the word of God? Are you still quibbling about inspiration? Are you still questioning and doubting about things like creation?

Are you still troubled about the old fashioned oppositions to the word of God like Jonah and the fish? Those things. are you still going to or can you say that by the grace of God your proud intellect has been humble your proud mind has been broken down under the power of God's word and then instead of arguing with God you bow humbly to his sovereign power and his holy word and what is more can you go on and say that not only have you been broken in spirit to bow before the word of God and recognise its authority but then you have pleaded with God to use his truth in your own heart and life Lord speak to me that I may speak in living accents of thy love yes friends there are times when the word of God is so precious to us we say

Lord speak to me Lord use the truth again and again in my life enlighten me teach me guide me through the truth anything until you have it until you have it firmly in your grasp you can't hold fast to it now friends we have a heritage what is our heritage in regard to the truth our heritage is this that our forefathers believed the scriptures to be the word of God they believed them to be the inspired word of God they believed that they had supreme authority they believed that they were sufficient to guide us in all matters of faith and conduct they firmly believed in the word of God as the word of God do we receive the scriptures as God's own truth in a heart in a heart which is humble and broken by the truth do we hold with arms of love the truth you know some people might even accuse me of what's called bibliolatry of worshipping a book well

I certainly don't worship just the paper that a book is printed on that's that's obviously not my spirit but friends there is such a relationship in my heart between the word written and the word living that I can't distinguish between the two Jesus bears this precious name he is the word in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God and the living word came here into this world and he preached and he taught and he confirmed the Old Testament scriptures and he gave to his apostles that particular authority and they teach his teaching they teach his gospel as he expounded to them the scriptures in the things concerning himself so they have conveyed to us and as the Holy

Spirit moved their hearts to explain and to teach and to preach so they have conveyed to us that which is the very expression of the heart of Jesus Christ friends that's what the scripture is it's the very expression of God's own heart it's God's truth now friend when we worship God we bow before a God who has spoken and there are some who know that they bow before a God who has spoken personally to them the word of God has come with a heavenly authority into their own soul you don't argue then you're not arguing about creation when God speaks powerfully through his word to your heart you're not quibbling about whether all men are sinners or not you're not arguing about the fall when God speaks when you're convicted of your own utter wretchedness and sin you don't argue with the word of God then you say all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and I'm one of the worst if not the worst ah friends it's when you begin to hold then you know the power of the truth you begin to hold it with that conviction in your heart of its truth you feel its power hold fast but you know friends it's not only when the word comes to humble and to break our proud hearts and to humble our naturally proud intellect it's when God reveals himself in and through the word what a precious thing that is to have

[19 : 21] God himself revealed to us in and through the word now John had a very wonderful experience he saw Jesus face to face and he says we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the father full of grace and truth you know it's not an experience that's unique to those who saw Jesus Christ in the flesh this is an experience which is known and powerfully known by every real believer we need no vision no airy vision of the face of Jesus or anything like that but Jesus in his power in his authority in his deity as the eternal son of God revealed in and through the scripture by the power of the spirit of

God is the one we bow before the one we recognise we say thou art the Christ the son of the living God you see our forefathers some of them have to contend about the truth regarding the real and eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ I don't know whether there are people arguing about that today or not but friends I'm sure there are some here not just because they're traditional not just because it's part of their traditional heritage but because in their hearts there is such a love of Christ they have received that truth that he is divine that he is indeed the son of God that he bears that eternal relationship to the father as the son of the father I he says and my father are one and in your heart you say he is

Christ Jesus is the Lord he is the Messiah remember the woman at the well of Samaria how the Lord so surprisingly revealed himself to her an outsider really she was but he revealed himself to her what as the Messiah I that speak unto thee am he I am the Messiah I am the very one that you've been talking about I have come anointed of my father anointed by the spirit of the living God and I have come with all the authority of God all the dignity of the son of God I am indeed God manifest in the flesh and friend your heart is humbled and amazed and your spirit trembled because he is the son of God you're not arguing then about the deity of our

Lord Jesus Christ it's not a question of theological discussion it's something that has absolutely broken your spirit down in reverent affection and devotion and you worship him because he is the son of God worship him as God and why is there so little power in the ministry of the word today why is there so little power in the preaching of the gospel perhaps it may be I don't know you might know better than I do perhaps it is this that the preachers know about the deity of Jesus Christ only as a theological proposition how much better it would be if all of us in our hearts could say that Christ is God I can about and for his people care for I have prayed to him as such and he has heard my prayer and I know whom I have believed do you

I don't say that with any bold presumption I say it friends because I have had to prove him to be what he is and I have proved him to be what he said he is I proved him to be the son of the living God with all divine authority and power and I have proved him to be the son of God's love the one who loves his people with an unspeakable love now our forefathers held fast the form of sound words regarding the person of our Lord Jesus Christ as the son of God and as the saviour of sinners I don't know why people are so afraid of such verses as these God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life now friend our forefathers could preach from verses like that because they believed in Jesus as the son of

[25 : 07] God and they believed in the love of God sending his son into the world and they believed in the power of Jesus Christ to save sinners and they had felt in their own soul that amazing love of God on such love my soul still ponders do you ever think it over again the love of Christ the love of God hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me what do we believe about the life of Jesus we believe he is the son of God we believe by the grace of God in that true and eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ as the son of the father we believe in his incarnation we believe that the word was made flesh and dwelt among us but what of his life what do you believe about his life you know there's a theology today that is trying to discover the historical

Jesus pretending to get behind the scriptures and find a Jesus that isn't in the scriptures and it's just a delusion of intellectual mind I'll tell you why they're trying to do it because they're not satisfied by a spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ that's why they've never had such a spiritual knowledge of Jesus Christ as to satisfy their soul I'm no opponent of the study of the word of God I'm no obscurantist in regard to reverent theological examination of the word of God but friend I am opposed to heresy I'm opposed to anything that denigrates our Lord Jesus Christ that will strip him of his honour and his dignity and his glory hold fast because there are those still today who will seek to do that hold fast the form of sound words but friend what about his life how do you believe

Jesus lived do you ever look at the life of Jesus and read the holy gospels again which tell us about his words and his works and have you said in your heart never man spake like this man there was never a man who lived like this never a man who lived like this I have never known I have never come across anybody in history or at the present time who lived like this I just don't know anyone like him friends we believe in the uniqueness of the life of Jesus because it was a perfectly holy and righteous life and a little sight and a little sense of your own utter vileness will make you admire with a spiritual admiration the life of that blessed man never man spake like this man there is none like him

I find no fault in him these are some of the testimonies that were given to the saviour while he was healed you well know that there's an even deeper significance to the life of Jesus and it's because your life is so pathetically evil it is because your life is so marred and ruined by sin it is because your nature is so perverted by your sinfulness it's because of that that you see in the life of Jesus something exceeding precious because this is his righteousness and friends that's what I need and that's what every believer will feel to need they will need the righteousness of Jesus they will desperately want to know how they can be righteous before

God how God can be righteous and yet say that this sinner is righteous our forefathers contended for what was called imputed righteousness perhaps a phrase that's hardly understood nowadays but it means this friend as simply as I can put it and I shan't explain it properly when I finish but it means this God the father in heaven watched his holy son on earth and he saw the whole of his perfect life and there wasn't one sin one mistake one rebellion one evil thought one wandering thought he saw life which was utterly and completely devoted to his father he saw a man who went to the end of the law for righteousness he sees that life and he recognises as only he can the virtue of that life and he says now that life with its wondrous virtue its perfect righteousness being the life of the

[31 : 24] God man is the life which I accept in the place of the life of these sinners which is all ruined and wrecked by sin he is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption what you think of the end of that life oh friends would that I could speak a little tonight about the end of that life Paul puts it like this writing to the Corinthians he says the love of Christ constraineth us it's a longing and has been in thinking of these services a longing in my heart that the love of Christ might constrain somebody tonight God help me to speak about the dying love of Jesus friends he knew why he came he knew what was before him his face was fixed in that one direction dear

Peter he didn't understand he tried as it were to hinder the Lord tried to turn the Lord away from that pathway that led to the cross get thee behind me Satan he said get thee behind me it was a terrible rebuke why because he knew what he had to do he gathers his disciples around him in that upper room he breaks the bread this is my body which is broken for you oh friends precious words aren't they for you for you you know our forefathers used to speak about substitutionary atonement it's another phrase that seems to be only understood by theologians but friends it's a precious truth it's what

Jesus was saying there as he broke the bread this is my body which is broken for you he was warning his disciples he was blessing his disciples he was giving to them and through them to the whole of his church down to the end of time a precious way of remembering that soon his body would hang on that tree this cup is the new testament in my blood drink ye all of it that's how personal this redemption is a personal redemption drink all of it it's the saving work of Jesus received in the heart by faith it's a real personal knowledge of what Jesus has done for me says

Paul he loved me and gave himself for me drink ye all of it he said goes into Gethsemane's garden there it seems as though that dark cloud of grief and anguish gathers thick over his spirit no one can fathom the sorrow of his holy soul my soul is exceeding sorrowful he said even unto death that ever softened your hard heart that he was so exceeding sorrowful we meet with pressures in life we meet with intense sorrow we meet with grief that seem to crush our spirit we are brought so low that all physical strength seems gone we fear we cannot bear the intolerable burden any longer but we've never sweat blood

I don't know of any other person in the whole history of mankind of whom it could be said he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground and friends the most profoundly deep anguish that you have ever felt in your soul is as nothing compared with this Jesus burden I was going to say oh but crushed under the weight of it my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death he began to be sorrowful and very heavy do I need to remind you of that mysterious prayer if it be possible let this cup pass from me nevertheless not my will but thine be done why why did he say that friends because he is what I told you a moment ago he is so holy because he has such a perfect hatred of sin and now this holy righteous pure blessed man is going to be made sin for us who knew no sin that was the cup he had to drink there I believe is the secret of that anguish here is the sin of his people being laid upon him and he being made like the old testament scapegoat having the sins put upon him and having to bear them away and what of his dying ah you say yes it was a sad end to a blessed life yes and those who are trying to discover the historical

[38 : 10] Jesus will say things just like that what a pathetic end to a noble life what think ye of Christ in his death ah friend what do you think of what do you think of those who had such hard hearts that they crucified him I'll tell you what some of them thought later on when Peter charged them with his death they thought it was the greatest crime that a man could ever be guilty of to crucify the lord of glory and the prince of life the apostle says if they had known that he was they wouldn't have done it they never have dared to do it but they did it he was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God mystery wondrous mystery of that eternal purpose wonderful mystery of his sacrifice awful terrible evil of man's sin friend what about you and

I how do you look upon the death of Jesus the just for the unjust the righteous man in the place of the unrighteous the sinless man burdened with the sins of his people the lamb of God taking away the sin of the world friends what think ye of Christ in his death you see there the only hope of your soul our forefathers you know blessedly knew that that was the only hope for their soul Jesus crucified for me that's it no other salvation friends but that no other way of forgiveness but this way hold fast the form of sound words as they tell you of his suffering and of his death and our forefathers believed in the resurrection the resurrection the bodily the real resurrection of our

Lord Jesus Christ maybe that wasn't a point at issue so much as it has been since I'm surprised sometimes by the lack of emphasis upon that cardinal principle belief of our most holy faith the real and bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ because it was the theme of the apostles preaching it was that divine seal that settled everything for them the third day he rose again but what do you think about the resurrection of Jesus is it simply for you a fact of history it was a fact no question about that it's the best attested fact of all history but is it still just that to you listen to Paul again nearing the end of his life he says that I may know him and the power of his resurrection the fellowship of his suffering being made conformable unto his death now friends there is a power in the resurrection of Jesus

Christ which is known in a very personal way it's like this that you know that Jesus is a risen exalted living saviour you know him as a real living person ah you say I wish I knew more friends so do I that's one of the great longings of my heart that I may know more of him like Paul had that same longing in his soul that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and friends it is the power of a living glorious person he rose triumphant o'er the grave and friends he rose in that glorious glorified body and he ascended up into heaven to receive the welcome of heaven itself lift up your heads o'er ye gates and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors and the king of glory shall come in our friends he was the risen king of glory and he is he is today that same king of glory hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me so I might go on friends to emphasize something which our forefathers held dear and that was of a living and spiritual experience of these things a continuing living experience of these things one of things which was so strongly emphasized was this and I feel sure it is important vitally important in these days you see the church is always subject to different winds that are blowing on it and you as a believer will be subjected to different winds that blow against you and sometimes you'll be tempted to drift in one direction and then in another direction sometimes you'll have to emphasize the truth of scripture the doctrine of God's word you may even have to contend for the precious truths of God's word there's a danger then that you'll get blown into a rather hard and dogmatic spirit our forefathers they contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints

I hope most of them were delivered from a hard dogmatism when they contended for the faith perhaps they weren't always what they might have been in that respect but that's one of the winds that blow we tend to get blown into that situation where we become harsh and dogmatic censorious and then as someone I don't know who it was but someone so aptly put it we hold fast the sound of formal words now friends that's a spiritual disaster disaster it's a spiritual disaster it's a contradiction of this verse if you do that you can't hold these words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus so our forefathers emphasised the importance of a warm spiritual gracious experience of the things of

[46 : 14] God the truth of the gospel and I would emphasise that it was a personal experience it was an experience of the truth it was the Holy Spirit work to reveal truth in the heart to give you a warm spiritual knowledge but you see on the other hand there's another wind that blows and people say well we mustn't be hard and dogmatic and merely theological and have just a formal declaration of faith we must have this warm spirituality and then they drift off into the other direction into a kind of vague pietism and it becomes a matter of wonderful dreams and strange experiences and personal testimony divorced from the truth and friends that's a disaster as well and I believe it's one of the disasters that has hit many of our churches it's not the inward work of the

Spirit of God revealing truth and making it precious to our heart bringing us to Jesus Christ the Christ of the Scriptures the Son of God hold fast the form of sound word lest we get blown in one direction or the other and there's a wonderful balance in these two verses that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost friends there is what the Lord has done for you personally in your own salvation that's a good thing that's what the Holy Spirit has taught you of the truth that's a good thing keep it keep it by the strength and grace of the Holy Ghost who taught you those things you know there's a reason why we're exhorted to keep that which was committed to us because it's not just to be kept to ourselves no friends it's not just to be kept to ourselves and that was underlying

Paul's exhortation here to Timothy it was not just to be kept to himself commit these things to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also as you are doing no friends it's not everyone's position in the church to be a teacher or a preacher as we were reminded this afternoon but you know there is something in which every believer is involved in this matter you can't be a secret disciple I know many try and it may be some here tonight are still trying to be secret disciples friends there's an absolute inconsistency between that and the scripture I'm not saying that a secret disciple hasn't been taught of the spirit of God and hasn't got part of that truth in his heart I'm not saying that that could well be but listen be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me his prisoner but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God see there's a testimony there's a personal testimony to be born because this honors the

Lord and because it glorifies the name of Jesus Christ and incidentally because the Holy Spirit uses this to strengthen your own faith but also because this is one of the ways in which these precious things these sound words are conveyed from one generation to the next that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us there's another thing which our forefathers so strongly emphasized and that was that the doctrine of God's word as the apostle puts it is a doctrine according to godliness a doctrine according to godliness now you see it's possible to contend earnestly for the faith it's possible to go a step further and read lots of obituaries and biographies and contend earnestly for that spiritual knowledge of the truth that I've been trying to explain tonight and it's possible to do all that and still for there to be something vitally wrong because all that is known all that is understood and all that is contended for doesn't affect a person's life now this doctrine these sound words are according to godliness they draw people on to a godly life man's chief end is to glorify god and to enjoy him forever

I think certainly for myself it may be a confession that you are making as well I feel so often I'm so far from god and I'm so far from that divine pattern of godliness and that's I'm sure one of the reasons why my ministry is so weak and ineffective and it may well be the case with you why your life your Christian life is so weak and ineffective why our churches are so weak and ineffective because we have the form of sound words we know all about the importance of personal experience of the truth we know all about these things but we're not like our forefathers they were godly he not walked with god friend it's when you and I walk with god that the difference is seen do we walk with god and that is a very humbling but a graciously sanctifying experience to walk with god you know there's a christianity today which is full of enthusiasm and zeal i wish i had more real zeal myself but there is a christianity today which is full of noise and enthusiasm and zeal an apparent life and apparent prosperity but there's one terrible question that you've just got to ask is it godly is it godly ah friends let's ask that question seriously soberly honestly it'll bring you very very low before god when you ask that question it'll make you see your life as it really is when you ask that question am i a godly man am i a godly woman am i living a godly life sometimes wonder whether the words godly and godliness are really understood god likeness you want to be as like to jesus christ as it is possible for a man to be that was murray mack shane's desire he wanted to be as like to jesus christ as it was possible for a mortal man to be oh friends that's godliness that's godliness that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the holy ghost and i come now to the great and precious secret of it all it is that work of the spirit of the living god friends we know nothing of jesus christ apart from that blessed work of the spirit we know nothing of that true conviction of sin and need apart from that spirit we know nothing of real repentance or of living faith in a living savior apart from the work of the spirit of the living god and you know when the church was blessed in that wonderful way at its commencement at pentecost we read they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship now when the holy spirit's work is most plainly seen you'll find

[56 : 23] that men and women are going on steadfastly in a love to the apostles doctrine in a warm spiritual relationship the apostles doctrine and fellowship in the breaking of bread and in prayers yes friends there is much emphasis today on the person and work of the holy spirit we should all be profoundly thankful wherever that emphasis is right and scriptural but friends bear in mind the truth of god's word that the holy spirit is the holy spirit that the spirit of god is the spirit of truth that the spirit of the living god speaks not of himself but reveals christ bear in mind those things and bear in mind that the holy ghost when we know the fullness of that blessing in our own soul will make us holy men and women we shall be godly people if we are filled with the holy ghost we have received the holy spirit as believers god has poured out upon us that blessing in the scriptures referred to as the baptism of the spirit that initiation into spiritual life and experience but friend as we go on through life there is that longing to know more of the power and the blessing and the teaching and the comfort of the holy ghost but if we do know that it will have a profound effect on our lives on our attitude on our ambition our desires for the future our decisions it will have a most demanding influence upon us because the holy spirit will reveal to you the love of christ like this and you'll be saying then love so amazing so divine demand my soul my life my all it is demanding that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the holy ghost which dwelleth in us

I wanted to go on and speak a little more about how our forefathers met together on the Lord's day and at meetings like this and at prayer meetings in the week and how a spirit of godliness prevailed there was life there was freedom there was communication there was fellowship but there was deep godliness someone said to me not so long ago you know we're like ships that pass in the night we just seem to see each other in the distance and we pass on and our forefathers knew that deep spiritual fellowship they communed one with the other they spoke to each other of what the Lord had done for their soul there was that freedom of communication but it was all under as it were the shadow of this sobriety and godliness and so their meetings were suffused with this godly atmosphere

I can't really describe it any other way something indescribable but which is powerfully recognised something different not the glib superficial happy laughing joking sort of religion of the day but something serious something deep something precious and as this godliness this spirituality this sense of God's presence this recognition of his authority this consciousness of his power yes friends there was something wonderfully different in their meeting together and there was something wonderfully different in their preaching of the word may God grant to us humility and faith to hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ

Jesus that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us Amen