

No.
190

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

F I R M N E S S .

IN THE LORD'S WORK AMONG CHILDREN.

An Address (revised) at

FOREST GATE,

2nd March, 1912.

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

Correspondence welcome:
Scriptural literature for Believers
Gottlieb-Daimler-Str.1 – 74343 Sachsenheim – GERMANY

F I R M N E S S
IN THE LORD'S WORK AMONG CHILDREN.

An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

At Forest Gate,

2nd March, 1912.

A word or two on the practical subject of work among the children. The subject that I thought would be the Lord's will for this evening is "FIRMNESS", in the Lord's work among those who are younger. First, what it is. Firmness is a decisiveness of character that first of all comes to a right conclusion inside and as a result keeps to it outside. Firmness is therefore contrasted with indulgence, changeableness, and also with impatience.

Secondly, a word as to the importance of firmness. It is necessary that God's dear people should be firm for the Lord's glory. That includes everything else, that is the great reason for all our acts of obedience. The Lord has appointed to His own that there should be a firmness. We find Scripture definitely approves it, for example in the Book of Proverbs in the earlier Scriptures, and in passages that deal with teaching, influence and discipline in the later Scriptures. I do not think we have any person brought into power in Scripture, or any description of power with God's approval,

where there is not firmness, this becoming the more emphasized when we realise for example in the case of David how God condemns the fact that he had never reproved his son Adonijah. Moreover God has definitely declared a general principle which includes this and much else. He says that we must not be wavering ones. Indecision in anything is never befitting a child of God. It is important that we should be firm not only for this general thought, but for the sake of the children who are entrusted to our care. Anything else is unkind though it may appear kind. Firmness with them will lead them to realise that we believe things are solemnly important, and that the arrangements of the work of God are no light matter. It is moreover important that we should be firm for our own sakes. The one who is not firm in any of his actions toward others will become indulgent toward himself. The vice versa is also true. Unless we control ourselves we cannot control others. Whichever way you look at it it is solemnly true. Unless we have an oversight for ourselves we cannot have an oversight for others, and unless we rule others who are committed to our care we cannot rule ourselves. A failure in either part of our service will affect the other. If we become those who vary we shall be made to regard truth as a small matter. Now a few practical hints. Seeing these things are so, how necessary it is that we should be sure we have the right thing in doctrine and that we cling to the right thing in practice before we speak or act. Firmness is important but unless our hearts know what we ought to do how can we be firm? Secondly, let us check any spirit of wishing to

win

gain affection by a lack of firmness. It is really a spirit of sinful self-exaltation. We are not to put ourselves into prominence; we are not to look after the arrangements of anything. We are simply to be the Lord's servants and leave results with Him. At the present day, many parents seem almost afraid lest they offend their children and lest the children will turn against them or against the truth because of a right severity. I believe that in this and in all Scriptural discipline we need to be on our guard against an unwise manner. If children turn against the truth because of their parents or because of those who work among them, it is not through the firmness but through the inconsistency and seeming firmness one minute, indulgence the next. A firmness which is but for one moment is unworthy of the name. Or if it is not through inconsistency it is through a harshness of manner, which is only a perversion of firmness. In other words we often undo blessings by our mode of doing what is right. The right action in a wrong way becomes the wrong action. The nought when multiplying the one blots out the one. So let us seek from the Lord that He may give unto us this decisiveness of character, that we may know what to do and how to do it, that we may know what the sins of children are before God, and dread that they should go on in them, and therefore seek (though at the expense of time which is not a wasting but an excellent outlay, seek at the expense of time) to have the children brought into a godly control. We had better lose time now as men would call it, than lead the children on the path of losing their souls, for we are responsible for the tendencies of our actions.

Let us therefore seek unto the Lord that the Lord will graciously cause us to have a right attitude as well as right doctrine, and that in every way we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and perhaps we shall find that we learn more OUR right attitude as we ^{think} have of HIS attitude towards us. Though in some things we cannot imitate Him, yet in many others we may even venture by grace to do this. The Lord has treated us with a love that has no parallel yet in that love that is without parallel there is a wondrous firmness. He never excuses our sins. He never makes light of them. We see this marked in the earthly life of the Lord Jesus with His disciples. Never did His affection cause Him to be indifferent to iniquity, NEVER. Never did His sternness against iniquity blot out that love wherewith He loved His Own unto the end, and never is "weakness" a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

-----oOo-----

Kindly preserve these notes,
and return them promptly to
MEETING ROOM, 61 Upton Lane
Forest Gate, London, E. 7.

Further literature, concerning the Lord, gladly sent (international) to exercised believers for personal perusal, and passing on to God's glory, some also in German, Spanish, Russian, Polish, Czech, Romanian:

- "To Testify the Gospel of the Grace of God." -

COPIES FREE (as the Lord enables) on application to:
Scriptural literature for Believers
Gottlieb-Daimler-Str.1 - 74343 Sachsenheim - GERMANY