

August 25

**2 Corinthians 2:16: To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?**

Brethren, pray for your pastors. No man is sufficient for the work of speaking as Christ's ambassador. That is the chief qualification given in the heart of those who speak for Christ. They know themselves to be totally unworthy for the work.

Most often, God gives his preacher the message dealing with God's hatred toward sin. God shows it to him in the great price Christ suffered when God spared not his own Son to put away the sin of his people, to satisfy justice and to manifest God's own righteousness. He sees the need of his brethren to whom he is sent to minister. His heart aches for them. When he finally has the word from God just for them then God convicts him in his own heart that he is the greatest sinner of all. He sees his sin is against the very Redeemer who loved him and gave himself for him. The same sorrow the believer in the pew feels, he feels. He would like to sit down in silence, mourn in his heart, to have someone else take the great responsibility of setting forth these words which are life or death. But though he sees himself the biggest hypocrite of all, he must stand and deliver God's word to his needy brethren. And after the message has been delivered, when he is all alone, that is when the lowest lows come. God will not allow him to become puffed up.

This is how God keeps him useful. Were God to allow him to wait till he thought himself worthy to speak for God then the pulpit would be the worst place for him to be. It is not just now that he feels his unworthiness that he is unworthy, he has never been worthy to speak for God and never will be in himself. So God keeps his face in the dust, continually making him behold what a worm he is. As he seeks a message from God for his people, day by day, God takes him to the heights of his throne room till he is walking on clouds. Then God shows him what he is, puts him through the wringer, making him like a dish rag rung out by the hand of Omnipotence. From the heights to the depths he goes, from greatest joy to deepest sorrow. It is the happiest most sorrowful calling there is. But oh, how needful! When he is made totally empty in himself then he is forced to look away from self for sufficiency. As he finds himself begging Christ to strengthen him, begging Christ to give him the words for his needy people, begging Christ to preach him, there he finds his suffering has been just what he has prayed for, for it has all been to bring him right to that very footstool, to Christ, the Bishop and Shepherd of his soul. His Redeemer never fails him. He always finds all sufficiency in the lover of our souls.

Brethren, join your preacher at that footstool. Pray for Christ to be glorified through his earthen vessel. Ask God that utterance may be given unto him, that he may open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which he is an ambassador in bonds: that therein he may speak boldly, as he ought to speak. (Eph 6: 19-20) Who *is* sufficient for these things? But our sufficiency is of God! (2 Cor 3: 5)