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ARTICLE I.

THE HISTORY OF THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM.

In its opening pages, the Bible gives us the account of Paradise lost; and man forsaken of his God. It closes with a glowing view in the future of Paradise restored, and God again dwelling with man on the renovated earth. The whole period between is filled up with the history of the mediatorial kingdom. There was a time when this form of the divine administration did not exist, and the great and holy God took delight in immediate intercourse with man here on earth. There will come a time when he will again do so; but not until every vestige of sin's dominion is wiped out, and death itself, the last enemy, destroyed, and all things made new. This is the mighty work of the Mediator King, the God-man, Jesus Christ. This is the grand design of his kingdom. The mercy of God founded it for the redemption of our fallen race and the vindication of his own honor; the wisdom, power, and love of the Son are carrying it forward to the final consummation. Then again God shall dwell with man as at his creation; and the Lamb, his mediatorial

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“There Magdalene hath left her moan,
 And cheerfully doth sing
 With blessed saints, whose harmony
 In every street doth ring.

“Jerusalem, my happy home!
 Would God I were in thee;
 Would God my woes were at an end,
 Thy joys that I might see.”*

ARTICLE IV.

THE GREAT COMMISSION.

An article on Popular Revivals, in a former number of this REVIEW, having met the approbation of many judicious brethren throughout the country, the writer feels encouraged to offer a few additional reflections, growing out of the same or a kindred subject.

In the execution of redemption, three instrumentalities are mainly employed—the preacher, the gospel, and the Holy Ghost. Take either away, and the economy is marred. Before the Saviour’s ascent, he selected and commissioned certain disciples, whose business it should be to preach. The ministry, therefore, is an office of divine appointment. “Go ye therefore,” etc. “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” Paul says: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.” “Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.” Once again, it is said: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, or bishops, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” And once more: “I will give you pastors according to mine heart”

* From the fine old ballad version.

which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." None, therefore, but the lawfully ordained may preach and administer the sacraments. Paul's directions to Timothy on this subject were as follows: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit* thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The forms to be observed are also laid down explicitly. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*." No man, therefore, taketh this honor to himself, but he must be called of God, and the divinely appointed arrangement and order of God's house should be respected throughout. The Confession of Faith says: "The word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office." The call of the candidate must be measured by his qualifications. It need hardly be said that the Church which we represent demands convincing evidences of piety in those who seek the sacred office. If any one fails at this point, no measure of talent and no amount of learning will compensate. "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous," etc. "Moreover, he must have a good report of them which are without." No unconverted man should ever look for a moment toward the gospel ministry. Nor should every regenerate person even consider himself called. A desire for the work in conjunction with manifest and acknowledged fitness—these are the indispensable conditions. Not only must there be moral worth on the one hand, but aptness to teach on the other. These two things must not be separated. For it is impossible to conceive of a successful teacher in any field who does not combine, to some extent, vigilance, sobriety, good behavior, patience, and a blameless life, with a preference of and aptness for his chosen profession. The command of the Master is, train, disciple, educate the nations. A man, therefore, who teaches others, must himself be taught. Three years did the Master himself instruct the

first preachers. With a world's necessities as large then as ever, the Lord Jesus kept back apostles until their preparatory work was fully complete.

The Church of the present day, especially, cannot afford to lower her standards. There is urgency now, more than heretofore, for scholarly attainment. Congregations, the people generally, demand the instructed scribe. A preacher, in these times, should blush for shame, who, from week to week, feeds the flock of Christ upon dried husks and unbeaten oil. That man mistakes the matter altogether who supposes that any teacher in the pulpit ever failed on account of learning. If human love is only made tributary to the cross, and if to the garnered treasures of genius there be also added that fire that comes from heaven, then shall the minister's power be enhanced beyond calculation.

The Master has commissioned his ambassadors to teach, and this teaching is to be effected chiefly *by preaching*. "Whom we preach," says an apostle, "warning every man, and *teaching* every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." He who spake as never man spake understood most fully the capacities and power that dwell in outspoken truth. Without its apostles and ministers, the history of Christianity might have been signally different. Matins, vespers, statues, pictures, robes, temple adornings—no earnest soul can be satisfied by these. To sound the lowest deeps, there must be *life*. Even the written word, although altogether true, is not enough. A messenger must *speak* to us. The living truth must be borne to our inmost souls from *lips* that have been touched with live coals from off the altar.

We are told that Dr. John Mason so read the Scriptures that it was a commentary upon them, and that Dr. Nettleton so read the hymn that it often proved a sermon. We would not by any means turn the sacred desk into a stage, and fill the morning papers with advertisements of one claptrap and another; for whatever of apparent success is temporarily secured by such unhallowed devices, truth makes its reprisals in the end, and all honest minds are disgusted. But it is most clearly the preacher's

duty to study deeply all methods and models of the Holy Spirit, and to preach as to manner with dignity, independence, gentleness, simplicity, and earnestness, and with an humble dependence always and every where upon the divine promise, *Lo, I am with you alway*. So much for the preacher, the first great instrumentality.

In the second place, the minister is not only to preach, but to preach the *gospel*. That is, Christ and him crucified. Whatever relates to the priestly, prophetic, or kingly work of the Master, is to be faithfully unfolded. This is the glad tidings. The *cross* should be the preacher's glory. In such preaching, there is power. The missionary went to Greenland and tried logic. He began with first principles. The law was discussed, and the attributes of God reasoned about. But the heathen were unmoved. The preacher grew despondent. What shall be done? Must he go away and meet the scoffer? Is there no gospel for Greenland? Can this be admitted? Aye; but the missionary considers, Has he tried the *gospel*? Has he preached to these heathens as Peter preached on the day of Pentecost? He goes back to the people; but this time it is the Lord's message, and not man's. There is a change instantly. The strangers are moved. Lips tremble and the eye is moist. Tell us again, say they, that story about Jesus. And again and again the story is told, till hundreds, who could not be moved by philosophy, are thrilled and converted by the *gospel*. The multitudes need the truth very plainly spoken. It has been well remarked that unlettered men, the masses, must have something far better than that meagre system which arrogates to itself the title of philosophical Christianity. On this subject, we have the testimony of such men as Mason and Dwight and Edwards. To be unintelligible to the illiterate, is not to preach the gospel to every creature. Elegant dissertations will not do for the sick, the sorrowful, the perishing. The gospel is for the poor. The preacher is to deal with relations which are eternal. To-day he is to preach, to preach plainly and scripturally; for to multitudes there will be no to-morrow.

Whatever is subtle and refined, says Hannah More, is in

danger of being unscriptural. If we do not guard the mind, it will wander in quest of novelties. The preacher is ambassador for God, and ambassador to men, whose actions, words, and thoughts, go up to the judgment.

The most literary and scientific men are not always the best preachers. Such persons are often ignorant of the wants of ordinary humanity. They live apart, and affect to crucify the common feelings and sympathies which bind them to their fellows. They speak down to human nature, instead of standing on its level, as Jesus of Nazareth did, when he stood on that last and great day of the feast, mingling in its joys and its sorrows, and crying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Bethany and Olivet, Jerusalem and Gethsemane—all are hallowed by tenderness surpassing and grand. And yet the whole was so simple! No philosophical style, no scientific formula, no new terminology, no puzzling abstractions, no far-fetched argumentation! The lily, the thorn, the mustard-seed, the little birds, a fallen tower, the rain, an angry sky, and the like, gave occasion for the utterance of high and imperishable ideas. His language was that of the common people; and yet those who listened to him oftenest could faithfully testify that his word was with power. The Master did not stand apart and wait for the people to grow up to his measure, but he went down after them, and never man spake as this man. Jesus spake as if he knew that men did not need proof, and that they already had within them the highest of all proof.* He could afford to be simple, for his speech abounded in ideas, and it was not necessary to conceal the poverty of *thought* by a very forest of verbiage.

Whilst we even insist upon learning, this, of itself, must not be relied upon. We are told that Isaac Barrow was more cultured than John Newton, but Newton was Barrow's superior in the pulpit. Ezra Stiles was the most learned man of his day, but his neighbor, Joseph Bellamy, could outpreach him. Samuel Stanhope Smith was a finished scholar, but not comparable to Davies in winning souls to Christ. Says an intelligent writer: "There are biographies which are replete with instruction in

* Young's Christ of History.

regard to the secret of ministerial success, and warn in emphatic terms against the mistakes into which some good men have fallen. We have been exceedingly struck by the comparative fruitlessness of certain kinds of preaching, particularly that sort in which metaphysical refinement undertakes to reason out everything from first principles." Metaphysics is good, and philosophy is good, in the right place; but the gospel is better, infinitely better; for it is here, and here only, that we have *the power* of God unto salvation.

A preacher, remarks Dr. Edwards, has nothing to do to invent new truths. The law of the Lord, *as he reveals it*, is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The Bible must be to us what the pillar of fire and cloud were to Moses. Where that goes, we must go; where that stops, we must stop. Go without this, and we go without God. *The promise is to my word.*

And after all, the holy volume contains the widest, deepest, truest philosophy; a philosophy that not only excites the intellect, but begets emotion; that deals not alone with the head, but brings into captivity the heart. No hideous monsters are germinated; but taking the creature as it finds him, it cultivates every part. The entire individual, with *all his members*, is cast into a gospel mould, and we are presented at last with a perfect man, but perfect only in Christ Jesus. Nothing else but the word of God will do this; for nothing else is the sword of the Spirit. It is before the edge and glitter of this weapon that the god of this world cowers, retreats, and yields. Strange, too, as it may appear, here is a word that wounds and heals, breaks and binds, casts into prison or gives quick deliverance, is the savor of life unto one and the savor of death unto another.

It has been well said, "that the minister who preaches every Sabbath against heresy will soon have a whole congregation of heretics." On the contrary, if we would break down and eradicate every stronghold of error, no instrument, for efficacy, can be compared with the simple, unsophisticated gospel. German intellect cut loose from the ancient moorings and went out upon the wide, wide sea of speculation, to measure the immeasurable.

But, for all this, were the people better instructed? Did the truth gain adherents? Do German multitudes know more of Jesus Christ because of philosophy? Has not pantheistic conjecture proved a wretched failure? And now, after a hundred years of sorrowful roaming, this very philosophy, in its last stages of analysis, has to accept of the Godhead as he is revealed in the Scriptures. And hence the deepest thinkers of Germany and the continent are coming back again to the old and precious doctrine of the divine personality. The writer does not offer these observations in any narrow spirit of depreciation. All honor to Germany for the wealth of thought which her industry has unfolded. But revelation meets a want that reason and nature cannot satisfy. We may inquire now, as of old, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" In the Sacred Scriptures, and not elsewhere, is the genuine Eureka. Life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel.

In the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, *every* want of man's spiritual nature was anticipated. Is it pardon? Christ suffered, the just for the unjust. Is it justification? "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Is it sanctification and deliverance from sin? "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. Sanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth." Is it consolation that we seek? "He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows." Is it blessedness in a world to come? "I go to prepare a place for you." In the long list of man's infirmities and sins, not an item was overlooked. All was foreseen, and all was provided for. It matters not who it is or what it is, in this divine storehouse there is a remedy. The relief, too, is as free as it is perfect.

It is a great mistake, therefore, when short-sighted man attempts improvements upon the wisdom of God. The race is not always to the swift. According to every rule of rhetoric and of art, Robert Hall was a greater preacher than Thomas Chalmers. What could be asked for that was not actually found

in the best of Hall's discourses? His audiences, too, were intellectual, crowded, and attentive. To this day, his sermons are regarded as classics. All this is a tribute to his genius. But what then? Did these splendid discourses ever smite upon the conscience? Did the convicted sinner often cry out under them? Look, again, at John Foster, who, as a profound and original thinker, was as superior to Hall as Hall was to Chalmers; but when we take the two and compare them with Chalmers as ambassadors for God to the Church and the world, then it is that we see Chalmers moving as a bright and burning light whither neither Hall nor Foster could follow. The Scottish orator did not seek to delight a highly educated audience with theistic speculations, with deep and distracting surmises, with bold and startling paradoxes; but the holy earnestness of his spirit and the cumulative propensities of his intellect bore him onward, with majestic power, to the *cross*, and as the mighty *redemption* rolls up before his spiritual vision, the jargon of the schools is forgotten and the rapt ambassador exclaims, I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Such was the testimony of one whose experience and observation constituted him a competent judge.

It has been observed that the true child of God has a relish, a spiritual discernment, which the gospel, and only the gospel, can satisfy. With philosophy St. Paul certainly was conversant; but *he* preached neither Seneca, nor Plato, nor an angel, nor himself, nor the highest among the created. *He preached Christ*. Not as a man merely, not as a teacher, or an example, or a pattern simply, but "Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

It will be seen, after a while, that every innovation upon the New Testament plan inevitably paralyses all true Christian sensibility in the end. The darkness of the middle ages had its origin in the first departures from apostolic order. All went well as long as the divine arrangement was strictly adhered to; but with unscriptural deviations trouble quickly appeared.

Former moorings abandoned, the old ship drifted hither and thither, as this wild wind and the other blew upon it. Wreck, at the last, was inevitable. A few determined souls, however, disembarked in season to preserve a faithful seed and to make the promise sure. With the blessing of God upon the simple truth, the Church in primitive times increased with amazing rapidity. Peter preached the *gospel* on the day of Pentecost, and they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. In the days of persecution, "they that were scattered abroad went every where, *preaching the word*. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which he spake." Philip falls in afterwards, by divine opportunity, with a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and *preached unto him Jesus*. And as they went on their way they came to a certain water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*." Paul and Silas, "on the Sabbath, went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and they sat down and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard them; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things *which were spoken of Paul*." At midnight, in the Philippian jail, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praise. The jailor, ere the day dawned, was convicted, and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*." It was while Paul reasoned of that righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, which the *gospel* inculcates and unfolds, that Felix trembled. These able ministers of the New Testament never dreamed that any other agency was necessary to give strength and efficacy to the blessed gospel of the Son of God. Armed with the sword of the Spirit, the soldier of Jesus was fully equipped. This weapon, forged in the divine

furnace, had its edge and form so adjusted and perfected as that, in every case, from a king to the beggar, when properly wielded, it pierced to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The New Testament preacher took this and *nothing else*, and the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. If the scriptures which relate to this subject are faithfully collated, it can be easily demonstrated that the greatest results invariably follow, when the human mind is least corrupted by any human device, *from the simplicity that is in Christ*. In joy and in sorrow, in assemblies of wicked men and in the society of saints, in seasons of revival or in times of religious decline, the sole instrument that the Spirit authorises is the gospel. The minister, therefore, that introduces any "means" or "measures," as supplementary to the inspired word, incurs a fearful responsibility; for such a one *charges*, virtually, *incompleteness and imperfection on the divine plan*, presumptuously substitutes man's wisdom in the place of God's, and blunts the edge of the only weapon that the Holy Ghost has pledged himself to use in the conviction, conversion, and final salvation of fallen man. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder if the Holy Spirit should be grieved and the people given over to strong delusions.

The world in which we live is the arena on which it was determined of old that God would exhibit the attribute of his *mercy* in the redemption of a chosen people. All events are secondary, and in some sense subsidiary. To this end, we can trace the thread of divine providence throughout successive families, tribes, and nations, from Adam's time down to the present moment. Every where and in all generations, however, the same agencies have been employed. Noah, in antediluvian times, was a preacher of righteousness. And after the world had been destroyed by water, Jehovah again raised up prophets and teachers, who guided the people, and upon whose labors a blessing was promised, provided both minister and people took heed to the commandments of the Lord to do them. For Jehovah is ever jealous of his honor and authority, and all deviations from the divinely perfected arrangements shall, sooner or later, be

rebuked. All things must be executed "according to the pattern." Under the New Testament economy, as was the case under the Old, human agents are largely employed. But the commission is explicit: *Go preach my gospel*. The laborer is called by different names: "First apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." The great business of every teacher, however, is to *preach the word*. "The cross," "Jesus Christ and him crucified," which is the gospel, was the only measure resorted to and the only power depended upon. *We shall insist upon this point until an inspired example or a divine precept can be produced to the contrary*. With what propriety can it be said that one rule is applicable to the pastor and another to the evangelist? The apostles and primitive preachers were all the "sent out" of God. They were missionaries and evangelists in the widest sense of the word. These men were commissioned of the Master to visit all nations, to enter all classes of society, and *if extraordinary measures were ever needed* to attract the multitudes together to some place of worship, the necessity would seem to have existed then; and yet the Scriptures are as dumb as the grave in regard to any such adventitious appliances. Whatever was the condition or situation of the people, these apostles of the New Testament brought into requisition no means or instrument but the gospel. For when they had at command the sword of the Spirit, no other weapon was demanded. Now, if all Scripture be given for our instruction, that the man of God may be *thoroughly* furnished, upon what shadow of proof can it be claimed that the *evangelist* is to be guided by one set of forms, and the *settled pastor* by another? We are the sincere advocates of evangelization. We would award, too, all praise to ministers of any name, who practise self-denial in order to carry the gospel to the poor and perishing. The writer hopes to see the day when every presbytery shall send forth faithful men to labor, not for the most part in congregations already supplied, but to preach the truth in those frontier and destitute regions where the gospel is seldom, if ever, heard. Without the evangelist, church machinery is incomplete. God "gave some, apos-

bles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; *but speaking the truth in love*, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv. 11-16. In this passage of Scripture, it is clearly intimated that the design of all preaching, whether by pastors or evangelists, is to witness for God, and to gather a chosen people from among the nations. Now, to this end there may be "diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." 1 Cor. xii. 4-6.

The business of the preacher, however, is not to pitch his tent in any particular spot and resort to extraordinary influences to draw multitudes of people after him, but the command is *to go* into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The missionary is directed to enter cities, villages, and houses; to go every where, preaching the word. This is the only plan which has a shadow of authority, either by divine precept or from apostolic example. The gospel of the Son of God, as exemplified in the life and as proclaimed from the heart, is the most powerful attraction that the minister can use. If extraneous measures to any extent are allowed, it is an entrance upon the path that leads to a doctrine whose terrible application extracted tears of blood from the Church throughout all the dark ages, to wit, the doctrine that "*the end sanctifies the means.*" The truth in its simplicity is the only safe way. Let this plan be thoroughly tested before any are bold enough to object and denounce. For if the

Almighty did not foresee and provide for every emergency, then the divine arrangements are incomplete, and the gospel scheme proves a failure. But if he did foresee and provide, then these provisions are to be found in the Scriptures, in that rule which all Protestants boast of as complete; and, as a consequence, he who adds to or takes from it, not only grieves the Holy Spirit, but endangers his own soul.

Although not exactly in the line of our argument, we may as well remark, that, in a certain sense, it is the duty of every man to preach. The child of God is called upon to let his light so shine that men may see his good works and glorify our Father in heaven. That saying of the Master, "Ye are the salt of the earth, ye are the light of the world," is applicable to all true believers. The sun in his circuit refreshes, enlightens, reveals, and quickens, while salt preserves bodies which would otherwise corrupt. What these material substances accomplish in the physical world, this, and much more, the holy living of Christ's disciples is to effect for the souls of perishing men. We are not our own. No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. It is true, that, as to degree, a larger measure of responsibility devolves upon the minister, but the obligation which falls on the private member is also complete of its kind. The man of one talent must so employ his gift as to insure interest in some form. The voice of the Master rings out in the market place to all the unemployed, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" The encouragements, too, are large. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." The Master said concerning a poor widow who cast her two mites into the treasury, "She hath cast in more than they who cast in of their abundance." The woman who poured the ointment on Jesus' head was commended, because she had done what she could. The promise is not to ministers alone, but to church members of every degree, that they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

Moreover, the church member must not only labor in his own appropriate sphere, but it is obligatory upon him likewise to afford all needful assistance to both pastor and evangelist. For it is the law of God's house, that they who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel; for the support of the ministry is no optional *charity*, but a sacred and imperative *obligation*. The Levite had no part in the land of Canaan, but the support of the priest was solemnly devolved upon the tribes. The Almighty calls and separates a certain number of persons to be pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc., and then enjoins it, by the law of conscience, upon the people, to sustain these men by prayers, coöperation, and the Levite's portion.

The point in discussion may be made yet plainer by reference to military customs. Let it be supposed that our country was in danger, and that in order to marshal armies for the conflict, the draft had to be resorted to. Now, the fact that the lot falls upon A, while B is exempted, does not release B from the obligation to perform every patriotic act in his power. One individual, by reason of infirmity, may be excused from the burdens of actual warfare upon the field, but it is expected and demanded of this man that he shall use all moral and pecuniary influences at home. They who go a warfare at any time must not do so at their own charges. The hardships of military life are sufficient, even when every alleviation is offered. This is witnessed by the eagerness with which multitudes hasten to procure substitutes. If the draft overtakes the wealthy and ease-loving, such a one looks out at once for a suitable person to take his place. The mind is busy with contrasts: on the one side is home, and friends, and family, and luxury; on the other side are tents, and marches, and bivouac, and hard fare, and the deadly missiles of actual conflict. The decision is quickly made, and large sums, if necessary, are readily paid down for a substitute. The whole country may complain of a pecuniary stringency, but, somehow or other, the money is raised for this purpose. Now, shall it be admitted that patriotism or selfishness are stronger sentiments than the love of Christ? Or will the professed child of God plead "hard times," when the Saviour asks his aid, and

yet ransack town and country to procure means to exempt his person from the light afflictions of this transitory world? Shall it be admitted that Christian men will eagerly spend their thousands when self and pride or the law's strong arm are the incentives, and yet respond reluctantly and with niggardly contributions when the object is the soul, and the motive appealed to, the amazing love of God as manifested toward a fallen world, in the gift of his Son? He who will go farther to secure earthly exemptions of any kind than to answer the calls of the divine Master, should be deeply concerned about the sincerity of his faith. The following words, at least, should be prayerfully pondered: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

Here, then, is the Church, with its machinery complete. Some are to preach the gospel in person from the pulpit; others are to preach it by proxy, through their purses; while all are to preach it by an example of self-denial and holy living. There is no discharge in this war. If any professed servant of Jesus Christ fails to respond, let him remember those terrible words, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." But in all this mighty warfare, there is but one instrument authorised or to be relied on, and that is the simple word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit. In the very wildest regions, this is sufficient. For when Paul directs Timothy to do the work of an *evangelist*, he clearly indicates the methods. His words are: "I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, *preach the word*, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." And then the apostle foretells what will come upon the Church when the wisdom of man begins to modify the purposes of God. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts

shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." 2 Tim. iv. 1-5. He who will take pains to examine, can ascertain that the apostle was no false prophet.

The condition of public sentiment at present, in regard to preachers and preaching, is matter for profound and solemn thought. The time seems to be rapidly passing when the people will listen patiently to exhaustive and scholarly presentations of sacred truth. There is demand for advertising, sensational orators. If it be known to the community that the themes to be discussed are those old but fundamental doctrines of faith, justification, original sin, God's sovereignty, providence, perseverance, etc., the multitude at once grow indifferent. The public taste is clamorous for something new and exciting. The things which belong to Cæsar are caught at more eagerly than the things which belong to Christ. Extravagant panegyrics, bold speculations, fanciful theories, dashing and brilliant manner—discourses executed upon this model will, in many localities, gain far more hearers than a sermon from the very ablest divine, whose staple is precious scriptural truth. With some congregations, there is scarcely an inquiry about the preacher's orthodoxy or theological attainment. But it is eagerly asked, Is he eloquent? Can he attract? Let it be distinctly understood that we do not undervalue the importance of style and manner in the pulpit. These are of great price. No public speaker can expect to gain the popular ear unless some regard is paid to the rules of elocution. A humdrum, droning manner in the pulpit deserves rebuke. While a minister of Jesus Christ should shun profane and vain babblings, yet he should study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. There was a time when able ministers of the New Testament were heard by the people gladly. A Davies or Alexander, a Baxter or Speece, could draw more hearers than every shallow and perfunctory declaimer in the land. The people of that generation had no taste for teachers

who paid more respect to "itching ears" than to the burden of a solemn "dispensation."

But how are we to account for the change which has come over our congregations in the last fifty years? We answer that the cause is attributable, in a large degree, to the preacher himself. A specific armor is provided for every minister who goes forth to do battle for the Master. First of all, he is to take to himself the girdle of truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness; the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith he shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and taking the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. Nothing else is needed to spoil principalities and powers, and make a show of them openly. To succeed under this plan, however, long and patient self-denying labor was demanded, and not a few chafed under the weight of such an armor. In other words, it is far less difficult to the flesh to be proficient in declamation than to gain the mastery in solid learning and edifying scriptural truth. We need not go far for a solution of the remainder; for in this fallen world the descent in morals is rapid and facile. It is far easier to educate a community downward than upward. The very moment that the preacher himself tampers with his commission, the congregation are not slow to claim their privileges too. If "extraordinary" measures are introduced, then the people are clamorous for "extraordinary" preachers, and preaching to match. The truth therefore loses ground on every side. As a consequence, the descent is rapid and mournful; and if correctives are not speedily applied, the day is not distant when no sermon will be tolerated which reproves or rebukes. Denunciation of prevalent sins will be considered personalities. "Itching ears" demand entertainment alone; and every discourse that denounces transgression as it stalks abroad, and points to retributive justice either here or hereafter, is regarded as ill-timed and vulgar.

Let conscientious ministers, who expect to give account, be-

ware. They who resort to extraneous influences will ascertain in the end that the way has been opened to pulpit demoralisation. These extraordinary influences are illusive. Those who, in days gone by, maintained the longest hold on congregations and continued the loved and useful pastors of one people a lifetime, were faithful men, who abounded in sound doctrine, and resorted to no measure but the faith once delivered to the saints. Congregations were attracted not only at home, but in missionary journeys abroad, not by new themes, or startling declamation, or newspaper advertisements, but by diligence in business and that fervor of spirit which arises from intimate acquaintance with "a form of sound words." There was a "blood earnestness" about those old preachers, but it had its sources in that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of instruction." They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and, as a consequence, their word was with power. Woe to the preacher who remodels an inspired "pattern," and thereby imperils the dignity and authority of his own divinely appointed office; for when the minister himself handles the word of God, or anything appertaining thereto, with licentious or irreverent hand, the contagion soon spreads to the people, and, as a consequence, sermons from the pulpit are quickly placed in the same category with speeches from the tribune. When this point is passed, there is but one more round of descent to reach—indifference and unbelief. For whenever a preacher ascends the sacred desk in any other capacity than that of ambassador for God, to utter the mind of the Spirit, he compromises his own lofty position, and opens a wide door to license and unsanctified will-worship; for whenever, again, the preacher cannot produce "a thus saith the Lord" for what he says and what he does, his discourses and devices are but the opinions and actions of fallible man, and the hearer feels at liberty to receive or reject, according to inclination. For if it is only the uninspired preacher who judges thus and thus, then the opinions of other men in the community may be far more valuable.

The only safety, therefore, for the Church of God and its ministers, in this or any age, is to cleave to the old landmark.

Defections from the faith have always had their origin in what are called "non-essential" deviations. The beauty or strength of a building may be seriously marred by changes in the plan of an architect, which, to the eye of an apprentice, appear altogether unimportant. A preacher is shorn of his power the very moment he cannot appeal authoritatively to his credentials and commission. He is no longer the ambassador of a great King, but a private individual simply. Alas for Christianity! her garments have been sadly defiled in these latter days. To behold that Church of God which is the ground and pillar of the truth prostrate at the feet of Cæsar, is a spectacle over which the angels might weep. And the thought is far more appalling when we remember that Cæsar did not make the first advances. But let it be deeply pondered that whenever the Church affiliates with and appeals to human governments in things spiritual, or whenever a spiritual court of Jesus Christ allows itself to dragoon for Cæsar, the period is near at hand when the divine law and pattern, in every particular, will utterly disappear. He who allows any king to sit, even conjointly, on Christ's throne, is already apostate; for the Church cannot have two heads, neither can she serve God and mammon. The very feeblest minister is an overmatch for the disputers of this world, if he only cleaves to his commission and speaks by authority; but if our credentials be discredited, then the strong shall be as tow and the maker of it as a spark, *and they both shall burn together, and none shall quench them.* There are beacons in the past which should warn us from the fatal shore.

The amazing enormities of the dark ages, therefore, as we verily believe, were the judgment of God upon a Church which apostatized from the economy of the New Testament. Every agency, down to minutiae, had been provided for with loving foresight. But with this wisdom of God the creature was not satisfied. Hence one priestly addition after another had to be appended, until the world groaned under the mighty superstition. The light kindled at heaven's true altars was put under a bushel, and the pale, sickly tapers of this earth substituted in its place. He who looks closely into those ten centuries of vice,

cruelty, and ignorance, will arise from the investigation profoundly convinced that every evil might have been averted, if religious teachers, the ages through, had sternly resisted every departure, however minute, from the divinely authorised plan. The inspired directions would have preserved the Church in its purity to the end. But when man began to tinker and improvise, paths became divergent, and a dishonored Master left a presumptuous servant to reap folly's harvest to the full. Inquisitions, spiritual bondage, papal tyranny, in forms most absurd as well as terrible, this was a rebuke stern indeed, but altogether legitimate. Against these very things the gospel had provided; but the servant thought himself wiser than his Lord, and he who ruleth over all gave up the creature to his own delusions. Looking backward, therefore, to the past, from any point of observation, either secular or religious, the testimony is the same—that he who rejects a true Messiah will follow after any benighted teacher, who says with bold though ignorant confidence, Lo here, or lo there.

The very design of the gospel is to divest man of spiritual reliance on himself; for self-righteousness is a rock upon which thousands have beaten and perished. The truth of God is adapted *precisely* to reveal the pit into which man is fallen, and to unfold, in unmistakable terms, the impossibility of escape, unless superhuman power is employed.

At the present moment, when apostasy in certain quarters is imminent, not to say rife, it does seem to the writer that the position of our Southern Zion is surrounded with unusual responsibilities. She should hold on to the divinely appointed landmarks with wrestling pertinacity. The watchword must be Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. The Church, as such, has no head but Christ. Thrones may crumble, dynasties change, but the crown rights of the Redeemer are immutable. There are things which belong to Cæsar and things which belong to Cæsar's Lord; but if the Church dallies with State and State with Church, the Bridegroom's honor will be endangered, and the fair name of the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be deeply imperilled. The voice of Zion's King cannot be mistaken—*my kingdom is not of this world.*

We have already seen how, at an early period of the Christian era, the creature attempted improvements upon the divine commission, and with what results. Is it true that history repeats itself, and are we, of this age, to witness another apostasy, and are other lessons of persecution and gloom to come upon the earth? Let the note of warning be sounded in time, and let every watchman on our walls take heed. Our only safety is in keeping steadfastly to the law and the testimony. In these days, especially, let no measure receive the Church's sanction that cannot be proved to have a divine warrant. Let us ponder deeply those words which were spoken to Moses when he was admonished of God in regard to the tabernacle. "For, See, saith he, that thou make *all things according to the pattern* showed to thee in the mount." Let us act boldly and faithfully upon the confession that the Bible is a perfect rule; for while the individual or denomination that works according to this pattern appears, at first sight, to move slowly, yet it shall be demonstrated in the end that these, and these only, are master builders. For they build according to directions, and the edifice, when complete, will exhibit symmetry, perfection, and beauty. This much is guaranteed by the divine architect. Let Cæsar also himself beware; for his image of iron, mingled with clay, shall be broken into shivers when the Ancient of Days rolls upon it that stone, cut without hands out of the mountain.

Now, if in that which was typical it were unlawful to deviate a hair's breadth from the divine pattern, who shall be bold enough to alter and remodel that sanctuary and true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man? As in a great earthly edifice the plan itself is first perfected and each stone laid by number in its place, so in this heavenly building the divine architect forecasts so particularly that nothing is left to the underworker but faithful execution. There is reason to believe, if Moses had altered, on his own authority, the plan of the tabernacle in the smallest particular, even down to a curtain or a board, the Holy Presence would not have descended and dwelt between the cherubim. Now, if exactness of execution, down to minutest details, was imperative in a sanctuary that was sym-

bolic, who can foretell the disasters which shall fall upon the Church of this generation, when the folly of man is substituted in the place of the wisdom and power of God? It is useless to say that such and such a measure is but a slight variation; the command to Moses, and through him to us, was, that there should be no deviation *at all*. The very life of the world was at one time conditioned upon that apparently small thing—the not eating of an apple! Any event is made great or small according as God commands or forbids. As the symbolic import of the tabernacle was incomplete until the last and minutest order had been rigidly and faithfully executed, until the very last pin had been driven into its place, so it is true that no substitute for the gospel, however subtly introduced, can be accepted as that precise power of God unto salvation which the Spirit reveals.

So that from every conceivable standpoint, it can be demonstrated that innovations or measures of any kind are not only not needed, but dishonor God and jeopard the soul; for the gospel contains all that man needs to know, points out all that man needs to do, and offers at every step such aids, warnings, rebukes, encouragement, and consolations, as cannot possibly flow from any other source. What the gospel cannot do for a man is impossible of accomplishment at all, unless it be confessed that the created understands better than the Creator the necessities and nature of man, and unless, again, the perfected wisdom and power of God, to a specific end, can be supplemented and improved upon by sagacity of mortal minds, which are both finite and depraved.

If this matter, therefore, be looked into deeply, the fundamental error will be found in a neglect of systematic and reverential Bible study; for “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be *thoroughly* furnished.” For in the divine economy, no emergency, from whatever cause or quarter, has been overlooked, but all was foreseen and abundantly provided for. When, therefore, the Master says, Go preach my gospel, he clearly limits the teacher’s authority to the agency and instrumentalities and powers that can be legiti-

mately discovered in the revealed truth itself. Every alteration or shadow of change is a dead fly in the ointment; for the gospel was adjusted, from of old, in the divine mind, to meet the creature's wants *exactly*. No trimming is demanded, no experiment allowable; but, on the contrary, the efficacy of redemption depends, for the most part, upon the very *precision of its application*. To add to or subtract from the inspired plan is not only presumptuous, but impertinent; for the gospel is either final and perfect as a revelation and moral restorative, or it is not. If it is, why seek to improve upon perfection? If it is not, then which of all the sons of men shall be accepted as an all-sufficient teacher? The writer is fully persuaded that the evils of the present day cannot find a remedy until the unperverted word of God is reverentially trusted both by individuals and the Church. It is only while the branch is kept in lively contact with the vine that life circulates freely through all the members. If we set aside the sure word of prophecy and give heed to fables and commandments of men, it need not be surprising if profaneness takes the place of praise, and the priesthood of babbling and opposing philosophy is seen ministering at the holy altar.

The command is definite—*Go preach my gospel*. St. Paul says, "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.*" *Do this*, and I am with you. *Do this*, and all is done that can be for man's recovery. For the truth cuts to the heart and destroys all self-confidence; and as the hope of salvation through obedience perishes in the soul, the gospel lifts up its voice and says, "Look unto me, and *be ye saved*, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

Away with the idea that the gospel is commonplace. If it is objected, however, that the same truth repeated from Sabbath to Sabbath must of necessity grow stale, our reply is, that the **same** argument would be good against all that is grand and lofty in the natural world; for the heavens now above us are the **same** that ages ago declared the glory of God. The identical **stars**, from century to century, have lighted up the mighty dome. It

was to the sweet influences of the Pleiades, the bands of Orion, and to Arcturus with his suns, that the finger of the Almighty pointed when he answered Job out of the whirlwind. And night after night does the astronomer gaze with enlarged and ever expanding admiration. The callous heart, the dull, uncultured head, may weary of the sight, and clamor for fresher revelations; but the man of true science returns to his observations with interest ever increasing, whilst the only thought that appals is this, that man's allotted time on earth is a period far too short in which to comprehend the wisdom and beauty that are garnered in the firmament. Age after age has inquiry, keen, scrutinizing, and lofty, proceeded; and to the eye of genius that looks up to-night, the heavens are as grand and glorious and beautiful as when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. In one sense, the gospel is never old. He only can weary of it who studies it least. For if the heavens declare the glory of God, in Jesus Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. While, in one sense, the same truth is declared in every sermon, yet in another the *instructed* scribe is ever bringing forth things *new* as well as old. As with no material but the light the kaleidoscope creates and exhibits a variety of beautiful colors and perfectly symmetrical forms, so it is true that the grace of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, is capable of boundless diversity and infinite beauty. The industrious preacher need never be at a loss for noble themes. The mine here is inexhaustible; for, rightly considered, the cross of Jesus Christ is the central object of our fallen world. All certified history, for thousands of years, foreshadowed the atonement; and after God was manifest in the flesh, the life, doctrine, and crucifixion of Jesus, left for all time a lively impress upon the nations. Calvary, therefore, is the focus from which all truthful history should enkindle its inspiration. For, the purposes of Jehovah with individuals and nations, the centuries through, are indissolubly connected with the mission of his Son. He, therefore, who aspires to the dignity of a teacher must fully understand at the start that the world was not created as a theatre on which kings and warriors and statesmen were to

exhibit pride, gratify ambition, and illustrate diplomacy; but the earth is the Lord's, and he created it for himself, that here on this fallen arena he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us, in Christ Jesus.

Then why go afar for remedies, when a physician, the best in the universe, stands at the very door? What need we more than the gospel provides? For if man be a sinner and God's vengeance impends, the creature who flies to philosophy for a refuge will receive mockery, and only mockery, for an answer. The gulf of separation is too wide for any but an omnipotent arm to reach over. The blood of bulls and of goats and the ashes of a heifer cannot atone. Neither can self-righteousness, in any form, present an acceptable offering. The only possible escape is to be found in the gospel.

Nor is it enough, as Dr. Dwight well remarks, that sermons contain the truth, important and indispensable as this is. A sermon may contain it *in such a manner* as to prevent a great part of its efficacy. Nor does the evil stop here. Instances have existed in the world in which preachers have uttered nothing but what is strictly evangelical, and yet have only amused, wearied, or disgusted sober, pious, and candid hearers. The *spirit* in which truth is preached is a consideration which cannot well be overestimated. The gospel should, by all means, be preached plainly, and with much tenderness, meekness, and holy fear. And this is not at all inconsistent with great boldness of speech. Abstract discussions, as far as possible, should be avoided. St. Paul, one of the most profound of all reasoners, always seems to adopt with pleasure a mode of disclosure which is *simple*, when the subject will admit of it. And he who spake as never man spake treated every subject in the most direct manner of common sense, although he often discourses concerning things of a profound nature. If the minister, therefore, would preserve a good conscience, he must take nothing from and add nothing to the inspired record. If he fails essentially *here*, the error is fatal. The voice of Gabriel would fall powerless, if he should venture to offer strange fire upon this altar. To be a master workman, the preacher must live in faith and walk with

God. His text, his sermon, his motives, must be for eternity. For if this wilderness and solitary place is ever to be made glad; if the desert is ever to rejoice and blossom as the rose; if the eyes of the blind are to be opened, and the lame man to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing; oh, if ever in this wearied, toil-worn earth, there is to be a highway of holiness—this and all else glorious shall be accomplished when the ransomed of the Lord are returning and coming home to Zion, and singing as they come, “With joy will we draw water *out of the wells of salvation.*” No voice but *this* can ever cry, Breathe, breathe, upon these slain. Great is the mystery of godliness, but great, too, is its power. Here is a hope that maketh not ashamed. It lives in life and swallows up death. The shining ones, mounting ever upward in glory, break forth and sing, Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God; worthy is the cry, and ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands cry, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb. This is their song, and it wears not old. There is no languid heart, no faltering voice, no tired tongue; but ever and forever is the cry, Worthy, worthy, worthy, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb.*

The writer has dwelt at length on this part of his subject, because he earnestly desires to see, in these days of perplexity, the unadulterated word and power of God fairly applied to the individual and public conscience. This is all that remains to us now; for it must be evident to every thoughtful mind that under the lead of eccentric and irreverent teachers, faith has been driven nearer and nearer to an eclipse.

The great commission is catholic in its spirit, and devolves upon the preacher a work coextensive with the globe. “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” The field lies wide, but the command is imperative. *Go* preach. At this point, we have apostolic example; for after Paul’s conversion he carried the gospel into Arabia. The same apostle, in company with Barnabas, made a missionary journey of two

* Edwards.

years. Afterwards St. Paul passes through Asia Minor and makes a visit to Corinth. The apostle winters at Nicopolis, and then goes to Ephesus. It was at the last named city that the Macedonian cry reached him. He obeys the call, and departs for Macedonia. After wintering in Achaia, Paul goes the fifth time to Jerusalem, where he is imprisoned. As a day of release approaches, the eye of this zealous missionary is turned, yearningly, toward the imperial city. He longs to see the faithful there, and to proclaim that gospel of Christ which is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first, but also to the Greek. That the gospel was to be carried to the nations, is distinctly intimated by the events of Pentecost. For on that day, Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, *all heard in their own tongues* the wonderful works of God. The providences of God throughout clearly indicated that all middle walls of partition were broken down, and that Jehovah was not a God of the Jew only, but also of the Gentile; that "the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. How, then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." "And this gospel of the kingdom," says the Master, "shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." It was in obedience to the spirit of this command that the apostle labored at his work. "Yea," says Paul, "so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation. But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand." "From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."

The field, therefore, is the world, every part of it, from sea to

sea. Other religions are for latitudes and castes, but Christianity is universal. Far as the curse is found, so far must the antidote be supplied. As death came upon *all* in consequence of Adam's sin, so life must be offered to all upon the ground of that righteousness which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The commission, therefore, was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

To this great commission is annexed a promise of ineffable sweetness—Go preach; "*and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*" Here is the third grand instrumentality—the Spirit's influence working mightily. For that the Master's allusion here was to the Holy Ghost cannot be doubted, when we recall his own words elsewhere to the disciples: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "And I will pray the Father that he may abide with you forever." It is true, that the *primary* end of all preaching is the salvation of an elect people. But in the proclamation of the truth, there are also other important purposes to be subserved. If, therefore, the number of the saved seems small, as the vastness of the field is considered, let the minister of Jesus Christ remember that to gather even this little flock and to keep them safe from the wolves, whilst, at the same time, the gospel is preached to the teeming nations as a witness, is work enough for an angel's strength. It is from misconception of the matter just now under discussion that much sorrow often fills the preacher's heart. He anticipates a success that has not been promised. Almost every young minister is eager for results of a specific kind. Mankind are expected to take heed forthwith to the gospel. But after many days of toil, it is ascertained that the human race now, as of old, are slow of heart to believe. The preacher is discouraged. Tears are his meat day and night. But go back to the commission. Does the Master say, Go preach, and men shall be ready to hear and obey? Is not the contrary distinctly intimated? Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If

they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. To be comfortable at all, the preacher must ever keep it vividly before his mind that it is not his duty to create sensations or "get up revivals," but to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. If he does *this* faithfully, there will be small room left for despondency and depression when extraordinary results do not immediately appear. For he who preaches the gospel *simply as a witness*, performs a great work; for even such an apostle is a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that perish as well as in them that are saved. The heralds of salvation must anticipate discouragements and prepare for them. Stephen was commanded to preach, but the multitude gnashed on the messenger with their teeth. They cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. The message of the preacher was rejected, and death lay in wait. But even while he spake, all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. And when the last moment came, he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Christ's engagement had been fulfilled. *He was with his servant to the end.* It is clearly intimated that the preacher's mission shall sometimes apparently fail. The Master instructs the disciples in reference to such cases: "But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive ye not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, do we wipe off against you."

The ambassador for God is commanded to work and wait. His expectations are one thing, and the Lord's purposes another. He should therefore fight against presumption and impatience. Grief may endure for a night, but joy shall come in the morn-
ing. Not as *I* will, but as *thou* wilt, should be the preacher's

prayer. And thus, not preaching *ourselves*, but the *Master*, that God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness will shine in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. We may be "troubled on every side, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body....For all things are for our sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, *but at the things which are not seen.*"

Difficulties, apparently insurmountable, encompassed the apostle at every step of his journey. "Of the Jews, five times received he forty stripes save one. Thrice was he beaten with rods, once was he stoned, thrice he suffered shipwreck, a night and a day was he in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which were without, that which came upon him daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak, who offended and I burn not? For I think that God hath set forth us apostles last, as it were appointed to death, for we are made a spectacle unto the world and to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake and despised. We both hunger and thirst, and are buffeted. We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." Yet, notwithstanding this fearful opposition, there was a spirit and wisdom in the hearts of these primitive preachers, which all their adversaries were unable to gainsay or resist. None of these things

moved them. Preach, says the Master, and the word that goeth forth shall not return void; but whether it prove the savor of death unto death or of life unto life, is a matter that need not overwhelm the preacher's mind. It certainly shall accomplish that which God pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto he sends it. With this idea fully established, the faithful minister need not be discouraged. He can preach to the multitudes whether they hear or whether they forbear, and they shall know that a prophet hath been among them. To the upright there ariseth a light in the darkness, and to such God gives songs in the night. The responsibility, therefore, is thrown where it belongs. "If thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." It is true, that the faithful minister, who trembles at God's word, should watch for souls as they that must give account; but if the burden be heavy and the harvest long delayed, the consolation of the promise never fails—"Lo! I am with you *always*;" "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown."

Let the preacher, therefore, go forth with manly heart and sow beside all waters. The fruits may not immediately appear, but it is a law, even in the material world, that nothing is absolutely lost. The place, the form, the visible aspect—these can change. Our bodies die and turn to dust. There are periods of growth and of decay. The waters wear the stones, they wash away the things that grow out of the earth. But in this change there is no loss or destruction of elementary particles. Dissolving elements, we are told, appear again in new combinations and new forms of utility and beauty. And now will he who watches over the changing elements of senseless matter, so that one particle never entirely disappears or comes short of its destination, permit any influence that ever originates in faith to fail of its end and perish? The blood of the martyr may be poured out—yea, his very bones be disinterred and their ashes sifted on the waters—but the Avon shall flow into the Severn, and the Severn into the sea, and the waves of old ocean waft to all kingdoms the doctrines which he taught and the deeds which he did. What is

true of John Wickliffe shall be true of all others. Whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. The sentiment is altogether false, that only the evil which men do lives after them, whilst the good which they do is interred with their bones. Every word which a man speaks and every action which he performs will live on forever. The great heroic deeds of the past have been the inheritance of all succeeding generations. *God with us* is the preacher's strength. He makes the wrath of man to praise, and the remainder he restrains. When this breath comes from the four winds and breathes upon the slain, they live. All opposition is vain; for the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them.

Not in man, therefore, but in the Spirit's influence working mightily, is the teacher's hope. It is true that a Paul may plant and an Apollos water, but the increase is from God. In God's own way and at the appointed time, a better day shall dawn. For of Zion glorious things are spoken. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." "I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." "God shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Even at this moment our old earth is wearied with her toils, and creation groans to be delivered; while pious hearts, in every land, yearn for that redemption Sabbath, whose blessed light shall shine on brightly through a thousand years. The trial may be severe, but those days of blessedness shall be reached by-and-by.

Here, then, are the agencies—the living teacher, the inspired word, and the Holy Ghost. It is enough. A voice from the great deep of man's necessities cries, "Work, *work*, WORK, for the night cometh." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."