

Victories in the Pastorate

by George Kulp

The sermon emphasizes the vital role of prayer, compassion, and personal faith in effective pastoral ministry and the transformative power of God in the lives of congregants.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:13

Topics: "Pastoral Ministry", "Personal Evangelism"

Description

George Kulp preaches about the pastoral work of Mr. Smith, highlighting his dedication to reaching souls for Christ through personal interactions and fervent prayers. Mr. Smith's compassionate and impactful approach led to powerful conversions and deep spiritual experiences, demonstrating the importance of genuine care and prayer in ministry. Through Mr. Smith's pastoral qualifications and duties, many individuals encountered the love and mercy of God, experiencing profound transformations and finding salvation in Christ.

Transcript

"Feed my sheep."

"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

"Which things also we teach, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

"Now thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

"We use great plainness of speech." The pastoral work of Mr. Smith now demands our attention. Let this incident illustrate his methods:

Having to go to a distant part of the Brighton circuit, Mr. Smith stayed to dine at an intermediate village. After dinner, an interesting and intelligent servant girl, of about fourteen years of age, who was engaged in the room in which he sat, arrested his attention. "Come hither, my dear," said he, in his usually serious and impressive manner; "I wish to speak to you." She immediately came, and, looking very earnestly in his face, awaited, with an appearance of great interest, what he had to say. "Do you know that you are a sinner?" he asked. Heaving a deep sigh, she replied, "Yes, sir." "Do you know that you will be lost unless your sins be pardoned?" "Yes, sir." "Are you unhappy?" "Yes, sir." "Do you ever pray?" "Yes." "Do you say your prayers, or do you ask God for what you feel you want?" "I say my prayers." "But you could ask me

for anything you wanted, could you not?" "Yes, sir." "Suppose you were a poor girl and went to Mrs. Smith to beg, you could tell her of your distress and ask her for something.?" In a voice full of emotion she replied, "Yes, sir." "Well, you are a poor distressed sinner; God pities you; you can ask Him to forgive you. Shall I pray for you? The poor child could not reply for weeping. They then kneeled down, and in a very few minutes she began to cry aloud for mercy, and to confess and bewail her sins in the most affecting manner. She continued to cry till God revealed His Son in her. The change in her countenance and accents was most astonishing. She praised God in a loud and joyful voice, and with a faith that greatly surprised Mr. Smith, who stood at her side, interceding for her relation, for all sinners, and for the world at large. Her gratitude taught her new and eloquent language. With extraordinary emphasis, she said over and over again, "Jesus has died for me! Jesus has died for me! Blessed Jesus! My God! My Father! God pities, God loves me, and I love my God! Oh, when shall I be with Thee in glory to praise Thy name for ever and ever!" She continued on her knees for more than an hour, and her state of rapture was so extreme, that, as Mr. Smith afterwards said, it seemed as if it had been impossible for her to survive so overpowering a revelation of the Divine love.

In the month of July, Mr. Smith visited Chichester, to assist in the opening of a new chapel, and remained there for several days. His labors in that city were honored by God. He preached one evening from 1 Peter 3:13: "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" and had great liberty of speech. During the concluding prayer, the influence of God descended on the congregation in a remarkable manner, and several groaned audibly under the burden of their sins. Mr. Smith cried out, "Now let your hearts yield!" and began to pray again. He then came down from the pulpit, and Mr. Hiley, the resident preacher, continued to plead with God on behalf of the distressed. Mr. Smith, in his usual way, immediately addressed those individuals who were seeking salvation, and exhorted them to trust in Christ for a present deliverance. Arrangements had been made for letting the seats in the chapel; but all other business was forgotten, in the urgency of the cries of penitent sinners, and the meeting was protracted unto a late hour. Nine persons were brought into the enjoyment of pardoning love that evening and many others still remained under deep and painful concern for their souls.

The beginning of the year 1820 was marked by considerable increase of religious interest on his charge, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the grace of God displayed in several instances of clear and striking conversion. Calling one day on Mrs. M____, a pious lady of Lewes, he there met with her niece, who was under concern for her soul. He engaged in prayer with peculiar sweetness, and was afterwards led to speak of the excellencies of the Savior, and the happiness of those who are united to Him. His word was accompanied by special unction, and Miss M____, the young person before alluded to, was so powerfully affected that she arose from her seat, and, casting herself on her knees, began to plead with God, in earnest prayer for the blessing of a present salvation. In a short time, hope sprang up in her heart. She exclaimed, "I will believe," and instantly the Comforter came. She rose and cried, "The Lord has washed away my sins for the sake of the blood of Christ;" and, in an ecstasy of gratitude and triumph, she flung herself on the neck of her rejoicing relative, exclaiming, "It is you that have brought me to this!" with similar expressions of joyful feeling. They then united in the praise of a pardoning God. If my information be correct, two other persons in the same family were, a few days afterwards, through Mr. Smith's instrumentality, made partakers of the blessings of saving grace.

In a letter to Miss Hamer, dated February 5, 1820,

Mr. Smith thus speaks of his own experience:

"My soul is kept in peace and purity. Glory be to God! What charms there are in Jesus! 'Unto you that believe He is precious.' I believe; and God testifies that He approves of my faith, by continually sending 'the Spirit of His Son into my heart, crying, Abba, Father.' I am grafted in the true Vine; life flows into my soul, and shows itself in buds and fruit; love, joy, peace, etc. I wish to be 'led with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.' I 'hunger and thirst after righteousness.' Blessed are such. My soul longeth after God. He is all my desire. I am yet but foolish in using the means, especially prayer. I want more of Bramwell's spirit, more of Longden's spirit, more of Nelson's spirit. It is to be had. I believe I shall have it ... Lately God has signally blessed me in visiting the sick. 'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting.' My soul has been filled and expanded. The excellencies of Jesus have been more fully revealed. It is good frequently to visit the abodes of the afflicted, especially when Jesus gives us sympathy for the afflicted. I long for more sympathy. I must go to Jesus for it. As man, He was full of it. As God-man, He is the fountain of it. Jesus, come and live in me, that I may, like Thee, go about doing good."

Mr. Smith excelled in pastoral qualifications and duties, and was often distinguishedly useful in private society. "Kindness," says Mr. Calder, was peculiarly prominent in his moral constitution, and gave to his piety the most interesting forms of sweetness and benignity. And this induced an individual, who was no mean judge of religious character, to observe of him, that he had the piety of a certain distinguished saint and minister. Hence the absence of all austerity from his manners. Of this, children seemed to be conscious and soon attached themselves to him with peculiar fondness, which he amply returned. In this respect, he resembled the founder of Methodism, and, I may add, the Founder of our holy religion also. Not satisfied with merely doing the work of the pulpit, he deemed it right to acquaint himself with, and frequently to visit, every family connected with the society. An unconverted individual in such a family became the subject of his peculiar solicitude, and he was placed upon his list to be specifically remembered before God with many tears and persevering intercessions. This ceaseless concern for the children and servants of the members of the church was attended with glorious results. My house was frequently the scene of holy triumph, for if a visit was paid to me by any of the children of our friends residing in other parts of the kingdom, they became objects of his peculiar regard. By his kind and affectionate behavior he first ingratiated himself into their favor, and then watching the effect of his admonitions, he was restless till they obtained the mercy of God. Never shall I forget the case of one of the sons of the late Mr. B., of London, upon whom, while paying a visit to my house, Mr. Smith commenced a serious attack on the subject of his salvation. This was followed up from day to day until the young man became duly impressed with the importance of religion, and not long after our friend called me into the study to join with them in praising God for having bestowed pardon upon this person. He shortly afterward returned to his family, a truly saved man, giving every evidence in his life of a work of grace."

The letters of Mr. Smith to his parents give us a glimpse into his inner life.

October 1, 1819, he writes:

"Your kindness towards me aids me much in my approach to God. It is said, 'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.' I think, -- what is it that my parents would not do for me? what is it that they have not done for me? They have provided for me, wept over me, prayed for me, dealt tenderly with me, forgiven me, and, under God, have been my spiritual parents, too. They cared for my soul as well as my body: God regarded them, and crowned their efforts with success: their kindness has been a flowing stream. Well, God is my heavenly Father; He cares for me: there is no evil in Him. He is full of pity and compassion. He

has given His Son. He is willing freely to give all things. I may come to Him with confidence; I do come with confidence, with the confidence of a little child, and He blesses me. He gives me His Holy Spirit. Of late, I have had such revelations of the love of God in my soul, such baptisms of the Holy Ghost as I never had before, and such as I had no conception of. God is not only able, but willing, 'to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.' 'Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.' We want more faith; power implicitly to rely on what God has said, -- to take God at His word.

'Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,

And looks to that alone.'

I see more clearly than ever that God Himself is the portion of His people. All the promises lead into God. Faith looks at them as living springs always sending forth something fresh. There is an infinite depth in the promises of God. 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.' 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.' I am happy, increasingly happy in God. God is my portion. Bless the Lord, O my soul! Christ is in me the hope of glory. I have the earnest of Heaven in my heart. This is my treasure, I esteem everything else as nothing in comparison with this.'

"Nov. 29th.

Thanks be to God for His continued and increasing goodness to me, the most unworthy and unfaithful of His servants. What shall I say about my soul? Oh, my dear parents, Jesus was never so precious to me as at present. He is the fairest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely. My soul is penetrated with His excellencies. All I want is in Him, and He is mine. I have power to give Him my whole heart, and I have the witness that He takes it. His Spirit dwells in me, and reveals to me the beauties of my Savior. I 'rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.' My 'conversation is in Heaven;' my treasure and my heart are there. God fills my soul. I know that He has taken away the body of sin. In obedience to Him, I reckon myself 'dead indeed unto sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ.' God is my portion. His fullness is mine. yet he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all I ask or think.' I am looking for fresh discoveries of His glory. My soul thirsts for God. I never needed the blood of Christ more than I do at present. But I have it, and I never made so much use of it as I do now. I have been mightily assailed by the powers of darkness, but Jesus is my Protector. Protected by omnipotent love, what can harm me? 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.' I wish to live in the act of casting my helpless soul upon Christ. I am thankful for your prayers, and for the prayers of God's people. I have the prayers of some who have power with God. I am filled with shame when I turn my eyes backward."

To the same, he thus writes, May 19:

"God has possession of my heart. Christ not only visits me, but dwells in me by faith. Christ is all, and Christ is mine. His excellencies exert a continual attraction. The world is unmasked to me. I see it unsuitable for the portion of my soul. It is unsatisfying and perishing. But Christ possesses everything that is suited to me. He is the eternal God. I choose Him for my portion. Yet I want more Divine power. This must result to me from deeper and more glorious revelations of the excellencies of Christ in my soul, by the Holy Ghost. Oh, that I may ever lie at the foot of the cross, and feel my need, and have the merit of the death of Christ!

'Weaker than a bruised reed,

Help I every moment need.'

I am kept no longer than I am kept by the power of God through faith. But does He not say, 'Fear not: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee'? Amen. My Lord, never leave me, nor forsake me."

This spirit of prayer was the secret of power with Mr. Smith, as with many others who were like him, real soul-winners, and made his sermons like messages from Heaven.

Years ago, Claus Hames, one of the most useful preachers in Germany, once met a friend to whom he told how many times daily he had to speak. His friend presently asked, "But, friend Hames, if thou hast so much to say, when art thou still? And when does the Spirit of God speak to thee?" That simple question so impressed Hames that he resolved from that time to devote a portion of each day to retirement and silent study.

"How is it," said a Christian man to his companion, as they were both returning from hearing the saintly Bramwell, "How is it that Brother Bramwell always tells us so much that is new?" The companion answered: "Brother Bramwell lies so near the gate of Heaven that he hears a great many things which the rest of us do not get near enough to hear."

And it is equally true that every child of God may learn by experience that in all things God will hear and answer if we but consult Him. A laboring man agreed to pay installments for the little house in which he lived. He spent his leisure planting trees and cultivating his garden. One hundred pounds was the price of the property. He was to pay ten pounds a year, with interest. Year after year he met his obligation, and when he died there were but ten pounds due on the cottage. By hard toil and much saving, the poor widow scraped together ten pounds, and was rejoicing in the prospect of a comfortable shelter for herself and child during the rest of her life. The man who owned the mortgage had died, as well as her husband; but great was her astonishment and grief, when she visited the attorney to pay off the remaining encumbrance on the cottage, to find a bill presented for one hundred pounds, instead of ten. "You must pay the money, or produce the receipts, or I shall sell your property under the hammer," said the lawyer. The poor widow searched her cottage from top to bottom, and emptied drawers and closets to find receipts; but all in vain. The prospect of being turned out of her little house stared her in the face. Her little boy said to her: "Mother, don't you think Jesus would help us in our trouble if we should pray to Him? He is our only help in this our time of distress. Let us kneel down and pray." The little boy offered a sweet prayer to the Savior, begging him to interpose to keep his poor mother from being turned out of her home. As he arose from his knees, the lad saw a large fire-fly coming in at the window. Boy-like he started for it. He chased the fly round and round the room, till at length the brilliant little creature made a dive under a chest of drawers. The little boy tried to reach him, but could not. "O mother!" he said, "just pull the drawers out a little bit, and I'll catch him!" As the drawers moved, something fell on the floor. It was her husband's lost receipt-book. The attorney was so astonished when she produced it, and heard the story; that he refused to receive the remaining ten pounds, but gave her a receipt in full. That night, as the widow sat with her little son by the cozy fire, she told him how easy it was for the Savior to answer prayer by little things. The fire-fly, conducting Freddy to the lost receipt-book, was as good as if an angel had been sent from Heaven.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/george-kulp/victories-in-the-pastorate/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net