

to you than your necessary food and sweeter than honey or the honey-comb, it will be impossible for you to speak of it to others without a glow passing into your words which will betray the delight with which it has inspired yourself.*

Perhaps of all causes of ministerial failure the commonest lies here; and of all ministerial qualifications, this, although the simplest, is the most trying. Either we have never had a spiritual experience deep and thorough enough to lay bare to us the mysteries of the soul; or our experience is too old, and we have repeated it so often that it has become stale to

* "You have to be busy men, with many distractions, with time not your own: and yet, if you are to be anything, there is one thing you must secure. You must have time to enter into your own heart and be quiet, you must learn to collect yourselves, to be alone with yourselves, alone with your own thoughts, alone with eternal realities which are behind the rush and confusion of moral things, alone with God. You must learn to shut your door on all your energy, on all your interests, on your hopes and fears and cares, and in the silence of your chamber to 'possess your souls.' You must learn to look below the surface; to sow the seed which you will never reap; to hear loud voices against you or seductive ones, and to find in your own heart the assurance and the spell which makes them vain. Whatever you do, part not with the inner sacred life of the soul whereby we live *within* to 'things not seen,' to Christ, and truth and immortality. Your work, your activity, belong to earth; no real human interest, nothing that stirs or attracts or that troubles men in this scene of life, ought to be too great or too little for you. But your thoughts belong to heaven; and it is to that height that they must rise, it is *there* that in solitude and silence they must be rekindled, and enlarged, and calmed, if even activity and public spirit are not to degenerate into a fatal forgetfulness of the true purpose of your calling—a forgetfulness of the infinite tenderness and delicacy, of the unspeakable sacredness, of the mysterious issues, which belong to the ministry of souls."—DEAN CHURCH.

ourselves; or we have made reading a substitute for thinking; or we have allowed the number and the pressure of the duties of our office to curtail our prayers and shut us out of our studies; or we have learned the professional tone in which things ought to be said, and we can fall into it without present feeling. Power for work like ours is only to be acquired in secret; it is only the man who has a large, varied and original life with God who can go on speaking about the things of God with fresh interest; but a thousand things happen to interfere with such a prayerful and meditative life. It is not because our arguments for religion are not strong enough that we fail to convince, but because the argument is wanting which never fails to tell; and this is religion itself. People everywhere can appreciate this, and nothing can supply the lack of it. The hearers may not know why their minister, with all his gifts, does not make a religious impression on them; but it is because he is not himself a spiritual power.*

There comes to my mind a reminiscence from college days, which grows more significant to me the longer I live. One Saturday morning at our Missionary Society there came, at our invitation, to

* "Habet autem ut obedienter audiat quantacunque granditate dictionis majus pondus vita dicentis."—ST. AUGUSTINE.

Stalker, James. *The Preacher and His Models*. New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891.