



Highlighting Our Heritage

WEEK 12



Life Application:

Knowing the critical importance of preserving our spiritual foundation by resisting pressure to alter the doctrinal teaching we have been given.

Key verse for meditation:

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. – 1 Corinthians 16:13

For personal study:

Psalm 1; Colossians 1:21-23; Titus 1:10-16; Hebrews 13:9

Taking a Stand

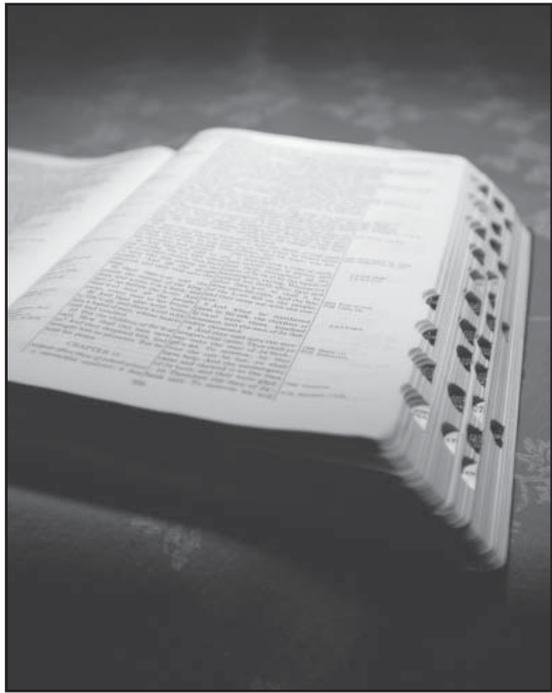
Standing Firm

IN THE YEARS that followed the establishing of the Apostolic Faith work in Portland, religious leaders in different parts of the country—even some who had initially supported the doctrines preached at Azusa—began presenting what they called “new light.” One doctrine promoted the “Jesus Only” belief, which denies that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are united as one in the Holy Trinity. Another group taught that the second, definite work of

sanctification was not a prerequisite for receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Some contended that one work of grace included both salvation and sanctification. Others claimed that a person was baptized with the Holy Ghost when he was saved or sanctified.

Florence Crawford knew that these new beliefs were contrary to the true teachings of the Bible and not in accordance with the doctrines embraced at the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in 1906. Consequently, she took a firm stand against false teachings. Anyone who attempted to present new theories quickly discovered that the organization’s founder stood steadfastly on the solid foundation of the Word of God and refused to deviate from any of the Bible doctrines. Through the years, many ministers and religious leaders challenged her and tried to sway her from her convictions, but she stood immovable.

One man came to talk to Florence Crawford with the intention of changing the mission’s theology. He claimed that the teachings regarding the experience of sanctification were wrong. Convinced that he could change her mind, he begged her, “Just give me one meeting;



all I want is one meeting.” She refused him categorically, saying, “You will never get your foot inside of a meeting that I have anything to do with—not even your foot will ever step inside of my place.” She was adamant about her theological position. Her experience had been too hard sought for her to stray from her original understanding that sanctification was a second definite work of grace.

Historical Context: Clear exposition of the need for three definite spiritual experiences was a hallmark of the Azusa movement. However, in time Seymour changed his doctrinal stand and said that speaking in other tongues was not necessarily the initial evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of sanctification was also questioned by the Azusa ministry, and the leaders ceased to teach this experience as a second, definite work of grace. By then, Florence Crawford was in Portland, and she took a firm stand against any compromise of Bible doctrines.



A Closer Look . . .

- 1.** How are our doctrinal teachings under attack in our day?
- 2.** What is the result of a confused or “flexible” moral and spiritual viewpoint?
- 3.** Name at least four Biblical characters who fearlessly stood for the truth.

Challenge: Referring to 2 Timothy 3:14, make a list of “things which thou hast learned” in spiritual matters. Beside each item, note why these truths are important to you, and why or how they might be challenged in today’s society.

Upholding the Truth

Gideon Hancock, a pioneer of the Apostolic Faith work in Newfoundland, was saved as a young man of 17, but said that he “knew nothing about earnestly contending for the faith.” He told how he received an Apostolic Faith paper while he was working with another religious organization. The postal representative, knowing that Gideon Hancock was a religious man, gave him the unaddressed religious paper, not knowing who else to give it to. Gideon was impressed by the doctrines listed in that Apostolic Faith publication. He testified, “I broke the seal and began to read, and it gripped my heart—something I couldn’t express. I believed the word as soon as I got a glimpse of it. I knew it was based on the eternal Word of God, a good foundation.” He kept that paper.

Two years later, when he and others were locked out of their church because of their belief in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Gideon remembered that publication from the Apostolic Faith. He knew the doctrines he had read there rang true, and that the experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Spirit must be upheld no matter what the cost. The little group contacted Portland, and they soon became officially affiliated with the organization. Today, we have six churches in Newfoundland.