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THE GOSPEL THE ONLY TRUE REFORMER.

BRAINERD'S REMARKS

ON THE

WORK OF GRACE

UNDER HIS

MINISTRY AMONGST THE INDIANS AT CROSWICKS, N. J.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS,

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE REFORMED PROT. DUTCH (COLLEGIATE) CHURCH, N. Y.

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EXTRACT FROM A DISCOURSE

ON

“PREACHING CHRIST.”

BY JOHN JENNINGS.

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1723.

“I SHALL then, by way of specimen, select some of the Apostles' discourses on duties most moral only, where we are most apt to forget Christ, or a due respect to Him; that it may at once appear that the Apostles neither shunned the pressing of such *duties*, nor disregarded *Christ* in treating of them.

“*Honesty* is pressed by these motives;—‘The unrighteous, thieves and extortioners, shall not inherit the kingdom of God’ (which, in the style of the New Testament, is *Christ's kingdom of grace and glory*).—That Christians are ‘converted by the Spirit of Christ, and justified by his righteousness.’ 1 *Cor.*, vi. 8.—*Chastity* is enjoined, as ‘our bodies are *members of Christ*, as we are one spirit with Him, temples of the Holy Ghost, and bought with a price.’ 1 *Cor.*, vi. 15.—*Almsgiving* is recommended, as it brings a large tribute of ‘praise to God for our subjection to the *gospel of Christ*—and *Christ* became poor for our sakes.’ 2 *Cor.*, viii. 9.—*Evil speaking* is forbidden, because ‘we were foolish and wicked; but the grace of God has made the difference; not for our righteousness, but of His free mercy He has regenerated us, and given us His Holy Spirit, *through Jesus Christ*, by whom we are justified, and heirs of glory.’ *Titus*, iii. 2.—Subjects are commanded to *obey magistrates*, because ‘the gospel is come, and we should *put on Christ Jesus*.’ *Rom.*, xiii.—*Husbands* are charged ‘to love their wives, as *Christ loved the Church*.’ *Eph.*, v. 25.—The obedience of *Wives* is urged, because ‘the husband is the head of the wife, as *Christ is the head of the Church*.’ *Eph.*, v. 22.—*Servants* are exhorted to their duty, as they would ‘adorn the *doctrine of Christ*,—because *grace* so teacheth, and that we look for Christ's appearance, who gave himself for us that we might be holy.’ *Titus*, ii. 9.—Now what is there in these motives peculiar to one age or nation? Are not all these as good now as formerly? And are men so ready in their duty, that we have no need of them? Nay, it is worthy of observation, that the Apostles do not confine themselves to motives peculiarly adapted to the duty they are pressing, and which serve to enforce one duty rather than another; but, as you may see, when such proper motives are not at hand, they take, without any scruple, common or general ones, which will equally enforce any duty whatsoever. And why should not *we* introduce the peculiarities of the gospel on all occasions, as frequently as the Apostles did? If our schemes of theology will not allow us, we have reason to suspect we are in a different scheme from the Apostles.”

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Brainerd, David, 1718-1747

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## INTRODUCTION.

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FEW names are so fragrant and precious among the people of God as that of DAVID BRAINERD. Although he died a century ago, at the early age of twenty-nine, and spent his short ministry in the wilderness, among a people every memorial of whom has long since perished, yet such was his extraordinary character and success, that his biography, by President Edwards, still retains its place as a Christian classic, and his example exerts an ever-widening influence in all lands over those who love our Lord. "He, being dead, yet speaketh." His great feature, as a man, was his eminent, perhaps unequalled holiness; and, as a minister, his unreserved consecration to his work. His religious exercises were in some degree marred by the shade of melancholy peculiar to his natural temperament; but apart from this defect, they furnish an almost faultless model of Christian experience. His humility, his love to God, his faith, his self-denial, his fortitude, his zeal, his tender spirit, shine out in every page of his memoir. His missionary labors were prosecuted with a singleness of motive, a constancy, a patience, and a fidelity, quite beyond the ordinary range of ministerial excellence. And they were abundantly rewarded. Many difficulties beset his course among the savages to whom he proclaimed the Gospel. They were ignorant and stupid, steeped in sensuality, given over to the love of strong drink, without natural affection, and full of prejudices against white men. Besides, they led a wandering life, rarely staying for a lengthened period in one place; their language was not known by the missionary, who was compelled to preach to them through an indifferent and listless interpreter; and his instructions, when understood, were zealously opposed by wicked white men, who thought it to be to their interest to keep the Indians ignorant and degraded. Yet notwithstanding these formidable obstacles, it pleased God to attend his ministrations with a signal blessing. The Spirit was poured out from on high, producing an eminently pure and powerful work of grace. Within the short space of eleven months, seventy-seven of these poor creatures were made wise unto salvation. From being drunken, howling savages, they became devout and intelligent Christians. Forsaking their sensual and idolatrous feasts, they sat down, clothed and in their right mind, at the table of the Lord.

Mr. BRAINERD, in his diary and letters, gives a detailed account of this interesting work, clearly setting forth its origin, the means used in carrying it on, and the individual and social results. At the close, he furnishes under the title of "GENERAL REMARKS," a series of reflections upon the notable characteristics of the narrative. These remarks, the Board of Publication of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church have thought proper to reprint, without alteration or omission, from the original edition, and thus give them in a separate issue a far wider circu-

lation than they would otherwise have. The teachings of this little tract, at all times appropriate, as exhibiting the true theory of the missionary work, are especially seasonable and important at the present time, when there is such a great and general tendency to misdirected effort in the cause of religion and morals. The popular watchword of our day is Reform. A host of institutions, plans, measures, and theories have been originated, all seeking the amelioration of human welfare. In support of these, time, toil, and treasure are largely expended, and persons of every shade of opinion and character are rallied to their standard. Popular agitation, voluntary association, political action, and civil enactments are eagerly sought and appropriated as sure means of effecting social reformation. Attention is so strongly concentrated upon single points of immorality, that general excellence of character and the underlying principles of all outward correctness are left in the background. Particular features of morals are so presented and prosecuted as almost to exclude religion, and it would seem as if the improvement of individuals and the elevation of society were looked for only through the suppression of prevailing immoralities, and the establishment of certain external reforms. We do not say that Scripture truth is denied, or even doubted, but that it is held in abeyance. In effect it is ignored, while the main stress is laid upon subordinate and so-called practical matters. Even ministers of the gospel of the grace of God have so far yielded to this influence as to descend from their lofty vantage-ground as ambassadors for Christ, and become mere advocates of a humanly-invented institution, or propagandists of a political party. They have laboriously striven to improve the branches and the fruit of the tree, while neglecting its root. They have acted as if cultivating a field of tares would change it into a field of wheat. They have urged all the rational and economical considerations, all the appeals to hope and fear, all the resources of argument and pathos, all the means of sympathy and impression by which men are usually moved, and have forgotten the Word which says: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit."

In direct opposition to all this is the system set forth by the sainted BRAINERD. He was engaged in a reforming work as complete, and thorough, and pervading, as was ever attempted by man, yet his mode of operation was radically different from that which is now in vogue. His plan was to preach Christ crucified, and make him the centre of every discourse. What are called the doctrines of grace, as these naturally lead to, or flow from the cross, were the scope and drift of his teaching for months together. These doctrines were, as he says, the fallen condition of men by nature, their inability to deliver themselves from it, or while in it to gain the favor of God by any outward amendment or religious observances, and hence their absolute need of a Saviour; the all-sufficiency of Christ as such, the freeness of His grace, the fullness of His invitations, and the ample encouragement for even the chief of sinners to betake themselves to Him. These truths he urged, not in a cold, abstract way, but with tenderness and fervor, always seeking to lead his hearers to see and feel that out of Christ they were lost and undone, while in him they would be justified and saved. He

laid out none of his strength on the inculcation of mere external reforms, nor did he directly attack reigning vices, although, if ever any circumstances would justify such a course, his might seem to do so. On the contrary, he distinctly acknowledges the divine help which enabled him "not to know any thing among them save Jesus Christ and him crucified."

He would seem to have followed exactly the plan recommended by the well-known convert TSCHOOP, a Mohikan chief, whose experience is narrated in Loskiel's *Mission among the North American Indians*, (P. II., ch. i., p. 14.) TSCHOOP had been distinguished for his sinful, licentious, and violent life, but a change was wrought which he thus recounted: "Brethren, I have been a heathen and have grown old amongst the heathen: therefore I know how heathen think. Once a preacher came and began to explain to us that there was a God. We answered: 'Dost thou think us so ignorant as not to know that? Go back to the place from whence thou camest.' Then again another preacher came and began to teach us: 'You must not lie, nor steal, nor get drunk,' etc. We answered: 'Thou fool, dost thou think that we don't know that? Learn first thyself, and then teach the people to whom thou belongest, to leave off these things. For who steals, or lies, or is more drunken than thine own people?' And thus we dismissed him. After some time, brother Christian Henry Rauch came into my hut and sat down by me. He spoke to me nearly as follows: 'I come to you in the name of the Lord of heaven and earth: he sends to let you know that he will make you happy and deliver you from the misery in which you lie at present. To this end he became a man, gave his life a ransom for man, and shed his blood for him,' etc. When he had finished his discourse, fatigued by the journey, he lay down upon a board and fell into a sound sleep. I then thought, what kind of a man is this? Here he lies and sleeps. I might kill him and throw him out into the wood, and who would regard it? But this gives him no concern. However, I could not forget his words; they constantly recurred to my mind. Even when I was asleep I dreamed of that blood which Christ shed for us. I found this to be something different from what I had ever heard, and I interpreted Christian Henry's words to the other Indians. Thus, through the grace of God, an awakening took place among us. I say, therefore, brethren, preach Christ our Saviour and his sufferings and death, if you would have your words to gain entrance among the heathen.'

Similar was the experience of the Moravians in Greenland. For several years they labored without any success, but once, while one of them was translating Matthew's Gospel, he was visited by a number of the natives, who were desirous to know the contents of the book. The missionary gratified their desire, told them of man's fall by sin and his recovery by Christ, enlarged with energy and feeling upon the price of redemption, and then read from the book in his hand, the history of our Saviour's agony in the garden. Now the Spirit of God began to work. One of these men, KAIARUACK, stepped forward to the table, and said

in an earnest and affecting tone: "How was that? Tell me that once more; for I would fain be saved too." Never had such language been heard from a Greenlander before. The impression continued and KAIARUACK became a decided and useful convert. Soon after this the missionaries visited one of their distant stations, and, guided by their recent experience, naturally insisted much upon the sufferings of Jesus. "What things have you come about now?" was the inquiry of their awakened hearers. "Your present discourse makes quite another impression upon us than when you always told us of God and the two first parents. We believed it all, but we were tired of hearing of it, and thought, what signifies that to us? But now we find that there is something interesting in your words." From that time the work went on with great speed and power, and in spite of sore persecutions and various other trials, a large number of consistent and steadfast converts were made. (*Carue's Lives of Protestant Missionaries*, I. 236.)

This course is exactly in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Scriptures. "Christianity knows nothing of reforms which do not spring from an inner impulse, the impulse of a Christian faith; nor does it admit such as are imposed by a power acting upon the surface of human nature, and working toward the centre." Its fundamental truth, the basis upon which the whole remedial scheme is erected, is that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." The natural man is "dead in trespasses and sins;" his "carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." While he is in this state, every self-originated attempt at amelioration is, of course, nugatory. What is required is the complete and fundamental change called regeneration. *Ye must be born again.* All reforms short of this are failures. They are partial and short-lived. Skillfully as human means may be applied, and successful as they sometimes seem, the final result is sure to disappoint the hopes of their contrivers. The inward depravity of men, checked at one point, bursts forth at another, and then makes reprisals for its short season of compression by a reaction at once tremendous and disastrous. All experience shows that it is vain to seek to make men virtuous except upon principle. The Scripture, therefore, as might be expected, goes to the bottom, and makes thorough work. It does not confine its view to man's purposes, or habits, or outward relations. It aims at the heart, and seeks to purify the fountain of evil there. It proposes nothing less than a radical transformation of the whole man, so that whereas before it was his nature to love sin, now it shall be his nature to love holiness. Its object is to convince men, not of particular acts or courses of sin, however gross or alarming, but of their inward rooted estrangement from God, of which all corrupt works are the natural fruit. "All these evil things come from within." When thus convinced, they are immediately pointed to the Lamb of God as the only deliverer. Hence the

stress which is laid upon doctrine throughout the New Testament. Doctrine is the staple of every sermon and every epistle. Truth is the great means of renovation; it is the nutriment and life of the soul, nor can morals exist apart from it. Therefore, while the sacred writers inculcate moral duties frequently, and with great variety and cogency, and while they require ministers to "affirm constantly that they which have believed should be careful to maintain good works," they always present those good works as exemplifications of principles supposed to reside within. They authorize no expectation of gaining conformity to the divine law in any other way than through faith uniting to Christ, and securing the participation of his life. The moralities of Christian deportment are looked for, not as the result of education, training, resolution, oratory, prudence, or intelligence, but as the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the outworkings of his gracious indwelling in the heart. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," etc. (Gal. 5: 22, 23.) And the enjoyment of the influences of the blessed Comforter is traced directly to Christ, by whom he is sent as the guide and counsellor of them that believe. "In whom, *after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

Thus, throughout the New Testament, we find that the great stress of apostolic preaching is laid upon Christ. Among Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, the intellectual Athenians and the dissolute Corinthians, in imperial Rome and in far-distant provinces, the heralds of the Cross confined themselves to the terms of their commission, and proclaimed the simple Gospel, "testifying repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." The burden of all their exhortations and entreaties was the believing apprehension of the blessed Saviour. No duty, however meritorious intrinsically, was allowed to come into competition with this. Men's hearts must be made right before any other permanent improvement could be effected; and the only way in which the heart could be thoroughly rectified was by that grace which unites to Jesus. The Apostles followed the letter of our Lord's memorable reply to the question once propounded by the Jews: "What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Faith, the faith of the operation of God, they considered as the indispensable origin and means of all holy living. By faith ye stand. (2 Cor. 1: 24.) We walk by faith. (5: 7.) The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. (Gal. 2: 20.) This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 John 5: 4.) Such a course seemed foolish to the worldly moralists of that day, but very soon was Wisdom justified of her children. The simple reception of Christ proved the spring of a mighty transformation, working from within outwardly, and converting the slave of sin into a cheerful servant of God, established in every good word and work, so that even the miracles of healing wrought by the Apostles upon diseased and impotent bodies were surpassed by the prodigies wrought upon yet more diseased and helpless souls. The truth thus acting upon individuals in time affected



the masses of society, and silently caused the most remarkable amelioration of public morals which the world has ever seen.

Similar has been the experience of the Church in every subsequent age. In the work of christianizing the barbarians who overwhelmed the Roman Empire, in the Reformation begun by Luther, in the labors of Wesley and Whitfield, in the Great Awakening little more than a century since, and in the triumphs of modern missions to the heathen, the preaching of the Cross, of the doctrines of grace, was uniformly the secret of strength and the cause of victory. The great aim of these successful laborers was not to reform men, but to renew them, not to impose morality, but to infuse holiness, not to attack specific sins, but to overcome the rooted depravity from which every individual transgression arises; in short, to make men humble, sincere, earnest Christians. This being accomplished, the performance of every known moral duty was the natural spontaneous result. The testimony of BRAINERD as to his experience on this point is clearly and explicitly given in the ensuing pages. "Numbers of these people are brought to a strict compliance with the rules of morality and sobriety, and to a conscientious performance of the external duties of Christianity, by the internal power of divine truths upon their minds; without their having these moral duties frequently inculcated upon them, and the contrary vices particularly exposed and spoken against." "The continued strain of my preaching, my great concern and constant endeavor, was so to enlighten the mind as thereby to affect the heart, and as far as possible, give persons a sense of feeling of these precious and important doctrines of grace." The consequence was, "a remarkable reformation among the hearers in general." "When these truths were felt at heart, there was now no vice unreformed, no external duty neglected." These poor, ignorant, stupid, grovelling savages were lifted, as it were, at once out of the mire of drunkenness and sensuality. Of their own accord, they put off all works of the flesh. Some vicious practices which Brainerd had "never so much as mentioned," they dropped, simply through the operation of the inward change upon their hearts. In like manner, without prompting, they commenced the external duties of Christianity, such as family worship, the observance of the Lord's day, the religious training of their children, etc., "not because I had driven them to the performance of these duties by frequently inculcating them, but because they had felt the power of God's word upon their hearts." Indeed, when their faithful teacher mentioned their wicked practices, it was not with the design or even the hope of thus effecting a reform, but "to lead them, by observing the wickedness of their lives, to a view of the corruption of their hearts, and so convince them of the necessity of a renovation of nature." He took to himself, as a minister of the Gospel, our Lord's words: **CLEANSE FIRST THAT WHICH IS WITHIN THE CUP AND PLATTER, THAT THE OUTSIDE OF THEM MAY BE CLEAN ALSO.** (Matt. 23 : 26.) "Cleanso the inside *that* the outside may be clean. As if he had said, the only effectual way to have the outside clean is to begin with what is within; if the fountain be purified, the streams will naturally be pure." On this

principle BRAINERD labored, and with what amazing success! Notwithstanding the combination of difficulties in the way, the natural stolidity of these Indians, their life-long habits of intemperance and licentiousness, their confirmed indolence and ignorance, their prejudices and suspicions, their unstable mode of life, the imperfection of the medium through which he addressed them, and the unprincipled efforts of wicked white men to estrange them from the missionary; notwithstanding all this, he succeeded in gathering a band of disciples, of whom the illustrious William Tennent says that "it is wonderful to behold their inward conversion and outward reformation," adding, that their conversation, had often, under God, refreshed his own soul. Another minister (Charles McNight) said, that they "might justly be proposed as examples of godliness to all the white people around," and the elders and deacons of the Presbyterian church in Freehold officially certified, saying: "We see them walk, as far as men can judge, soberly, righteously, and godly." These converts were indeed filled with the fruits of righteousness. From being barbarians they became civilized. Instead of howling at drunken idolatrous feasts, they devoutly sang the praises of God in solemn worship. They delighted in prayer. They religiously observed the Lord's day. They coveted instruction for themselves and their children. They were conscientious in the observance of all relative duties. In short, in less than a twelvemonth a tribe of low, debased savages were converted into a peaceful, intelligent, and moral community. Their religion was animated and zealous, yet un-mixed with fanaticism or wild-fire; and their morality, resting upon vital principle, was consistent, steadfast, and pure.

From the whole subject, the following principles may be deduced:

I. The Gospel of Christ, as it is the only ordained means of saving them that believe, is also the only sure means of effecting moral reform. *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus.*

II. It does this not so much by its precepts as by its doctrines, not by attacking vices in detail, but by seeking, and under the operation of the Holy Ghost effecting, the entire renovation of the heart. *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

III. The preaching of Christ crucified, the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation, furnishes not merely the best, but the only way to heal great social evils, and elevate the masses of mankind. *Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.*

IV. They who attempt this end by other means act in opposition to God's method, and not only waste their strength, but do harm, by occasioning a reaction which makes "the last state worse than the first." *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.*

GENERAL REMARKS  
ON THE  
WORK OF GRACE.

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- I. ON THE DOCTRINES PREACHED TO THE INDIANS.  
II. ON THE MORAL EFFECTS OF PREACHING CHRIST  
CRUCIFIED.  
III. ON THE CONTINUANCE, RENEWAL, AND QUICKNESS  
OF THE WORK.  
IV. ON THE LITTLE APPEARANCE OF FALSE RELIGION.

A. D. 1745, 1746.

At the close of this narrative, I would make a few general remarks upon what, to me, appears worthy of notice, relating to the continued work of grace among my people.

I. ON THE DOCTRINES PREACHED TO THE INDIANS.

I can not but take notice that I have in general, ever since my first coming among the Indians in New-Jersey, been favored with that assistance which, to me, is *uncommon*, in preaching *Christ crucified*, and making him the *centre* and *mark* to which all my discourses among them were directed.

It was the principal scope and drift of all my discourses to this people for several months together, (after having taught them something of the *being* and *perfections* of God, his creation of man in a state of rectitude and happiness, and the obligations mankind were thence under to love and honor him,) to lead them into an acquaintance with their deplorable state by nature, *as fallen creatures*; their *inability* to extricate and deliver themselves from it; the *utter insufficiency* of any *external* reformatations and amendments of life, or of any religious performances of which *they* were capable, while in this state, to bring them into the favor of God, and interest them in his eternal mercy; thence to show them their *absolute* need of Christ, to redeem and save them from the misery of their fallen state; to open his *all-sufficiency* and willingness to save the chief of sinners; the *freeness* and *riches* of divine grace, proposed "without money and without price," to all who will accept the offer; thereupon to press them, *without delay*, to betake themselves to him, under a sense of their misery and *undone* state, for relief and everlasting salvation; and to show them the abundant encouragement the Gospel proposes to needy, perishing, and helpless sinners, in order to *engage* them so to do. These things I repeatedly and largely insisted upon, from time to time.

I have oftentimes remarked, with admiration, that whatever subject I have been treating upon, after having spent time sufficient to explain and illustrate the truths contained therein, I have been *naturally* and *easily* led to Christ as the *substance* of every subject. If I treated on the being and glorious perfections of God, I was thence *naturally* led to discourse of Christ as the only "way to the Father." If I attempted to open the deplorable misery of our fallen state, it was natural from thence to show the necessity of Christ to undertake for us, to atone for our sins, and to redeem us from the power of them. If I taught the commands of God, and showed our violation of them, this brought me, in the most *easy* and natural way, to speak of and recommend the Lord Jesus Christ, as one who had "magnified the law" which we had

broken, and who was "become the end of it for righteousness to every one that believes." Never did I find so much freedom and assistance in making all the various lines of my discourses meet together, and centre in Christ, as I have frequently done among these Indians.

Sometimes, when I have had thoughts of offering but a few words upon some particular subject, and saw no occasion, nor indeed much room for any considerable enlargement, there has at unawares appeared such a fountain of Gospel-grace shining forth in, or *naturally* resulting from a just explication of it, and Christ has seemed in such a manner to be pointed out as the *substance* of what I was considering and explaining, that I have been drawn in a way not only *easy* and *natural*, *proper* and *pertinent*, but almost *unavoidable*, to discourse of him, either in regard of his undertaking, incarnation, satisfaction, admirable fitness for the work of man's redemption, or the infinite need that sinners stand in of an interest in him, which has opened the way for a continued strain of Gospel invitation to perishing souls, to come *empty* and *naked*, *weary* and *heavy-laden*, and cast themselves upon him.

As I have been remarkably influenced and assisted to dwell upon the Lord Jesus Christ and the way of salvation by him, in the general current of my discourses here, and have been, at times, surprisingly furnished with pertinent *matter* relating to him, and the design of his incarnation, so I have been no less assisted oftentimes, in an advantageous *manner* of opening the mysteries of divine grace, and representing the infinite excellencies and "unsearchable riches of Christ," as well as of recommending him to the acceptance of perishing sinners. I have frequently been *enabled* to represent the divine glory, the infinite preciousness and transcendent loveliness of the great Redeemer, the suitableness of his person and purchase to supply the wants, and answer the utmost desires of immortal souls; to open the infinite riches of his grace, and the wonderful encouragement proposed in the Gospel to unworthy, helpless sinners; to call, invite, and beseech them to come and give up themselves to him, and be

reconciled to God through him; to expostulate with them respecting their neglect of one so infinitely lovely and freely offered; and *this in such a manner*, with *such* freedom, pertinency, pathos, and application to the conscience, as I am sure I never could have made myself master of, by the most assiduous application of mind. Frequently, at such seasons, I have been surprisingly helped in adapting my discourses to the *capacities* of my people, and bringing them down into such easy and familiar methods of expression, as has rendered them intelligible even to Pagans.

I do not mention these things as a recommendation of my own performances; for I am sure I found, from time to time, that I had no skill or wisdom for my great work, and knew not how "to choose out acceptable words," proper to address poor benighted Pagans with. But thus God was pleased to help me, "not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Thus I was *enabled* to show them their *misery* without him, and to represent his complete *fitness* to redeem and save them.

*This* was the preaching God made use of for the awakening of sinners, and the propagation of this "work of grace among the Indians." It was remarkable, from time to time, that when I was favored with any *special* freedom in discoursing of the "ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners," and "the need in which they stood of such a Saviour," there was then the greatest appearance of divine power in awakening numbers of secure souls, promoting convictions begun, and comforting the distressed.

I have sometimes, formerly, in reading the Apostle's discourse to Cornelius, (Acts 10,) wondered to see him so quickly introduce the Lord Jesus Christ into his sermon, and so entirely dwell upon him through the whole of it, observing him in this point very widely to differ from many of our *modern* preachers; but latterly this has not seemed strange, since Christ has appeared to be the *substance* of the Gospel, and the *centre* in which the several lines of divine revelation meet. Still I am sensible that

there are many things necessary to be spoken to persons under Pagan darkness, in order to make way for a proper introduction of the name of Christ, and his undertaking in behalf of fallen man.

## II. ON THE MORAL EFFECTS OF PREACHING CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

It is worthy of remark that numbers of these people are brought to a strict compliance with the rules of *moral-ity* and *sobriety*, and to a conscientious performance of the *external duties* of Christianity, by the *internal* power and influence of divine truths—the peculiar doctrines of grace—upon their minds, without their having these *moral duties* frequently repeated and inculcated upon them, and the contrary vices particularly exposed and spoken against. What has been the general *strain* and *drift* of my preaching among these Indians, what were the truths I principally insisted upon, and how I was influenced and enabled to dwell from time to time upon the peculiar doctrines of grace, I have already observed in the preceding remarks. Those doctrines, which had the most direct tendency to humble the *fallen* creature; to show him the misery of his *natural* state; to bring him down to the foot of *sovereign mercy*; and to exalt the great Redeemer, discover his transcendent excellency and infinite preciousness, and so to recommend him to the sinner's acceptance—were the subject-matter of what was delivered in public and private to them, and from time to time repeated and inculcated upon them.

God was pleased to give these divine truths such a powerful influence upon the minds of these people, and so to bless them for the effectual awakening of numbers of them, that their lives were quickly reformed, without my insisting upon the *precepts* of *moral-ity*, and spending time in repeated harangues upon *external* duties. There was, indeed, no room for any kind of discourses but those which respected the *essentials* of religion, and the *experimental* knowledge of divine things, while there were so many inquiring daily—not how they should regulate their

*external* conduct, for *that* persons who are honestly disposed to comply with duty, when known, may in ordinary cases be easily satisfied about—but how they should escape from the wrath they feared and felt a desert of, obtain an *effectual change of heart*, get an interest in Christ, and come to the enjoyment of eternal blessedness. So that my *great work* still was to lead them into a further view of their *utter undoneness* in themselves, the total depravity and corruption of their hearts—that there was no manner of goodness in them, no good dispositions nor desires, no love to God, nor delight in his commands, but on the contrary, hatred, enmity, and all manner of wickedness reigning in them; and at the same time to open to them the glorious and complete remedy provided in Christ for helpless, perishing sinners, and offered freely to those who have no goodness of their own, no “works of righteousness which they have done to recommend them to God.”

This was the continued strain of my preaching, this my great concern and constant endeavor, so to enlighten the mind as thereby duly to affect the *heart*, and as far as possible give persons a *sense of feeling* of these precious and important doctrines of grace, at least so far as means might conduce to it. These were the doctrines, and this the method of preaching, which were blessed of God for the awakening, and I trust the saving conversion of numbers of souls, and which were made the means of producing a remarkable reformation among the hearers in general.

When these truths were felt *at heart*, there was now no vice unreformed, no external duty neglected. Drunkenness, the darling vice, was broken off from, and scarce an instance of it known among my hearers, for months together. The abusive practice of *husbands* and *wives*, in putting away each other, and taking others in their stead, was quickly reformed, so that there are three or four couple who have voluntarily dismissed those whom they had wrongfully taken, and now live together in love and peace. The same might be said of all other vicious practices. The reformation was general, and all springing from the *internal* influence of divine truths upon their



hearts, and not from any *external* restraints, or because they had heard these vices particularly exposed and repeatedly spoken against. Some of them I never so much as mentioned, particularly that of the parting of men and their wives, till some, having their conscience awakened by God's word, came, and *of their own accord* confessed themselves guilty in that respect. When I at any time mentioned their wicked practices, and the sins they were guilty of, contrary to the *light of nature*, it was not with a design, nor indeed with any hope of working an effectual reformation in their external manners by this means, for I knew that while the *tree* remained *corrupt*, the *fruit* would *naturally* be so. My design was to lead them, by observing the wickedness of their *lives*, to a view of the corruption of their *hearts*, and so to convince them of the necessity of a renovation of nature, and to excite them with the utmost diligence to seek after that great change, which, if once obtained, I was sensible would of course produce a reformation of external manners in every respect.

And as all vice was reformed upon their *feeling* the power of these truths upon their hearts, so the *external* duties of Christianity were complied with, and conscientiously performed from the same *internal* influence—family prayer set up and constantly maintained, unless among some few more lately come, who had felt little of this divine influence. This duty was constantly performed, even in some families where there were none but *females*, and scarce a prayerless person was to be found among near an hundred of them. The Lord's day was seriously and religiously observed, and care taken by parents to keep their children orderly upon that sacred day; and this, not because I had driven them to the performance of these duties, by frequently inculcating them, but because they had *felt* the power of God's word upon their hearts—were made sensible of their sin and misery, and thence could not but pray and comply with every thing which they knew to be their duty, from what they felt *within* themselves. When their hearts were touched with a sense of their eternal concerns, they could pray with great free-

dom, as well as fervency, without being at the trouble first to learn *set forms* for that purpose. Some of them, who were suddenly awakened at their first coming among us, were brought to pray and cry for mercy with the utmost importunity, without ever being instructed in the duty of prayer, or so much as once directed to a performance of it.

The happy effects of these peculiar doctrines of grace, upon which I have so much insisted upon this people, plainly discover, even to demonstration, that instead of their opening a door to licentiousness, as many vainly imagine and slanderously insinuate, they have a directly contrary tendency; so that a close application, a *sense* and *feeling* of them, will have the most powerful influence toward the renovation and *effectual* reformation both of heart and life.

Happy experience, as well as the word of God and the example of Christ and his apostles, has taught me that the very method of preaching which is best suited to awaken in mankind a sense and lively apprehension of their depravity and misery in a *fallen state*—to excite them earnestly to seek after a change of heart, as to *fly for refuge* to free and sovereign grace in Christ as the only *hope set before them*—is likely to be most *successful* in the reformation of their *external* conduct. I have found that close addresses, and solemn applications of divine truth to the conscience, strike at the root of all vice, while smooth and plausible harangues upon *moral virtues* and *external duties*, at best are like to do no more than lop off the *branches* of corruption, while the *root* of all vice remains still untouched.

A view of the blessed effect of honest endeavors to bring home divine truths to the conscience, and duly to affect the heart with them, has often reminded me of those words of our Lord, which I have thought might be a proper exhortation for ministers, in respect of their treating with others, as well as for persons in general with regard to themselves: "Cleanse first the inside of the cup and platter, that the outside may be clean also." Cleanse, says he, the inside, *that* the outside may be

clean. As if he had said : The only effectual way to have the outside clean is to begin *with what is within* ; and if the fountain be purified, the streams will *naturally* be pure. Most certain it is, if we can awaken in sinners a lively sense of their inward pollution and depravity, their need of a change of heart, and so engage them to seek after *inward* cleansing, their *external* defilement will *naturally* be cleansed, their vicious ways of *course* be reformed, and their conversation and behavior become regular.

Now, although I can not pretend that the reformation among my people does, in every instance, spring from a saving change of heart, yet I may truly say it flows from some *heart-affecting* view and sense of divine truths which all have had in a greater or less degree. I do not intend, by what I have observed here, to represent the preaching of *morality*, and pressing persons to the *external* performance of duty to be altogether unnecessary and useless *at any time*, and especially at times when there is less of divine power attending the means of grace—when, for want of *internal* influences, there is need of *external* restraints. It is doubtless among the things that “ought to be done,” while “others are not to be left undone.” But what I principally designed by this remark was to discover a plain matter of fact, namely, that the reformation, the sobriety, and the external compliance with the rules and duties of Christianity, appearing among my people, are not the effect of any *mere* doctrinal instruction, or *merely* rational view of the beauty of *morality*, but from the internal power and influence which the soul-humbling doctrines of grace have had upon their hearts.

### III. ON THE CONTINUANCE, RENEWAL, AND QUICKNESS OF THE WORK.

It is remarkable that God has so *continued* and *renewed* the showers of his grace here, so *quickly* set up his visible kingdom among these people, and so *smiled* upon them in relation to their acquirement of knowledge, both divine and human. It is now nearly a year since the beginning of this gracious outpouring of the divine Spirit

among them; and although it has often seemed to decline and abate for some short space of time—as may be observed by several passages of my *Journal*, where I have endeavored to note things just as they appeared to me—yet the shower has seemed to be *renewed*, and the work of grace *revived* again. A divine influence seems still apparently to attend the means of grace, in a greater or less degree, in most of our meetings for religious exercises, whereby religious persons are refreshed, strengthened, and established, convictions revived and promoted, in many instances, and some few persons newly awakened from time to time. It must be acknowledged that for some time past there has, in general, appeared a more manifest decline of this work; and the divine Spirit has seemed, in a considerable measure, withdrawn, especially with regard to his *awakening* influence, so that the *strangers* who come latterly are not seized with concern, as formerly, and some few who have been much affected with divine truths in time past, now appear less concerned; yet blessed be God, there is still an appearance of divine power and grace, a desirable degree of tenderness, religious affection, and devotion in our assemblies.

As God has continued and renewed the showers of his grace among this people for some time, so he has, with uncommon *quickness*, set up his visible kingdom, and gathered himself a church in the midst of them. I have now *baptized*, since the conclusion of my last *Journal*, (or the *First Part*,) *thirty* persons, *fifteen* adults and *fifteen* children, which, added to the number there mentioned, makes *seventy-seven* persons, whereof *thirty-eight* are adults, and *thirty-nine* children; and all within the space of *eleven* months past. It must be noted that I have baptized no adults but such as appeared to have a work of special grace wrought in their hearts. I mean such as have had the experience not only of the awakening and humbling, but, in a judgment of charity, of the renewing and confirming influences of the divine Spirit. There are many others under solemn concern for their souls, who, I apprehend, are persons of sufficient knowledge and visible seriousness, *at present*, to render them proper subjects of the ordinance of baptism. Yet since they give no

*comfortable evidence* of a saving change, but only appear under convictions of their sin and misery, as the propensity in this people to abuse themselves with strong drink is *naturally* very great, and as some who at present appear serious and concerned for their souls may lose their concern, and return to *this* sin, and so, if baptized, prove a scandal to their profession, I have thought proper hitherto to defer their baptism.

I likewise administered the Lord's supper to a number of persons, who, I have abundant reason to think, as I elsewhere observed, were proper subjects for that ordinance, within the space of *ten months* and *ten days* after my first coming among these Indians in New-Jersey. From the time when, as I am informed, some of them, attending an *idolatrous feast* and *sacrifice*, in honor to *devils*, to the time when they sat down at the Lord's table, I trust to the honor of God, was not more than a *full year*. Surely Christ's little flock here, so suddenly gathered from among Pagans, may justly say, in the language of the Church of old, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Much of the goodness of God has also appeared in relation to their acquirement of knowledge, both in religion and in the affairs of common life. There has been a wonderful thirst after *Christian knowledge* prevailing among them in general, and an eager desire of being instructed in Christian doctrines and manners. This has prompted them to ask many pertinent as well as important questions, the answers to which have tended much to enlighten their minds, and promote their knowledge in divine things. Many of the doctrines which I have delivered, they have queried with me about, in order to gain further light and insight into them; particularly the doctrine of *predestination*; and have from time to time manifested a good understanding of them, by their answers to the questions proposed to them in my *catechetical lectures*.

They have likewise queried with me respecting a proper *method*, as well as proper *matter* of prayer, and expressions suitable to be used in that religious exercise, and have taken pains in order to the performance of this

duty with understanding. They have likewise taken pains and appeared remarkably apt in learning to sing *Psalm-tunes*, and are now able to sing with a good degree of decency in the worship of God. They have also acquired a considerable degree of useful knowledge in the affairs of common life; so that they now appear like *rational* creatures, fit for human society, free of that savage roughness and brutish stupidity which rendered them very disagreeable in their Pagan state.

They seem ambitious of a thorough acquaintance with the English language, and for that end frequently speak it among themselves. Many of them have made good proficiency in their acquirement of it, since my coming among them, so that most of them can understand a considerable part, and some the substance of my discourses, without an *interpreter*, being used to my low and vulgar methods of expression, though they could not well understand other ministers.

As they are desirous of instruction, and surprisingly apt in the reception of it, so divine Providence has smiled upon them with regard to the *proper means* in order to it. The attempts made for the procurement of a *school* among them have been succeeded, and a kind Providence has sent them a *schoolmaster* of whom I may justly say, I know of "no man like-minded, who will naturally care for their state." He has generally *thirty* or *thirty-five* children in his school; and when he kept an evening-school, as he did while the length of the evenings would admit of it, he had *fifteen* or *twenty* people, married and single.

The children learn with *surprising readiness*, so that their *master* tells me he never had an English school which learned, in general, comparably so fast. There were not above *two* in *thirty*, although some of them were very small, but that learned to know all the *letters* in the *alphabet* distinctly, within three days after his entrance upon his business; and several, in that space of time, learned to *spell* considerably. Some of them, since the beginning of February last,\* when the school was set up,

\* In less than five months, namely, from Feb. 1 to June 19.

have learned so much that they are able to read in a *Psalter* or *Testament* without spelling.

They are instructed twice a week in the Assembly's *Shorter Catechism*, on Wednesday and Saturday. *Some* of them, since the latter end of February, when they began, have learned to say it pretty distinctly *by heart*, considerably more than half through, and *most* of them have made some proficiency in it.

They are likewise instructed in the duty of secret prayer, and most of them constantly attend it night and morning, and are very careful to inform their master if they apprehend that any of their little school-mates neglect that religious exercise.

#### IV. ON THE LITTLE APPEARANCE OF FALSE RELIGION.

It is worthy to be noted, to the praise of sovereign grace, that amidst *so great* a work of conviction, so much concern and religious affection, there has been no *prevalence*, nor indeed any considerable *appearance* of *false religion*, if I may so term it, or heats of imagination, intemperate zeal, and spiritual pride, which corrupt mixtures too often attend the revival and powerful propagation of religion; and that there have been very few instances of irregular and scandalous behavior among those who have appeared serious. I may justly repeat what I formerly observed, that there has here been no appearance of "bodily agonies, convulsions, frightful screamings, swoonings," and the like; and may now further add that there has been no *prevalence* of visions, trances, and imaginations of any kind, although there has been *some appearance* of something of that nature, an instance of which I have given an account of in my diary for December 26.

But this *work of grace* has, in the main, been carried on with a surprising degree of *purity*, and freedom from *trash* and corrupt mixture. The religious concern under which persons have been has generally been *rational* and *just*, arising from a *sense* of their sins and exposedness to the divine displeasure on account of them, as well as their utter inability to deliver themselves from the misery which they felt and feared. If there has been, in any in-

stance, an *appearance* of concern and perturbation of mind, when the subjects of it knew not why, yet there has been no *prevalence* of any such thing; and indeed I scarcely know of any instance of that nature at all. It is very remarkable that, although the concern of many persons under convictions of their perishing state has been very great and pressing, yet I have never seen any thing like *desperation* attending it in any one instance. They have had the most *lively sense* of their *undoneness* in themselves; have been brought to give up *all hopes* of deliverance from themselves; have experienced great distress and anguish of soul; and yet, in the seasons of the greatest extremity, there has been no appearance of *despair* in any of them—nothing that has discouraged or in any wise hindered them from the most diligent use of all proper means for their conversion and salvation. Hence it is apparent that there is not that danger of persons being driven into despair under *spiritual trouble*, unless in cases of deep and habitual melancholy, which the world in general is ready to imagine.

The *comfort* which persons have obtained after their distresses, has likewise in general appeared solid, well-grounded, and scriptural, arising from a spiritual and *supernatural illumination* of mind; a view of divine things, in a measure, *as they are*; a complacency of soul in the divine perfections; and a peculiar satisfaction in the *way of salvation* by free *sovereign grace* in the great Redeemer.

Their joys have seemed to rise from a variety of views and considerations of divine things, although for substance the same. Some who, under *conviction*, seemed to have the hardest struggles and heart-risings against the divine *sovereignty*, have seemed, at the first dawn of their comfort, to rejoice in a peculiar manner in *that* divine perfection, and have been delighted to think that themselves and all things else were in the hand of God, and that he would dispose of them “just as he pleased.”

Others, who, just before their reception of comfort, have been remarkably oppressed with a sense of their *undoneness* and poverty, who have seen themselves, as it were, falling down into remediless perdition, have been



at first more peculiarly delighted with a view of the *freeness* and *riches* of divine grace, and the offer of salvation made to perishing sinners, "without money and without price."

Some have at first appeared to rejoice especially in the *wisdom* of God, discovered in the way of salvation by Christ. It then appearing to them "a new and living way," a way of which they had never thought, nor had any just conceptions, until opened to them by the *special* influence of the divine Spirit. Some of them, upon a lively *spiritual* view of this way of salvation, have wondered at their past folly in seeking salvation in other ways, and have wondered that they never saw *this* way of salvation before, which now appeared so *plain* and *easy*, as well as *excellent* to them.

Others, again, have had a more *general* view of the beauty and excellency of Christ, and have had their souls delighted with an apprehension of his divine glory, as unspeakably exceeding *all* of which they had ever conceived before; yet without singling out any one of the divine perfections in particular; so that, although their comforts have seemed to arise from a *variety* of views and considerations of divine glories, still they were *spiritual* and *supernatural* views of them, and not groundless fancies, which were the spring of their joys and comforts.

Yet it must be acknowledged that when this work became so *universal* and *prevalent*, and gained such general credit and esteem among the Indians, as Satan seemed to have little advantage of working against it in his own proper garb, he then *transformed* himself "into an angel of light," and made some vigorous attempts to introduce turbulent commotions of the passions in the *room* of genuine convictions of sin, imaginary and fanciful notions of Christ, as appearing to the mental eye in a human shape, and in some particular postures, etc., in the room of *spiritual* and *supernatural* discoveries of his divine glory and excellency, as well as divers other delusions. I have reason to think that if these things had met with countenance and encouragement, there would have been a very considerable *harvest* of this kind of *converts* here.

*Spiritual pride* also discovered itself in various instances.

Some persons who had been under great affections seemed very desirous, from thence, of being thought truly gracious; who, when I could not but express to them my fears respecting their spiritual state, discovered their resentments to a considerable degree upon that occasion. There also appeared, in *one* or *two* of them, an unbecoming ambition of being *teachers* of others. So that *Satan* has been a *busy adversary* here, as well as elsewhere. But blessed be God, though something of this nature has appeared, yet nothing of it has *prevailed*, nor indeed made any considerable progress at all. My people are now apprized of these things, are made acquainted that *Satan* in such a manner "transformed himself into an angel of light" in the first season of the great *outpouring* of the divine Spirit in the days of the apostles, and that something of this nature, in a greater or less degree, has attended almost every *revival* and remarkable *propagation* of true religion ever since. They have learned *so* to distinguish between the *gold* and *dross*, that the credit of the latter "is trodden down like the mire of the streets," and as it is natural for this kind of *stuff* to die with its *credit*, there is now scarce any *appearance* of it among them.

As there has been no *prevalence* of irregular heats, imaginary notions, spiritual pride, and Satanical delusions among my people, so there have been very few instances of *scandalous* and *irregular* behavior among those who have made a *profession*, or even an *appearance* of seriousness. I do not know of more than three or four *such* persons who have been guilty of any open misconduct since their first acquaintance with Christianity, and *not one* who persists in any thing of that nature. Perhaps the remarkable purity of this work in the *latter* respect, its freedom from frequent instances of scandal, is very much owing to its purity in the *former* respect, its freedom from corrupt mixtures of spiritual pride, wild-fire and delusion, which naturally lay a foundation for scandalous practices.

May this blessed work, in the power and purity of it, prevail among the poor Indians here, as well as spread elsewhere, till their remotest tribes shall see the salvation of God! AMEN.

EXTRACTS FROM A DISCOURSE

ON

“Rules for the Preacher’s Conduct.”

BY DR. WATTS.

WRITTEN IN 1729.

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“*In speaking of the great things of God and religion, remember you are a minister of Christ and the gospel, sent to publish to men what God has revealed by his Prophets and Apostles, and by his Son Jesus; and not a heathen philosopher, to teach the people merely what the light of reason can search out.*”

“These were the sacred weapons with which those were armed, to whom our exalted Saviour gave commission to travel through the dominions of Satan, which were spread over the heathen countries, and raise up a kingdom for himself amongst them. It was with principles, rules, and motives derived from the gospel, that they were sent to attack the reigning vices of mankind, to reform profligate nations, and to turn them from dumb idols to serve the living God. And though St. Paul was a man of learning above the rest, yet he was not sent to preach the enticing words of man’s wisdom, nor to talk as the disputers of the age and the philosophers did in their schools, but his business was to preach Christ crucified; though this doctrine of the cross, and the Son of God suspended on it, was a stumbling-block to the Jews, and the Greeks counted it foolishness, yet to them that were called, both Jews and Greeks, this doctrine was the power of God, and the wisdom of God for the salvation of men. And, therefore, St. Paul determined to know nothing among them, in comparison of the doctrine of Christ and him crucified. These were the weapons of his warfare, which were mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan in the hearts of men, and brought every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It was by ministration of the gospel, that the fornicators were made chaste and holy, and idolaters became worshipers of the God of heaven; that thieves learnt honest labor, and the covetous were taught to seek treasures in heaven; the drunkards grew out of love with their cups, and renounced all intemperance; the revilers governed their tongues, and spoke well of their neighbors, and the cruel extortioners and oppressors learned to practice compassion and charity; these vilest of sinners, these children of hell, were made heirs of the kingdom of heaven; being washed, being sanctified, being justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

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