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# LECTURES

ON

## PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

BY THE

REV. JAMES SPENCER CANNON, D.D.,

LATE PROFESSOR OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY, AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT, IN THE THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY OF THE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH, NEW-BRUNSWICK, N. J.

NEW-YORK:

CHARLES SCRIBNER, 145 NASSAU STREET.

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1853.

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# A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.

BY

REV. PROF. CAMPBELL, D.D.,

OF NEW-BRUNSWICK.

JAMES SPENCER CANNON, the author of the lectures contained in this volume, was born in the island of Curaçoa, January 28, 1776. His father was a sea-captain, and of Irish extraction; his mother was a native of New-England. Captain Cannon's home was in the city of New-York, from which port he usually sailed; and Mrs. Cannon seems to have frequently accompanied her husband upon his voyages. The latter fact will account for the birth of James at Curaçoa, and also for the interment of Mrs. Cannon in the Friends' burying-ground in the city of Baltimore, Md.

Upon the death of Mrs. C., the captain placed his three children, Joseph, William, and James Spencer, the youngest, in the academy of Peter Wilson, LL.D., at Hackensack, N. J. Here they remained three or four years, when death deprived them of their father. Captain C. had taken passage for Charleston, S. C., in a vessel commanded by Philip Freneau, the poet. During the progress of the voyage, a violent storm arose, and Mr. Freneau, who was not a practical navigator, being unable to manage the vessel, gave up the command to Captain Cannon; and while the gale was still raging, Captain C. was knocked overboard by the jib-boom and lost.

The orphans were made to feel the cruelty of the wicked; two persons took charge of the estate of the deceased, and the lawful heirs never received

*A Biographical Sketch of the Author.*

a penny of their father's property. But the Father of the fatherless raised up a warm friend for James in the person of Henry Brevoort, Esq., of Hackensack, who from the time of Captain C.'s decease down to James's licensure defrayed all the expenses of his education.

James began his classical studies under that able and pious teacher, Dr. Wilson, and finished them under the Doctor's successor, the Rev. Alexander Millar. The Rev. Dr. Peter Labagh, who was a fellow-student of Dr. Cannon, declares that he was an indefatigable student, and enjoyed, in an eminent degree, the affection and confidence of his teachers.

In the year 1794, James, together with Dr. Labagh and the Rev. Garret Mandeville, made a profession of religion in the Reformed Dutch church of Hackensack, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. Solomon Freligh; and Dr. C. then prosecuted his theological studies under the care of his pastor until the spring of 1796. As, however, Dr. Freligh was not a Professor of Theology, and could not give the certificate which was required by the Classis, Dr. C. went to Dr. Livingston on Long Island, and for two months prosecuted his studies, at the end of which time Dr. L. gave him the usual professional certificate. Hereupon he and Mr. Peter Labagh presented themselves to the Classis of Haekensack, and after a thorough and satisfactory examination, protracted through two days, they were both licensed to preach the gospel.

After his licensure, Dr. C. received several calls from churches then vacant, but finally determined to devote himself to the care of the united churches of Millstone and Six-Mile-Run, which had recently become vacant by the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Van Harlingen. Upon the termination of the collegiate relation between these two churches, Dr. C. devoted the whole of his time to the church at Six-Mile-Run. This was his only field of labor, where for thirty years he quietly but most successfully cultivated the vineyard of the Lord.

One who knew him well, thus speaks of him as a minister: "His preaching was characterized by a clear exhibition of divine truth, and was thought to be peculiarly adapted to the tastes and various exercises of the pious. He was a Barnabas rather than a Boanerges. His labors were attended with an even and gradual success, rather than by any thing of the nature of

*A Biographical Sketch of the Author.*

revivals. As a member of the Church judicatures, he was mild and judicious, and stood high in the confidence of his brethren."

In 1826, he was elected Professor of Pastoral Theology and Ecclesiastical History and Government, the duties of which office he continued to fulfil with distinguished fidelity and success till the time of his death. The Church was bereaved of his services and example on Sabbath, the twenty-fifth of July, 1852.

Do you wish proof of his learning? These lectures will afford you the fullest demonstration. Do you wish to hear of his benevolence? Go ask the poor, who never went empty from his door. Do you wish to know his courtesy, his unwearied diligence in the discharge of duty, his piety? Ask your pastors, who owe so much to him; or go to those of his old parishioners who still survive him; from these you will learn that we do well to mourn the loss of our father and friend.





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### PART I.

#### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

These qualifications are,

FIRST. A *special call of God*.

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## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

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## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

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Practical reflections:

Difference between *saying* prayers and *praying*—Review past experience in prayer—Consider its present exercise—Prayers of the hypocrite, the formalist, and the true Christian, compared—Necessity of the *grace* of prayer—How acquired—The only source of growth in grace—A graceless minister described—Exhortation to steadfastness.

## LECTURE V.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### MATTER, ORDER, AND MANNER OF PASTORAL PRAYER.

The Westminster Directory, regarding the "Book of Common Prayer." The foregoing arguments against, seasonable. The Evangelical Pastor must regard the three things following in his public prayers, namely: the matter, the order, and the manner of.

#### I. The *matter*. Directions:

1. The pastor must *study* the various states of his own heart.
2. Must read and study, especially, the devotional parts of Scripture.
3. Must strive to know the state of his flock.
4. Must engage in secret' prayer—Examples; Luther, John Knox, Welsh, Leighton.
5. Must carry with him the various wants of all.
6. Must depend upon and supplicate the aid of the Holy Spirit.

#### II. The *order* of prayer—Necessity thereof for edification.

1. Gives expression to the nature of public worship.
2. The only way to avoid omissions, repetitions, etc.
3. Also to promote devotion.

#### 1st. Rules for preserving this order in prayer:

1. Habitual thinking on all important subjects.
2. Must distinguish generals from particulars.
3. Connect things of the same kind.
4. Pressing evils and special mercies should occupy much thought in prayer.

#### 2d. Various general methods of prayer—Some divide the matter into ten parts, others into eight, others five, and others again, two—I recommend the five following parts, namely:

1. *Invocation*. Its nature and object explained—Should vary in length.
2. *Confession*. Its nature and importance—Comprehends two things, a sense of guilt and contrition—A form of, in the

liturgy of the Reformed Church—To be accompanied with short professions of faith.

3. *Petition.* Should occupy a large place in prayer—Subjects of, numerous.
4. *Thanksgiving.* This duty, obvious—Subjects of, numerous.
5. *Intercession.* In behalf of others—It is either, (1.) General for all classes and conditions of men; or, (2.) Particular, for individuals—Manner of concluding prayers.

### III. MANNER of prayer. This embraces three things:

1. *Gesture.* The posture must express reverence—Different forms of—standing, kneeling, bowing the head—The first to be preferred—The *gestures* should be few—Eyes should be closed.
2. *Pronunciation,* or tone of voice. Must be distinct—Not dictatorial—Neither too low nor too elevated.
3. *Style,* or language. General directions for.

#### Practical reflections:

Must distinguish between, 1. The extraordinary and the ordinary gifts of the Spirit; and especially, 2. Between the gifts and the graces of the Spirit.

(1.) Prophecy, an extraordinary gift; (2.) Miracles, another; (3.) Doctrinal knowledge, an ordinary gift; (4.) Utterance, another; (5.) The talent of performing audible prayer, another—Further directions and cautions—Conclusion.

## LECTURE VI.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

#### SECOND. THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

Introduction—Design of, to be “teachers”—Distinction between the gift of prayer and that of preaching—The latter the most important—The redemption of sinners, the great end of all God’s works—Difficulties to encounter—Not to be overcome by perpetual miracles, but by a special ministry—The wisdom of God in this arrangement—Unlike the orations of the heathen, which were limited to one nation, the publication of the gospel is universal—Hence the superiority of the divine ordinance of “preaching,” as a means of salvation—the primitive number large—Wonderful effects of, prove its divine origin—Preaching, not ritualism, the great work of the gospel ministry—Its awful responsibilities—Hence, the “gift of preaching” an essential qualification of the Evangelical Pastor.

- I. The term preaching defined—It signifies to convey a message—Is descriptive of the Christian ministry as an *office*—Its design or end.

1. Preaching is both a *gift* and a *duty*. Consider it as a *GIFT*.  
The term defined—Is susceptible of improvement—Is

imperiously demanded by the nature of the service—This is evident, (1.) from Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus; and, (2.) from the nature of the duty of preaching.

2. Directions for the improvement of this gift :
  - (1.) The renewing grace of God in the heart—Examples : Luther, Knox, Brainard.
  - (2.) By the improvement of the mental powers.
  - (3.) By frequent conversation with pious and experienced Christians.
  - (4.) By the outpourings of the Spirit of God upon the people.
  - (5.) By selecting useful matter, and studying the manner of preaching.

II. Preaching comprehends two things, namely: 1. The sermon itself, as a piece of composition; and, 2. The delivery of it.

1st. THE SERMON AS A COMPOSITION. This includes five things:

FIRST. The *proper subjects* for—The Scriptures the only source of—Departures from, in the early ages, by substituting the teachings of Aristotle for those of Christ—In Wickliffe's time—The Romish Church—Many Protestants labor to suppress the preaching of the gospel, by substituting systems of human device—Socinianism—Deism—The subjects of preaching various—Those suitable for ordinary discourses are:

- (1.) The fall and depravity of human nature.
- (2.) The evil of sin, and destruction of the impenitent.
- (3.) The perfection of the moral law—Its penalties, etc.
- (4.) The Saviour, in his person, offices, and states.
- (5.) The constitution of the covenant of grace.
- (6.) The operations of the Holy Spirit.
- (7.) The privileges of God's people, etc.

But the preacher is not confined to these. He must preach historical, prophetic, and typical discourses—Difficult passages—Directions in treating them—A caution—Topics not to be dwelt on, such as ancient heresies, Millerism, temperance, the divine decrees, etc.

2d. Directions for the selection of proper subjects.

1. The preacher must keep in view the *end* of his mission, to preach "Christ crucified."
2. He must preach to those who *hear him*, not to the absent.
3. He must watch the various changes in the *religious states* of his flock—Move with caution among them—Consult the judicious among his church officers—Guard against gossips—Not be too much in the streets.
4. Also the leading exercises of his own mind—He must not only combat error, but, especially, feed his flock.

Practical reflections:

The gift of preaching acquires its *value* from its connection with the ministry of Christ's gospel—Is a preaching and teaching ministry—Its power during the apostolic age—Opposed by prelacy and ritualism, which aim to supplant preaching by the introduction of ceremonies—Confirmed by historic facts—Must be defended against these assaults—Address to those about to enter the harvest.

field—The exalted honor of the office—The original command, "Go, preach," etc., is unrepealed—Calls into exercise all the faculties of body and soul—Counsel and encouragement to such—Curran.

## LECTURE VII.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

## GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

*On the Composition of Sermons.*

On this subject, in the preceding lecture, I have treated of the subjects of preaching. Your attention is now directed:

SECOND. To the *thoughts or sentiments* in a sermon. The proper character of sermons depends upon the ideas and arguments expressed. To this end:

1. They must be pregnant with, and *illustrative* of, divine truth—Free from metaphysical subtleties; also from light and frothy sentiments—Must be sound and practical, rather than popular.
2. The thoughts and sentiments must be *pertinent*, as opposed to unnecessary amplification.
3. They must also be *profound*—The term explained—An illustration given from "Behold the Lamb of God," etc.
4. They should also be *select*—Must avoid diffusiveness; also irrelevant matter.

The *method* to be observed in acquiring matter for discourses:

- (1.) Reading the Scriptures, and other standard writings on the subject; and, (2.) Reflection—Directions in the selection of proper works—Cannot extend his researches too far—Must digest what he reads—Avoid borrowing from others—Take time for study and reflection. (3.) Importance of prayer—Bradford. The next thing to be considered is,

THIRD. *Style*; the manner of expressing thoughts to others:

1. Language the instrument—"English undefiled" the source—Use small words—Pope and Milton—Importance of.
2. Style is various—Should be adapted to the particular subject of the discourse.
3. The rules of composition in general use prescribed:
  - (1.) Perspicuity, as opposed to obscurity.
  - (2.) Great importance of—Hearers composed as well of the illiterate as the educated.
  - (3.) It must be *grammatically* correct.
  - (4.) Use *plain* words—Obsolete and scholastic words, and coined terms, etc., to be avoided—Evils of—Consubstantiation—Luther—Justification—Wesley—Feeling, etc.—Words sanctioned by long usage to be the standard—A caution.
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5. The *nervous* style; the result of strength of mind, strong conceptions, happy selection of words, etc.; and,
6. The *pathetic* style. To what part of the discourse it belongs—How to be used—Is called “unction” by the French.

### Practical reflections:

1. To preach well, is a talent of a superior order, etc.
2. The nobleness of the service should excite to strenuous exertions.
3. Should keep in view the great end to which the gift of preaching the Word is to be consecrated—Christ the great pattern—Archbishop Usher.

## LECTURE VIII.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

*Texts—Plan or Arrangement of Sermons.*

FOURTH. *Texts.* The term explained—Embraces the *whole Word of God*—Use of particular parts as a text.

- 1st. Apocryphal books, uninspired—Evils arising from the use of—The Word of God alone taken as the text, two great questions arise:

First. May an edifying sermon be composed and spoken without a text?—Not used by our Lord or his apostles—Reasons therefor—The use of texts naturally results from the divine command to “preach the Word”—Its utility evident.

Second. May one or more passages be used as a text, as leading to a subject, without referring to every fact or circumstance which the words of such a text express? Yes; if the text contain the *subject*, which must be distinctly stated—Illustrations given—Analysis—When to be used—Tillotson—Bourdalous.

The *utility* of the use of texts depends much upon their proper selection:

- (1.) An illustration given.
- (2.) The text must form a *distinct proposition*, which shall express the meaning of the sacred writer—Its relation to the context.
- (3.) Should guard against the selection of too many passages—When to use a *copious text*—Directions for the selection of suitable texts.

FIFTH. THE PLAN, OR ARRANGEMENT OF A SERMON. Importance of logical order or method in the arrangement of a sermon—Evils of an unmethodical discourse—A written analysis recommended.

The proper method to be pursued in the composition of sermons—The attention directed,

I. To the *constituent parts* of a sermon. These are two: First, the explication or discussion of the subject; second, the application or improvement of it. But I shall consider the following:

1. The *introduction*, or *exordium*—This not an essential part of, though ordinarily to be used.

(1.) The introduction should be *short*; (2.) Also marked and *pertinent*; (3.) Also *clear*; and, (4.) *Modest*—A caution.

2. The *nexus*, or connection—Not always necessary to show the context—Generally necessary—Three rules given.

Practical reflections:

1. The gospel ministry divinely instituted to secure two great ends—Claims of the subjects already treated upon the serious attention of such—Eminence in knowledge, and the gift of preaching, require study and pains-taking—“Covet earnestly the best gifts.”

2. Directions to the pastor in the walks of private and social life—In language be perspicuous—Avoid pedantry—Use a chaste and dignified style in conversation—Be kind and affectionate.

## LECTURE IX.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

##### *Texts—Plan or Arrangement of Sermons.*

3. The third constituent part of a sermon is, its *division*. Necessary—Analysis:

(1.) No one invariable rule can be prescribed—The subject illustrated by various examples; (2.) The division should comprehend the whole subject; (3.) The general division must consist of as few heads as possible; (4.) Not necessary to announce them all at the opening of the discourse.

4. The fourth constituent part, the *discussion* or *exposition*. This, though the most important, yet not the most difficult part, is made up of two parts, namely: *First*, *explication* of the text—The process explained—Rules to discuss a text well: 1. Must understand the meaning of your text; 2. Enter not deeply into metaphysical discussion; 3. Motives to a godly life must be drawn from gospel considerations; 4. Let the discussion be animated—Various modes of discussion—Distinguished by Claude into four, namely: i. By *explication*. The process explained—Examples—Difficulties of, how overcome—Must be compared with other passages—Is of two kinds, simple and compound—Explained—Particulars not to be overlooked—Lecturing, a most useful mode of preaching

- ii. By *observation*. Different mode of treating historical facts and scriptural characters—Hunter's Sacred Biography—Must be directly pertinent—Illustration—Four observations—Improvement of the subject in four particulars;
- iii. By *continued application*. Advantages of—George Whitefield—Avoid efforts to imitate; iv. By a *distinct proposition*. Mode of.
5. The fifth constituent part of a sermon is its *application*, or improvement. This a most difficult and important part of a sermon—Vitrina—Improvement of sermons is of two kinds: (1.) By *inferences*. Subjects best suited for, historical, proverbs, and parables—Are of two kinds, doctrinal and practical; (2.) By *direct application*. Cautions—A good application must have the following properties: *First*, it must be directly drawn from the subject; *second*, it must be pointed; *third*, faithful—In what true faithfulness consists; *fourth*, animated.
- Manner* in which a sermon is to be concluded: Recapitulation—Conclusion should not be abrupt—Close by invitation, rather than denunciation.
- A question*: Should a sermon always be committed to writing before it is spoken? Answer: Is not absolutely necessary—Depends much on the extent of knowledge, and the gift of utterance—Robert Hall—Such men few in number—Writing strongly recommended—Advantages of—Evils of its neglect—Advantages of long practice.

Practical reflections:

In view of the preceding, it may be asked: "Who is sufficient for these things?" A word of encouragement—Caution against imitating empty declaimers: 1. "Give thyself to reading;" 2. Be not satisfied with small attainments; 3. Study the system of divine truth as a whole; 4. Aim to be qualified for permanent usefulness—The neglect of this, the cause of frequent changes from place to place.

## LECTURE X.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

##### *On the Delivery of Sermons.*

The gift of preaching most displayed,

SIXTH. In the *delivery of a sermon*. A defective delivery destroys the effect of the best composition, and vice versa.

- I. The great organ of delivery, *the human voice*—When properly cultivated, requires few gestures—George Whitefield—Delivery, a talent which may be greatly cultivated—Demosthenes—An error corrected—Delivery should be diligently improved—Ordinary rules of, equally applicable to the pulpit, etc.—Practice necessary—Directions and cautions—The properties of a good delivery in a pastor are:

1. Solemnity of countenance and of manner—"The place whereon such stand is holy ground"—Directions—Such solemnity is opposed to gloom, sourness, indifference, and a smirking and smiling countenance; also to quaintness and wit, etc.

2. Distinctness of pronunciation.
  3. Animated speaking—To be kept within due bounds—Flow on gradually—Directions—George Whitefield—Voice and action—A mistake corrected.
  4. Must be affectionate and pathetic—Need not shed tears—Avoid denunciation—Irritability—Directions: (1.) Mark the most important passages; (2.) Avoid bodily exhaustion; (3.) Seek to obtain a composed and solemn frame of mind; (4.) Feel deeply that he is to preach the gospel of the blessed God; (5.) Attend to his voice and gestures.
- II. *Action*: 1. Must correspond with the voice; 2. With the sentiments delivered; 3. With the sacredness of the place; 4. For the gospel's sake, strive to be a good speaker—Be not discouraged by detraction.

Question: Should sermons be *read*, or delivered *memoriter*? Great diversity prevails on this subject—Most ministers read—Most people prefer delivery from memory—Dr. Campbell—Dr. Blair—Arguments in favor of *reading*: (1.) Good readers are more numerous than good speakers—This fact denied; (2.) Reading saves time and labor—Wherein admissible; (3.) Reading secures order and accuracy of expression—How far correct—Advantages of one who speaks from memory over one who reads—Arguments in favor of preaching *without reading*: (1.) It was adopted by the apostles and Christian Fathers—Also by the Reformers; (2.) Committing and speaking a sermon strengthens the power of the memory—Two evils; (3.) Produces familiarity with the Scriptures—This the strongest argument; (4.) It has the general sentiment in its favor—Historical remarks on the two customs; (5.) Is more efficient as a means of reproof, admonition, and affectionate expostulation; (6.) It opens the way for many useful and pertinent thoughts, etc.—It better comports with the nature of his calling, duties, interruptions, etc.

Remarks:

- i. Candidates for the gospel ministry should be educated for both reading and speaking their sermons.
- ii. Natural gifts and endowments vary—No one way can be prescribed.
- iii. The conclusion is, that students of theology should aim both to read and speak well.

Practical reflections:

The composition and delivery of sermons is entitled to serious consideration—The age and genius of the people require it—Should labor to be "able ministers of the New Testament"—Heed not denunciation.

## LECTURE XI.

## PART II.

## PASTORAL DUTIES.

*The Duty of Prayer.*

Duties. The term defined—Pastoral, the highest—Relate to public action—Must be *pastors*, as well as heralds and preachers—May be itinerant or local—Responsibilities great—All comprehended under the name of pastoral instruction, by teaching and example—Particular public duties are,

- I. OFFERING UP PRAYER IN SOCIAL WORSHIP.
- II. PREACHING THE WORD.
- III. ADMINISTERING THE HOLY SACRAMENTS.
- IV. CATECHIZING THE YOUNG.
- V. VISITING, ESPECIALLY THE SICK.
- VI. GOVERNING THE FLOCK—DISCIPLINE.
- VII. COÖPERATING WITH OTHER MINISTERS, ETC. —Promised reward to the faithful—The first duty:

I. PASTORAL PRAYER IN SOCIAL WORSHIP. On prayer as a pastoral gift, see Lecture IV. and V.—Is now treated as a duty—Is private, domestic, public—Is to be offered,

1. For all saints—Wherefore? Answer: (1.) From their relation to one another and to Christ—Socinus—Answer to; (2.) From their relation to the earth as the salt of—Their covenant safety does not exclude the duty of prayer—Must pray especially for his own flock—Directions and cautions.
2. For the conversion of sinners—Naming persons in, not commended.
3. For an enlargement of the visible Church—Important considerations and directions—In the *larger* prayer, three defects: (1.) Didactic style; (2.) Censuring in prayer; (3.) Praying too long—The closing prayer—Directions — Other prayers—Sacramental—Private—Domestic—With the sick—On other suitable occasions—Canons for the regulation of; i. Know the state of his own flock; ii. Seek the aids of the Spirit; iii. Accommodate himself to their circumstances, etc.; iv. Avoid proximity in—An inquiry: How shall I know that I have the special grace of God in prayer?—Answered—Encouragements to pastoral prayer—Praying societies, etc.

Practical reflections:

The pastor will need large measures of grace—Guard against formality, pride, empty display, etc.—Weapons not carnal—Discouragements—Directions—Dilapidated churches—Encouragements—Value of praying societies—Are under the special care of the pastor and his elders—Difference between a faithful and unfaithful pastor.

## LECTURE XII.

## PASTORAL DUTIES, CONTINUED.

## THE DUTY OF PREACHING THE WORD.

The next duty of a pastor is,

## II. That of PREACHING THE WORD.

1. The *dispensation* of God's Word by a pastor is *public*, and as such is usually called "*preaching.*" (See Lectures VI., VII., VIII., etc.)

(1.) When and how often to be performed—Restrictions imposed—George Whitefield—Revivals—Dangers of, to the pastor—Cautions—Infirm state of health—Young ministers must not preach too frequently—With these limitations in view, the preaching of the Word cannot be too frequent: i. The Sabbath; ii. Other week-days; iii. On funeral occasions—Directions; iv. Occasions for social prayer and catechizing.

(2.) In preaching the Word, *great diligence* is required: i. God has commanded it; ii. It is the divinely ordained instrument for the salvation of sinners; iii. Rewards promised to the faithful; iv. Urged by the condition and wants of his flock; v. By the example of his Master.

(3.) *Results* of a faithful preaching of the Word.

(4.) Further suggestions as to the proper occasions of preaching, etc.

2. The *manner* of dispensing God's Word. This must be done,

(1.) By declaring the whole counsel of God—An illustration given in four particulars—Fearlessly, but,

(2.) In wisdom—This necessary, from the variety of the subjects, etc.

(3.) With faithfulness; but,

(4.) Must avoid personalities.

(5.) And in the spirit of compassion, etc.

Thus much regarding the public administration of the Word.

Consider next,

The more *private* and limited dispensation of it:

*First*, week-days, on suitable occasions; *second*, but not to the neglect of suitable preparations—Difference between the ministry of the apostles and that of this day—Still, *third*, the *spirit* of the duty to preach from house to house must be maintained.

3. In what consists the difference between a public and private dispensation of the Word.

Practical reflections:

Cautions against, 1. A love of criticism; 2. Against the love of praise; 3. Be humble.

## LECTURE XIII.

## PASTORAL DUTIES, CONTINUED.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

THESE ARE FOUR IN NUMBER. TWO UNDER THE ANCIENT DISPENSATION, CIRCUMCISION AND THE PASSOVER. TWO UNDER THE NEW DISPENSATION, BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

On what constitutes the doctrine of the Sacraments in general: 1. The Ordinances so called; 2. The word "Sacrament" not used in Scripture—Derivation of—By whom and how used—True history of.

(1.) In what sense the term Sacrament may be retained.

(2.) Scriptural terms used to denote the sacraments are "Sign" and "Seal"—Erroneous comment of Tiringius, a Roman Catholic, on Gen. xvii. 4, exposed—Another by a Mennonist Baptist—Erroneous comments on Rom. iv. 11, in three particulars, exposed. The next duty of the Christian Pastor is,

### III. The ADMINISTRATION of the sacraments.

To sacraments belong five things; namely,

FIRST. *A Divine Institution*: 1. Sacraments were instituted by God himself—Proofs: (1.) Are founded on the will of God; (2.) Are religious ordinances; (3.) Things contained in the promises can only be given of God; (4.) Evident from the nature of the Church as an organized body; (5.) Proofs that they were instituted by God himself. 2. This is true, i. Of Circumcision; ii. Of the Passover; iii. Of Baptism; iv. Of the Lord's Supper—Socinian views of, refutation of—Volckelius—True nature and design of Circumcision. To sacraments belong,

SECOND. *A visible sign in a Sacrament*: In what it consists, shown in four particulars—Proofs that it is essential—Three arguments—Objection—Mode of development of—How visible signs in sacraments are to be distinguished from others, etc.—Proof that the visible signs or elements alone do not constitute the sacraments.

THIRD. Pass from the visible sign to *the thing signified*: The doctrine of visible signs further elucidated under the Old Dispensation. (1.) Were designed as *memorials*—This true of Circumcision—Of the Passover—Both were of a *mixed* character—Errors of Baptists and others—Baptism and the Lord's Supper spiritual in their nature, and designed for universal application; (2.) Privileges of, various; (3.) The Church as founded on the Abrahamic Covenant constituted of a two-fold seed, etc.—An important inference—Wherein the visible sign and the thing signified are to be distinguished, shown in four particulars.

## LECTURE XIV.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

FOURTH. *On the union of the external sign with the thing signified by it.*

1. This union—What called—The "*Forma*" of the sacraments—Derivation of—"The matter" of—In what it consists.
2. *Errors* regarding this union: (1.) Romish views of: (2.) Lutheran views of—True doctrine of: i. Negatively; ii. Positively; iii. This

- union, how formed; (3.) Another Romish view regarding the doctrine of *Intention*—Fallacy of in three particulars.
3. Remarkable phraseology of the inspired writers in relation to the sacraments:
- 1st. To the *sign*, in some passages, is given the *name* of the thing signified—Four examples—Examination of each *seriatim*—Romish errors respecting them refuted—Tirinius on baptismal regeneration—Refuted in three arguments. But, further:
  - 2d. The *thing signified* bears the name of the sign—Bellarmine's and Crellius's comments on 1 Cor. v. 7—Answers to.
  - 3d. To the *sign* is sometimes ascribed the *power and efficacy* of the thing signified—Acts xxii. 16, Bellarmine on—Answer to—The Baptists on—Answer to. Again,
  - 4th. To the *thing signified* is sometimes ascribed the *ceremony* in relation to the sign.
  - 5th. The *names* of the Old Testament sacraments used to designate the members of the Church under the New—This is a most important fact, in two particulars, regarding the Baptists and others—Conclusion:

- (1.) The Sacraments and the Word, wherein they *agree* and *differ*: First. They have the following things in common: i. Both proceed from God; ii. Both address the mind through the external senses; iii. Both to be dispensed solely by ministers of the Word—Proofs, in four particulars—This doctrine violently opposed by Romanists—Defense of, in three particulars.

The sacraments and the Word *means* by which the Holy Spirit operates—Both exhibit and express the grace of the gospel.

On the Romish errors regarding their efficacy.

- (2.) On the *difference* between the Word and sacraments—This shown in eight particulars.
- (3.) Wherein the *Christian* sacrifices are distinguishable from the sacraments, shown in two particulars.
- (4.) Wherein the sacraments under *both* Testaments agree and differ: i. Wherein they *agree*, shown in two particulars—Errors of Baptists and Romanists exposed; ii. Wherein they *differ*, shown in four particulars.

## LECTURE XV.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

#### THE DESIGN OR END OF THE SACRAMENTS.

To sacraments belong,

FIFTH. The DESIGN OR END for which they were established.

- I. The glory of God the grand end.
- II. Subordinately, various other important ends; as,
1. To signify spiritual things—All admit this, Socinians excepted—  
Transubstantiation.
  2. Are seals of the privileges and blessings of the everlasting covenant—Denied by Socinians, Papists, and Mennonists—Argument to prove that they are seals—Various arguments of opposing sects considered—Those drawn from *circumcision* answered—The Passover—Baptism—The Lord's Supper—Objection by the Papists—Answered in three particulars—Objection by Antipedobaptists—Answered in three particulars—Direct argument in proof of—Objection of the Baptists answered—Direct argument.
  3. A third subordinate end, to distinguish the visible Church of God from the unbelieving world—Proved in three particulars.
  4. Another end of the sacraments—To enable believers to testify their union and communion in the enjoyment of the same covenant blessings—An objection of Socinus—Answered in four particulars.
  5. Another end—It binds believers to the practice of all the duties of the covenant.
  6. Sacramental signs and seals are not promises made to any individual, but to the whole visible Church.
- III. The number of the sacraments.
1. Under the Ancient Dispensation they were *two*, and no more—Errors of the Papists and the Baptists respecting Circumcision and the Passover.
  2. Under the New Dispensation also *two*, and no more—Further remarks on the word "Sacraments"—The Papists add *five* others—We must know what they are.
    - (1.) *Confirmation*—What—Proof that it is not a divine ordinance.
    - (2.) *Penitence*—What—Fallacy of in two particulars.
    - (3.) *Extreme Unction*—What—Fallacy of in two particulars.
    - (4.) *Marriage*—What—In four particulars—The Papal theory of, as founded on Ephes. vi. 31, 32—Answer, in five particulars.
    - (5.) *Ministerial Order*—Proof that it is not a sacrament, in two particulars.

## LECTURE XVI.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

## CIRCUMCISION—ITS ADMINISTRATION.

A few additional points of doctrine, in relation to the ancient sacraments.

FIRST. CIRCUMCISION—Importance of an understanding of this ancient seal of the covenant.

1. The original terms, what:
  - (1.) When instituted.

- (2.) By whom instituted—God.  
 (3.) With whom instituted—Abraham.  
 (4.) When instituted with him.
2. Circumcision, as an external or visible sign—What—Its institution shown in three particulars—Reasons for—Three assigned—The instrument employed.
3. The thing signified—Shown in four particulars.
4. Circumcision a seal—The end accomplished thereby—Rom. iv. 11, explained in four particulars—Forms the basis, first, of the doctrine of justification by faith without works; Second, that circumcision was not only a sign but a seal of the righteousness of faith—Objections of opponents: *First*. Socinians—Answered in two particulars; *Second*. Do. answered in three particulars; *Third*. Objections to circumcision as a seal: 1. By Socinians—Answered in two particulars; 2. By do. answered in three particulars; 3. By Episcopius, the leader of the Arminians—Answered, in two particulars:
5. Union or agreement of the sign with the thing signified.
6. To whom administered.
- (1.) To adults: i. To Abraham's household; ii. To strangers; iii. Proved by the practice of the patriarchs.
- (2.) To infants: *First*. Circumcised by Abraham on the eighth day—By the ancient Church, down to the introduction of the New Testament Dispensation—In Egypt; *Second*. This fact not denied; *Third*. The time for the circumcision of adults not determined by the Divine Law; *Fourth*. Proves the existence in the visible Church of infant church membership—Two important results follow: 1. It removes the objections of Antipedobaptists; 2. Proves that the right of infant church membership remains, so long as the covenant, of which it is a law, continues in force—Proof, that neither the change in the dispensation, nor the abrogation of the right of circumcision, repeals the right of infant church membership, in three particulars; *First*. The Abrahamic Covenant has still its visible sign in another sacrament; *Second*. The adaptation of this sacrament to infants; *Third*. That sacrament is Baptism—Shown in two particulars—Objections: 1. If this be so, the baptized are bound to keep the Ceremonial Law—Answer, in four particulars; 2. That spiritual circumcision has come in the place of external circumcision, Col. ii., 11, 12, 13—Answered, in two particulars; *Fourth*. Direct Proofs. See following lecture.

## LECTURE XVII.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT—INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP—  
CIRCUMCISION—BAPTISM.

Recapitulation of the preceding lecture—Direct proofs of the perpetuity of the Abrahamic Covenant.

*Analytical Table of Contents.*

- I. The visible Church organized on the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant of circumcision—Janeway's Letters and Mason's Essays on.
- II. The Abrahamic Covenant not abrogated under the New Testament dispensation—Objection by the Baptists, that the new is called "a better covenant," etc.—Answered in four particulars.
- III. Proof from the fact, that the believing Gentiles were by Peter included in that covenant.  
Also, from the import of the term "Everlasting," as applied to that covenant.
- IV. Images, olive tree, etc.
- V. The names which designate a relation to that covenant, applied alike to Jews and Gentiles, shown in two particulars.
- VI. The same blessings secured to Abraham by circumcision, are enjoyed by the New Testament believers.  
*Infant church membership* did not depend upon the visible sign of circumcision, but upon the covenant itself, which is still in force; therefore, infant church membership cannot be abrogated—Arguments in proof of.  
The silence of the New Testament writers regarding infant church membership, as urged by the Baptists, no argument against it, shown in two particulars:
  - I. But the New Testament writers are not silent as to this matter. Proof: from the words of Christ, Matt. xix. 13, 14; Mark x. 13, 16. Objection by Socinians and Baptists—Answered in five particulars—Another objection by the Baptists—Answered—Another objection—Answered.
  - II. The next argument drawn from the relation of children to "the kingdom of God," shown in two particulars—Objection by the Baptists—Answered in two particulars—Another objection by the Baptists—Answered in three particulars—A third objection by the Baptists—Answered in two particulars.

## LECTURE XVIII.

## INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, CONTINUED.

## CIRCUMCISION—BAPTISM.

Further proofs, drawn from passages in the New Testament. Recapitulation of the preceding lecture.

- III. The first proof, from the words of Peter, Acts ii. 39: 1. Who were intended by the words, "you and your children?" Answer: The Jews—Two facts stated—Objection by the Baptists—Answered in three particulars—Another objection by the Baptists, answered in two particulars—2. What we are to understand by "the promise" in Acts ii., "to you and to your children?" explained, in connection with other promises.
- IV. From the words of Paul, Rom. iv. 13, 14: Explained in four particulars—Two inferences.

- V. From the words of Paul, Gal. iii. 14: Explained—Inference—Recapitulation of the preceding arguments, in four particulars.  
Proof, from “the Baptism of Households.”

## LECTURE XIX.

## THE PASSOVER.

The next sacrament, under the Old Testament dispensation, comes now to be considered, namely:

## SECOND. THE PASSOVER.

- I. The *Name*: The original terms whence it is derived—What it denoted, and to what to be applied—Shown in four particulars.
- II. By whom instituted—JEROVAH.
  1. The time of *institution*—Two particulars.
  2. The time when *celebrated*—Shown in four particulars.
    - (1.) The month—Two remarks; (2.) The day of the month;
    - (3.) The time of the day; (4.) The two evenings—Remarks.
  3. The *places* of celebration.
    - (1.) In different places—Egypt—The wilderness—Gilgal.
    - (2.) One particular place—The Land of Promise, Jerusalem.
  4. The *visible sign* of; (1.) The lamb or small beast; (2.) Oxen—On what occasion used—The lamb the ordinary victim—Its qualities, etc., in three particulars—Further particulars respecting the lamb; i. The slaying of; ii. Sprinkling of the blood, shown in three particulars; iii. Roasting the flesh; iv. Eating, shown in three particulars.
  5. The *thing signified* by the Passover—It was,
    - (1.) A memorial feast—Children admitted to—Not thereby to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper. It was also,
    - (2.) An expiatory sacrifice—Denied by Socinians—Proved, in four arguments—Was a type of the sacrifice of Christ for sin.
    - (3.) The Passover, also, was of a sacramental character—Proof of, shown in four particulars—What it signified in its typical relation to Christ, the antitype, shown in four particulars.
  6. Agreement between the *sign* and the *thing signified*—Shown in two particulars.
  7. The *partakers* of the Passover—*First*. The whole congregation—Exceptions—Erastus, Prynne, and others affirm, that even the morally unclean might eat the Passover—Three admissions—Error of the Erastian theory shown in three arguments—The subject resumed in the next lecture.

## LECTURE XX.

THE PASSOVER—WOMEN—FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD—  
BAPTISM.

## RECAPITULATION—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Besides the circumcised Israelites,

*Second.* The WOMEN of Israel were admitted to the Passover—A difficulty met and answered, in six particulars.

*Third.* Families—Number in each—Provisions by law for those unavailably prevented from celebrating the Passover.

*Fourth.* Proselytes.

*The Feast of Unleavened Bread.*

Distinction between it and the Passover—Conclusion.

## BAPTISM.

Let us now turn our attention to the sacraments under the New Dispensation; and,

FIRST. HOLY BAPTISM—Derivation of the term, from the Greek, *Βαπτισμα*, Matt. iii. 7; xxi. 15; Rom. vi. 4. Your attention is directed,

I. To the baptism of the *Hebrews*.

1. The subjects—*Proselytes* from other nations. Hence,

(1.) The “divers washings” of which Paul speaks, Heb. ix. 10—Maimonides on.

(2.) Not claimed by them to be founded in a Divine command.

(3.) Immersion, the mode—Remarks on.

(4.) The act performed, not by church officers, but by the proselytes themselves

2. The *children* of these proselytes—How were they treated in the Jewish Church?—Those brought with them—Both circumcised and baptized—Those born after—Only circumcised—Three important inferences.

II. The baptism of *John*: This subject involves a controversy with the Baptists on many points—What the Baptists affirm respecting the baptism of John.

*First.* That Christian baptism was promulgated by him.

*Second.* That he and his disciples administered one of the sacraments of the Christian Church—Answer—Facts admitted in regard to the baptism of John. It is conceded,

1. That John came from God.

2. That he baptized by immersion, or washing. But,

3. That he did not derive his commission from Christ.

4. He came to prepare the way for Messiah—This the pivot on which his whole mission turns—Two passages explained: (1.) Isaiah xl. 3: (2.) Mal. iii. 1.

*First.* What is meant by "the way of the Messiah, or Redeemer," as employed by the prophets, evangelists, and the apostle Paul, explained.

*Second.* How the way was thus prepared by John—Obstacles in the way of Messiah—A view of his character and work necessary to explain them.

1. Character and work of Christ.
2. Wrong notions of the Jews respecting them.
3. Their strong attachment to the tabernacle and temple worship.
4. But Christ came to break down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile.

Further remarks respecting the ministry of John :

- (1.) It was administered at the end of the Old, and beginning of the New Dispensation—What follows, on the Baptist hypothesis, shown in two particulars—Conclusion—The subject resumed in the next Lecture.

## LECTURE XXI.

### HOLY BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### JOHN'S MINISTRY AND BAPTISM PREPARATIVE—JOHN'S BAPTISM NOT A SACRAMENT—NOT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Recapitulation. Proof,

I. That John's baptism was not a Christian sacrament.

1. No provision was made for its perpetual observance in the Church as a standing sacrament.

(1.) His baptism expired with his death.

(2.) No provision made for its continuance by Christ—The sacrament of holy baptism not instituted till after the resurrection.

2. The ministry of John merely preparative, evident from a view of its principal parts, shown in five particulars—Conclusion.
3. Further evidence from John's preaching, in five particulars.

II. John's baptism was not Christian baptism—Arguments in proof of, derived from Robert Hall, etc.

1. The commission to baptize all nations originated in the express command of Christ, which John's did not.
2. John's baptism was administered *before* the Christian dispensation opened, etc.
3. Christian baptism is a sacrament of visible initiation into the Christian Church, as distinguished from the ancient Jewish Church, shown in two particulars.
4. The baptism of John was unto repentance and reformation, as a *preparation* for the *approaching* kingdom of God; but the institution of Christ included an explicit profession of faith in him as the Lord of that kingdom.

Three observations on:

5. Christian baptism was invariably administered in the name of Christ, but John's baptism was not performed in that name.

6. John not only distinguished his baptism from that of Christ, which was to follow his, but Christ's baptism is distinguished from John's, etc.
7. No provision made for its continuance.
8. The apostles *re-baptized* those who had been baptized by John, etc.—Instances of—Three inferences—The last inference (namely, that those baptized by John did not receive the Holy Spirit) violently opposed by certain Baptist writers—The facts in this controversy, as founded on Acts xviii. 23, et seq., fully discussed—Apollos, etc.

## LECTURE XXII.

## HOLY BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

JOHN'S BAPTISM, AND THE BAPTISM ADMINISTERED BY CHRIST'S DISCIPLES,  
TEMPORARY.

Recapitulation of the facts in the case of Apollos, at the close of the preceding Lecture, with further remarks concerning him—Further facts in this controversy, in proof that John's baptism was temporary, as derived from Acts, chapter xix.—Direct arguments resumed from the preceding Lecture.

9. John's ministry and baptism were limited to the Jews, etc.
10. The Abrahamic Covenant, of which the New Economy is a more full dispensation, included infants—But John did not baptize infants—Conclusion—Two inferences—Remarks on the baptism which our Lord's *disciples*, by his order, administered before the resurrection—This transaction recorded John iii. 22–26, and John iv. 1—These records examined—Proof that the baptism administered by them was not the sacrament of baptism afterwards instituted by Christ. The arguments are the following:
  - (1.) The faith required in John's baptism had not Jesus of Nazareth for its object, nor was it administered in the name of Christ.
  - (2.) So many would not have been baptized by the disciples in Judea, if at their baptism they had known and acknowledged (as is required of adults in Christian baptism) that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ.
  - (3.) This baptism by the disciples, like that of John, was only a temporary baptism.
  - (4.) Baptism administered by our Lord's disciples could not belong to the New Testament dispensation and Church, for these were not yet in being.
  - (5.) Our Lord, for a short time, directed his disciples to baptize—Objects of, shown in two particulars.

## LECTURE XXIII.

## CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

## NAME — INSTITUTION — VISIBLE SIGN.

Recapitulation of the preceding Lecture. The subject of the present Lecture is, Baptism as a sacrament, instituted by Christ after the resurrection—To it as such belong three things, namely: 1. Its doctrine; 2. Its history; 3. Its pastoral administration.

## I. Of the DOCTRINE of Baptism. Under this head, consider,

1. Its *name*—derived from the Greek, “*Βαπτισμα*,” Matt. iii. 7; xxi. 15; Rom. vi. 4—Remarks on—Various applications of the verb *βαπτίζω*—from *βαπτω*—and the noun “*Βαπτισμα*.”

First. *Literally*, as applied, 1. To *civil* purposes, (for example, to human bodies,) in the sense, (1.) Of *dipping*, or *immersing*; (2.) Of *washing*; (3.) Articles of domestic use; (4.) *Aspersions*, or *sprinkling*—Erroneous use of these terms by the Baptists; 2. Their *ceremonial* use—Heb. ix. 10, *διαφοροῖς Βαπτισμῶν*, explained.

Second. Used *figuratively*: What they signify, shown in three particulars.

2. The *divine institution* of baptism.
  - (1.) Instituted by Christ, as the sacrament of the Abrahamic Covenant under the New Dispensation.
  - (2.) The time when instituted, after the resurrection—Two remarks on.
  - (3.) At the first institution of the gospel ministry.
  - (4.) Its perpetual observance obligatory—Rejected by Socinians and Quakers—Reply to, in three particulars—Further remarks on the Quaker theory of baptism by *the Spirit* only, in seven particulars.
3. Baptism as a *visible sign*. This consists in the use,
  - (1.) Of pure natural water—Unauthorized additions to, by the Churches of Rome and England—Mohammedans.
  - (2.) Prescribed action in baptism—Mode, by immersion, affusion, and sprinkling—Baptist objections—Answers to—Direct arguments in support of the mode by aspersion and sprinkling—Three preliminaries—Arguments, etc.
    - i. The baptism of three thousand persons by immersion in half a day by the twelve apostles impossible.
    - ii. Admitting the baptism of the Eunuch to have been by immersion, (though improbable,) the circumstances in the cases of Paul, the Jailer, and others, favor that of aspersion.
    - iii. Sprinkling by blood and water divinely appointed, and of common use among the Jews.
    - iv. Christ's yoke easy—Conclusion—Trine immersion and sprinkling.

## LECTURE XXIV.

## CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—SUBJECT CONTINUED.

## THE VISIBLE SIGN—THE THING SIGNIFIED—BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

Recapitulation. Another appendage of the action of Christian baptism as a sacrament, in addition to the mode, is,

*Second*. The union of the Word of God with the application of the water, in the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*—Remarks on:

1. Must be proclaimed in the form prescribed by Christ.
2. Publication of the name of the person baptized—Remarks, (1.) On the word “Christening”—When improperly used; (2.) On the words “Regeneration and Regenerated,” as used by the ancient Fathers; (3.) On the words “Illumination” and “Enlightened;”

- (4.) Result of the loose use of by the Churches of Rome and England, and by Lutherans, Methodists, etc.—The dogma of baptismal regeneration.
3. Baptism not regeneration—Proofs:
- I. The material substance used in baptism cannot reach the mind—Objection—Answer.
  - II. All who have partaken of the sacraments not real converts—Israelites—Simon Magus.
  - III. Faith and repentance required of adults before baptism.
- IV. Regeneration necessary to salvation—Baptism not.
- V. The administration of sacraments a discretionary act of the minister—Not so of the disposal of the Spirit. To the doctrine of baptism belongs,
4. The *thing signified*—In what it consists.
- (1.) It seals to the Church the *various grace* of the Covenant.
  - (2.) Is not communicated in the same measure, or alike, to all—Reasons therefor, in two particulars—Proof, in three particulars—These apply to the Lord's Supper, but particularly to baptism—Applied to the ease,
    - First.* Of INFANTS, in two particulars.
    - Second.* Of ADULTS, in four particulars.
5. Agreement between the *sign* and the *thing signified*—This so obvious as to require no remarks.
6. The lawful partakers of baptism, or the *subjects* of. These are,
- (1.) *Adults*—Believing—No dispute regarding them.
  - (2.) *Infants*—Rejected by the Baptists—Their right to, supported by the following arguments: namely,
    - I. The perpetuity of the Abrahamic Covenant, shown in two particulars.
    - II. The substitution of baptism in the place of circumcision—Denied by the Baptists—A case supposed—Recapitulation of proofs in a former Lecture, in three particulars—Objection—Answered, in four particulars.
    - III. From the relation which infants sustain to God and his Church.
    - IV. Apostolic example—Two remarks on—Facts reviewed in two particulars—Conclusion.

## LECTURE XXV.

## HISTORY OF BAPTISM—ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

To the ordinance of Baptism, as a Christian sacrament, belongs,

1. Its HISTORY: Preliminaries—Design and use of—Confined in this lecture to infants—Limited to the period of Augustine—Authorities quoted.
  1. The APOSTLES, and those who acted with them—Examples.
  2. Hermes.
  3. Justin Martyr—Three remarks on his testimony.
  4. Irenæus, A. D. 150—Two remarks on.

5. Tertullian—Remark.
6. Origen.
7. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage—Fidus—Council of Carthage, A. D. 253.
8. Optatus, A. D. 360—Remarks.
9. Gregory Nazianzen.
10. Ambrose.  
Those writers who flourished from A. D. 380 to Augustine.
11. Chrysostom.
12. Athanasius—Pelagius—Controversy awakened by his errors, etc.
13. Jerome, or Hieronymus.
14. Augustine—Three remarks on 1 Cor. vii., “Else were your children unclean,” etc.  
Objection of the Baptists, that the baptism of infants was an unscriptural innovation—Claim the Waldenses, etc.—Reply to, in two particulars—Waldensian testimony in defense of infant baptism—The last article connected with Christian baptism as a sacrament.

II. ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION—Preliminaries—Directions in reference to the subjects of,

1. INFANTS: Remarks on,
  - (1.) The qualifications of the parents who present children for holy baptism.
  - (2.) Important questions, regarding those church members who have not fulfilled their baptismal vows.
  - (3.) Recent action of General Synod on.
  - (4.) Further questions on.
  - (5.) When parents should apply to the pastor for the baptism of their children—Reasons for.
  - (6.) Parents to be instructed in regard to the doctrine and obligations of.
2. ADULTS:
  - (1.) On application, time to be given for pastoral instruction and examination, etc.
  - (2.) To be administered in public assemblies—Private baptism—Five reasons given against.
  - (3.) To be administered on the Sabbath.
  - (4.) How to be administered.
  - (5.) A record of the baptized to be kept.

## LECTURE XXVI.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The last of the four divinely appointed sacraments, and the second under the New Dispensation is,

#### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Preliminaries—Its basis, the Abrahamic Covenant—Early and gradually corrupted, until it degenerated into the Popish Mass—Corrupted,

1. By the Romish Church.
2. By Unitarians.
3. By some Protestant denominations—Lutherans—The Church of England and others—Importance of a right understanding, etc., of—Its doctrine, history, and administration.

I. Its DOCTRINE: This comprehends the name, Divine institution, visible sign, the thing signified, the partakers, and the design of, etc.

1. The *name*.

(1.) Derivation of—Why called a “supper,” shown in four particulars—Other names—Mass or Missa—“Bread”—“The cup of blessing”—“The breaking of bread”—“Sacrificium”—“The sacrament of the altar”—The first and last condemned.

2. Its *Divine institution*: (1.) Christ its author; (2.) Mode of, its analogy to the Passover; (3.) What taught thereby, shown in three particulars; (4.) Bread and wine in the pass-over changed from a common to a special use; (5.) Christ commands its observance.

Objection by the Quakers, that this institution is not obligatory—Answered in five arguments.

3. The *visible sign*. The elements consist,

FIRST. Of the *symbols* themselves—Bread and wine.

1. Bread—Kind, etc.—Papists use wafers—Folly of—Three reasons for rejecting their use.
2. Wine—Remarks on—Color of—Whether to be mixed with water—Whether other elements can be substituted. To the visible sign belongs also,

SECOND. The *actions*, both of the administrator and the recipient.

FIRST. The actions of CHRIST—What he did and said in distributing the bread and wine—What he DID in relation to the *bread*, shown in four particulars—And to the *wine*, shown in three particulars—What he SAID—His words were either, (1.) Preceptive, or, (2.) Explanatory—Remarks on. In relation to the “*bread*,” “This is my body, given—broken—for you:” Matt. xxvi.; Mark xiv.; 1 Cor. x. 24—Same with the lamb in the passover—Perversion of, by Romanists.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION—Arguments against.

- I. Such transubstantiation contradicted by the whole history of its institution, etc.
- II. Is destructive of the human nature, and hence of the person of Christ.
- III. Contradicts the testimony of our senses—Objection by Papists—Answered in three particulars.

## LECTURE XXVII.

### THE LORD’S SUPPER, CONTINUED.

#### TRANSUBSTANTIATION—THE CUP—THE THING SIGNIFIED.

The arguments against transubstantiation resumed:

- IV. If Christ’s words, “this is my body,” changed the bread into his real body, then he did not die, etc.
- V. Is contradicted by all the facts connected with the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.
- VI. Is contradicted by Scripture.

- VII. Destroys the character of the Lord's Supper as a sacrament, and makes the Saviour not an object of faith, but of carnal enjoyment.
- VIII. Involves the working of a miracle, without exciting astonishment.
- IX. Is opposed by the history of the Lord's Supper, and the sentiments of the primitive and ancient Fathers—Concluding remarks—The words, "this is my body," to be understood *literally*.

The words of Christ, in relation to the *cup*, are,

First. Preceptive—Perversion of by Romanists.

*Popish prohibition of the cup to the laity*—Principal reason for—That the disciples were all priests and not laity—Answered—Other objections by Romanists to the giving the cup—Bellarmine—Answered—Another writer—Answered—Another by Bellarmine—Answered—Further arguments in proof of the existence of the law requiring communion in both kinds.

(1.) The command of the Saviour is express.

(2.) The disciples did all drink of the cup.

(3.) Inferred, from the relation believers sustain to Christ.

(4.) Proof, from 1 Cor. x., xi.

(5.) The abuse of the cup by the Corinthians, proof that they had access to it by law.

Second. The *explanatory* words, etc., "This cup is the New Testament in my blood," etc.—Defended against Romish perversions—Their true sense explained, in three particulars.

We now come to consider,

*Second.* The actions of the *disciples*, as the first communicants, etc.—Shown in three particulars.

4. The *thing signified* and sealed by the visible signs in the Lord's Supper.

*First.* The *sign*, what?—In general—In particular—Conclusion—A question answered.

*Second.* *Seals*—Explained in four particulars.

5. Agreement between the *sign* and the *thing signified*.

6. The *lawful partakers* of the Holy Supper—Erastians—Those who admit all the baptized—Proof, that the Lord's Supper is not a *converting* ordinance, in five arguments.

Objection. But did not all the Israelites eat the Passover? (See Lecture on.)

Question. Can the Lord's Supper be lawfully administered to children?—Answered—Conclusion.

7. The *end* for which the Holy Supper was instituted—Shown in seven particulars—Private communion condemned—Conclusion—The *obligations* which it imposes—Shown in four particulars.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER, CONTINUED.

#### THE HISTORY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

This lecture treats,

II. Of the History of the Holy Supper.

Preliminaries—Two facts in regard to it:

FIRST. The *apostolic age*: Its administration frequent; 2. It involved an avowal of the doctrines of the gospel: 3. Was simple in its rites; 4. Yet soon perverted by unregenerate Jews and Gentiles.

*First.* The heretic Ebion—his heresy shown in three particulars.

*Second.* The church at Corinth—Reproved by Paul—1 Corinth. xi, fully explained, in four particulars—Abuses of verse 27, by Bellarmine and some Lutheran doctors—Answered in four particulars—On 1 Corinth. xi. 28—The duty of *self-examination*—The law respecting it—What is included in the duty of self-examination—Consequence of an unworthy eating and drinking, etc., 1 Corinth. xi. 29, 30—Summary of the preceding exposition.

SECOND. Age of the *Apostolical Fathers*; These are: (1.) The five following, namely: Hermas, Polycarp, Ignatius, Clemens, and Barnabas—Their writings limited—Say but little on this subject—Quotations from (1.) Justin Martyr; (2.) Irenæus; (3.) Ignatius; (4.) Irenæus again; (5.) Clemens. Of the *manner* of celebrating, etc.—Justin—Facts expressed thereby, in four particulars—On the words “offering, sacrifice, and altar”—Two observations.

## LECTURE XXIX.

### THE POPI SH MASS.

Preliminaries—General description of—Accounts for three characteristics of the Romish Church—Made the subject of particular discussion in the Heidelberg Catechism—Hence, this Lecture.

#### I. Of the MASS in general.

1. Its *name*—Latin *Missa*, corrupted into Mass.
  - (1.) Its *origin*.
  - (2.) When first known in the apostolic age.
2. The *visible signs* and *ceremonies* of—Contrariety of, to those of the Lord's Supper, shown in three particulars.
3. The *doctrine* of, as settled by the Council of Trent, shown in five particulars: i. Is founded on the doctrine of transubstantiation; ii. Is a denial of the full atonement for sin made by Christ; iii. Is opposed by every fact the Scriptures express in relation to the present state of the Redeemer; iv. Romanists worse than the Jews, who crucified Christ but once, they often; v. Romanists inconsistent, who offer up an unbloody sacrifice; vi. *Lastly*, the Lord's Supper a eucharistic, not a propitiatory sacrifice.
4. The *history* of the Mass—Not known to the apostles, nor to the early Latin Christians. *First.* Proof that the Lord's Supper was not intended as an expiatory sacrifice of the body of Christ. *Second.* Proof that from A. D. 100 to 600, no traces are to be found of the Romish Mass: (1.) Justin Martyr quoted; (i.) Romish plea from Justin Martyr's use of the word *oblations*—Answered; (ii.) Another plea, from Justin's Dialogue with Trypho—Answered; (iii.) Another, from Clemens Romanus, etc.—Answered; (iv.) Another ditto—Answered; (v.) Another, from Irenæus—Answered—Conclusion, on the history of the second century; ii. His-

tory of, in the third century—Preliminary—Cyprian; iii. History of, in the fourth century; iv. From the fourth to the beginning of the seventh century; v. From A. D. 600 to 850; vi. From the period of Leo IV., A. D. 850, to the Council of Lateran, under Innocent III., A. D. 1215; vii. From Luther, etc., down to the Council of Trent, A. D. 1539–40.

## LECTURE XXX.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER (RESUMED.)

## ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

We come now to inquire respecting,

## III. THE PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION of the Lord's Supper.

1. Of his duties in *general*.

(1.) Must teach sound doctrine in regard to it—What it comprehends, shown in four particulars—The idea embraced in the word condition, what.

## 2. Other pastoral duties. These relate,

(1.) To the pastor himself in his preparations. He should,

*First.* Press upon sinners the duty of immediate preparation.

*Second.* Avoid interruptions from worldly sources.

*Third.* Commence his pulpit preparations early in the week.

(2.) To the people of his charge.

*First.* Call a special prayer-meeting early in communion week.

*Second.* Examine persons for admission to communion—Directions how to conduct such examinations—Particular cases, how to be treated—Further directions—Two points of special inquiry regarding candidates, etc.—Questions to.

*Third.* Should be familiar and tender, while he is solemn and faithful, in his examinations.

*Fourth.* Further directions to the pastor.

*Fifth.* The delivery of an *action sermon*.

*Sixth.* Appropriate subjects of discourse immediately before the communion.

*Seventh.* A question, whether the communion should be delivered privately.

*Eighth.* Let the pastor exhort, that the whole communion Sabbath be most religiously sanctified.

## LECTURE XXXI.

## PASTORAL DUTIES, RESUMED.

## CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

I. The *character* of this duty:

1. Exposition of 2 Tim. i. 13, "sound words."

2. To these "sound words" is ascribed "a form"—Explained.

3. Derivation of the word *catechize*.

4. The primitive practice of—Creeds—Apologies—Catechisms.

- II. Of *catechisms in general*.
1. Comprehend oral instruction by question and answer.
  2. Not given by divine authority, and hence not infallible.
  3. Early origin and use of such compilations.
- III. HISTORY of Catechisms; and,
1. Of the *Heidelberg* Catechism—By whom compiled—Extent of circulation—A choice summary of Christian doctrine—Occasion on which it was composed—College of Heidelberg—Lectures upon, by Ursinus.
  2. Of the *Westminster* Catechism—Origin of—English Parliament—Difference between the Synod of Dort and the Westminster divines—Westminster Catechisms, Larger and Smaller—Differ from the Heidelberg—Query, whether the Heidelberg Catechism (xvth Lord's Day) is Calvinistic—Answered in three particulars.
- IV. PASTORAL DUTY in reference to catechetical instruction. This duty urged,
1. From the relation of baptized children to the Church.
  2. Importance of, compared with branches of knowledge.
  3. From its great advantages.
  4. It is actually preaching the Word.
  5. Is productive of benefits to the pastor himself.
  6. Disastrous consequences of its neglect, in four particulars.
- V. DIRECTIONS to pastors, etc., in six particulars—Conclusion.

## LECTURE XXXII.

## PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

## PASTORAL VISITATIONS, PART I.

Preliminaries—Difference between pastoral visitations and the preaching of the Word:

- I. Proofs of pastoral visitation as a duty. Evident,
  1. From the *nature* of the gospel ministry and the pastoral office.
  2. From the *obligations* of, as enforced by the examples of Christ and his apostles.
  3. From the diversified wants of those to whom he ministers.
- II. Of pastoral visitations there are two kinds:
  1. *General*, embracing the families of the whole congregation, which may be recommended by the following arguments:
    - (1.) It makes the pastor acquainted with his flock.
    - (2.) It reaches those who are otherwise inaccessible.
    - (3.) It serves to endear the pastor to his people.
    - (4.) It renders the preaching of God's Word more effectual to individuals.
    - (5.) The benefits of such pastoral visitation depend upon the *manner* of its performance—Much grace and wisdom are required in its performance—Directions: i. Should study the sentiments and habits of each member of the family; ii. Should prepare the way by previous notice; iii. Should not pass by the poor; iv. Should be gentle and affectionate to all—Subjects of instruction—A few particulars of advice: 1. Visits should be short; 2. Should avoid disputation; 3. It may be best to begin

with children; 4. Persons subject to fear must be approached with caution; 5. Must not be the arbiter of disputes between neighbors; 6. Should conclude his visits by prayer.

## LECTURE XXXIII.

## PASTORAL VISITATIONS, CONTINUED.

Pastoral visitations are,

2. *Particular and occasional*, among individuals and families—Preliminaries.

These visitations are of three kinds; namely,

I. Visits which arise from *the special providence of God*.

1st. The SICK IN BODY—those who are *really* sick—Directions, in six particulars. The characters of the sick are of three kinds:

*First.* The *irreligious*: May be ignorant or indifferent, etc.—Directions; 2. May discover great hardness of heart—Directions; 3. May be self-righteous—Directions.

*Second.* The *doubtful*—This class described—Directions.

*Third.* The *pious*—Directions.

2nd. The AFFLICTED: When *irreligious*, how to be treated; 2. When *pious*—Directions in respect to them.

3rd. The AWAKENED AND TROUBLED IN MIND—Preliminaries, in respect to the pastor himself—There are degrees in awakening: i. Partial—Described—Directions; ii. Stronger work of conviction—Described—Directions; iii. Awakening accompanied with despair—Described—Directions.

## LECTURE XXXIV.

## PASTORAL VISITATIONS, CONTINUED.

## PASTORAL EXERTIONS IN SEASON OF RELIGIOUS DECLENSION.

Recapitulation of the preceding Lecture—Summary of doctrines to be taught in times of awakening. The further duty of the pastor in his visitations,

4th. To *mourners in Zion*, or believers under the pressure of sore trials of faith—Description of such—Various cases of: (1.) Those who doubt of their renewal by grace, when comparing themselves with others—How to be treated; (2.) Those who have lost their first transports, etc.—Directions regarding such; (3.) Those whose religious comforts are fluctuating, etc.—Directions; (4.) Those who are alarmed at their state of declension—Directions; (5.) Those who are distressed from strange and violent temptations—Directions. The next class of pastoral visits,

II. Are those which are designed to promote religion, as a *voluntary act* of the pastor—Will be brought into contact with various characters—Talents requisite for.

III. Visits which are purely *social and civil*—Advantages of, pointed out in five particulars—Two evils to be avoided: *First.* They must not

be too frequent; *Second*. They must not be void of the salt of religion.

THE DUTY OF PASTORAL EXERTION IN THE TIME OF RELIGIOUS DECLENSION.

Preliminaries—Early and more modern existence, and causes, of such declension.

- I. When *ministers* are the causes of such declension, shown in four particulars.
- II. When these declensions originate with the *people*. These are composed of two classes; namely,
  1. Communicants—Description of—How they promote religious declension, shown in five particulars.
  2. Non-communicants—How religious declension is promoted by.
- III. Question: How is the pastor *to act*, in this sad state of things?—General remarks and directions:
  - 1 The minister should begin with himself
  2. Labor to counteract evil influences among the people.
  3. Faithfully preach the Word—Proper subjects for discourses in time of declension, etc.
  4. Form praying societies among the pious—On publishing instances of awakening.
  5. In the pastor's absence from the praying societies, suitable sermons should be read—Protracted meetings—Remarks on.
  6. By engaging his people to aid in the missionary cause, etc., etc.

LECTURE XXXV.

PASTORAL VIGILANCE IN SEASONS OF GENERAL AWAKENING AND ENLARGEMENT IN THE CHURCH.

Preliminaries—Revivals are extraordinary events—Often abused by those who promoted them, etc.—Three important facts in God's dispensations towards his Church stated.

First. No special promise given of numerous awakenings and conversions—The work of the Spirit two-fold:

- I. *Ordinary*—The number of awakenings and conversions small—Erroneous views entertained by some, etc., on account of—Occasional awakenings and additions of converts to the Church in large numbers. Hence,
- II. The Spirit of God producing a *general awakening*, etc.—Remarks—Design of—May not be the conversion of the many—Though this not impossible—But to develop the strength of sin—Hence, an explanation of religious declensions—Duty of pastoral vigilance in times of awakening—Arguments for the promotion of:
  1. The pastor should be always faithful, etc.
  2. Men are inclined to conform to the existing predominant influence in society, whatever it may be.
  3. Fear, at such times, operates powerfully, etc.
  4. Religion becomes fashionable, and the principle of self-righteousness will press forward to unite in such profession—Directions, etc.
  5. The pastor's own heart is deeply affected, etc.—His dangers

—May be too precipitate in admitting to the Church—May indulge in pride—Caution.

Manner of exercising this pastoral vigilance.

*First.* He must guard, in his preaching, against misleading sinners, shown in four particulars.

*Second.* Should also guard against preaching imprudently and erroneously, shown in three particulars.

Concluding additional directions:

1. Let the pastor, during religious awakening, guard against undue excitement and fanaticism.
2. Dwell much in his sermons on humility and poverty of spirit.
3. Should not be hasty in calling upon new converts frequently to pray in public, etc.
4. Let the pastor watch over his own spirit.
5. Labor to suppress a spirit of censoriousness, etc.
6. Call loudly for the proper fruits of conversion in a life of godliness.
7. Should not talk or preach as though there could be no religion without excitement.
8. Let the pastor not run to publish in the newspapers an account of the revival.
9. Should himself converse personally with all who are awakened, and who offer themselves for full communion.
10. Should make suitable inquiries respecting new converts of those who know them.

## LECTURE XXXVI.

### PASTORAL INSTRUCTION BY EXAMPLE.

Recapitulation.

Duty of the pastor to instruct by his Christian example.

Preliminaries—1 Tim. iv. 12, explained, in reference to the word “example,” “*τυπος*”—Three great lineaments of the pastor as an instructor by example. The first of which is seen,

- I. In the performance of duties required of him. These respect,
  1. God—These consist, (1.) In holy affections of the heart; (2.) In submission to God’s will; (3.) In imitating his divine Master; (4.) In supreme love to God. These duties respect,
  2. Our *neighbor*—Remarks—These duties pointed out, in five particulars. Finally, these duties respect,
- II. The *pastor himself*, in avoiding forbidden vices, shown in six particulars—Further enforced, in six particulars. Conclusion of these Lectures on Pastoral Theology with,
- III. Offering some considerations exciting to the faithful performance of pastoral duties.
  1. Let him consider,
    - (1.) That he derives his commission from God.

(2.) The design and object of his office.

(3.) What he owes to that Saviour who died for him, etc.

2. If the gospel service has trials, it also has peculiar consolations, shown in five particulars.

Some additional considerations to support faithful pastors under the trials inseparable from the sacred ministry.

First. *Common* sources of his trials—Encouragements. Take the three following:

1. All the precious promises given to the children of God are his.
2. Opposition of a certain kind, is an evidence that the pastor is well employed.
3. Trials afford him an opportunity of setting an example before his flock how trials and temptations ought to be borne.

Second. Of pastoral trials which are *peculiar*.

1. Is sometimes removed from his kindred, and exposed to vexations, etc.
2. Sometimes finds little visible blessings upon his labors—  
Consolations under this trial, shown in five particulars.

# LECTURES

ON

## PASTORAL THEOLOGY.

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### LECTURE I.

I. PASTORAL THEOLOGY is that branch of the science of Christian Theology which treats of the qualifications, duties, trials, encouragements, and consolations of the Evangelical Pastor.

II. An Evangelical Pastor is a person who, being a member of the body of Christ by visible profession, *is called* by the Word, Spirit, and Church of that Saviour and King, and is set apart in the manner prescribed in the Scriptures of the New Testament, to feed that portion of the Christian flock which is committed to his special instruction and care, and to aid in administering the laws of Christ's kingdom to his glory and the benefit of the subjects of his kingdom.

III. The Evangelical Pastor, as his name imports, is a minister of the "glorious gospel of the grace of God;" *as such*, he is distinguished,

*First*, From those patriarchs who were ministers of true religion in their respective domestic establishments, before the giving of the law at Sinai, by the following circumstances, viz :

1. He is one of a pure ecclesiastical order, which is entirely separate from either domestic or civil establishments.
2. He is not required by his office to offer up animal sacrifices, etc.
3. He does not act under a typical dispensation.

4. His office is in no way connected with the ancient custom or law of *primogeniture*.

5. He serves a Saviour come in the flesh—crucified—risen from the dead, and received up into glory.

*Secondly*, From the *Priests and Levites under the law*, the Evangelical Pastor is distinguished by the following particulars, viz :

1. He does not belong by birth or parentage to a sacerdotal family or tribe.

2. He is not required to offer up animal sacrifices.

3. He is not directed in his official duties by the ceremonial laws which governed the ancient priesthood of the Church ; and, therefore,

4. He is not subordinate to any earthly high priest, but serves the Lord Jesus Christ, the only existing "High Priest of our profession."

*Thirdly*, The Evangelical Pastor is distinguished from the extraordinary ministers of the Saviour in the primitive Church—the apostles, prophets, workers of miracles, etc.—in the manner of his call to the sacred ministry, in his powers, in his gifts, and in his field of labor. In these, there is nothing *extraordinary*. He is a servant of Christ, now when no extraordinary officers are to be found in the visible Church on earth.

*Lastly*, The Evangelical Pastor is to be distinguished from those persons whom we denominate "Licentiate," or "Candidates for the ministry," in this important respect: the *former* are ministers of the Word of God, *the latter are not*. The candidate is one "who desires" the office of a bishop or overseer in the Church, but is not yet invested with that office.\*

It may then be asked here, "Why is such a person permitted to preach the Word?" We answer, such permission is granted with the express view of *eliciting the judgment of the Church* respecting the qualifications and gifts of the candidate for the gospel ministry. *Ordinarily*, it is not sufficient that the ministers of the Word,

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\* "It must be confessed, we think it but fitting, that persons should, after they have passed their trials as to their abilities, officiate for some time as candidates, that they may have an opportunity of passing a judgment whether they can comfortably fix on the ministry as the employment of their lives, and whether they are likely to have *that measure of acceptance* as is necessary to a rational hope of usefulness and success."—*Calany*.

“who are forbidden to lay their hands suddenly on any man,” are satisfied with respect to the qualifications of one who desires to be admitted into the ministry; for ministers alone do not constitute the Church. The Christian laity, who, together with the clergy, compose the visible Church, should, so far as circumstances allow, know such an applicant for the sacred office, try his gifts, and judge of his qualifications, before he is set apart by prayer and the imposition of hands. When the Church, after such trial of one whom the Presbytery, by the certificate of licensure, has recommended to her notice, expresses her approbation by instituting, after prayer for Divine direction, a regular call on him to exercise the ministry and fill the office of pastor, then there is that concurrence in sentiment of the rulers and of the members of the Church which authorizes the *former* to confer on the approved candidate ministerial and pastoral powers, and makes it the duty of the *latter* to receive him as a “steward of the mysteries of God.”

The license then given to a candidate for the gospel ministry is a very limited power, and *restricted to a particular end*, namely, to the exhibition of his piety and gifts before the Church, for her better judgment.

IV. The pastoral office is involved in the gospel ministry, which is a divine institution. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Ephes. iv. 9, 11, 12: “He gave some pastors and teachers.”

Ministers of the Word are commissioned not only to preach, but also to administer the Holy Sacraments—a duty which, in its faithful performance, implies pastoral inspection and care; for they are “stewards of the mysteries of God.” They are authorized, wherever they “serve God in the gospel of his Son,” to “feed the sheep and the lambs;” “to take the oversight of the flock,” so far as any portion of it is committed to their care; and “to watch for souls as those who must give account.” (Heb. xiii. 17; 1 Pet. v. 2.)

Ministers, whether restricted to one society in one place in their labors, or itinerants in their ministry, still sustain the pastoral office, and engage in the duties which it imposes.

Those candidates who are sent to preach the gospel to the heathen are ordained with the express design that they shall exercise pastoral care over those who, through their instrumentality, are brought to “the obedience of faith.”

V. The great end which this institution of pastors and teachers has in view is, the glory of God in the salvation of men, who, when called by the servants of the Saviour, “receive the Word in the love of it, and obey the truth.”

Subordinate to this grand end, there are various other important objects to be effected by this ministry: such as the defense of gospel truth against error, the maintenance of the pure worship of the living God, the restraint of human depravity and wickedness, and the improvement of the minds of men, especially those of the poor and laboring classes, in knowledge, in morals, and in the habits of social order and peace.

Hence the gospel ministry, apart from its usefulness in disseminating divine truth and converting sinners to God, is an incalculably rich blessing to civil society. This fact is clearly exhibited to the eye of every observer, in the intellectual and moral state of those nations who are blessed with the faithful ministry of the Word and other ordinances of Christian worship, when compared with the lamentable condition of those people of various countries who either have not the Word preached to them, or, through the craftiness of their priests, are the slaves of Pagan or Papal superstitions.

VI. Now, if the gospel ministry and the pastoral office be an institution of God, and if the designs and relations of this office be such as we have just described, then there must be in those persons who lawfully engage in this ministry *special* qualifications for the discharge of its duties. Let us then proceed to speak of *those qualifications* which constitute, in their natural order, the *first branch of the science of Pastoral Theology*.

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## PART I.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

FIRST. The first qualification for the pastoral office is, *A special call of God*.

The Evangelical Pastor, it has been said, is a person *called by God* to serve him in his visible Church on earth, in the ministry

of the Word and Sacraments, and in the exercise of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The necessity of such a special call to the pastoral office is proved—1. From the relations and work involved in the character and duties of the Evangelical Pastor. He sustains special relations to God the *Saviour*: hence he is called “the servant of God in the gospel of his Son,” “a minister of the New Testament,” “an ambassador for Christ,” “a steward of the mysteries of God.” In these relations “a necessity is laid upon him,” and he is bound to perform special duties under an awful responsibility. Now those special relations and duties require a special call. 2. From the passages, Rom. x. 15; Heb. v. 4, 5; Matt. xxviii. 19; Jer. xiv. 15, etc. 3. From the broad fact, every where exhibited in the Sacred Scriptures, “that mere aptitude or fitness does not confer right.”

I. Taking into view the New Testament dispensation from its commencement, this call of God to the Pastoral office is either, 1, immediate, or 2, mediate.

1. The *immediate* call of God to the gospel ministry is that command of the great Head of the Church himself, accompanied with corresponding operations of his Holy Spirit, which requires a person to undertake the office of a minister of the Word in the visible Church. This call must proceed *immediately* from the King and Saviour of the Church. It is therefore, when compared in its circumstances with the *mediate call* of that Redeemer, *an extraordinary or supernatural call*, and is always accompanied with *those miraculous gifts which are the proper and only evidences* of the reality of such a divine call, and which the apostle Paul calls “the signs of an apostle.”

This immediate call of God was addressed to the apostles and the inspired prophets who were employed in the gospel service at the opening of the New Testament dispensation. Since that period it has ceased to exist in the Church.

When the Church, after the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ into heaven, was to be relieved from the burden of “carnal ordinances;” when she was to be divested of her cumbersome tabernacle and typical garments; when her worship and government were to be so modified as to correspond with those grand events which had taken place, and to suit her future extension among the

nations of the earth; and when she was to exhibit herself under this new modification, be established and protected against the assaults of the malignant Jews, of the Pagan philosophers, priests, and statesmen, it was necessary that her first ministers should be *immediately called* by the Saviour, and that their endowments should be *extraordinary*.

Necessary was their immediate divine call; for the Master of the house was present in person with his disciples during forty days after his resurrection, "and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts i. 3.)

Necessary was their immediate call; for it could not be made through the Church, which was not yet formed under the new dispensation.

Necessary were their supernatural gifts; for they were employed in making new revelations of the will of God; and those gifts were required to prove that they had received their commission from God, and were his special agents in this great concern.

If any person now professes to speak or act by divine inspiration, he must be required to exhibit similar proofs of his divine mission; but such requisition will be made on false teachers, prophets, and fanatics, in vain.

2. We conclude, therefore, that the call of God to the gospel ministry is now altogether *mediate*. This call we denominate *mediate*, not because there is in it no powerful operation of God in the heart of the person so called, but because the *ordinary means* of grace are in the first instance used in this call, and because the Church is employed as a medium through which the call is made.

II. This mediate call of God to the pastoral office is—1, partly internal, and 2, partly external. The former lies at the foundation, and is preparatory of the latter; the latter is of the very essence of a call of God to the gospel ministry.

*First*, The internal call of God comprehends the experience of true conversion to God, so that there shall be a renewed mind, and in that mind, of course, sincere love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When the Saviour was about to employ Peter in his gospel service, he asked him with great solemnity and emphasis, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" He received an answer in the

affirmative from Peter, on which he said, "Feed my sheep—feed my lambs."

Whoever, therefore, wishes to ascertain whether God has called him to the work of the ministry, must first inquire whether he is so renewed by divine grace as to perceive by faith the glorious excellences of Christ as a Saviour who redeems by price and with power? whether this Saviour is habitually and inexpressibly precious to him? whether he so loves this Saviour as "to count every thing which the gospel calls him to relinquish for his sake but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ his Lord"?

But though conversion and the graces of the Spirit prepare one to be the subject of the whole internal call of God to the ministry, yet the enjoyment of those saving blessings does *not constitute that call*. A person may be "born again of water and of the Spirit;" he may "believe with the heart unto righteousness," and "love the Saviour in sincerity;" and yet not be internally called by God to his gospel service. Every true convert is called "to God's kingdom and glory, but not to the ministry of his Word." We remark, then,

*Secondly*, That in the internal call of God there is superadded to the experience of renewing grace those special influences of the Holy Spirit, which excite in the heart of the converted man a *prevailing holy desire* to be employed in the good work of a Christian bishop or pastor. (1 Tim. iii. 1.) With a direct reference to this special operation of the Holy Ghost, that eminent divine, John Brown, of Haddington, asks the student of divinity, "Has he filled you with deep compassion to the perishing souls of men, and a deep sense of your unfitness for such arduous work, and *fervent desire* that if the Lord were willing to use you as an instrument for winning souls, he would sanctify you, and make you meet for his work?"

*Thirdly*, The internal call comprehends the production in the mind of its subject, of an habitual disposition and set purpose of heart, evidenced by corresponding efforts, to obtain the qualifications for the pastoral office, by endeavors to acquire that portion of knowledge which will enable him to teach others and to grow himself in grace; and by a course of prayer and conduct, which shall prove that the ministry is seriously aimed at, and that it rests upon the soul as the grand object of desire. If there be no re-

solved holy purpose and fixed habit of desire, such as we now speak of, men may enter into the ministry, and perform the external duties which it imposes in a manner ecclesiastically lawful and right, but they are not “called of God.” If a young man enters a theological hall in the same temper of mind as that in which he would enter a school of medicine or law, he ought to weigh his principles of action deeply. If he exhibit the levity and inconsideration of mind, and the want of deep religious feeling, which is often seen in the mere scholar at a classical institution, he ought to seek better motives and better preparation for the solemn employment which he professes to have in view.

We have now described the internal call; and in relation to it have only to add that this internal call may be accompanied with a power of the Holy Spirit, and attended by circumstances and events, in the lives and the conversion of some ministers of Christ, which, when compared with those of the many who piously engage in the gospel service, may appear to be *extraordinary*. Thus, judging from circumstances, it may be said that God has called one to the ministry from his birth. Another may be converted under such deep convictions, and with the communication of so much light and grace, as, with the joy of pardoning mercy, to have in his soul the graces in very vigorous exercise, prompting him to pursue the ministry as an object essential to his own peace and happiness, and to say with the apostle Paul, “Necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel.” And a third may, in the uncommon circumstances of all God’s dealings with him, exhibit certain peculiarities in his call to the ministry, and richer endowments for the work. Examples, illustrative of these facts, we may find in the history of the early lives of Augustine, Knox, Junius, Perkins, Halyburton, Davies, John Newton, and others. But let it be observed, that whatever is uncommon in these instances does not belong *essentially to the internal call of God*.

To the internal call must be added an *external call of God*, in order to qualify one for the pastoral office.

III. The external instrument or agent by which this external call is made, is, *the Church of God*. The visible Church is composed of her rulers and her members.

That the power of calling to the pastoral office is vested in the

rulers of the Church is to be proved by the following arguments, viz :

1. The command of God given to the overseers or bishops of the Church, "to lay hands suddenly on no man," (1 Tim. v. 22,) which implies the power of judging of the qualifications of men for the gospel service, and rejecting those who shall appear to be unqualified; "to commit gospel truth and order to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," (2 Tim. ii. 2,) and "to watch, lest grievous wolves enter in, not sparing the flock." (Acts xx. 29.)

2. The power with which the episcopal presbyters are invested, is that "oversight of the Church" and "stewardship of the mysteries of God," which have directly in view the welfare and preservation of the one and the holy care of the other. (1 Pet. v. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 5.) Now this important trust, as every reflecting mind will perceive, could not be executed well without authority to receive into and exclude from the ministry. On this particular subject there is no great diversity of opinion among Christians. Even those who taught "that the Evangelical Pastor should be called and chosen by the suffrage and consent of the Church," still required that he should be solemnly set apart with the approbation of the ministry to whom the oversight of the Church is especially committed, and by the "laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

But the presbyters or rulers in the Church of Christ must, in ordinary circumstances, permit the *members of the Church* to cooperate with them in the exercise of this power of calling to the pastoral office. The authorized agency of the latter in this important concern is evident from the following places of Scripture: Acts i. 23; vi. 3-5; 1 John iv. 1. Besides, the very nature and end of the pastoral office prove the same fact; for the Saviour has given pastors and teachers, not merely to make known his will to his people, but also to subserve all their spiritual interests, so far as their agency can go, and especially to be their mouth in addressing supplication to God in public worshipping assemblies. "Regula juris est, ab omnibus approbari debet qui omnium vicem supplet."

The members of the primitive and the ancient Christian Church exercised this power. Cyprian, vigorously as he was disposed to maintain the episcopal authority, testifies that such was the estab-

lished rule from the days of the apostles down to his own age. He says: "It is the people in whom chiefly is the power of choosing worthy prelates, or refusing the unworthy. Which very thing, we see, is derived from divine authority, that a bishop is to be chosen in the presence of all the people, and the worthy and well qualified were to be approved by the judgment and testimony of all."\* According to the ancient canons, "a bishop should be chosen by the presbyters and people." A late historian† of the Christian Church has expressed the facts correctly: "Of most of the apostolical churches, the first bishops were appointed by the apostles; of those not apostolical, the first presidents were probably the missionaries who founded them; but on their death the choice of a successor *devolved on the members* of the society. In this election, the people had an equal share with the presbyters and inferior clergy, without distinction; and it is clear, *that their right in this matter* was not barely testimonial, but *judicial* and elective. There is a great concurrence of evidence to show that no bishop was ever obtruded on an orthodox people without their consent."

In further evidence of the same fact, we must add here, that every particular ecclesiastical society, as a part of the "Holy Catholic Church," is, in certain respects, "the pillar and the ground of the truth," (1 Tim. iii. 15,) the prop and the foundation that supports the truth; being charged with the preservation, maintenance, defense, and circulation of that written Word of God on which she is built, from which she derives her provisions and all her hopes of future prosperity in this world and of glory hereafter: though in *other respects*, as has just been observed, that Word of truth is the foundation on which the visible Church herself rests, being "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." (Ephes. ii. 20.) Now that she may preserve the truth, she must have the requisite power of approving sound teachers and rejecting those who corrupt the Word, either through ignorance or from regard to traditions or the doctrines of false philosophy

#### IV. But the power which the Church possesses of calling men

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\* Cyprianus, lib. 1, epist. 3. "Ipsa plebs maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi," etc.

† Waddington.

to the ministry and pastoral office is *not* a *sovereign* and *despotic*, but a *ministerial* and *limited* power. It must be exercised agreeably to the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ expressed in the Sacred Scriptures; and in no instance, not even in prescribing "rules of order" in the Church, must it violate the divine laws.

In the exercise of this power, which belongs to the rulers and the members of the Church, the rulers should take the lead. The Holy Spirit in his Word calls them "leaders or governors." (Heb. xiii. 7.) They are set apart for "the defense of the gospel," and are especially charged to guard the ministry from just reproach, and to commit it "to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. ii. 2.) It belongs therefore to their office to have great influence in this matter. They are required to institute a close examination into the gifts, pious habits, and doctrines of those persons who "desire the office of a bishop;" to seek out and encourage such a promise to be useful in the sacred ministry; and to recommend them to the people composing Christian congregations. (Acts xx.)

But such recommendation by the presbyters or rulers in the Church implies that "the faithful in Christ Jesus" are also invested with rights, the exercise of which is necessary for their own spiritual welfare and the promotion of the interests of their Redeemer's kingdom. It is their duty and privilege to coöperate with the ministers of the Word in looking out for suitable men among themselves, through whom the ministry may be perpetuated; in affording encouragement and help to such in their attempts to qualify themselves, under the Divine blessing, "to teach others, and to feed the flock of Christ;" in judging of the fitness of those whom their rulers shall recommend for the pastoral office; and in calling them, when approved, to the exercise of that office, with a proper respect for those rights with which the presbytery are invested by the great Head of the Church.

Irrespective of those powers of the gospel ministry, with which ministry a Christian congregation are connected, they should not act in calling one to the pastoral office, excepting in a case of the most urgent necessity, such as either great corruption and tyranny in church rulers, or violent persecution by the enemies of gospel truth and order, might produce. God requires the ministry of his appointment to be duly regarded; and in his providential care of

his Church in her lowest estate, he has made an extreme case to be of such rare occurrence, that it will not disturb the order of his house. "Pugnat cum jure divino et veteri ecclesia," says Melancthon, "Democratia, in qua populus capit ad se electionem." And Junius correctly observes, "Populus non solus judicet, sed praeunte et moderante actionem clero et presbyterio."

But while the members of the Church are bound to act in proper subordination to their presbyters or bishops, it is their privilege and their duty, on occasion of calling one to the pastoral office, to look well to it, that their *rulers* do them no injury; for to them it pertains to approve or disapprove.

The consent of the people who are members of a Christian Church may be either tacit or expressed. By tacit consent, we mean that, after the object is proposed, no objection is offered by the people. This mode may be adopted or rejected at the pleasure of the members of the Church, but cannot be authoritatively prescribed by the rulers.

The consent of the people may be expressed by writing, by the voice, or by the lifting up of the hand. The mode employed in collecting the suffrages is unimportant.

How far the consent of the people is necessary in calling to the pastoral office has been a subject of discussion. We are satisfied that such consent is not absolutely, but only relatively necessary.

The Saviour has given it in special charge to his ministers of the Word, to maintain and perpetuate the gospel ministry by "committing it to faithful men." Should the people therefore cease to love the truth, and, under the impulse of a "spirit of delusion," turn away from a faithful ministry, and hearken only to "teachers of lies;" should persecution for a season scatter the flock, or tyrants in the earth prohibit the exercise of those rights which God has given to his people in the Church, in all such circumstances the Ministry not only may, but should call men whom they consider to be qualified to the pastoral office.

Hence one servant of the Lord Jesus, or more, with a view to preserve the ministry, may call to the pastoral office when circumstances imperiously require this to be done.

But the induction of men into the pastoral office by *patronage* is unscriptural and unlawful in the Church.

V. A regular call to the ministry by the church is followed by *Ordination*, or, as it is sometimes called, the setting apart of one to the gospel ministry by prayer and with the laying on of hands.

The imposition of hands in religious services is a very ancient ceremony. It was used in blessing, in sacrifices, in giving testimony, (Lev. 24,) and in ordaining to office.

The imposition of hands was a rite observed by the apostles, (Acts xiii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 14; 1 Tim. v. 22; 2 Tim. i. 6.)

The imposition of hands is not essential to the setting apart of one to the exercise of the pastoral office; yet it ought to be observed, as it has an important meaning:—designating the person ordained; distinguishing him from civil officers, and those to whom he is called to minister; signifying the peculiar relations of the office into which he is inducted, and adding solemnity to his ordination.

In the apostolic day, the imposition of hands was used on the communication by the Holy Spirit of miraculous gifts; but to this use it was not restricted, as appears from various passages of Scripture. Besides, it could have, in conferring supernatural gifts, no more efficacy, in itself considered, than it has in the ordaining to the ministerial office.

The ceremony of the imposition of hands, and the ordination with which it is connected, may, in times of persecution, be performed in a private manner; but, in ordinary peaceful times, it ought to be performed in the presence of the church engaged in divine worship. The Sabbath is a very suitable day for this solemn act. Ordination to the ministry is Sabbath work.

Whether the imposition of hands in such ordination should, in any circumstances, be repeated or not, has given rise to various opinions among divines. If reordination be considered “merely as a repetition of the bare words and ceremonies of ordination, without any acknowledgment of the invalidity of a former ordination;” and if such reordination shall, from the circumstances in which a minister of the Word is placed, evidently operate to enlarge the sphere of his usefulness, it is not to be objected against. The Scriptures do not require reordination; and a gospel minister cannot recall his ordination vows, though he may for habitual impiety, or for heresy, be deposed from the ministry of Christ.

VI. The power of ordaining to the gospel ministry, is peculiar to that ministry. Some however have contended, that the people in a particular Christian society, may not only call, but ordain to the pastoral office, and offer in support of this doctrine, Acts xiv. 23;\* where they say the term “χειροτονησαντες,” expresses the act of the people in ordaining to office. The passage will not bear this construction. If that term expresses any act of the members of the Church in relation to those persons who are constituted presbyters, it is a choice of them as pastors, and not *an ordination* of them to their office, by the imposition of hands.

In the writings of the apostles, ordination is constantly expressed, not by “χειροτονεο,” but by other terms, as “επιθεσει χειρων,” “χειροθεσια” and “χειροεπιθεσια.” Had the sacred historian used “χειροτονη αυτες” to signify the act of ordination, he would have spoken unintelligibly; for in no writing, sacred or profane, is that word employed to express the *imposition* of hands.

The arguments to be offered in proof of the doctrine, that the power of ordination is to be exercised by ministers of the Word alone, are the following, viz:

1. The directions and instructions relating to the ordaining of men ministers of the gospel, are addressed by the apostle Paul, not to the people in a Christian church, but to those who were by commission “the stewards of the mysteries of God,” in his house here below.

2. The practice in the primitive churches was, to ordain with the approbation, and by the hands of ministers alone.

3. The people are not invested with the office and power of presbyters. (1 Cor. xii. 29.) They are not placed under the solemn obligations inseparable from that office, and therefore cannot confer or transmit what they have not.

“That part of ordination,” says Dr. Owen, “which consists in

\* The person elected was called *χειροτοντος*. Hence *χειροτονεω* is used to signify to elect, appoint, or constitute to office, though the act of lifting up the hand be not used. Philo employs this word to express Pharaoh's appointment of Joseph to be the governor of Egypt, and God's act in appointing Moses and other priests to their office.

Lucian uses the word to express the act of Alexander constituting his deceased friend Hephæstion, a god. Maximus Tyrius applies the term to the horse of Darius, which was instrumental in fixing his princely master in the vacant throne of Persia.

the imposition of hands by the presbytery, I think necessary by *virtue of precept*, and that to be continued in a way of succession." The Doctor, however, puts a case of a Christian man cast by shipwreck upon a country of some barbarous people, that never heard of the name of Christ, and asks, "Ought he not to preach Christ unto them? And if God give a blessing to his endeavors, may he not become a pastor to their converted souls?" And Calamy teaches, "that where *the help of ministers cannot be had* in ordaining suitable persons for ministers, the people may set persons apart for the office themselves, *rather than live without ministers.*" In uniting in sentiment with the above-mentioned eminent divines, no difficulty can be felt; for the cases to which their remarks apply, are *extraordinary*, and, as such, make provision for themselves, subject to the grand requirements of the law and gospel. "God will have mercy, and not sacrifice."

VII. A person qualified for the ministry may be lawfully ordained *sine titulo*, without any particular church as his pastoral charge, provided the exercise of his gifts shall be called for among weak and destitute churches, or he be sent as a gospel missionary to the heathen; yet, in such ordinations, the performance of pastoral duties is always had in view.

Other qualifications for the pastoral office, in addition to the special call of God, will be exhibited in the next lecture. I shall conclude this lecture with some practical reflections.

It is impossible to consider well the divine institution, the solemn relations, and the end of the pastoral office, without recurring in thought to what the Saviour said, (Luke xiv. 28 :) "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it: lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold him begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish?"

So peculiar are the relations to God formed by the gospel ministry, so holy are its services, so arduous its duties, so various its trials, and so awful its responsibilities, that those who desire to engage in this ministry ought "to sit down, and with all seriousness, to count the cost." Feelingly alive should such persons be to the fact, that certain qualifications are required, to be the approved and

faithful servants of God in the gospel of his Son. For “an unwarrantable intrusion into this office,” as one observes, “is certainly a crime of a very high nature.” It may well startle us, after having put our hands to the plough, “if we should find any reason to be apprehensive that the great God in whose name we take upon us to act, and that by virtue of his commission, should one day say to us, Who hath required this at your hands?”

As you have been admitted into this theological seminary, professing to be actuated by a strong and pious desire to serve the Saviour in the ministry of his Word, I have begun with stating to you the necessary qualifications for that work—qualifications which extend from proper motives of action to a perpetual engagement in this holy service, and to a patient and honorable endurance of all the trials and evils connected with it; and must, as I proceed, exhort you to inquire very seriously whether you now possess some of those qualifications, and whether you aim at the acquisition, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, of the others.

In this inquiry, the first particular to be investigated by you is, whether you have received a special call of God, so far as that call can now be made, to engage in the gospel ministry?

Some young men study theology, and even take upon themselves the vows of the gospel minister, without reflecting upon the importance of being called in a special manner to this great work. They choose the ministry from among the learned professions as the employment most agreeable to their taste, better suited to their circumstances, more gratifying to the wishes of their parents and relatives; or they apply to theological studies with a view to engage in the ministry, because they are anxious to elevate themselves from obscurity to a respectable standing in society, while they shall enjoy a livelihood, associate with men of literature and science, and improve their own minds by reading; and it may be, that even the desire to figure as an orator, from a consciousness that they possess good speaking talents, which the pulpit will allow them to display, is the leading motive which impels others in the pursuit of the ministry.

How remote now are all such motives and views from those which ought to exist in the breasts of those who engage in the special service of the Lord Christ! How liable do such render themselves to receive the greater condemnation, “who run with-

out being sent," and who take up the office of ambassadors of the Saviour, without being specially called by him to this office! Were a person to act thus towards an earthly prince, he would be denounced as an impostor and a traitor, and be punished accordingly. And is the offense less, because committed against the Majesty of heaven? "I trow not."

Let, then, the theological student pause here, and ponder those things which constitute a special call of God to the gospel ministry.

The first of those things, it has been said, is the experience of renewing grace, and the existence in the soul of that "precious faith in Christ, which works by love."

With all solemnity, therefore, should the man who desires to be a minister of Jesus, and a steward of the mysteries of God, interrogate himself as he enters a divinity school, on the subject of this divine work of conversion. Do I believe, he should ask himself, that I have ever been dead in trespasses and in sins; an intelligent creature alienated from God, and under the awful sentence of condemnation? Have I seen that I was in myself a lost and undone sinner? Have I sought to escape the damnation of hell, by pursuing, in the exercise of faith and repentance, that way to which the gospel directs sinners? Has the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ recovered me? Am I a converted man? For an unconverted minister of Christ is surely a monster in deceit, recommending a Saviour to others, to whom he himself has not fled for refuge; pressing others to hasten into the ark, while he remains without, to perish with the children of disobedience. And what an awful destruction awaits that impenitent minister who, like Judas Iscariot, has betrayed the Son of man with a kiss; a preacher of Christ Jesus in hell, there to be not only stung by the reproaches of his own conscience, but also taunted by devils, who shall say, "We never acted so inconsistently and deceitfully; we never preached Christ in whom we did not confide; we never made public discourses about a Saviour and his excellences, whom we did not love."

It is a very serious question, to be answered *in limine*, Am I renewed in mind by the power of the Holy Spirit, or shall I advance to preach the gospel, and in preaching it be nothing more "than a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal"?

Let me, then, exhort you to review your past experience in re-

ligion, and in aid of such examination into your state before God, remind you that the true convert is a sincere penitent. On his conversion, he has offered up to God "the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit." Such an offering is something more than an affirmative answer to the question, "Have you submitted to God?" A question, which, since the mystery of redemption has been made known to the nations by the coming, the crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ, is expressed in terms much too general, and therefore the aforesaid answer cannot exhibit the faith of the gospel; nor does that offering imply deep and terrifying convictions of sin, accompanied with great visible distress; for many are so convicted and so distressed, who "never submit to the righteousness of God," and never truly repent of their sins; but it implies a realizing sight of God's infinite purity and excellency, and a sense of the great evil of sin, which has turned the heart away from such a glorious Being, and rendered the sinner a vile and polluted creature, deserving condemnation. Such a creature the convert perceives himself to be by nature and practice, "wherefore he abhors himself," feels a heart-breaking sorrow for his past offenses, and cherishes through life those humble sentiments which classify him with that peculiar people who are described as the "poor in spirit," and disposed "to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child."

Further: The true convert is one who has "no confidence in the flesh," and whose soul embraces the Lord Jesus Christ as "Jehovah his righteousness."

There is a faith of human origin, resting upon the general reception of Christianity in a land which receives Christ as a Saviour, without perceiving how he saves sinners, and creates in their salvation a brighter display of the glory of God. Hence some have no other idea respecting this Redeemer than that he will, after the performance of certain ecclesiastical rites, pardon and save their souls in a future world; and others, still "going about to establish a righteousness of their own," but, not quite satisfied with the amount of their own good doings, cherish the fond sentiment that Christ will be so good as to supply any little deficiency in merit which may be found in themselves.

But the true convert has a faith which God has given him. He sees with enlightened eyes of understanding, "that Christ is the

end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." He gladly receives him as such—is willing to be eternally indebted to the atoning blood of the Lamb slain for his pardon and cleansing, and experiences a warmth of affection for his precious Saviour, which impregnates in future all his sentiments, and ever and anon prompts him to say, "What, O what shall I render unto the Lord my Redeemer, for all his benefits?" The heart of the convert is set against the doctrine of self-righteousness. He rejoices now in the belief that God has forgiven him for Christ's sake, and he hopes in the last great day to stand "complete in Christ," and never to be separated from him more. Meantime he looks upon himself as "one who is bought with a price," and who, from a principle of love, is bound "to do more than others."

But to believe in and love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, is not the whole of the special call of God to the ministry. For, as we have observed before, in addition to renewing grace, the Holy Spirit, when he operates such a special call, excites and maintains in the heart of the convert a prevailing holy desire to be employed in the gospel service; he influences the mind so as to bend it towards the ministerial work. Where such a call exists, there may be in the way of its subject obstacles apparently insuperable; the person may at first be allured by offers from friends to aid him in other employments; he may be pressed by circumstances to engage in other pursuits; but in these his mind continues to be restless; he is not in his proper element; the grand desire to serve his Saviour in the gospel is not extinguished; it remains "like a fire in his bones." Such a person has no evidence that he will accomplish great things in the ministry; he knows not that he will be an instrument in the conversion of one sinner; he feels his own insufficiency for such a great office; and sometimes he thinks that his talents will be inadequate to the duties and difficulties connected with it. But the desire lives in his heart, for it is a call of God.

May you be able to find that strong, holy desire, alive in your minds. Peculiar trials attend the gospel ministry. It is not the road to worldly honor, wealth, and greatness. The faithful minister must labor hard, experience many trials of temper from the contradictions of sinners, exercise much patience under injuries, and endure various privations of good things. Survey the ground

well over which you may be called to travel, and then inquire whether, in attempting further progress, "the love of Christ constraineth you."

Other reflections connected with this subject will occur in the following lectures.

## LECTURE II.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

IT has been stated, that the first qualification required for the pastoral office, is the special call of God.

SECOND. Another requisite qualification, is a measure of intellectual endowment suited to the work of the gospel ministry. (Matt. xiii. 52.) Our Lord supposes "every scribe to be instructed unto the kingdom of heaven." "A bishop must be apt to teach." (1 Tim. iii. 2.) The "faithful men to whom the things of God are to be committed, must be those who *shall be able to teach others.*" (2 Tim. ii. 2.) "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me." (Hosea iv. 6.)

I. That knowledge is required in those who engage in the ministry of the Word of God, is evident,

1. From the name given to them by the Holy Spirit. They are called "teachers," (Matt. xxviii., Ephes. iv. 11,) "the light of the world," (Matt. v. 14,) "ambassadors for Christ," men employed in an important embassy, which they must be able to execute, (2 Cor. v. 20.)

2. From the design or end of their ministry: for it is a ministry appointed "to preach the Word," (2 Tim. iv. 2,) and so to preach it, "that their profiting may appear to all," (1 Tim. iv. 15,) to "save souls by sound doctrine," (1 Tim. iv. 16,) and "to defend the gospel," (Phil. i. 17.)

3. From the subjects of their preaching, which are various as well as important, and require various knowledge in those who discuss them.

4. From the opposition made to the divine authority of the Scriptures, by deists and atheistical philosophers; and to sound doctrine, by heretics and other enemies of the truth: for these are foes, who comprehend, in their array, men of cultivated minds and of various erudition.

5. From the respectable place which the gospel ministry, with a view to success in their work, should occupy in civil society. An illiterate ministry cannot command respect in an intelligent and polished community.

II. But here it may be objected, "that the apostles, chosen by the Saviour himself, were unlearned men; that many of them were poor uneducated fishermen; yet their preachings resulted in the conversion of thousands, and in the enlargement of the Church."

1. This objection will be set aside by the simple fact, that those apostles were not sent out to preach the gospel *with that measure of knowledge* which they had before they received their commission, and while they were fishermen; but in addition to the instructions which their Master had given them, both before and after his resurrection, they were taught by the Holy Spirit, in an extraordinary way. Accordingly, they were forbidden to act immediately in the gospel service, and were required "to tarry in the city of Jerusalem, after Christ's ascension into heaven, until they should be endued with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49.) Now whoever, at any time, shall be endowed with the same "power from on high," and give those evidences of this fact which the apostles did to the Church and to the world, must be considered as *fully qualified* for the work of the ministry. "The fact, then," as one remarks, "of the eleven being unlearned, is the very reason why *uninspired* ministers should, to a certain extent, be learned: for, in the apostles and primitive evangelists, inspiration supplied the place of learning; in ministers of the Word now, appropriate knowledge, acquired in a course of education, must supply the place of inspiration."

2. Further: At the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, it was necessary to show that Christianity had its origin not in the wisdom of the schools; that it derived its authority not from the researches and deductions of the learned, but from the immediate inspirations and will of God. No such necessity now

exists; hence extraordinary gifts are no longer communicated by the Holy Spirit.

3. But the *absolute* necessity of human erudition is not the point in dispute. All that we consider to be an indispensable qualification for the sacred ministry, in respect of intellectual endowment, is a measure of knowledge which shall enable one otherwise well qualified, "to preach the Word unto the edifying of the body of Christ." Hence presbyteries are authorized to license and ordain some who have not enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, when "they have the best assurance which can be obtained, that they are men of singular talents, piety, humility, sobriety, good understanding, and discretion, together with the gift of utterance."

But we consider various knowledge, acquired by application to study in the schools, or elsewhere, to be necessary, *relatively and ordinarily*. Should, however, one with an understanding slenderly furnished, urge in favor of his admission into the ministry, this argument, "that he ought not to keep his talents concealed in a napkin," the befitting answer is that which the celebrated Robert Hall gave: "The smallest pocket handkerchief you have will do, sir."

III. What measure of knowledge one should possess, before he is ordained to the ministry of the Lord Jesus, cannot be exactly defined. He cannot be master of too much science and literature. He ought not to possess too little of this intellectual furniture: for,

1. God has revealed himself to man, since the days of Moses, not by traditions, but by writing. And the languages employed by the Holy Spirit in the Sacred Scriptures, are the Hebrew and Greek languages.

The study of the Greek and Hebrew languages (and to facilitate the acquisition of these, we must add the Latin also) is, therefore, recommended by very strong considerations, to those who desire to fill the office of a bishop in the visible Church. Apart from that influence which the study of these languages doubtless has, "*πρὸς τὴν γυμνασίαν τοῦ νοῦ,*" as Socrates says, the knowledge of them is necessary to correct mistranslations of the original Scriptures, and to defend the true doctrine of God against the various assaults of error. Hence the study of the sacred languages has ever been associated with the orthodox faith in the Christian Church. When

the revival of letters took place, A. D. 1470, as one expresses it, "illico affulsit evangelii claritas,"—"forthwith the clear light of the gospel shone out." From that period it has been ascertained that the ablest theologians and commentators on the Bible among the Protestants, are those who were most conversant with the sacred languages; and that even among the Romanists, those writers were more orthodox who understood those languages. Of this fact, Arias Montanus, Masius, Vatablus, compared with other Papal writers, are examples.

2. Further: The Sacred Scriptures exhibit an infinite variety of matter for our consideration and belief; and the various interesting facts which they contain require that those persons who are set apart to expound them should be furnished with that various knowledge, which a course of liberal education is calculated to impart. No one can be long employed in the exposition of the written Word of God, without perceiving that he draws upon his stores of knowledge, rich as they may be, with manifest profit and pleasure in his work. Natural philosophy, logic, metaphysics, geology, history and travels, antiquities, chronology, geography, and rhetoric, all contribute their aids in rendering a faithful servant of Christ a better expounder of the Word, and an abler minister of the New Testament. This Word has been connected, by its divine Author, with almost every branch of science, that the religion which it teaches might rise higher in our souls through increasing knowledge of the wonderful works of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness around us, and that it might, in every age and country, afford its powerful assistance in promoting the advances of the human mind in intelligence.

Very cunningly did that great enemy of Christianity, the Roman Emperor Julian, act, when he attempted to banish the children of Christians, and of course the future ministers of Christ in the empire, from the schools of learning. He wished to see the followers of the Saviour, and especially their pastors, immersed in ignorance; lest, as he said, "they should be qualified to argue with our gentile dialecticians."

In the same spirit of hostility to true Christianity, and with a view to introduce into the visible Church as much of paganism as could be concealed under nominal Christian ordinances, Pope Paul II. said, "it was sufficient for the sons of Christians, that they

were taught to read and write." Soon indeed would popish superstition and atheistical philosophy divide the Christian world between them, were the ministers of Christ unqualified, through ignorance, to defend that "glorious gospel" which is committed to their special trust.

The objections, therefore, brought by certain sects against the salutary requisition, that the minds of those young men of piety, who desire to preach the gospel, should be disciplined by a regular course of academical instruction, are the offspring, not of reason and experience, but of fanaticism.

The question to be answered here is simply this: Are the Scriptures to be well expounded by the ministers of Christ? We affirm, but fanatics deny, and require that men should speak in religious assemblies, as the Spirit dictates. Hence it is evident that the real matter in controversy is not, whether gospel preachers shall be furnished with various knowledge? but, whether they shall be set apart to expound well the written Word of God? A mere academical education neither operates a change of heart, nor communicates to any a holy desire to serve God in the gospel ministry; yet it is highly useful in expanding the mind through various knowledge, and in strengthening the reasoning powers, and thus fitting a minister of the Word to speak better, "both to the wise and the unwise." The religion of the heart in ministers, we believe to be the special work of the Holy Spirit; yet supreme love of God alone cannot, from the very constitution of man, store his understanding with facts, and make him an able minister of the New Testament.

IV. But above all, the Evangelical Pastor should have his mind stored well with the knowledge of Bible theology, "that he may be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and good doctrine." (1 Tim. ii/6.)

By Bible theology, we understand the science of the doctrines taught, and of the duties commanded in the Holy Scriptures, as those doctrines and duties compose a system of religion, the parts of which are admirably connected together by the Spirit of Infinite Wisdom. That connection, however, of the doctrines as well as of the duties of revealed religion, is not exhibited in the Sacred Scriptures according to the arrangement adopted in philosophical

schools, or in the usual order of human science in uninspired compositions, for various weighty reasons: among which, let our attention be here fixed upon one only, namely, the trial of the human heart, not only in reading all the parts of Scripture, historical, typical, and prophetic, as well as didactic and practical, but especially "in searching them." "Search the Scriptures," said our Lord: "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

To a similar constitution of things, the human mind is subjected in all the other departments of science.

And can any arguments be required, to prove that the person who is solemnly set apart "to preach the Word and to defend the gospel," should understand his business? God does "not send his message by the hand of a fool." "The priest's lips must teach knowledge." Accordingly the apostle Paul said to the Christians at Corinth, "though I be rude in speech, yet *not in knowledge.*" (2 Cor. xi. 6.) Pastors after God's own heart are "such as feed his people with knowledge and with understanding." "Jesus saith unto them, Have ye *understood* these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man, which is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Matt. xiii. 51, 52.) This parable, spoken in illustration of the question, "Have ye understood these things?" cannot be mistaken in its doctrine.

Ignorance of divine truths in their proper connection, has, in those who undertook to preach the Word, produced much zeal and many extravagances, and given rise to as many errors, and wrought as many evils in the visible Church, as "philosophy, falsely so called." Mark the serious errors and gross superstitions (of some of which the more sober Gentiles would have been ashamed) which sprang up like weeds, in the dark ages, when those who were the professed teachers of Christianity were strangers to the theology of the Bible, and hardly acquainted with the letters of the gospel alphabet! Mark the wild fancies and other excesses of the Anabaptists in Germany, who were led on by men who, instead of studying the Word of God, snatched at a few of its passages to fire their imaginations and to inflame their passions! Mark the course of fanatics at this day: they exclaim with rude

vehemence against well-instructed and faithful ministers of the gospel who oppose their errors, and attempt to speak unknown tongues, while ignorant of the very languages in which the Scriptures of truth were written.\*

Strongly, therefore, must it be demanded, that one who is admitted into the gospel ministry, should "understand the Scriptures." And as these Scriptures speak of the works of God in creation, providence and redemption, works which, under the direction of infinite wisdom, form a system, so the revealed truths in relation to that Being and his works, must and do constitute a system of theology. On this system depends what is denominated, the *analogy of faith*, which, as John Newton observed, "is a master-key, that not only opens particular doors, but carries you through the whole house." To use this key with wisdom, knowledge of the structure in its various well connected and proportioned parts is necessary; for such knowledge alone can render one "mighty in the Scriptures," and check both the wildness of metaphysical speculations in divinity, and the ardor of attachment to the particular systems of theology composed by learned man.

During the dark ages, those who entered into the priesthood, as the gospel ministry was improperly called, neglected the study of the Holy Scriptures, and applied themselves to the reading of the Christian Fathers, or rather the books which exhibited the doctrines contained in their writings; and the result is well known. Luther knew it so well, from what he saw and felt in early life, that even in relation to his own compositions he said, "Ego ipse odi libros meos, et sæpe opto eos interire, quod metuo, ne morenter lectores et abducant a lectione ipsius Scripturæ, quæ sola omnis sapientiæ fons est."

But to improve in this theological science, shall pious youth repair to a theological school for instruction? Doubtless such a course is to be pursued by them, if a school of theology shall facilitate their progress in the knowledge of divine truths, and call their graces as well as gifts into exercise. If *means* are to be used in increasing their knowledge of what the Bible teaches, and in qualifying their minds for the better defense of its doctrines, their

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\* "I remember," said the late Mr. Rowland Hill, "when — — came to me and talked about not hiding his talents, I could not help telling him, that for my part, I thought the closer he hid them the better."

duty in this respect must be obvious. If they read without the help of suitable instructors the choicest works on theology, they are still using *means* to furnish their minds with more knowledge of divine truth; but means less efficient to their end. And means must be employed, if that requisite knowledge be not communicated *by miracle*. Some such miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit on the minds of those who are called to preach the gospel, is considered by certain fanatical sects, who oppose theological seminaries, to constitute the special call of God.

It must however be carefully noted here, that schools of theology, whether they exist independent of, or in connection with, universities and colleges, are not invariably *helps* to the pious mind in the acquisition of the knowledge of Bible theology. They are human institutions, and as such, liable to change their original useful character, to become schools of error and heresy, and to aid in quenching the heavenly fire of vital religion, in corrupting the ministry of the Word, and in substituting the study of profane literature and philosophy for that of Bible theology. It was in the view of the reprehensible mode of theological education at such seminaries, and of its disastrous effects upon the ministry and the state of religion, that the pious and indefatigable servant of Christ, the late Rowland Hill, and others, (whose language in relation to cotemporary preachers was at some times very unwise,) spoke of the "modern academies in Britain, as being, in general, sad-soul starvation places," and the ministers educated in them, as being "poor tools of our manufacturing." This representation might be in a measure correct, and yet, theological schools conducted in the spirit of the gospel, will possess a high value from their usefulness in the Church. It is not easy to estimate accurately the great benefits derived in the days of the Reformation, from the theological academies of Geneva and other Protestant cities.

V. Here it is hardly necessary to remark to you, that the knowledge of Scripture doctrines and duties, by those who aspire to the pastoral office, must be such as to instruct them in relation to the important exercise of *pastoral prayer*, and to furnish them with skill in framing addresses to God, in the name and on behalf of a Christian congregation. To which let me add, that so subservient is various knowledge to the usefulness of the gospel ministry, that

the Evangelical Pastor should give himself to reading, and increase his intellectual stores, so long as the powers of his mind possess any strength. Never must he relax his exertions to acquire better understanding of the Scriptures, which have “depths in which elephants may swim.” Increasing science of this kind, united with Christian humility, tends to make the instructive preacher an abler ruler in the Church of God, a wiser counsellor in the presbytery. For it is not in the preaching-desk only, that he must serve the Lord Christ, but in ecclesiastical councils also, where he is called to extend care over the very important interests of his Master’s kingdom.

THIRD. But I have done with knowledge, and proceed to observe, that a third qualification for the pastoral office is, *such a development of the graces of the divine life* in one’s temper and conduct, as shall give promise to the rulers of the Church of his future usefulness in the gospel ministry. This qualification is usually expressed by the term *piety*: but as this term is not sufficiently comprehensive of my meaning here, as one may be accounted to have a good share of what is ordinarily denominated piety, while he exhibits little prudence, and little holy zeal, I shall enumerate those Christian graces and virtues, which are considered to form an additional requisite qualification for the pastoral office.

1. Accordingly, I begin with *heavenly-mindedness*.

Heavenly-mindedness stands opposed to earthly-mindedness, which consists in an inordinate love and pursuit of the good things of this world.

Every one who is “born of water and of the Spirit,” is the subject of that change which places the Supreme Being upon the throne of his affections, and causes this world to be considered by him as an inferior and unsatisfying good. “If any man love the world, (supremely,) the love of the Father is not in him.” “For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world.” (1 John ii. and v.) Yet corruptions do exist in the renewed mind on earth: In such a mind, covetousness, as well as any other existing lust of the human heart, may be “the sin which doth more easily beset the Christian.” Hence, we find some whom we have reason to regard as converted persons, too strongly wedded still to the gains and riches of this world, too avaricious in their dispositions, too

ardent in their pursuit of earthly things, and too much disposed to estimate such things above their proper value: and we must add, that if such a temper be found to exist in one who aims at the ministry of the Lord Jesus, it is a disqualification for that important office. Such a person shows that he is not sufficiently weaned from this world; that his views of heavenly realities in their existence and glory, are not sufficiently clear and enlarged; in a word, he does not possess a suitable measure of heavenly-mindedness! For a bishop must not be "greedy of filthy lucre," not covetous: he must, according to the requirements of his divine Master, exhibit that spirit of self-denial with regard to the good things of this life, that abstraction of his affections from worldly enjoyments, which shall prove that he lives "in the consideration of things unseen and eternal;" that he is prepared to forsake houses and lands for Christ's sake, and that his own temper and life enforce that Word, which he is called to preach to others; which describes the Christian as "crucified unto this world," and which forbids inordinate solicitude about, and attachment to, earthly good things.

In requiring such a heavenly temper as a qualification for the pastoral office, it is not intended, that those who engage in the gospel service shall either throw away the worldly estates which they may possess, or be indifferent about their own subsistence, and the maintenance of a family, if Divine Providence has placed one under their care. By no means: there is a divine law, sanctioned by a sentence of excommunication from the Christian Church, which binds pastors as well as others to provide for their own households. 1 Timothy, v. 8: "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." They should be economists of those good things of time which God has placed under their stewardship. For it is required of bishops, that they "be given to hospitality:" but to exercise this virtue, it is necessary that care and management be used in relation to their means of livelihood, and their worldly affairs.

There is, then, a dutiful concern about temporal subsistence and secular affairs, which the Evangelical Pastor must feel; and the want of this proper attention is betrayed by those ministers of the Word, who are improvident, lavish in their expenditures, or with-

out regard to their own ability in purse, ever anxious to place their domestic establishments upon a level with the establishments of the wealthy and elevated in society. Hence have arisen debts and difficulties, which have disturbed the minds and impaired the usefulness of such ministers in no small degree, and in some instances operated to produce a separation from their pastoral charges. But on this point I shall say nothing further here; for it is not so much the want of due concern, as the excess of worldly affections and solitudes, which stands opposed to heavenly-mindedness.

Now these inordinate cares and anxieties about earthly things, may and do discover themselves in various ways, through the habitual temper and actions of some who aspire at, and others who sustain, the office of a minister of the Word.

One, for instance, may, from avarice, sin against the laws of Christian hospitality and benevolence, visiting in the houses of others and partaking of their kindness, while he is afraid to open his own doors and to entertain strangers; calling in his sermons for the liberal contributions of others, while he withholds his own contribution, or imparts with a niggardly hand for the sustenance of the poor, and the promotion of other benevolent objects.

Another may be so intent on adding to his estate, and acquiring riches, as to contemplate with horror the condition of the gospel missionary among the heathen; or, if settled in a pastoral charge, to be constantly pressing his congregation, and troubling the church officers, on the subject of the insufficiency of his salary. His desires, like the daughters of the horseleech, cease not "to cry, Give, give!"

A third may be so eager after worldly gains, that he must unite secular pursuits with his ministry; he must engage in trade and speculation in lands; or he must employ himself in the various labor of agriculture, giving a large portion of his attention to the improvement of his farm, horses, cattle, and expending but little time in his preparations for the pulpit. He cannot be content with a small estate for the gospel's sake. When "the altar" affords so little, he must endeavor to enrich himself from other sources.

A fourth may manifest in all his dealings with others a mean, penurious, and covetous temper, insisting upon the uttermost farthing; quarrelling about a few pence; collecting his stipend by personal visits; threatening a civil prosecution, in cases in which

a little self-denial on his part, and even a little suffering at home, would add to his reputation and influence as a servant of Christ, and promote the interests of the gospel.

In all the instances just mentioned, there is a want of *heavenly-mindedness*: a defect which is quickly discovered in a pastor by the people of his charge; and need I remark, that it is a serious defect? The high and solemn relations which the Evangelical Pastor sustains, and all the duties which he is called to perform, stand so directly opposed to the lust of wealth, and the pride of life, that, unless one feels this passion well subdued in his heart; unless he believes "that contentment with godliness is great gain;" unless he is willing to be a poor man, and to commit himself and family to the direction and care of Divine Providence while he preaches the gospel, he ought to hesitate, and examine himself thoroughly before he enters into the ministry, and not rest satisfied until, through growth in grace, his heart can in some measure adopt the sentiment of Paul: "We seek not yours, but you."

It was a noble qualification in Martin Luther for the great work of the Reformation, that his affections were raised high above earthly things. He used to say, that he was variously tempted; but the sin of covetousness never troubled him. When he became aged in the service of the gospel, and princes and noblemen made him rich presents, he would, in his private devotions, tell the Lord "that he would not be put off with these things." If a poor student of theology came to his house in distress, he would supply his wants, if he had money; and when he had no money, he was known to break down silver vessels, and bid the necessitous student go and sell the silver, and relieve himself of his difficulties.

The late pious Henry Martyn, before he experienced the power of divine truth in his soul, could not resolve upon devoting himself to the ministry of the gospel; "because, as he said, he could not consent to be poor for Christ's sake." But after he felt the constrainings of the Saviour's love, and grew in spirituality of mind, he could devote himself to all the trials of the missionary service, and say, "My dear Redeemer is a fountain of life to my soul. With resignation and peace can I look forward to a life of labor and entire seclusion from earthly comforts, while Jesus thus stands near me, changing me into his own image." "We are

just to the south of all Europe," said he on his voyage to India, "and I bid adieu to it for ever, without a wish of ever revisiting it; and still less with any desire of taking up my rest in the strange land to which I am going. Ah! no; farewell, perishing world! To me, to live, shall be Christ."

The gospel ministry is a holy and elevated service. It looks particularly to the heavenly world for its gracious reward! Hence, there are special honors connected with it. God has said to his ministers here, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." To which of his holy and mighty angels hath he said this?

2. Another grace operating to qualify one for the gospel ministry, is *humility*.

When the apostle Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church, (Acts xx. 19;) and when, in obedience to his call, they were gathered around him, he thus addressed them: "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord *with all humility* of mind." From the discovery of his own sinfulness; from the deep sense which he had of his entire dependence upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and from his admiration of the excellences of his Saviour, this eminent minister of the gospel stood amid his brilliant successes in his work, "clothed with humility." He had learned of his Master "to be meek and lowly in heart:" hence, he could endure injuries with patience, serve both the wise and the unwise, and condescend readily to men of low estate. His humility appears in the sentiments which he expressed to all the churches in relation to himself. He calls himself "less than the least of all saints," "who am not meet to be called an apostle." Ephes. iii. 8: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ." And if humility formed the ordinary dress of one whose revelations from above were so rich, whose attainments in religion were so high, and whose triumphs over the powers of darkness were most splendid; should not those who desire the office of a bishop, and those who are invested with this sacred office, exhibit themselves in the same dress? Most correct was the observation of a zealous and successful preacher: "We ministers cannot sink too low in humility,

nor yet rise too high in heavenly-mindedness ; but we may soon be lost in the wilderness of needless speculations."

That humility of soul, which should be cultivated in preparation for, and especially in the actual exercise of, the gospel ministry, consists in a deep sense of one's unworthiness, as a sinner, (perhaps once among the chief of sinners,) of that mercy which he has found. 1. Tim. i. 12, 13, 14: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord," said Paul, "who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus:"—in an abiding conviction of one's insufficiency for the holy and arduous work of the ministry. 2 Cor. ii. 16:—"And who is sufficient for these things?" "When I think," said Henry Martyn, "of my shameful incapacity for the ministry, arising from my own neglect, I see reason to tremble." Such was the language of a highly gifted and laborious servant of the Saviour, concerning whom one who knew him well in India wrote, "He shines in all the dignity of love; and seems to carry about him such a heavenly majesty, as impresses the mind beyond description:"—in an habitual conviction that one's best compositions, and best efforts, can of themselves turn no sinner unto the Lord, and transform him into a new creature. 1. Cor. iii. 6, 7: "I have planted, and Apollos watered: but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase:"—in an habitual dependence upon the promised grace of the Redeemer, and the aids of his Holy Spirit for support and success. Phil. iv. 13: "I can do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me." When Eliot, the apostle of the Indians, in his last moments, had spoken of his successful labors in the missionary field, he paused and said, "I recall that word; I spoke of what *I* had done. Oh! child of the dust, lie low; it is *Christ* that hath triumphed:"—in a proper estimate of one's own gifts; not thinking more highly of himself than he ought; not depreciating the talents and labors of others, but whenever it can be consistently done, "in honor preferring them:"—in a disposition to place one's self on a level with the pious poor, and to "condescend to men of low estate" for the gospel's sake; not arrogating a higher rank, and assuming great im-

portance, because either his family, education and talents are superior, or his house is better furnished, or his mind and manners suited to the polished and elevated orders in society. Rom. i. 14: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." 1 Cor. ix. 19: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." Archbishop Usher, who, as Selden said, "was learned to a miracle," afforded in his ministry a bright example of Christian humility, united with eminent piety. It is recorded of him, "that in his demeanor and behavior, he had high thoughts of others, and as low of himself. Godly persons, of what rank soever, had great power with him; he would put them in his bosom, visit them in their sickness, supply their wants, beg their prayers, and countenance their cause and persons:"—in that spirit of patient enduring which will bear up against revilings for the gospel's sake, and move onward in the faithful discharge of duty:—finally, in an habitual feeling, that one is called to the ministry to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and not to show off himself by a display of his talents, either as an orator or a metaphysician. "Pride," said Mr. Baxter, "makes many a man's sermon; and what pride makes, the devil makes." Pride makes many a preacher neglect his studies, insinuating that his mental powers are so strong, and his acquirements so various and rich, that he can preach well with little preparation. Pride in the ministry frets under every hardship, and resents in anger every token of disapprobation, every mark of disrespect, and every injury. Pride in the pastoral office courts the smiles and delights in the company of the rich and powerful, while it can suffer the poor to sicken and die without pastoral prayer, instruction and consolation.

How important, then, is an humble heart in the gospel service. "God giveth grace to the humble, but the proud he knoweth afar off." Bishop Davenant justly remarks, that "God does not permit a spiritual vacuum to exist in the hearts of the humble, but pours into them to fill them with the streams of his heavenly gifts." But I need not enlarge here; a proud heart in the gospel ministry will produce various neglects and numerous troubles.

To cherish and promote humility in his own soul, let both him who desires to minister in the Word, and him who is engaged in that service, be frequent in his acknowledgments before God in

secret prayer, of his many defects—let him familiarize to his mind the sentiment, that he is a poor creature and an unprofitable servant—let him make his preparations for the work of the ministry in the spirit of prayer, and cry, “Help! Lord!”—let him reflect how many efforts in preaching well have produced no visibly good fruits—let him consider, that he is not called to win the favor and to receive the applause of men, but appointed to preach Christ, and in preaching him, to oppose the sentiments and the course of this present evil world, and in this conflict “to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” And should his labors be much blessed, let him be doubly watchful over the pride of his heart. “For he then,” said Rowland Hill, “need to be favored with a deal of humility. We are too apt to be proud of that which is not our own. O humility, humility, humility!”

In addition to humility and heavenly-mindedness, other graces and virtues operate to qualify men for the duties of the sacred ministry. These will occupy our attention hereafter: the present lecture I shall conclude with some *practical observations*.

1. It has been said that *various knowledge* is required to render one who is specially called by God to the ministry of his Word, “a workman in the gospel service, who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth;” and that in addition to schools of literature and science, a theological seminary of evangelical principles is the place where a measure of such knowledge is to be more easily and quickly obtained. Now these facts very clearly show the manner in which the time of the students in this seminary is to be spent. Your principal business here, while you are attending to your growth in personal religion, is to collect knowledge, such as will enable you to do God’s husbandry-work well, when you are sent into the fields to be cultivated. Study, diligent and unremitting, is your great duty. Close attention to reading, to the lectures delivered, and to preparations for examination, is what is particularly incumbent on you. Such is the course of instruction pursued here, that if a student relaxes his efforts and spends *too much time* either in civil visits, or unprofitable reading, or social religious and benevolent meetings, or even in exhorting in the various neighborhoods around him, in aid of the pastors of churches, he will find himself thrown behind the studious, and be hardly able, by any future vigorous exertion, to

recover his proper place, and to do justice by his proficiency to the labors of his instructors.

Certain it is, that inattention to study in a theological seminary, even when such neglect is accompanied with much apparent zeal to produce religious excitements, obscures the evidence required to prove either an humble sense of one's present attainments in the knowledge of the Scriptures, or the reality of his being specially called by God to the gospel ministry. It is a blossom that promises no ripe fruit. The young pastor, after his settlement in a congregation, must, in order to do good service, apply closely to reading during all the hours for several years in succession which he can command, after discharging his external parochial duties. But, will that person sit down to books and the careful composition of sermons, who in a divinity school thought that he was already well qualified to preach the gospel both "to the wise and the unwise," and who, in his ardent zeal for the conversion of sinners, contracted habits averse from study? He may: but the probability is, that a license to preach will be considered by him, a document certifying that he is "very mighty in the Scriptures," and that under the influence of this sentiment, he will spend much time abroad, when he should be accumulating in his study "treasures of things new and old," for future use.

Let me then press upon your consciences, attention to present duty. Apply diligently to study—examine whether an hour has been lost, and endeavor to redeem it. The celebrated Perkins wrote upon the front page of his books, "Minister verbi es, hoc age." Like him, it becomes you to keep the fact constantly before you, that your principal employment here is to acquire various knowledge, especially a better understanding of the Scriptures, to qualify you for the work of the ministry: "hoc age."

2. It has also been stated in this lecture, that the graces of heavenly-mindedness and humility are among the qualifications for the pastoral office. As such, those graces should unquestionably appear in the temper and conduct of those who in a theological seminary aspire to the gospel ministry. Evidences should *now* be afforded, that you have drunk "of that water which in the renewed mind is a well of water springing up into everlasting life"—that divine grace has operated in you a heavenly temper, imparted a new life to your souls, and made you to breathe after heavenly

and eternal things. The judicious and serious around you, and with whom you are more intimately conversant, should be able to perceive in your habits of life, that you have engaged in the practice of Christian self-denial, and “learned of your Saviour to be meek and lowly in heart.”

Heavenly-mindedness in one who aims at the gospel ministry and possesses the grace, cannot be concealed. It will discover itself in his readiness to bow, in the course of his preparatory studies, to those dispensations of Divine Providence, which place him in a state of dependence on the benevolence of pious friends, or which deny him that finer raiment and those luxuries of the table, which others can enjoy from their improved circumstances in life—and to endure various trials patiently, rather than relinquish his purpose of serving his Redeemer. When, therefore, one who professes to have the ministry in view, is known to fret habitually under the privation of those earthly good things which are enjoyed in a condition of life superior to his own, or when he passes beyond the limits of his pecuniary means, and runs into debt in order to dress in better style or to sit at a richly furnished table, he gives to others an occasion for suspecting, that his affections are not weaned from this world, and that he is not yet disposed “to endure hardships like a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” who, “though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor.” (2 Cor. viii. 9.)

The grace of heavenly-mindedness will further prompt the theological student, *so far as his higher duties in the seminary will permit*, to cultivate the society of aged, experienced Christians—to aid in forming and maintaining associations for prayer and religious conference—to take a deep interest in the circulation of the Holy Scriptures and instructive tracts—to feel for the wretched heathen, and seriously to inquire what claims those who are perishing for lack of knowledge may have upon his personal future efforts to enlighten and save their souls—to instruct the ignorant around him—to exhort sinners “to repent and believe the gospel”—to recommend Christ to every one as a suitable Saviour, and promote the growth of vital godliness—to seize upon every opportunity to do good, and to cooperate with moral and benevolent societies in checking the progress of vice, and in ameliorating the condition of the destitute and afflicted. “For the fruit of the

Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth : proving what is acceptable unto the Lord." (Ephes. v.)

Can one whose mind appreciates "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," be silent in his praise and inactive in his service? Can one who holds "in his hand the writ of manumission, signed by God's own signature," be unsolicitous about the deliverance of the miserable slaves of sin from similar bondage? Will one who "sees light in God's light," make no effort to

———"drive away  
From earth the dark, the infernal legionry  
Of superstition, ignorance and hell—  
High on the Pagan hills, where Satan sat  
Encamped, and o'er the subject kingdoms threw  
Perpetual night, to plant Immanuel's cross,  
The ensign of the Gospel, blazing round  
Immortal truth"?

A student of theology, intent only on the future display of his intellectual powers in the pulpit, may wrap himself up in his study, and exhibit no concern either about the salvation of souls or the enlargement of the Church of Christ in the earth. But the more intense study of the Sacred Scriptures in a divinity school, will prompt that person who desires the office of a Christian bishop from proper motives, and feels the constrainings of his Saviour's love, to aid in the cause of truth and righteousness. The stronger sentiments of his heart will be those of the heavenly-minded through the ages past. "Blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." (Isa. lxii. 1.)

We have associated in this lecture *humility* with heavenly-mindedness, for they are, as graces, inseparable companions. They grow and decline together. The latter excites holy zeal and fortitude in the gospel service: the former administers greatly to patience under injuries from men, and to the habit of dependence upon the Holy Spirit for aid and success in the work of the ministry. The mind of the apostle Paul burned with zeal for the promotion of his Master's cause: for "his conversation was much in heaven." He could not be checked in his course by the revil-

ings of men: for he considered it "enough for the servant to be as his Lord," while he regarded himself "the least of the apostles, and not meet to be called an apostle, because he persecuted the Church of God." (1 Cor. xv. 9.) He labored successfully and indefatigably, with his eyes constantly directed upwards: for the sentiment of his heart was, "who is sufficient for these things?" "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

The Christian religion is the parent of true humility, and as you profess to have experienced the power of that religion, you are required to exhibit now those evidences of an humble heart, which shall endear you to the pious and afford promise of future usefulness in the ministry. Let not those who are set "to watch over you in the Lord" in this seminary, and other Christians around you, be pained by the reflection, that "you are not clothed with humility."

It is certainly no evidence of humility in a theological student, when he enters a school which the Church has opened for his instruction, more disposed to teach and correct his instructors, than to be taught by them. Though he has read little on divinity, and perhaps acquired all his knowledge of some controverted points from a few sermons delivered during a religious excitement, (and excitements may be raised more with a view to disseminate error and disturb church order, than with the design to improve the state of religion,) yet he considers himself qualified to subvert doctrines generally received after much controversy and close examination. His pride renders him zealously daring, and prompts him, in defense of his favorite tenets, to lay down propositions, which, if admitted to be sound doctrine, would soon undermine the whole Christian system.

It is no evidence of humility in a student, when he is ready to put the worst construction on any words of reproof or admonition, which a deep anxiety for his proficiency in knowledge has drawn from the lips of his affectionate instructor.

Nor can it be considered a mark of humility in such an one, when every contradiction of his argument in debate, and every criticism on his composition and its delivery before others, awakens his ire and disturbs his peace of mind! Ah! how will such a person, with such a temper, endure in the gospel ministry, the contradictions of sinners and the revilings of the ungodly?

Be impressed, then, with the high importance of humility, in your preparatory course. Grow in this grace, which is as beautiful to the eye as it is useful in God's service. Oh! remember, I beseech you, that

— "humble love,  
And not proud reason, keeps the door of heaven:  
Love finds admission, where proud science fails."

## LECTURE III.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED—GRACES.

IN addition to heavenly-mindedness and humility, the Sacred Scriptures place, among those graces which qualify men for the pastoral office,

3. *Harmlessness, or Inoffensiveness.*

“Be ye harmless as doves,” said the Saviour (Matt. x. 16,) to those who were to be employed in his gospel service. “Giving no offense in any thing,” said the apostle Paul, “that the ministry be not blamed; but in all things approving ourselves, as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions; by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned.” (2 Cor. vi. 4, 6.) “A bishop must be blameless: no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient; not a brawler.” (1 Tim. iii. 2, 3.)

Harmlessness is the offspring of that “charity,” which forms the spirit and substance of obedience to the second table of the moral law; of that “charity, which suffereth long, and is kind; which envieth not; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil, and beareth all things.” It is love seeking the happiness of others; it is meekness when injuries are inflicted; it is quietness when revilings are heard; it is the noble spirit of our heavenly religion, aiming to “overcome evil with good, following peace with all men,” and abstaining, not merely from positive mischief and injury, but from all those careless and malignant insinuations of the tongue, which may tarnish the character, and destroy the happiness of others.

In conformity with the elevated spirit of Christianity, and in imitation of their Lord and Saviour, “who was holy and harmless,” all Christians are required “to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.” And is it necessary to remind you, that in the

exhibition of this amiable temper, and most benevolent course of action, which implies a victory achieved over some of the worst passions of our nature, it is enjoined upon the ministers of the Word to be *examples* to all believers? "In all things," says the Apostle of the Gentiles to Titus, "showing thyself a pattern of good works." (Tit. ii. 7.) And also, to Timothy, (1 Tim. iv. 12,) "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity; follow after rightcousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." The conduct of the same apostle illustrated his own precepts, given to his fellow-laborers: hence, he could appeal to the testimony of all the pious who were conversant with him, to prove "how holily, and justly, and unblamably, he behaved himself among them that believe." (1 Thess. ii. 10.)

Martin Luther, much as we find to commend in him, did, however, much injury to the cause of his divine Master, and more than once jeopardized the best interests of the Church, as she struggled to throw off the shackles of Popery, by the violence of his temper, and the unjust aspersions which he cast on the good name of those reformers who dissented from him on certain points of doctrine. But the primitive Christians, by studying to be *harmless*, recommended their religion in a powerful manner to others. Their inoffensiveness was every where remarked and applauded; "they shone as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life." In this brilliant course, they were directed by the gospel of peace, and animated by the example of their pastors and teachers.

In a world of various creeds, and where the depraved passions of the human heart, with their diversified and selfish interests, are so violent in their course, who can escape the arrows of vituperation?

"For, if a cherub in the shape of woman  
Should walk this world, yet defamation would,  
Like an evil cur, bark at the angel's train."

But the Christian, who is not "of the world" in his sentiments, habits, and dearest interests, cannot, by any precaution and circumspection, preserve himself from the enmities of those who hate his God and Saviour, and from the unjust censures of reckless tongues: "Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. iii. 12.) Now, ministers of the Word are

“the leaders” in the Christian army; they are called to act openly and vigorously in defense of the doctrines and laws of the gospel—to repel the assaults of infidels and atheistical philosophers—and to contend with that powerful foe, whose forces are collected and marshalled by irreligion, fashion, the love of pleasure, and the inordinate thirst for wealth. They are bound in a special manner, fearlessly to do what God commands them, as his messengers: “to warn the unruly—to show his people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins;” and “in the dreadful front of battle high to war” incessantly with death and hell. Thus conspicuous in station and in action, can gospel ministers, however benevolent in their dispositions, however correct in their deportment, and useful in their lives, expect to be unharmed in the conflict with the various children of disobedience, and the many “enemies of the cross of Christ”? Their divine Master has taught them otherwise. John xv. 20: “Remember the word that I have said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.” Most certainly, no faithful servant of the Redeemer will remain unwounded in this perpetual war with error and ungodliness. No pastor, who is active in the gospel service, can escape censure and opposition. But the hatred of the wicked, expressed in sneer or slander, and the hostilities of the enemies of divine truth, when excited against him on account of the regular performance of his ministerial duties, is an honor; such persecution endears him to his heavenly Master, and serves to distinguish him from the unfaithful servants in the household: for, “woe unto him, especially in this important service, of whom all men speak well.”

Aside, however, from the diligent execution of the ordinary duties of his office, a pastor may give just cause of offense to others, in various ways.

He may offend through irritability of temper, and the want of patience and meekness—regarding every contradiction as a personal insult, and every mark of inattention as a slight; and meeting every injury in the spirit of those who would call down fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans.

He may give offense, by indulging in mirth, when the occasion calls for seriousness; by narrating anecdotes calculated to create

much laughter, when his speech should be seasoned with the salt of religious instruction; and by displaying his wit, in wounding the minds of others, when his voice should rather be lifted up in prayer.

He may offend by becoming a party-man, when his judgment should be unbiassed; thus showing the absence of that "wisdom which is pure, peaceable, without hypocrisy, and without partiality."

He may offend by intermeddling in controversies of a civil nature, existing among persons under his pastoral care; and by becoming, when political excitements rise high, a preacher of party politics, to the neglect of far more important interests.

He may offend by harsh words, unjust censures, and unkind remarks, both in and out of the pulpit.

He may give offense by appearing too frequently in the company of the vain, giddy, and irreligious; and manifesting no decided predilection for the society of godly persons.

He may offend by the incautious use of improper words in the presence of females, and by indecent stories narrated in any company.

He may offend by habitual slovenliness and uncleanness: for the Christian world is agreed, "that next to godliness is cleanliness."

He may give offense by adopting too early the various changes of fashion in dress, and appearing to court notice by the elegance and richness of his garments.

He may offend by throwing into his address, with a view of being regarded as a person of great uprightness and decision of character, a roughness inconsistent with good manners.

He may give pain to others by the careless manner in which he reports what he has heard, heightening the coloring of some facts, adding others, and thereby injuring the characters of those concerned.

Now, in these and other respects, the pastor must "give no offense." His life must be holy and inoffensive—his temper kind and benevolent—his manners pleasing and dignified. The apostle Paul (2 Cor. vi. 3) uses the strong terms "*μη μωμηθη*,"—as if he had said, observes a commentator on the passage, "*ne habeat, quod reprehendat vel Momus ipse:*" that the Christian pastor should be

so inoffensive, that even Momus himself could not find fault with him.

Most surely, a person who from violence of temper, unguardedness in his speech, and levity in his conduct, frequently gives offense to serious and judicious people, is not qualified for the pastoral office in the Christian Church.

#### 4. *Prudence.*

But our Lord Jesus Christ, when he commanded his ministers to be "harmless as doves," required them in the same breath to be "wise as serpents."\* This wisdom or prudence must then be another grace, qualifying men for the duties and trials of his special service.

Prudence in life is generally understood "to be a state of the mind, in which a person is disposed to pay a wise regard, in every step of his conduct, to the lessons which experience has taught him and others." Such prudence has by some been denominated cunning and intrigue; and others have represented it as a cowardly dereliction of duty, through fear of danger, or love of gain and popularity; but in truth, it is wisdom deliberating, not cowardice trembling. Hence, in the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit has bestowed the highest commendation on this virtue. Prov. xiv.: "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: the folly of fools is deceit. The simple believe every word; but the prudent man looketh well to his going. The simple inherit folly; but the prudent are crowned with knowledge." Amos v. 13: "Therefore, the prudent shall keep silence in that time: for it is an evil time." Ephes. v. 15: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise."

Prudence stands opposed to precipitancy in judgment and in action. Under its influence and direction, the mind rests upon the important habit of reflection, instead of yielding to the impulses of vanity, the sallies of a warm imagination, and the excitements of passion. It is involved in that duty which the apostle Peter prescribes, when he says, "Be sober." Amid the persons of different

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\* "φρόνιμοι." The original term φρόνησις, rendered in our version "prudence," (Ephes. i. 8,) and "wisdom," (Luke i. 17,) expresses a judgment distinguishing what is useful from what is hurtful, united with an engagedness of spirit, in wisely pursuing the former as an object of desire. This prudence is operative in the life. (Phil. ii. 2, 5; Rom. viii. 5; Matt. vii. 24; xxiv. 45.)

tempers and habits, to whom the pastor in the course of his ministry "must preach the Word," and the perplexing circumstances in which he is sometimes placed, prudence restrains him from committing himself to men whom he does not well know, because they make loud professions of religion, and perhaps exhibit much talent in public prayer and in preaching: for it reminds him, that the apostle Paul was "in perils among false brethren." (2 Cor. xi. 26.) It restrains him from determining the religious characters and states of those persons with whose sentiments and habits of life he is imperfectly acquainted; from describing as unconverted or heretical, those who do not subscribe to every article of his creed; from pronouncing anathemas upon all Christian denominations that adopt confessions of faith different from his own, observe modes of worship less pure, though untainted with idolatry and gross superstitions, and submit to forms of ecclesiastical government, which he considers to be corruptions of the primitive rule. It forbids him to convert the church court in which he presides, into a grand inquest for a county, or to be hasty in raising "the rod" of ecclesiastical discipline. It forbids him to form opinions upon mere rumor, or to say aught affecting the moral character of others, on the testimony of gossippers and busy-bodies; and it also forbids him to consider every occasional meeting of persons, a suitable one for preaching the Word, or for pious discourse—every opportunity that may offer, the best season for administering reproof—and every person who transgresses, the proper subject of reprehension and admonition from the pulpit. The eloquent John Chrysostom, of Constantinople, in his ardent zeal to promote reformation among the inhabitants of that city, and especially in a licentious imperial court, violated the laws of prudence, in the use of intemperate language while preaching, and in insisting upon bodily austerities, not required by that gospel of which he was a minister. Other Christian fathers, also, imprudently invested the discipline of the Church with a severity of character at variance with the precepts of their Lord, and with the spirit of his religion. Happily, during the eighteenth century, our American churches were blessed with the light of constellations (among the stars of which, shone Witherspoon, Hardenbergh, Rodgers, Livingston, J. M. Mason, Romeyn, Westerlo, McWhorter, and others, too numerous to be mentioned here) resplendent with piety and prudence, united with

knowledge, and directive of their successors in a useful ministerial course. Of these eminent servants of the Saviour it may justly be said, as was said of Melancthon, "they were born for the common good of the Church here, and for the benefit of the whole country." Their counsels, "like Ariadne's thread, led others in moments of perplexity out of many a labyrinth."

Prudence weighs circumstances, seasons, places, and persons. It attends, not merely to what is lawful, but what is expedient also: "non quid licet solum, sed quid expedit"—not merely to what it may attempt, but to what it can effect. Rash zeal says on every occasion, all that is true: but prudence is sometimes silent with respect to undoubted facts. The apostle Paul might have begun his speech on Mars Hill with that description of the impurities of Gentile worship and morals, which is recorded in the first chapter of his epistle to the converts at Rome; for every word in that description served to render the picture of pagan abominations exhibited to the eye in that day, more faithful; but he wisely chose a different mode in addressing the Athenians, (who were, as he told them, wedded to their superstitions,) that he might obtain from them a patient hearing of that glorious gospel, of which he was an ambassador. Rash zeal runs forward to the utmost point of apparent duty, trampling in its course upon important doctrines and ordinances, and reckless of the consequences; but prudence does not recommend in all circumstances, that the minister of the Word shall occupy all the ground which he might claim; or that he should act hastily, when a little delay will increase his means of operation, and secure the object which he has in view. This grace guided the steps of John Wickliffe, in a very dark and superstitious age. "He perceived the true doctrine of Christ's gospel," says one of his biographers, "to be adulterated and defiled with many filthy inventions of bishops, sects of monks, and errors; and bemoaning the general ignorance of the Christian world, he resolved to do his utmost endeavor for the reformation thereof: but, withal, foreseeing how dangerous this attempt would be, (for that such things, as by long use and custom had been rooted in their minds, could not suddenly be eradicated and pulled out,) *he judged it fittest to attempt* the same by little and little. Whereupon he first assailed his adversaries by logical and metaphysical questions,\*

\* It appears that the earliest Reformer did employ *Metaphysics* in a good cause.

and having made way thereby, he at length came to the matter of the sacraments, and other abuses of the Church." Rash zeal is never associated with humility and compassion; but prudence walks between humility and zeal, keeping its penetrating eyes fixed on the honor of the Redeemer, and the extension of his kingdom on earth, while it is inspired by that "charity which hopeth all things." In a word, prudence in the gospel service takes into consideration, that some remedies may be worse in their effects than the diseases which they are employed to remove; that certain measures pursued by those who do not relish sound doctrine for the revival of religion and the union of Christian sects, however imposing in their immediate results, may soon lead to the entire prostration of the gates of truth, and leave the camp open to the feet of hostile forces. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light: therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness, (men of great apparent piety and zeal,) whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15.)

So many events arise, and circumstances exist, in the course of the gospel ministry, requiring the exercise of prudence, that persons who are known to be *habitually imprudent* in speech and in action, ought not to be intrusted with the high interests connected with that ministry. Such persons may be pious, learned and eloquent; but they are not qualified for the duties and trials inseparable from the pastoral office in the visible Church of Christ.

##### 5. Gravity.

With prudence we must join *gravity*, in speaking of the qualifications for the pastoral office. The apostle Paul, in his solicitude to render Titus a highly useful minister of the Word, addresses him thus, (Tit. ii. 7:) "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, *gravity*, sincerity."

The gravity which the apostle here requires, "is that seriousness of mind, united with dignity of behavior, that commands veneration and respect." With a particular view to this quality of the mind, and grace of life in a pastor, the same apostle says to Timothy, (1 Tim. iv. 12:) "Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an example to believers;" and also to Titus, (Tit. ii. 15:) "Let no man despise thee."

Gravity is equally removed from austerity on the one hand, and

levity of temper, speech and behavior, on the other. Austerity of look and manner in a pastor, tends to deter those from speaking to him, who, though poor, uninformed, and undistinguished in life, ought to have free access to him, and be encouraged to open their minds to him. Hooper, of England, it is said, exhibited such austerity; while the celebrated Athanasius, of Alexandria, was, as Nazianzen tells us, easy of access and affable.

But the affability of gospel ministers must not sink into levity, nor decline into familiarity with all classes of men.

Gravity holds the middle place between repulsiveness of countenance and manner, and that "waxen mind which takes every seal and sails with every wind," and which never fails to draw around the Christian preacher the foolish and the vicious, and to expose his person and his office to contempt. It springs from a heart habitually impressed with the reality of eternal things, and with a conviction of the holy relations and solemn obligations of the gospel ministry. It is made up of holy fear, humility and circumspection. It shows itself *in a temper* sweet in addressing all men, and condescending to the lowly state of the poor and the infirmities of the weak—*in speech*, gentle and edifying—*in conduct*, winning and exemplary.

The young pastor who seeks to preserve his youth from disrespect, must be grave, without pride and austerity. His divine Master set him a bright example in the practice of this virtue. He was affable, yet most dignified and chaste in his manners. So sweet in his temper, so accessible by the poor and miserable, that he was called "the friend of publicans and sinners:" and yet that condescension was combined with such majesty in virtue—that sweetness was blended with such purity of life, that the publicans and sinners stood in awe of him! In his harmlessness, "he was evidently separate from sinners."

To excite and maintain in the minds of others a proper degree of reverence for his person and office, the Evangelical Pastor, in addition to the cultivation of those qualities of mind and that address of which I have just spoken, must guard against the following improprieties and evils:

(1.) He must avoid the contracting of heavy debts, by his personal and family expenses, and keep himself free from oppressive obligations to any among those to whom he ministers in the

Word. "The debtor feels a sense of moral inferiority in the presence of a creditor;" and the creditor easily falls into disrespect of those who are constantly in his debt, and dependent upon his favor. "The borrower becomes a servant to the lender," who need not be reminded of that power with which his loans and the distresses of others invest him. Unhappy is the condition of that pastor, who through, not unavoidable calamities, but want of self-denial, economy and prudence, contracts debts in his parish which he finds it difficult to pay. He will soon discover that he is treated with less affection and respect than he ought to be, in the view of his character and services; and that his freedom and authority in the faithful performance of his duties, are gradually and sometimes insolently invaded and abridged. Let him then fear debt, and study to preserve the dignity which is attached to his office. The apostle Paul did this in the exercise of much self-denial, and rejoiced that he could say that he was burdensome to none; that he "was free from all men." (1 Cor. ix. 19.) With little less vigilance should the pastor guard against those strong expressions of friendly regards—those pecuniary and other gifts—by which an undue measure of his pastoral attentions may be intentionally sought, by which his impartiality in the exercise of discipline may be assailed, or his hands bound, in the discharge of his ministerial duties. "Gifts blind the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous." (Exod. xxiii. 8.) "A man's gift maketh room for him." (Prov. xviii. 16.) Better is it to dispense with donations entirely, and to endure hardship, than to have our minds unduly biased in favor of the donors, and our moral principles in the least degree corrupted; for, with the loss of integrity, we shall experience a diminution in respect and esteem, even from those persons whom we have been disposed to cherish and befriend, on account of their kindnesses to us. "Thy money perish with thee," (Acts viii. 20,) must sometimes be the language which the faithful pastor is bound to use in relation to certain persons in his congregation. Daniel said, (Dan. v. 17 :) "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another." In a like spirit of elevated piety, did the noble Caracciolus, of Naples, reject the money offered him by a Jesuit, to induce him to abandon his faith and return into the bosom of the Romish Church. "Let their money," said he, "perish with them, who esteem all the gold in the world worth one

day's society with Jesus Christ and his Holy Spirit; and cursed be that religion for ever, which shall wed men to the world, and divorce them from God. Go home, therefore, and take thy silver with thee; but know that my Lord and Saviour hath made me enamored of durable riches."

(2.) Another evil operating directly against that gravity which the Christian pastor should be solicitous to maintain, is his ready acceptance of invitations to social parties and feasts. Snares for the Christian are thickly set around the festive board; and the gospel preacher especially, who manifests a fondness for such convivial entertainments, together with the taste of an epicure, will soon find that while smiles are lavished upon him, and he is fed with dainties and cheered with costly wines, he sinks in respectability. "That clergyman," says father Jerome, "is readily despised, who, being often invited to dine, (with the rich,) never refuses. I know not how it is, but the very person whose frequent invitations you accept, thinks contemptibly of you; and he whose calls you refuse from a sense of duty, venerates you the more."

It is in large cities particularly, that the ministers of the gospel are exposed to those temptations which are connected with dining parties and luxurious feasts:—but whether in the city or country, let the pastor act with prudence, and maintain his gravity. Many servants of Christ, men, too, of splendid endowments, have deeply injured their characters and impaired their usefulness, by sitting too often and too long at the tables of the generously rich, and fashionably great. Some have in such company learned to be immoderately gay and intemperate in various things; but we must be "sober and temperate in all things."

(3.) Further: to maintain his gravity, the pastor must carefully shun the company of the open enemies of his religion, such as atheists, deists and scoffers, and hold little intercourse, except in the dispensation of the Word, and in affording succor under their afflictions, with those persons whose language is profane, and whose characters are immoral—or those whose chief pleasures are drawn from foolish talking, and from those various sports which destroy sobriety of thought and feed the lusts of the flesh. Every one who reflects at all, must perceive the importance of this rule. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." "Can a man take fire to his bosom and his clothes not be burnt?" Hardly will that

minister be able to convince others that he is emphatically “a lover of good men, and that his delight is in the excellent of the earth,” when he readily and freely associates with those who have “not the fear of God before their eyes.”

But there are associations of men for important civil and political purposes—associations not intended to violate any law of morality, and to which no impure character can be ascribed—from which, however, it will be wise in the Evangelical Pastor to keep himself separate. I refer here to political societies and caucuses in times when no serious revolutions in civil government are contemplated, and no heavy calamities are impending—to electioneering meetings—to military parades, and to country vendues. The minister of the Word who is often seen in such assemblies of people, and who discovers a fondness for them, will find it difficult to be suitably grave in the presence of those around him; his pious habits will not be maintained in their purity and vigor, nor will his time be profitably spent in his Master's service.

It is true that the Christian pastor in the discharge of his important trust, as well as in the ordinary commerce of life, must converse with persons of every character and condition: but then all his duties will be compatible with the preservation of gravity. In the walks of his secular business, he may be active and vigilant; in his daily intercourse with various classes of men, he may be, in his address, not only kind and winning, but occasionally sportive and witty, without subtracting aught from that respect and reverence which his office and exemplary life are calculated to inspire in the minds of others.

It requires much self-government and careful observation of men, to know how far, precisely, a minister of the gospel may indulge in what is called pleasant talk and mirth, in promiscuous society. One rule, however, it is his duty carefully to observe:—his pleasantness should always be decorous and intellectual; he should so speak and act in every company, as to leave an impression upon the minds of others that, while his piety is remote from sourness and pharisaical pride, he is still intent upon his Master's business. He should be jocose with those only, who will not misinterpret nor misrepresent his sprightliness and humor; and he should write in “album amicorum” the names of no other persons than those who are distinguished by their piety and prudence; “for the companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

(4.) Another evil to be avoided by the pastor who seeks to obtain due respect for his person and office, is the habit of disputation. Scarcely can you begin a conversation with certain men, without being contradicted by them, with a view to start an argument. Such a temper betrays a high conceit of one's own reasoning powers; "and yet no opinion can be more groundless," observes Dugald Stewart, "than that a captious and disputatious temper is a mark of acuteness." It is a temper which, instead of aiding in, is often a bar to the discovery of truth. It serves to render the person who cherishes it disagreeable to others; and when it appears in a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, it has a direct tendency to withdraw respect and reverence from him. For frequent argumentations, especially when extended to almost every topic of conversation, cannot be carried on without betraying various infirmities, and producing either too much familiarity with some persons, or too much irritation in the minds of others. No little injury was done to the cause of truth and religion, soon after the dawning of the Reformation day, by the fondness for disputation on almost every subject connected with the leading doctrines of the Bible, which the ministers of the gospel discovered, and especially by the asperity of their language in conducting controversies, both oral and written.

(5.) No less rapidly will the Evangelical Pastor sink himself in the esteem of the people under his care, by frequent exhibitions of violent anger, or of any weakness of mind arising from great fear, in circumstances in which others are quite composed, or of any excessive sorrow under the pressure of affliction;—for it is expected that he shall be an example to those around him, in the exercise of meekness, fortitude and resignation, as well as in the display of faith and zeal. If his conduct be marked with defects on occasions when it is thought that religion should discover its power over the heart, the eyes of the world are quick in perceiving it; and on perceiving the fact, their regard for such a minister of Christ will be diminished. "*In all things*, therefore," said the apostle Paul to Titus, "showing thyself a pattern of good works." (Tit. ii. 7.)

Whatever, then, is calculated to exhibit in a Christian pastor the image of his Lord, will contribute directly to procure for his person and office, from those who receive the Christian religion, a proper measure of reverence and respect.

To the graces which have been enumerated, must now be added, as an important qualification for the pastoral office,

6. *A holy Zeal* in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Zeal is an ardor of the soul, created by the strong interest which the affections take in pursuit of their object. Now, the object of desire and pursuit proposed to the ministers of the Saviour, is one as deeply interesting to the renewed mind, as it is sublime in its nature and effects. They are set apart "to be fellow-workers with God," in saving immortal souls from everlasting perdition; or, in other words, in promoting the glory of the Supreme Being, in the redemption of sinners of the human race. If this object does not so interest a Christian convert, "who desires the office of a bishop," as to inspire his mind with zeal in the pursuit of it, this fact alone is *an evidence* that his desire is fed by unhallowed fuel, and that he is not inwardly called by God to the work of the gospel ministry. Isaiah's lips were touched "with a live coal taken from off the altar," that when it should be asked by the Saviour, "Who will go for us?" he might be prepared to answer, "Here am I, send me."

Zeal that is holy in its nature, has a special regard to the glory of God and the salvation of men—and is the offspring of sincere love to the Saviour, and of warm gratitude for the abundant grace received.

The existence of such zeal is implied in the very commission given to ministers of the Word, as a virtue which they must constantly exercise. "Go, preach the gospel to every creature; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine." "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it." (Col. iv. 17.) "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim ii. 3.) Who were appointed to keep the fire from heaven constantly burning, under the ancient dispensation? The priests and Levites.

Much zeal did the Saviour display in his all-important ministry on earth—being ever employed in the great work which the Father had given him to do, and affording, in the exhibition of this grace, a glorious example to his ministers. The burning zeal which actuated his apostles, strikingly appears in their recorded language, labors and sufferings. The Reformers, also, were in this respect

shining lights. The zeal of Luther was most ardent. The exertions of Melancthon, in the great cause of the Reformation, were unremitting. Bucer was an indefatigable laborer. Knox was a soldier whose arms were always bright, and whose efforts never relaxed. Good Bishop Latimer carried his New Testament at his side, and went about instructing the people. And Beza himself, who was exceedingly active in his Master's service, tells us, that Calvin delivered in public two hundred and eighty-six sermons, and one hundred and eighty-six lectures yearly, besides the theological works which he composed, and the innumerable letters which he wrote, in furtherance of the great interests of the rising Church of God.

Zeal is necessary in the gospel service, not merely as an evidence that a minister loves his Saviour in sincerity, and believes "that gospel which he preaches, to be the power of God unto salvation,"—but also, as that state of mind which alone can enable him to endure patiently "the contradiction of sinners"—to grapple with discouraging circumstances—and to be abundant in labor, intrepid in danger, and steadfast under various trials. Zeal is necessary to animate him in those times when all around him are sinking into lukewarmness; when increasing dissipation, and bolder irreligion in the higher walks of life, create a formidable opposition to the practice of true godliness; when his own bodily infirmities increase through age, and when his temporal comforts are diminished, in consequence either of severe domestic afflictions or of external persecutions.

That zeal, however, which is a proper qualification for the pastoral office, is associated with knowledge, humility and prudence. It is, therefore, in its operations, not like the noisy eruptions of a volcano, which attract deep attention and awaken strong emotions in beholders, but endanger life and destroy the beauty and fertility of the earth with burning lava—but like a majestic river, which waters and enriches a country, while it presses forward with a steady current, in spite of every obstacle, to the ocean. This grace is not unrestrained like the fanaticism of the ignorant and the ardor of the heretic—but loves to dress itself "in the form of sound words," and to move forward "in the ways of God's testimonies." It is not like the fire which strong passions have kindled in the

breast of the conspirator, who is ready to use any means to obtain his ends, and who

“Changes shapes with Proteus for advantages,”—

but, like the noble spirit which actuates the true patriot, it reveres the laws of truth and integrity, while it aims at higher objects than its own aggrandizement and power. That unholy zeal which has so often troubled the churches, commences its course with loud professions of superior piety and benevolence, blowing the Pharisee's trumpet that every one may hear it; but its grand object is to stand at the head of a party—to acquire fame as a reformer, and be distinguished as the author of new measures—while it is reckless of the consequences of its doctrines and measures, when the excitement it has industriously enkindled shall have subsided. On the contrary, the zeal which qualifies the Christian Pastor for great usefulness in the Church, is a flame fed “with beaten oil”—an ardor of soul which seeks to extend the influence and triumphs of an *old Gospel*. If that knowledge which is associated with it, is instrumental, after profound and prayerful study of the Sacred Scriptures, and careful attention to the history of the Church, in resolving any difficulty connected with sound doctrine, or in exhibiting any revealed truth in a stronger light, holy zeal does not hence take occasion to proclaim, that “former systems are radically defective, or that former ministers have not understood the Scriptures;” no,—this grace is modest and cautious, as it existed in the breasts of Meade, Edwards, and Newton, and so linked with humility in its progress, that after unwearied efforts to explain the Word and save souls, it can thank God, as an eminently learned and laborious minister among the Puritans in England did, “that it has never broached any manner of new opinion.”

At this day the spirit of change is abroad, and its course, both in civil and in religious society, is marked by an intemperate daring, and proud zeal in securing its objects. It therefore becomes the Christian Pastor to guard the health of his principles amid an infectious atmosphere, and keep his zeal untainted by the pride of opinion and the lust of “uppermost seats in the synagogue.” Now, to do this in certain circumstances and places, it is necessary that the soul of the servant of Christ should in no small measure be imbued with another grace, viz :

7. That of *Christian Fortitude*.

The apostle Paul has this grace particularly in view, when he says to Timothy, (2 Tim. ii. 1 :) "Thou therefore, my son, *be strong* in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; fight the good fight of faith; endure hardness;"—and also, where he speaks in relation to himself, on the occasion of his trial before Nero, at Rome: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me." (2 Tim. v. 16, 17.) The Spirit of God has this grace in view, when he addresses the gospel ministry at Sardis: "Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." (Rev. iii. 2.) Daniel was called by the angel to exercise this grace. Dan. x. 19: "O man of God, greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong."

Christian fortitude springs from faith in the divine promises, and discovers itself by a strong and unbending adherence to the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, amid temptations and dangers of various kinds. Under the pressure of afflictions, it exhibits itself through patience and by acquiescence in the Divine will. In times of severe persecutions, it keeps the Christian unmoved by threats, bold in the avowal of his faith, and prepared to suffer for Christ's sake. Amid a general defection from God, it renders the mind firm in its holy attachments; and when the current of fashion in a particular society, or in a nation, runs violently against sound doctrine and the practice of godliness, *fortitude* resists the powerful stream—stands and raises its head above the waters.

Happily, in this land, ministers are not called "to resist unto blood." Yet fortitude is here required to render them "faithful stewards of the mysteries of God," and to keep them, in the various circumstances of trial in which they are placed, "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The Evangelical Pastor, when treated with much respect and kindness, needs fortitude of mind to act against either prevailing lukewarmness, or increasing Antinomianism among the people committed to his care. He must have a good measure of this grace in exercise, to enable him in particular companies, where every mouth is opened to oppose the claims of Christianity, and numerous tongues are active in defaming the pious, and in sneer-

ing at important doctrines and practices of religion, to maintain the cause of truth and righteousness with firmness and chaste dignity. But when the Church enjoys, in a land of plenty, great external peace and respectability, there is *an occasion occurring*, on which his fortitude will be brought into higher requisition, and on which he will be called to display the intrepid and inflexible spirit of the Christian martyr. For, it is a fact, that in such a peaceful and prosperous country, numerous ministers and religious societies will at some times manifest a strong disposition to abandon their pure faith, and to bring their doctrines into closer affinity with the metaphysics of the age, and the sentiments of an impenitent world. Nor will they be satisfied with the revolution in their own opinions, but with a zeal ardent and increasing, will labor to render those opinions popular and controlling in the Church. With this view, royal power and patronage, where it can be gained, will be used; politics with its civil force will be employed; seats of literature and science will be occupied; and fashion, as she walks in the higher circles of society, will be persuaded to lend her powerful aid. The history of the Church affords several instances, in which such instruments were used to effect a lamentable revolution in the doctrines and habits of Christian communities. But in some countries, such means cannot be procured, and are not adapted to promote the change contemplated. Hence other means must be used, and other measures be adopted: *means* of a highly religious and imposing character—*measures* calculated to produce religious excitements—frequent meetings for prayer and conference—loud and ardent professions of elevated piety—strong animal feelings in worship, permitting the preachers to propagate their errors as they acquire influence, and boldly to denounce those who expose their extravagances, and who desire “to take the precious from the vile,” as men of no religion, enemies to revivals, cold, formal professors, who stand in the way of the great work of God, in the advancement of his kingdom.

Still further to create a moral force in society, which shall enlist the unstable on the stronger side, overawe the timid, bind the hands of the mighty, and bear down all opposition, the press will be put into active operation, and religious papers widely circulated; sectional attachments and prejudices will be called into disgraceful action; attempts will be made to gain over political

party on the side of the ecclesiastical agitators ; means will be employed to cultivate the whole field of education by male and female teachers ; church courts will be corrupted through systematic combinations to carry a point, even at the expense of truth and honor in the process ; confessions of faith will be decried at one time, and twisted at another to answer particular ends ; the sentiments of standard writers will be misrepresented or denied, and the operations of moral, benevolent and religious associations will be adroitly turned into channels, which shall aid in augmenting the power that is set in motion to effect the desired change in the Church ;—meanwhile the whole confederacy will march under banners inscribed with the words “liberality, union, peace, freedom from antiquated creeds and notions—Christian benevolence—revivals and superior piety.”

Now in opposition to a foe of this character, and in the trying circumstances created by his ingenuity and exertions, what fortitude of mind must the Evangelical Pastor possess, to resist error recommended by religious awakenings, and all the expressions of warm religious affections, and to stand firm amid insinuations and under calumnies, affecting the character of his own piety and the usefulness of his ministry ! “It is easy to swim with the tide, and to persuade the heart of the rectitude of that which is favored by the times, and yet to pretend still that it is from more light ;”—but to stand in maintaining the truth, almost alone, as Elijah did in Israel, and Athanasius in the Roman empire at one period of his eventful life, requires in a servant of Christ that faith and love which are productive of a high degree of moral courage or fortitude.

Sure we are, that those persons who are “carried about with every wind of doctrine,” and enamored of the latest metaphysical speculations—who are timid in defense of their faith, and apt to be enslaved by “the spirit of the age,” without examining into the proper character of that spirit, or inquiring whether he is a single or a double faced spirit, are but slenderly qualified for the pastoral office.

FOURTH. I have done with the graces, and proceed to observe, that the fourth qualification for the pastoral office, is “an aptness to teach.” (2 Tim. ii. 24.) “And the servant of the Lord must

not strive, but be gentle unto all men, *apt to teach*, patient." (1 Tim. iii. 2.)

One may be renewed in mind, blessed with much experience of his Saviour's love, mighty in the Scriptures and profoundly learned, and yet not be qualified for the gospel ministry. For he may be the slave of a constitutional timidity, a nervous weakness, producing an excessive diffidence. He may have impediments of speech, which would prevent him from speaking so as to edify and please others. He may also be deficient in that quickness of apprehension, united with a ready memory, and elocution, which are so essential in an instructive public speaker. Examples might here be given of men who have written well on various subjects, while in conversation they found it difficult to express their ideas, and to engage the attention of their hearers. Hence, for a useful ministry of the Word, are required boldness of spirit, and the gift of utterance, united with knowledge and piety—an ability to speak so as to awaken and fix the attention, and to instruct the minds of those who hear—"to open the mouth and declare the mysteries of Christ." This gift the apostle Paul considered to be so important, that he besought the prayers of Christians in his behalf, that he might have it richly in exercise. (Ephes. vi.)

To communicate instruction, there is certainly required a bodily and mental adaptation, with which every pious and learned man is not endowed. A person who is well taught himself, may be ill qualified to teach others; hence the Scriptures insist upon "aptness to teach," as a qualification for the gospel service.

Now this aptness will, *on a proper course of trial, be evinced by such measures of the gifts of public prayer and preaching*, as in the judgment of the Church shall promise usefulness in the ministry of the Word. To these important gifts, therefore, your attention must in the next place be directed; but the present lecture let me conclude with *some practical reflections*.

Did we know nothing concerning the arduous duties and trials of the gospel ministry, either from our own experience or observation, we might learn much on this subject from a view of those various graces which are required in the Scriptures, as a qualification for that office. What knowledge! what circumspection and self-denial! what intercourse with heaven! what elevation above the children of this world, in views, affections, and habits of life!

what humility of soul! what meekness, candor, and gentleness in behavior! what zeal, prompting renewed efforts in the cause of Christ, amid discouragements! what fortitude in enduring hardships, and in bearing up against the variously expressed opposition of the open enemies of divine truth, of the lovers of pleasure, and of the false brethren in the Church, are necessary in this holy ministry, after we are satisfied that we have experienced the transforming power of the Word, and that we have our desires specially directed to the service of the Saviour! Oh! in the view of the required endowments to fulfil the duties of the pastoral office, it cannot be surprising, that some pious minds have, from a consciousness of their own imperfect attainments in knowledge and in grace, felt much discouraged in the pursuit of the ministry, and also in the commencement of their pastoral course. But it should ever be remembered, that in all the qualifications for the gospel service, there is both growth in the use of means, and an omnipotent Spirit to promote that growth. "He giveth more grace," and can raise up (as he hath often done) the shrub in the ministry, and convert it into a tall cedar of Lebanon. "When he worketh, who shall let it?"

For richer communications of the Holy Spirit in his gifts and graces, it is your duty to *abound in prayer*; while the consideration of the holy nature and effects of the qualifications just mentioned, should urge you to institute frequent examinations into your own affections and habits, with a view to discover whether the graces of the Spirit do exist in you, and operate in preparation for the work of the ministry. It becomes you seriously to inquire, whether your walk now is so marked with gravity, blended with heavenly-mindedness and humility, as to cause you to be regarded by the pious as those who do love their Saviour, and seek from proper motives, to be engaged in his special service?—whether the young with whom you associate, treat you as persons whose hearts are imbued with religion, and bent on extending the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and saving sinners? or, whether you are looked upon as those whose levity, instability, self-importance, trifling conversation and careless walking, justly withhold from you esteem and respect?

It is your duty to inquire further, whether you are harmless, sweet in your temper, gracious in your words, kind in your actions, and meek under injuries; or, habitually restless and peevish,

irritable, suspicious, harsh and provoking in your language, and offensive in your manners and dress? Ah! if you are not now inoffensive, humble, patient, slow to anger, and in some measure evidently attractive, in consequence of the exhibition of those graces which render "the righteous more excellent than his neighbor," how much has the Church to fear that you will not be exemplary and growingly useful, when you shall be exposed to all the trials of holy temper and speech incident to the care of a congregation.

But it has also been shown in this lecture, that *prudence* is a grace of the mind, of high importance in the ministry of the Word, and that the gospel service calls loudly for *holy zeal* and *fortitude*. Fix then your attention upon these Christian virtues; inquire what evidence you now give, that you in any measure possess them; and be solicitous to grow in them.

In speech, men may be imprudent in instances too numerous to be mentioned here; nor can it escape your observation, that in the ordinary intercourse of life, many variances and animosities between individuals and families, spring from this source. "The tongue is a fire—a world of iniquity." Guard therefore the doors of your lips, especially when speaking of the moral characters of others, and replying to those who misrepresent your conduct and assail you with invective language. Apart, however, from the usual imprudence in speech, students of theology, when engaged in religious conversation, or invited to speak in worshipping assemblies, may act unwisely, by undertaking, without much reading and reflection, to discuss subjects mysterious or highly controversial; by using unkind terms in relation to other Christian sects, or even to persons of their own denomination, who will not, in expressing divine truth, adopt their theological phraseology, because it runs along the precipice of error; nor approve their new measures, because they so easily slide down into extravagances, and usually terminate either in fanaticism or heresy, by erroneously exhibiting the *perfection of duty* as constituting the Christian character; and in the ardor of their zeal, to produce awakenings among careless sinners,\* shutting with a presumptuous hand against

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\* "The revivalist would continue, 'Do you not love God? Will you not say you love God?' Then taking out his watch:—'There, now, I give you a quarter of an hour; if not brought in fifteen minutes to love God, there will be no hope for you,—

them the gate of heaven, *in words*, when the God of grace keeps it open, *in fact*. Pious Dod, of England, whose ministry was remarkably blessed, used to say, "that a man never was undone till he was in hell." But now, sometimes we hear the preacher telling the sinner who shall remain impenitent under his excellent awakening discourse, not that his day of merey may soon terminate, not that his soul may this night, or the next hour, be demanded of him, but that he will be given up to entire hardness of heart, and enjoy no future season for repentance. Happily, however, the same preacher must afterwards, in preaching "the glorious gospel" to the same sinner, tell him that the door of mercy is yet open, and that Jesus, the Saviour, "still calls—still bids him come."

Much of that imprudent language and conduct which attaches, at this day, to some portion of the gospel ministry, originates in a design, to be executed with *burning zeal*, either to subvert old doctrine, and introduce new philosophy in religion; or, by any means, to extend sect, and acquire seats of honor and power in the visible Church; or, to find a substitute for unfeigned repentance and the renunciation of self-righteousness, and to acquire, by a course of pious and useful external movements, a broad foundation on which to raise the hope of pardon and eternal life. For the unrenewed, though awakened, heart of man finds it easier to perform a thousand external services in religion, and in them to cry out, "Come see my zeal for the Lord"—to be punctual at morning prayer-meetings, and active in the promotion of various benevolent plans, than to lie low before God, in sincere contrition of spirit, and to abandon its self-righteous sentiments and hopes. The Pharisees, among the Jews, were proverbially zealous in religion; and much zeal actuates the missionaries of Rome, and inspires the souls of those who undergo various hardships to reach Loretto, or to visit the sepulchre of Christ at Jerusalem.

But "what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." There is a zeal for the glory of God—a holy ardor of spirit in his service—an activity in the promotion of the great interests of Chris-

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*you will be lost,—you will be damned.* A pause, and no response. "Ten minutes have elapsed; five minutes only left for salvation. If you do not love God in five minutes, you are lost for ever." See Dr. Cox's Narrative of a Scene in Vermont.

tianity, which is a noble feature of the new man,—a grace of which we cannot possess nor exhibit too large a measure,—a grace which, under the impulse of divine truth and love, “expands her wings and mounts into the sky.”

In this grace seek to grow; keep constantly before you all the powerful considerations which urge you to display that zeal which is neither ostentatious nor self-righteous, but pure, ardent, and unabating. Some are disposed to be alert and headmost, when they perceive that a course of religious action is applauded; but their zeal soon languishes when it has to work unnoticed and uncommended. Like the mountain torrent, it runs for a while with much noise, and dashes into foam, but soon dries up. Now, let it be your great concern, to have your hearts “early rooted and grounded in the love of Christ;” then your zeal, like that of Brainerd and Carey, will look discouragements in the face, increase as circumstances call for greater exertion, and brighten in conflicts with untoward events.

Especially let me earnestly exhort you to cultivate and exercise the grace of holy fortitude. The revolutionary spirit of the age, and of the world, has infected thousands in the Christian Church. They are restless under the old and approved laws of Zion, “in veterem viam novam semitam quaerentes,” and prepared to adopt every new scheme, with little reflection. Hence, even in theological schools, a few are seen “to be carried about with every wind of doctrine,” yielding themselves to the successive waves of old errors, under the name of better views of theological truth, and exhibiting a disposition to stand out in bold relief, as those who are destined to effect great things in the conversion of sinners, and in the reformation of a world that lieth in wickedness. In this temper of mind, they embrace every innovation as an improvement—disregard alike the lessons of history and the voice of experience, and never stop to reflect that the mere copyist of “modern fashions and notions in religion,” may be as far removed from sound doctrine as the veriest slave of “ancient customs.”

Guard against that instability of mind, which so readily yields without due examination, to the popular movements and opinions in the visible Church. “I have often thought,” observes Dr. Watts, “that it is a right noble and gallant principle, which enables a person to pass a just and solid judgment upon all things

that occur, without being warped aside by the influence of fashion and custom; it is a noble soul that can practise steady virtue, in opposition to the course of the humor of the multitude:

"Tis brave to meet the world, stand fast among  
Whole crowds, and not be carried in the throng."

You are preparing for the gospel ministry at a time when the spirit of change is advancing to do great evils in the churches. Justly has Dr. Dana said,\* "The order of the day is innovation. The spirit of the age is innovation; innovation, restless and reckless; innovation, which, while it professedly aims to improve and perfect Christianity itself, disfigures its beautiful structure, mars its fair proportions, undermines its very foundations, and threatens to leave nothing of this divine system but its name.

"We tremble for our country. We almost tremble for the Church of God. Indeed, we have long been convinced, that apart from the numberless enemies which encompass the Church from without, it harbors in its own bosom evils which are amply sufficient for its destruction—evils which, had it not an Almighty guardian, would have actually destroyed it ages since."

Admitting this representation of the state of the Church here to be correct, what wisdom will you need, "to take forth the precious from the vile;" what fortitude, to breast the torrent of innovations, and to encounter a foe who marches under a banner on which are inscribed, "superior light, zeal, and liberality!" In former ages, bigotry, "the carcass of dead piety,"

"In every different sect 't was known,  
It made the cassock and the cowl its own,  
Now stalk'd in formal cloak, now flutter'd in the gown;"

frowning upon rational inquiry, checking all attempts at reformation, and frequently shedding "the blood of the saints." But now, and in this country, where civil institutions have direct tendency to produce a proud spirit of independence in men, the public temper strongly inclines toward a point the very opposite of bigotry in religion. Be observant, therefore, of the character of the times. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John, iv. 1.)

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\* Review of Chapin's Essay. See Liter. and Theol. Review, No. viii.

## LECTURE IV.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—PRAYER.

AMONG the qualifications for the gospel ministry, are certain gifts, without which no person can "be apt to teach." These endowments are *two*, and usually denominated,

1. The Gift of Prayer—and
2. The Gift of Preaching the Word.

The exercise of these gifts, it will be perceived, is necessary, to fulfil the duties of the pastoral office, which requires instructions to be given, by the ministers of the Lord Christ, in public worship and in private pastoral visitations to individuals and to families.

Let me direct your attention, in the first place,

FIRST. *To the important Gift of Prayer.*

I. Prayer is an essential part of the public worship of God. It is that principal act, by which the Church engages in direct formal adoration of the God of her salvation, avows her dependence upon his grace, expresses her thankfulness for his mercies and her hope in his promises. Accordingly the Church, in every age of her past existence, has offered up prayer in social worship. Under the ancient dispensation of grace, the house of God on earth was "an house of prayer," (Isaiah lvi. 7;) and when the new dispensation opened, prayer was the *first* act of worship, in which the apostles and primitive Christians were employed. Acts i. 13, 14: "And when they were come in from the mount called Olivet, they went up into an upper room where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

Prayer is a duty, which is incumbent on Christian pastors. The apostles requested to be relieved from the service of the poor, that they might "give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word." (Acts vi. 4.) This duty is distinct from ejaculatory, and from stated secret and family prayer, and may therefore be denominated, *Public Pastoral Prayer*.

Prayer by the pastor, in the discharge of his official duty in the worshipping assembly, may be thus defined: *It is the offering up to God, the petitions of the church committed to his episcopal care, "for things agreeable to the Divine Will, in the name of Christ, by the help of the Holy Spirit, with confession of sins and thankful acknowledgment of mercies."*

Such prayer is distinguished from other prayer, not by any quality which renders prayer acceptable to God, but principally by the extended interest which it involves, embracing *directly* the wants and desires of a particular church, and the concerns of the Holy Catholic Church in this world.

1. The Christian minister, in such public addresses to God, says Vitranga, "is the *representative* of those assembled who believe with the heart." This fact, it will not be denied, is overlooked by some who are engaged in the service of the sanctuary. Perceiving before them an assemblage of persons, some of whom they well know have experienced no change of heart, they, in the confession of sin, describe the Church as being still in an unrenewed and un-sanctified state. Accordingly in prayer they express themselves after this manner: "There is no health in us—we are dead in trespasses and in sins—we daily sin with a high hand against God—we are children of wrath—we love the world more than God," etc. All which confessions are true of men in their natural state, and are descriptive of all Christians, before they repented and believed the gospel: but the Church is "quickened together with Christ"—she believes, loves and adores—the Saviour hath put a portion "of his own comeliness upon her." Her public prayers, therefore, while they express her miserable condition *by nature*, her imperfections and defections, should correspond with her high calling of God, and be so framed, that every one redeemed by grace may, with a free conscience and voice, add a hearty "Amen!" (1 Cor. xiv. 16.)

2. Pastoral prayer, equally with all the prayers which Chris-

tians offer up, must be addressed, not to the Virgin Mary—not to angels nor to saints, but to *God alone*, in the name of Jesus Christ, the only Mediator and High Priest of our profession. Luke iv. 8: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him *only* shalt thou serve.” Rev. xix. 10: “And I fell at his feet (the angel’s feet) to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God.” 1 Tim. ii. 5: “For there is one God and one mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus.”

Gentilism, or that system which was early formed in opposition to the revealed Word and worship of God, admitted the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, but erected many inferior gods, as powerful agencies to operate between that Supreme Intelligence, and man; and these gods of various place and capacity, it converted into *mediators!* This system moulded the religion of ancient Chaldea, Egypt, India and Crete, and was imported into Greece. It constitutes the basis of the philosophic theology of Plato. But Holy Scripture reveals one only living and true God, and one mediator between God and man.

The corrupt Church of Rome, you know, borrowing much of her theology and ritual worship from the pagan temples, admits the existence of various mediators, and at this day seems to exult in the mediatorial office of Mary, whom she adores as “the Queen of Heaven.” With a view to reconcile her idolatries “with the law of God’s house, she teaches that religious worship is of *two* kinds, a superior, and an inferior, worship.” The apostles and primitive Christians, as we may learn from the Acts and the Epistles, engaged only in one kind of religious worship: and the “ancient Fathers,” Cudworth correctly observes, “made no such distinction of religious worship—into *Latreia*, as peculiar to the Supreme God, it being that whereby he is adored, as self-existent, omnipotent, or the Creator of all—and into *Douleia*, such an inferior religious worship as is connivable to creatures: but concluded of religious worship, universally and without distinction, that the due object of it all was, the Creator only, and not any creature.” See “Intellectual System,” book 1, chap. iv.

3. Pastoral prayer must be *audible*, and expressed in a language which is understood by the people.

*Silent* prayer, in the place of worship, cannot be social public

prayer. With a view to defend its practice, some may describe it "as an overshadowing of their spirits by the Almighty," but it is *secret* prayer, and belongs to the closet. The Christian may with profit engage in silent prayer, before the commencement of the public worship of God; but should that worship be begun, when he joins himself to the worshipping assembly, he should immediately unite in this holy service. Every duty has its proper place and time; and he who wishes to engage in meditation and silent prayer before public worship, should be seated in the place of assembling in due season.

Against the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, we contend, that the prayers of the pastor must be neither muttered, as her priests do, at the sacrifice of the Mass, nor be offered up in Latin, or in any other language unintelligible to the congregation. For, though such prayer be spoken by *one*, yet it is an act of *social* worship, and therefore the minds and hearts of all who worship God should be engaged in it. Adoration of Deity, is the duty of every individual in the place of public worship, who has passed beyond the incapacities of childhood: now such adoration implies, that the words by which it is expressed are understood—for, unless they be understood, how shall we be able to ascertain that they describe our wants and express our desires and requests? The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians xiv. 16, teaches, that in the Christian congregations prayers and the giving of thanks must be so conducted, that the people—even the most illiterate—may say "Amen." "Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified." The term "amen" in religious worship is a short prayer, and its utterance implies, that the assent of the worshipper has been understandingly given to the prayers and thanksgivings: but how can that short prayer be made to apply, either to the silent prayer of another, or to prayers in unintelligible language?

The passage just referred to, as well as every part of the New Testament Scriptures, shows that *all* the persons in public worship did not attempt to pray *audibly* and *simultaneously* in the primitive churches. God is the author, not "of that confusion" which sometimes has been seen in worshipping assemblies, but requires every thing "to be done decently and in order."

Every part of public worship must be subservient to the edifying of the body of Christ. But public prayers, which are unintelligible through the use of a foreign language, can neither administer to edification, nor call the affections of the heart into exercise. The Latin service of Rome should, at this day, form no part of Christian worship in any place. The Hebrews, under the Mosaic dispensation, offered up their prayers in a *known* tongue.

The Saviour, in social prayer, used a language which his disciples and the Jews around him well understood.

The primitive and ancient Christians heard the Word and united in prayer, using the language of their respective countries. Origen (*Contra Calsum*, 1, viii.) says: "But the Grecian Christians in Greek, the Romans in Latin, and every one in his own proper tongue, prays to God and praises him, as he is able." Were even the ancient liturgies, when these compositions came into ecclesiastical use, written in the same language? Far from it.

4. Pastoral prayer must be, in its *matter*, as diversified as are the wants and circumstances of a Christian congregation: it must be *intellectual*, and calculated to actuate, under the Divine blessing, the graces, in the hearts of the pious; and it must be *consistent* with and *based* upon, the promises of God, contained in his written Word.

II. Now, for the performance of such an important duty as the frequent offering up of public prayer, to the edification of the Church, the Evangelical Pastor must be well qualified; and such qualification sustains a close relation to two things, which are not always united, namely:

1. *The Grace of Prayer*, and
2. *The Gift of Prayer*.

It has been said by some, that a more just distinction on this subject would be, the *talent* of elocution in prayer, and the *spirit* of prayer. It is true, that the spirit of prayer is a special gift of the Holy Ghost: but we believe with Dr. Watts, that "the ordinary assistance of the Spirit of Christ is required, for the attainment of that skill and ability to pray, which is called the *gift of prayer*."

1. By the *grace* of prayer, is to be understood that holy habit wrought in Christians on their conversion to God, and afterwards maintained and strengthened in them by the Word of truth and

the Spirit of prayer and sanctification, by which they are enabled to offer up their requests to God, and to wrestle with him in the exercise of the graces of the divine life. This grace of prayer, in order to distinguish it from lip service or mere formality, in our addresses at the Throne of Grace, is frequently called "the spirit of prayer." It may exist and operate powerfully in the heart of one who possesses but in a very moderate degree the gift of prayer. It belongs to those operations of the Holy Spirit which, in the language of the schools, were distinguished by the terms "*gratia gratum faciens*." (Matt. xv. 28.)

2. By the gift of prayer (*gratia gratis data*) is meant the ability to offer up prayer in worshipping assemblies in a devotional manner, and to the edification of the Church, *without written forms*.

Your attention must be limited here to the *gift* of prayer, as that is the talent which the pastor is called to exercise, in the public service of the Church. What relates to prayer as a pastoral *duty*, belongs to the second branch of Pastoral Theology, and shall hereafter find its proper place in these lectures.

But, it may be asked, whence arises the necessity of discussing at all, the importance of the *gift* of prayer as a qualification for the gospel ministry? for, in public prayer, it is far better to leave nothing to the understanding and memory of the pastor—let him use *written* forms of prayer, well digested, and containing matter suited to that solemn and interesting part of divine worship.

It is most true, that if the pastor be restricted to written forms of prayer in public worship, what we denominate *the gift* of prayer, cannot with propriety be enumerated among the qualifications for the ministry of the gospel: nor need one "who desires the office of a bishop" concern himself either about the matter or order of prayer, nor use any means for his improvement in the gift of prayer. All his attention in the performance of this pastoral duty must then be directed to the *art of reading well* the set forms of prayer before him.

We readily concede, that forms of prayer, which accord with the doctrines of Scripture and express the desires and affections of renewed minds, do not vitiate the worship of God, and may occasionally be profitably used. They may aid "babes in Christ," and improve the phraseology in prayer of the unlearned and the ignorant. Pastors may recommend the use of wholesome forms

to a certain class of young converts, whose gift in prayer is slender, and whose knowledge and experience in the Christian life are very limited. Accordingly, our Reformed Church, which is a branch of the great Reformed Church in Europe, has her *Liturgy*, in which are forms of prayers to be used, when circumstances require it, by ministers and by Christian people in their closets and their families; and also in worshipping assemblies, on occasion of the administration of holy baptism and the Lord's Supper. But her liturgy, with its prayers, is not designed to *bind the conscience*, and to create the *disuse* of the *gift* of prayer. No, indeed; the Holy Scripture alone is "the law of God's house." "Neither," says our Confession of Faith, Art. vii., "may we compare the writings of man, though ever so holy, with these Divine Scriptures, nor ought we to compare custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or succession of times, or persons, or councils, decrees or statutes, with the truth of God; for the truth is above all."

III. But where, in Holy Scripture, is the *divine law*, requiring that written forms of prayer alone should be used, either in public or private worship? No such law is to be found in the sacred pages of the Bible. The only passage containing any appearance of a divine injunction to that effect, which the friends of written forms have produced, is Matt. vi. 9: "After this manner, therefore, pray ye, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed," etc.

But we remark on this passage—

1. That the Lord's Prayer, as it is usually called, was composed and given out by the "Master of assemblies," that Christians "might have a Summary Symbol of all the excellent things they were to ask of God in his name; a model by which they might square their desires and petitions." Hence, it was not delivered in the same words by the several evangelists. Augustine says: "Christ gave it as a model, or rather a form, teaching his disciples what things they should pray for—and understands it to be meant chiefly as a directory for *secret and mental prayer*, where words are not necessary."—See Grotius, Com. on Matt. vi. 9.

2. If the passage, Matthew vi. 9, proves any thing more than that the Lord's Prayer may be used, and that it is a *model*, then it proves too much for our adversaries, and prohibits the use of any other form of prayer! Our Lord gave no other form, and he

gave this one form to exhibit the manner; and if the word "manner" express the obligation to use the words themselves, then the form alone must be invariably used, for there is no other which sustains the character of a Divine Rule or Law: but this would exclude the greater part of the Latin service, of the Book of Common Prayer, and other human compositions of this kind, from use.

3. But the apostles and primitive Christians well understood those words of their Saviour; hence, nothing is recorded of the use of the Lord's Prayer by them in the Acts or in the Epistles to the Churches: and hence also, these inspired men prescribed no written forms of prayer for public use. "There can be little, if any, doubt," says *Palmer*,\* "that Christian liturgies *were not at first committed to writing*, but preserved by memory and practice." The apostles, then, did not compose any liturgy for divine service; the primitive Christians had no such formulary in their worshipping assemblies. "It seems," says the same writer, "to have been often assumed by the learned, that there was originally some one apostolic form of liturgy in the Christian Church, to which all the monuments of ancient liturgies, and the notices of which the Fathers supply, might be reduced! Were this hypothesis supported by facts, it would be very valuable. But *the truth is*, there are several different forms of liturgies now in existence, which, as far as we can perceive, have been *different from each other from the most remote period*." It is easy to imagine that there was an apostolic form of liturgy, and by a little additional effort of the imagination, to insinuate that the apostles and presbyters delivered their prayers invariably in the same words in consecutive sentences, so that their prayers were easily retained in the memories of the Christian people! But, unhappily for the cause of ritualists, proofs in confirmation of such imaginings are wanting in Scripture and antiquity.

4. The Lord's Prayer may be, in its form, recommended to the use both of Christian pastors and people, on account of its excellency; but it ought not to be used in worshipping assemblies, save as a part of some prayer better adapted to the broad light and rich grace of the New Testament dispensation.

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\* *Palmer's Origines Liturgicæ—Introduction.*

In the Lord's Prayer, though the kingdom of the Messiah be referred to preëminently, in its full development and glory, yet we are not taught to ask in the name of Jesus Christ, "crucified for our offenses, and raised from the dead for our justification." The reason of this doubtless is, that the atonement had not yet been made by the Saviour incarnate, and therefore certain facts in relation to that mysterious work were not to be clearly unfolded to the disciples at that time. Accordingly, our Lord said, (John xvi.,) "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name," as the Son of "God, manifest in the flesh. But at that day," when I have been delivered up, when, after my resurrection, I shall have departed from you in body, "ye shall ask in my name." That day has long since come; and therefore the Lord's Prayer, when used as the only prayer of the Christian Church in worship, would neither correspond with her knowledge of divine truth, nor fulfil her duty. The old economy was still in force when that prayer was spoken by the Saviour; hence some expositors have considered it as falling under that dispensation. Be this, however, as it may, the facts just stated should prevent the frequent repetition of that prayer at one time, by one assembly, in worship. The Master expressly cautioned his disciples against "vain repetitions in prayer." This the heathens\* practised, and the Church of Rome has in this superstition and error imitated them, regardless of the Saviour's injunction. In her form of the "Rosary," she requires that her penitents shall repeat the Lord's Prayer *fifteen* times, and in that of the "Crown" *seven* times; each form of prayer idolatrously decked with numerous "ave Maria's." Truly when "the beast," maddened through power, slung around her tail, reason, scripture, and common sense, were carried away in its sweeping process.

Certain it is, in the early Christian churches, pastors and people did not use the Lord's Prayer in that manner, which in subsequent ages ecclesiastical custom seemed to authorize.

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\* Even the Mahometans indulge in these vain repetitions. Harmar, vol. I. Observation 3, gives us the beginning of one of their prayers, thus: "O God! O God! O God! O God! O Lord! O Lord! O Lord! O Lord! O thou living! O thou immortal! O creator of the heaven and the earth! O creator of the heaven!" etc.

The primitive believers regarded it as a prayer adapted to the lips of those who were conscious that they were under the influence "of that charity which is the bond of perfectness." Hence they called it, emphatically, "the prayer of the faithful." Some say that the early Christians used the Lord's Prayer at the consecration of the Eucharist; others deny it; but this circumstance, if true, would go to confirm the facts just stated. Strange it must be to every thinking mind, that while the frequent celebration of the Holy Supper is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and referred to in the Epistles, not a hint is given of the use of the Lord's Prayer on those solemn occasions.

5. But, if it be admitted that in Matthew vi. a form was prescribed by the Saviour, we may still ask, what authority does that circumstance give to others to *compose forms of prayer*, which shall bind the consciences of Christians? He was invested with supreme authority, and guided by unerring wisdom. Are they thus endowed?

There is, then, no express divine law binding pastors and their congregations to *pray by written forms*. There was no such law enacted under the ancient dispensation, as the Scriptures plainly show; yet, at that period, the liberty of God's people was in many respects "bondage," in comparison of that freedom which is one of the glorious privileges and rich blessings of the New Testament Church.

IV. An attempt however has been made, to maintain the use of written forms exclusively in the public worship of God, by an argument drawn from the practice of our Lord Jesus Christ during his abode with men. Accordingly, it has been said that in the ancient synagogue worship the Jews used written forms of prayer; that our Saviour did not condemn the use of those forms while he was upon earth, but that he united with the Jews in that very worship in which those forms were used.

I must preface my reply to this argument, by reminding you that we do not teach that the use of written forms, or a liturgy, is inconsistent with the pure and spiritual worship of God; for such is not our doctrine. We believe that God is worshipped "in spirit and in truth," by those persons who exercise the grace of prayer, whether they use a written form or not. Many a pious

heart, with a written form of prayer before it, has so supplicated the Divine mercy in the name of Jesus, as "to have power with God and prevail" in his suit. Christians and young converts, as we have before remarked, may, in consequence of their defect in the gift of prayer, derive aid and benefit from prayer-books. In such books they will find their state better described, their troubles, wants and desires better expressed, than can be done by words of their own selection, and sentences of their own hasty composition. Nor can it with truth be said, that a prescribed form of prayer "quenches the Spirit," if it be found useful in liberating the mind from perplexity, in choosing and arranging terms for the expression of thought, and operate to excite the religious affections.

Here let it be added, that in those past ages in which emperors, kings, and their courtiers embraced the Christian faith, vast multitudes of their subjects, most of whom were illiterate, imitating the conduct of their princes, rushed into the Church and were unwisely received and baptized. Now, not to leave this baptized multitude, who were unable to read, wholly without instruction and worship, persons *ill-qualified* were in great number invested with the office of priests and pastors; but the gifts of these teachers were so *small*, that edification in public prayer could not be expected from them. In such cases, then, their slender abilities were doubtless aided in religious service by the use of a liturgy.

The Church now offers certain forms of prayer, to be used in social worship, (for the Confessions and Forms of the Evangelical churches have proved to be more faithful than their ministry,) with a view to secure the avowal of sound doctrine and proper sentiments of the heart, in connection with the observance of the holy sacraments.

But while all these concessions are cheerfully made, it is nevertheless true, that there is no divine law binding the Church to the stated use of prescribed forms of prayers; and that the public worship of God, conducted by qualified ministers of his Word, *is better without written forms.*

1. The Spirit of God, speaking by Moses and the prophets, did not prescribe the liturgies of the *synagogue*. Indeed, it is to be doubted that synagogue worship existed at any time during the period of ancient inspirations. Whence, then, were these syna-

gogue prayers derived? They were human, uninspired compositions.\* A few men composed them at different times. And have not ministers of the Word the like liberty now, to compose prayers on occasion of public worship, and to vary their compositions as the spirit of religion and the wants and circumstances of a Christian congregation demand? Where, in Holy Scripture, is any one man, however exalted in the hierarchy, or any class of men, however gifted, invested with power to manufacture prayers which shall invariably be offered up by the whole Church in worship? The apostle Paul was directed by the Holy Spirit to say to Christians, "Stand fast, brethren, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. v. 1.)

2. So far as the argument stated may be thought to derive any force from what our Saviour did in the days of his ministrations on earth, Dean Prideaux himself, who urges it, has given a sufficient answer. He says, "that our Lord was contented to join with the public in the meanest forms of public worship, rather than separate from it." Now, "the like mind should be in us." Were we placed in situations in which the regular worship of the living God was conducted by written forms of prayer, which do not corrupt the Word, we should join in it, instead of separating ourselves from it. Such worship is inexpressibly better than no worship at all: it has all the essential attributes of true Christian worship, if the hearts of those who engage in it be well affected towards God.

3. Besides, our Saviour was not the regular minister of any synagogue; and the time for the introduction of another and purer mode of worship, under a new dispensation of grace, had not yet come.

4. But when that new dispensation actually opened with the ministry of the inspired apostles, did these apostles set themselves to compose forms of prayer for the use of Christian churches,

\* "With respect to the Old Testament Church, we know of no evidence that they had any forms which could, with propriety, be called a liturgy."

"The Old Testament Scriptures do not give the least hint of the existence of such forms of prayer for the synagogue worship. Philo and Josephus are perfectly silent respecting such forms."—*Repertory*, vol. xi, No. 2.

so as to maintain in the duty of public prayer a resemblance of the synagogue worship; or, so as to secure uniformity in worship? Nothing of this kind was done, and nothing of this kind is to be seen in their writings. In their Epistles we read of a "form of doctrine," referring hereby to a system or sketch of divine truth; but where do they direct the attention to a set form of prayers? Such a form did not occupy Paul's thoughts, when he said to believers in Ephesus, (not, as some diocesan bishops have done, Use your prayer-books, but) "Pray ye with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance." (Ephes. vi.)

5. Our Lord could not have heard the synagogue prayers transmitted to us read in worship; for, while many of the learned pronounce the eighteen synagogue prayers to be forgeries, we know that some of them were composed after the destruction of Jerusalem and the wide dispersion of the Jews. The Saviour condemned the Jewish leaders in religion for "making long prayers," probably referring, in part, to the synagogue prayers, which were very long, and which Prideaux describes as "very jejune and empty forms."

V. But, in the absence of all divine law requiring Christian churches to worship God in the use of written forms of prayer, the friends of such forms argue "that it is highly expedient to use them in public worship."

Before a reply be made to arguments of this kind, I must remark, that if the *use* of written forms of prayer in the stated worship of God, is to rest on the ground of *expediency*, then let not any book of common prayer be thrust upon us under the *show* of divine authority, and as if it formed a part of God's own Word; then, let us not be told that efforts to evangelize the heathen, by means of the gospel and its ministry, *must not* be made, unless the "Book of Common Prayer" used in the Church of England accompany the precious Bible. This requisition obviously derogates from the proper character of the written Word of God, and reflects upon the office and power of the Spirit of truth and of supplication. The apostles and primitive Christians knew nothing of such a union of human inventions with the sacred oracles, in their attempts at making converts to the Christian faith. They

went abroad, "preaching the Word;" but where do we read that they carried with them books of common prayer, for use in public worship? Printing presses, with their mighty power, had no existence in those days; converts were multiplied every where: by what means were they to be supplied with prayer-books?

But, it may be said, liturgies were early composed and used in the Christian churches; there were compositions of this kind bearing the imposing names of the Apostles and Evangelists; as, the Liturgy of Matthew, the Liturgy of Peter, and those of James and Mark.

In relation to these works, it will be sufficient for my purpose, in this place, to give you the remarks of a distinguished Episcopalian: "Two books," he writes, "are still remaining, under the name of Matthew, viz: a liturgy pretended to have been composed by him, and a discourse concerning the nativity of the blessed Virgin; but both rejected by learned men, as works of some impostor, *many ages after* the death of that holy apostle.

"As for the liturgies ascribed in like manner to some others of the apostles, viz: St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James, there is not, I suppose, any learned man at this day who believes them to have been written by those holy men, and set forth in the manner that they are now published."—See the Apostolic Fathers, by William, Archbishop of Canterbury. Baronius even does not ascribe those liturgies to the apostles and evangelists; and "there are things in them," says Dr. Owen, "not dreamt of in the days of the apostles." "With regard to the liturgies attributed to Chrysostom and Basil," says Bishop White, an English prelate who lived under the reigns of James I. and Charles I., "the liturgies fathered upon St. Basil and St. Chrysostom have a known mother, to wit, the Roman Church; but there is (besides many other just exceptions) so great dissimilitude between the supposed fathers of the children, that they rather argue the dishonest dealings of their mother, than serve as lawful witnesses of that which the adversary intended to prove by them."—Tracts against Fisher the Jesuit, p. 277.

Several writers have attempted to trace the rise of liturgies in the Christian churches of olden times. Evidently they had slender beginnings, and originated partly in the help which pastors sought to obtain for themselves by writing out the prayers they

would offer up in worship, and to afford to converts, who were ill-educated in religion and little versed in the phraseology or "wholesome words" expressive of gospel truths—and partly in the desire of preachers to render the Christian religion less offensive and more popular, by imitating the religious rites of the Jews and Gentiles. From this disposition to bring their system of doctrine and worship more into harmony with the prevailing sentiments and customs of the age, sprang nearly all the corruptions which soon infected the Christian Church. The Jews evinced a growing attachment to forms, just in proportion as they lost the spirit of true religion; and the Gentiles, in their splendid religious establishments at Rome, Alexandria, and other great cities, had a solemn form for every public action, in worshipping their gods. Could the ministers of the Christian faith, inspired by unhallowed ambition, leave their worshipping assemblies long without liturgies and imposing ceremonies?

Accordingly, as one remarks, liturgies owe their origin, not to the apostles, not to any Councils General or Provincial, but to the choice and determination of individuals in the gospel service: one person composed one form, another person composed another, a third made additions to these; presently some of the fathers collected these forms, (for no early liturgy was completed,) added what they considered to be improvements, and so commended them to the use of their own churches. Hence the liturgies were as many and various as the great Episcopal churches of those days. In the beginning of the fifth century they began to take order about the use of liturgies. Henceforward darkness overspread the Christian world; the top stone of the hierarchy was laid in the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and the mystery of iniquity was fully developed. Ritualism triumphed over the power of divine truth, and the spirituality of divine worship. The Bible, excepting in small, disconnected portions of it, was unknown and unread; and liturgical service at length resulted in the Roman Mass. Even in the seventh century, "the first form, which assumed the character of a *libellus officialis*, was not a complete liturgy."

The antiquity of liturgies, then, ought not to restrain us from the free exercise of the gift of prayer in public worship: for we have seen that the apostles and presbyters used no liturgies; on

the contrary, they directed the ministers of our religion to "covet the best gifts," and bring their gifts in public praying and preaching to the service of their Divine Master.

Nor ought we to be influenced by the suggestion, "that liturgies serve to promote and secure uniformity in the worship of God." For uniformity, such as God requires in the churches of the saints, is sufficiently secured, as we may ascertain by attending divine worship in various places, without the use of written forms of prayer. Were the apostles regardless of the unity of the Church? Had they no concern for a proper uniformity in worship? Yet they prescribed no liturgy, and the prayers on record, which dropped from their own lips, seem not to have been the repetition of any form.

VI. In favor of the expediency of using written forms of prayer, well digested, and approved by the Popes, Queen Elizabeth and others, who exercised usurped authority in the Church, it has been said, "Who wants the crude and indigested thoughts of another thrown out in such a solemn exercise as prayer in public worship?"

An answer to this misrepresentation of what is done and heard in numerous worshipping assemblies of Christians, may be thus given:

1. It must be first proved that all prayers, without written forms, are made up "of crude and indigested thoughts—of inappropriate petitions, and expressed in unedifying language." For that endowment denominated "the gift of prayer"—a gift enumerated among the qualifications for the gospel ministry—presupposes and secures that very talent which sets aside the objection just stated.

2. The Church must guard against the evil of unedifying pastoral prayer, "by laying hands suddenly on no man." She must see to it, that those persons whom she calls to the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ be furnished with gifts which shall render them "apt to teach," and skilful in framing addresses to God, in the behalf of Christians engaged in the duty of public worship.

3. Accordingly, in churches well governed, that evil is guarded against. Christian congregations have those "to watch for their souls," who offer up every Sabbath suitable and edifying prayers.

So true is this, that it is rare to hear any complaints among the people, of defects in this branch of social worship. On the contrary, many churches having good forms of prayer, and comprehending a great number of intelligent and pious members, prefer free or extemporaneous prayer.

Surely the apostles did not think that those who were called of God to the sacred ministry would be unable to pray and to administer the ordinances in an edifying manner; otherwise they would have made provision for this serious defect. But Christ lives to give good gifts to his servants; they have ability to offer up prayer, and are not dependent on liturgies for the faithful execution of their office.

4. If a pastor be able and faithful, his thoughts in prayer, though they do not run invariably into one order, cannot "be indigested and crude." His business is prayer; and the same application of the mind which enables him to preach so as to edify, will qualify him, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, to *pray* so as not to disturb the devotions and lacerate the religious sensibilities of others.

VII. But it has been further objected against the practice of extemporaneous prayer in public worship, that if we do not know beforehand what the prayer is to be, how shall we be prepared to say "Amen" to the petitions which may be offered?

This objection obviously has little weight: for there is abundant security in the piety and talents of a good pastor, that he will pray aright and in an edifying manner. If he cannot be trusted to pray with his flock, he ought not to be intrusted with the embassy of Christ to sinners, nor be empowered to administer the holy sacraments to believers.

As a man, in the exercise of his judgment, may assent to a truth delivered in a sermon not before read by him, so he may with his heart, tacitly or by an "Amen," join in any holy desire expressed by another in prayer, though the words of that prayer, and the order of its petitions and thanksgivings, had not been placed before him for his examination and approval.

But if a pastor, through ignorance or fanatical imprudence, utters any sentiment in prayer, in which the pious cannot heartily join, they are not bound to say "Amen" to it. Ignorance and imprudence are disqualifications for the pastoral office.

VIII. I shall conclude this lecture with the arguments which support the exercise, by the pastor, of his gift of prayer in the divine service, and the duty of extemporaneous prayer, or prayer offered up without written forms—and with some practical reflections.

1. The people of God, under the ancient dispensation of grace, as we may learn from the book of Psalms and the other sacred records, were not restricted to any particular forms of prayer; and especially under the present more spiritual dispensation of the great Abrahamic Covenant, the Holy Spirit has prescribed no set forms. The apostles and primitive Christians used no written forms: some of their prayers and acts are inconsistent with the use of a liturgy. Such forms, as a substitute for the exercise of the gift of prayer by the pastors of the churches, were unknown in the first centuries. "In the Epistles of the Church at Smyrna, about the time of Polycarp's martyrdom, and of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, preserved by Eusebius, there are not the least intimations of such forms of service. In the Epistles of Clemens, Bishop of Rome, to the church of Corinth, the same silence is observed respecting liturgies. In the Epistles of Ignatius, in the writings of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, the like silence prevails. Toward the end of the third century, in the writings of one or two, intimations are given of some particular prayers in some churches." (Orig. tom. II.) Justin Martyr, in speaking of the worship of God when Christians were assembled together, says, "that the president or officiating minister offers up prayers and thanksgiving, according to his ability," or gift of prayer; an expression, as Dr. Dick remarks, "which would have been unmeaning if he read prayers from a book, as in this case no mental ability is required, and it is necessary to use only the eyes and the voice."

Tertullian, who lived in the second century, says, "Looking towards heaven," (not to images and crosses, etc.) "sine monitore, quia de pectore, oramus,"—we pray without a monitor, because we pray from the heart.

"We are not atheists," (the Gentiles called the Christians atheists, because they worshipped without material altars and images, an invisible God,) says Justin Martyr, "seeing we worship the Maker of the world, affirming indeed, as we are taught, that he stands in no need of blood and drink offerings, or incense; in all

oblations we praise him, *according* to our abilities, with or in the way of prayer and thanksgiving."

Origen speaks (Con. Cel. l. 8) of public prayer in the same manner: "We worship one God and his own Son, who is his Word and Image, with supplications and honors, *according to our ability*, offering to the God of the universe prayer, through his only begotten Son." Again, "He that prays must bless God 'kata dunamin,' according to his ability."

Augustine, in his letter to Proba, a widow, speaks of prayer as offered up extemporaneously. (See Milner's Hist., vol. II.)

Justin Martyr tells us that Christians in worship "rose up to prayer."

Origen says, "they prayed with closed eyes," "closing the eyes of the senses, but lifting up those of the mind."

Chrysostom says, "it required more confidence and boldness than Moses and Elias had, to pray, as they were wont to do, before the Eucharist."

Evidently, public prayer was conducted according to the ability and taste of each officiating minister for the time being. Hence arose the diversity observed in the prayers offered up; and, after liturgies were introduced, the great variety in the liturgies of various churches in various places. Socrates, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century, remarks, "Generally in any place whatsoever, and among all worshippers, there cannot be two found agreeing in the same prayers."

Sozoman also says, "It cannot be found that the same prayers, psalms, or even the same readings, were used at the same time." (Hist. l. vii.)

Augustine says, "There is a freedom to use different words, provided the same things are maintained in prayers." (Epis. 121.)

Liturgies in churches, within the limits of the Roman empire, were various and composed by various persons. "Even in the Romish Church in England, as late down as the Reformation, there was no single uniform liturgy for the whole kingdom."

2. Free or extemporaneous prayer by pastors in public worship, is better adapted than prayer by written form, to excite and keep alive the spirit of devotion. We are so constituted, that what is often heard by being often repeated in the same words, is less attended to and less affecting. "Though the confessions, the

petitions and praises, are never so happily framed, and the expressions never so proper and pathetic," says Dr. Watts, "yet where the same set of words and phrases pass over the ears in a constant rehearsal, the soul, by degrees, loses those lively influences and devout sensations which it at first received from them; and the continued round of uniform expressions, rolling on in a beaten track, makes little more impression upon the heart, than the wheel that has often travelled over a hardened road."

"In the use of such forms," says Bishop Wilkins, "a man ought to be very watchful over his own heart, for fear of lip-service and formality, which in these cases we are more especially exposed to."

3. Take another argument: Extemporaneous prayer gives scope for the improvement of the *gift* of prayer, and to the operation of the *grace* of prayer, by the expressions of the desires, confessions and thanksgivings of renewed minds. That the use of written forms checks the improvement of the *gift* of prayer, is evident: what we do not bring into exercise, cannot be improved. Yet the Christian is commanded to "covet the best gifts," and to grow in all parts of Christianity, gifts as well as graces. But "to be satisfied with his prayer-books," says Bishop Wilkins, "and go no further, is for a Christian to remain still in his infancy, and not to grow up in his new nature. This would be as if a man who had once need of crutches should always afterwards make use of them, and so necessitate to a continual impotence."

But further, forms impose a restraint upon the desires of the mind, and check the *grace* of prayer in its exercise. They oblige us to think the thoughts of other men, and to limit ourselves to the expression of their desires, when, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, we have thoughts and desires in a particular association of our own. "When the heart and thoughts of a Christian are confined to the words of any form, so as not to give himself the liberty of expressing his own devout breathings after God, whatever holy elevation of soul he may at present feel, this brings a heavy damp upon the inward devotion of the heart; it binds the soul in uneasy fetters, and it appears to carry in it a resistance of those good motions of the blessed Spirit, whose assistance is promised in prayer, 'because we know not what to pray for as we ought, and the Spirit is given to make intercession for us, ac-

ording to the will of God.' (Rom. viii.) Such restraint is indeed painful to a holy and devout worshipper; it diminishes the pleasure which the Christian has in his converse with heaven; it makes him speak to God the thoughts of other men, while he enchains and neglects his own."

This painful restraint, created by forms, some of the most ardent friends of the Book of Common Prayer have felt. It is said, that when Archbishop *Secker* was confined by illness, and sensible of his approaching dissolution, Mr. Talbot, of Reading, who had lived in great intimacy with him, and had received his preferment from him, visited him at Lambeth. Before they parted, the Archbishop said, "You will pray with me, Mr. Talbot?" Whereupon, Mr. Talbot rose and went to look for a Prayer-Book. "That is not what I want now," said the dying prelate; "kneel down by me and pray for me in the way I know you are used to do."

It is therefore true, that in the freedom which extemporaneous prayer affords, our various feelings and desires are more likely to be fully and particularly expressed. "There is a life, a simplicity, a touching and moving power in prayers poured forth from a pious and feeling heart, which cannot be ordinarily approached in reading written forms."

4. Another argument which I offer, is this: Extemporaneous prayer enables a pastor better to accommodate his prayers, in public worship, to the existing circumstances of his flock and to the changes which may occur in natural and spiritual life. It is impossible to express in books of prayer for public use all that variety of want, of trouble, of temptations, and of comfort, which enters into the life, walk and conflicts of faith. But, in the freedom of extemporaneous prayer, we can unburden the mind more fully of its anxieties and distresses, and approach nearer to our diversified circumstances and trials. Hence the Christian who has once improved his gift in prayer cannot be restricted by a form; he must pour out his heart more freely and fully; express his repentance for particular sins; supplicate the Divine assistance, as we find done in the Psalms of David, to escape particular snares, and overcome peculiar temptations; and plead the promises which faith grasps, and which apply more directly to his state.

It has been said that advice given in books is conveyed in terms too general to be applied to every particular emergency. Certain

it is, prayers in books have this defect. When, therefore, Episcopalians, with a view to tie down Christians to the use of their Book of Common Prayer, tell us that the prayers therein contained are extracted by piecemeals from the writings of the ancient Fathers, they argue against themselves! For this fact proves that the primitive Christians were not restricted to set forms. And if the Fathers composed their own prayers, the question arises, whether ministers of the Word now are so inferior to them in the knowledge of divine truth, that they are not to be trusted in the use of the same liberty, and in the enjoyment of the same privileges, which the early Fathers had? Let the writings of the latter be compared with those of the orthodox and evangelical pastors of this day, and the question must be answered in a way that will discharge us from the obligation of taking the words of our prayers from the closets of the early converts, whatever piety and zeal they displayed in their Saviour's service. "Why should men who lived a thousand years ago understand prayer, and be able to prescribe forms for it, better than the learned and pious divines of our day?"

Besides, in extemporaneous prayer, the evangelical pastor is at liberty to use the choicest petitions of the Fathers expressed in their very words, without binding himself and the church under his care to the constant use of any one prescribed form of prayer.

IX. Setting aside now the arguments employed to prove that public pastoral prayer, by written forms, is *expedient*, (after having shown that the Holy Spirit, in the Word, has prescribed no liturgy,) I return to the proposition early laid down in this lecture, namely, *that the gift of prayer is a talent*, which the evangelical pastor is called to exercise in the public service of the Church. The Saviour, who instituted the gospel ministry, and who "ascended to receive good gifts for men," has engaged (Matt. xxviii. 20; Ephes. iv. 7, 8, 11, 12) to impart spiritual abilities to his gospel servants; and if any are unqualified, in the judgment of the Church, through defect of gifts, either to pray or preach "unto the edifying of the body of Christ," such are not called by him to serve with his approbation in the work of this important ministry.

Keeping then in view, that the Evangelical Pastor is bound to

exercise the gift of prayer in the discharge of his solemn duties as a bishop in the Christian Church; and also the *fact*, that the *gifts* as well as the graces of the Holy Spirit, imparted to him in the ordinary dispensation of his influences, admit of *growth* and *improvement*, it is almost unnecessary to observe, that it is rendered a *duty* highly incumbent on him to aim at improvement in his gift of prayer, and to furnish himself with proper matter and language. On this obligation I should not here dwell for a moment, were it not for an error which some who are averse to written forms of prayer cherish on this subject. They think that in prayer the pastor, as well as the private Christian, ought to depend entirely upon the immediate suggestions of the Holy Spirit, and that it would be "a quenching of the Spirit" to furnish oneself beforehand with matter and expressions suited to that important exercise.

1. This opinion, it will be perceived, accords with the doctrine of fanatics on the subject of preaching, and rests upon wrong notions respecting the operations of the Holy Spirit. To evince that it is destitute of any foundation in the Scriptures, I must observe, first, that there is no promise made to the Christian pastor, of an immediate infusion of thoughts and words by the Holy Spirit, either in praying or in preaching, and if he depend upon such infusion in prayer, he ought *not* "to give himself to reading," nor revolve any divine truth in his thoughts, but depend upon the like infusion in preaching the Word.

True it is, when God calls men in an extraordinary manner to extraordinary duties, he will qualify them with a "tongue and wisdom." When he says to those who are employed in the introduction of a new economy, with its appropriate laws and institutions, "Take no thought what ye shall say, neither do ye premeditate," then he will also give them, "in that very hour, that which they shall say." But this divine work is *evidently miraculous*, and it is a tempting of God to depend upon his extraordinary operations for the performance of ordinary duties. Judiciously is it said by the son of Syrach, (Eccles. xviii. 22 :) "Before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one who tempts the Lord."

2. If no immediate infusion of thoughts and words in prayer be promised, then it is the duty of the pastor, by the use of all proper means, to cultivate the gift of prayer, and to furnish his mind with matter for pastoral prayer.

Under the law of Moses, the Israelites were bound to offer in sacrifice to God "the best of their flocks;" and surely our spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise should correspond with the spirit of that reasonable requisition. The pastor, especially, "should not be hasty to utter any thing before God," (Eccles. v. 2;) and as one of the important ends in prayer is the "edification" of others, he should aim to possess cultivated gifts, and to exercise them in the best manner. His gift of prayer is to be displayed in a most interesting and solemn part of divine worship. It is conversant with the dearest interests of immortal souls. It is to be employed in expressing the desires and requests of the pious around him, and to stir up the affections at the throne of the heavenly grace.

I shall now close the didactic part of this lecture, by observing, that the gift of prayer is susceptible of great improvement, and that it is improved—

- (1.) By renewed communications of the Holy Spirit.
- (2.) By keeping the mind familiar with the devotional parts of Holy Scripture.
- (3.) By intellectual improvements, consisting in an increase of knowledge, quickness of apprehension, readiness of memory, and fertility of expression.
- (4.) By the frequent careful exercise of the gift itself.
- (5.) By cultivating the graces of the Spirit. Grace, if it be abundant in the heart, will have a powerful influence on the intellectual powers. It invigorated the understanding, and exalted the imagination, as well as refined the taste of poor John Bunyan, the tinker, and qualified him to compose a work which has rendered his name immortal in Christendom.

In the succeeding lecture, your attention will be directed to the Matter, Order, and Manner, which should characterize Pastoral Prayers. Here let me lead your thoughts to a few *practical reflections*.

Prayer, you have heard, is one of the regular public services of the Evangelical Pastor; and a duty which must be more frequently performed than that of preaching the Word.

It is therefore incumbent on those in a Theological Seminary "who desire the office of a bishop," to inquire what preparations they have made or are making for the performance of this great duty? I know that you have prayed *often*; but there is a great

difference between *saying* a prayer over, in all the ardor of elevated animal spirits and good elocution, and *praying* a prayer, from a heart well exercised towards God. The great questions, on entering upon this subject with a view to examine yourselves, are: Have you received any measure of the Spirit of grace and supplication? Have you *gone* to the Throne of Grace, as one sick of the pestilential atmosphere around him goes with pleasure and for recovery into wholesome air? Have you "given yourselves to prayer," as an aquatic fowl hastens to the water as its proper element? Do you feel habitually, that God's mercy-seat, sprinkled with the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, "the great High Priest of our profession," who offered up himself a sacrifice for sin, is the *place* "whereunto your soul would continually resort," and where alone you can obtain rest and peace; whence alone you can derive strength, and hope, and consolation?

Here it would be useful that you should review all your past experience in prayer; that you should consider when *first* you began to pray for mercy?—what difficulties "sin that dwelt in you created?"—what temptations of the adversary you experienced, in your first attempts to call upon God?—what special enlargements you have enjoyed at the throne of grace?—and what answers have been given to your prayers?

Here you ought to consider how you are now exercised in prayer? The *hypocrite* is principally concerned about the opinions which men entertain of his praying talent: the *true Christian* is solicitous that his heart in prayer shall be right with God. The *formalist* is satisfied, if his prayers be said over at the proper times: the *renewed mind* is dissatisfied with itself, unless it can offer up the sacrifice of a heart truly contrite, truly believing, or truly affectionate and thankful. The *self-righteous* take merit from the number, the supposed excellency, and the warmth of their prayers: the *true Christian* is usually ashamed of his prayers, and rests his hope upon the infinite value of his Redeemer's sacrifice, and upon the efficacy of his intercessions, as his advocate with the Father. Those who have not the *grace* of prayer, become proud in proportion to the superior measure of their gift in prayer, and to the reputation which they acquire through this endowment; but it is at the throne of grace that the *Christian* receives the most powerful lessons of humility, and is made to be closely observant of the

state of his own mind, and most feelingly alive to the pressure of his heart-sins and his many imperfections. *There* he is sometimes so troubled at the view of the low state of his religious affections, and his want of proper exercises, that he cannot roll out words as usual, but is lost in inward struggles, and “groans in spirit, being burdened.” If the formalist be fluent and animated in prayer, he is content. But oh, what trouble has the Christian at some times, with the hardness of his heart and the wanderings of his thoughts and affections in prayer! A formalist has no inward sense of either spiritual depression or enlargement in prayer; he feels always alike, excepting that he finds prayer more of a *task* at one time than at another, in consequence of the greater interruptions it creates in his worldly pursuits and carnal ease: but the renewed mind is variously exercised in prayer, sometimes straitened, and at other times unexpectedly aided and elevated; sometimes shut up, self-condemned, in the very prayer which is passing from the lips, and distressed after it, but at other times disposed to wrestle with God, to press nearer to his mercy-seat, to plead confidently his promises, feeling so much pleasure in that communion which prayer affords with the God of his salvation, that his heart is in his closet before his body.

I shall not enlarge on this subject, but earnestly solicit you to inquire whether you have that measure of Christian experience in prayer which can give you evidence that you have been actuated “by the Spirit of grace and supplication.” “They shall come with weeping, and with *supplication* will I lead them, saith the Lord.”

In the ministry of the gospel, men are obliged to pray often. Now, what drudgery must it be, to be bound to pray so often and so much, without *the grace of prayer*—with respectable gifts, indeed, with various fit and acceptable words, and a lively flow of the animal spirits, but without those exercises of precious faith and unfeigned love, which enable the Christian to trade with God for the merchandise of the heavenly world, and to enrich his soul “with the sure mercies of David.”

And let me observe, that the “grace of prayer” is not to be acquired merely by praying often and fluently in public. The Pharisees prayed much and prayed long; but their principles were not improved by their prayers: and it is easy to conceive of per-

sons praying fervently and eloquently, who employ their prayers as a mantle to cover up their depravities. Be solicitous, therefore, that your hearts in prayer "be right with God." Inquire whether you have those convictions of want and poverty, and those feelings of unworthiness, which your supplications in the name of the Lord Jesus imply. "God giveth grace to the humble, but the proud he knoweth afar off." "Whosoever abaseth himself shall be exalted." Inquire whether you have received the Saviour by faith, and feel no boldness in coming to the throne of grace, but by Him, as the High Priest over the house of God, as the Mediator, whose atoning blood cleanseth from all sin, and whose intercessions alone can procure the acceptance of your person and your prayers. Inquire whether you cherish those awful impressions of Jehovah's purity and majesty, those correct views of your own sinfulness and insufficiency, which will render humility your ordinary, as it is your becoming dress, before the mercy-seat. Inquire further, whether you are fervent in prayer, deeply impressed with a sense of the incalculable worth of the blessings which you ask for, and importunate in your requests.

Remember that the Spirit of grace and supplication, in his operations in the human heart, is essential to your further experience of redeeming mercy, to your growth in grace, and to all real pleasure in walking with God, and in serving him in the gospel of his Son, Jesus Christ.

A man, to be sure, may engage in the gospel ministry without actual experience of the converting and sanctifying power of divine truth; he may acquire the fame of a great preacher, and as such draw multitudes around him, to be entertained and moved by his eloquent addresses; but if he know neither "the terrors of Jehovah nor the grace of Christ," as the redeemed know them, he will *not stand fast*, either in holy living or in sound doctrine, when he can promote his worldly interests, and add to his popularity and higher elevation, by abandoning them. An increase of doctrinal knowledge, and richer stores of learning, form a poor substitute for Christian experience. It is this experience that will give delight to the mind of a pastor, in discharging the arduous duties of his ministry; this experience alone will enable one to endure hardships with patience and constancy, for Christ's sake; and this experience alone can rivet upon the heart a deep conviction of the truth of the great doctrines of grace.

That you may be steadfast, unmovable, and useful in the ministry of the gospel, abound in prayer, through the Holy Ghost. That ministry, you have heard, will try every grace of your hearts; it will expose you, if you are faithful, to many severe trials: but remember your Redeemer is nigh, to aid you by fresh communications of Divine influence, and that in his service,

“Strength is born  
In the deep silence of long-suffering hearts,  
Not amidst joy.”

## LECTURE V.

### QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED

#### MATTER, ORDER, AND MANNER OF PASTORAL PRAYER.

IN the Directory for the public worship of God agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster, it is said, "In the beginning of the blessed Reformation," (in England,) "many godly and learned men rejoiced much in the Book of Common Prayer at that time set forth, because, the Mass and the rest of the Latin service being removed, the public worship of God was celebrated in our own tongue." "Howbeit long and sad experience," continues the Directory, "hath made it manifest that the liturgy used in the Church of England hath proved an offense, not only to many of the godly at home, but also to the Reformed Church abroad. Prelates and their faction have labored to raise the estimation of it to such a height, as if there were no *other worship* or *way* of worship of God among us, but only the *Service-Book*, to the great *hindrance* of the preaching of the Word, and justling of it out as unnecessary, or, at best, far inferior to the reading of common prayer, which was made no better than an *idol* by many ignorant and superstitious people. Add to which, (which was not foreseen, but since hath come to pass,) that the liturgy hath been a great means to make and increase an idle and unedifying ministry, which contented itself with set forms, made to their hands by others, without putting forth themselves to exercise the gift of prayer with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all his servants, whom he calleth to that office!"\*

The statements just given from the Directory, and elicited

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\* "He that knoweth God and his works, and knoweth his own sins and wants, is acquainted with the best prayer-book."—BAXTER.

from those who had full knowledge of both the useful and unhappy effects resulting from the use of the Book of Common Prayer, in a whole kingdom of Protestants, will show that we have not been too particular in our arguments against the imposition, by human authority, of set forms, operating to the exclusion of extemporaneous or free prayer by the Christian pastor, in the public worship of God. Those arguments might receive additions were it necessary here; but let it suffice to remark, that when little care is bestowed on the religious education and selection of young men for the gospel ministry, as is the case in the Church-establishment in England; when persons of untried gifts, slender theological knowledge, and habits of piety still unformed, "take orders," as it is called, we cannot be surprised that such a help as the Book of Common Prayer is found to be useful. But we know that the evangelical pastor is authorized by the Word of God, and called to exercise his *gift* of prayer, in the worshipping assemblies of Christians. This duty, as I have before said, he is bound to discharge in the best manner and form that he can invent, in a *premeditated form*, if that be the best to express the desires and stir up the affections of others.

It is injurious every way to be careless of his language—markedly defective in his sentiments, whenever he is the mouth of the many around him at the throne of heavenly grace.

In relation to his prayers in public worship, the Evangelical Pastor must direct his serious attention to three things—namely, to the

1. Matter.
2. Order, and
3. Manner of his prayers.

#### I. THE MATTER OF HIS PRAYERS.

The matter\* in prayer constitutes its substance; and, as I

\* Such words as occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, in relation to prayer, are learnedly explained (among others) by Professor Witsius, in *Orat. Dom. Exer.* 1 c. x. p. No. 9–12.

The principal Greek terms expressive of prayer, which we find in the New Testament scriptures, are—

"*δεησις*," entreaty.

have before observed to you, it must be as diversified as the wants and circumstances of a Christian congregation, and expressive of the desires of renewed minds. In proportion to the relative importance of the matter, must be the care and study of the pastor to exhibit this attribute of edifying prayer in public worship.

Now, to furnish yourselves with matter for prayer, let the following directions be observed :

1. The pastor must *study* the various states of his own heart ; note the workings of the law of sin, and the insidious course of this enemy in his own mind ; mark the trials to which faith is exposed in this world of sense, and the changes incident to the divine life ; observe the dealings of God with himself, and remember past extremities and past deliverances. Christian experience is a special and most instructive teacher. Certain it is, a pastor will better know what to pray for, when he is a close observer of what transpires in the spiritual warfare ; when he carefully remarks the weakness of his own arm ; the poverty of his own resources ; the variety of his own wants, and his entire dependence upon the spirit and grace of his Redeemer. Oh ! when he has often appropriated the words of the Psalmist, (Ps. xl.,) "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me ; thou art my help and my deliverer ; make no tarrying, O

"προσευχη," supplication. Ephes. vi. 18.

"επιευξεις," intercession. 1 Tim. ii. 1.

"αιτημα," desire ; "εucharιστια," thanksgiving. Phil. iv. 6.

Theodoret of the 5th cent. explains "αιτηματα," (Phil. iv. 6.,) translated "requests," to denote prayer in general.

This will be conceded with pleasure, as well as the exposition which he makes of "εucharιστια," that it denotes the various expressions of gratitude in prayer. But the learned ancient Father considers the other three Greek terms to denote each a various kind or part of prayer : thus he makes "δεησις," (Eph. 6.,) translated "prayer," to refer to that kind of prayer in which we deprecate that which is evil ; yet this very word is used (Luke i. 13) in that prayer in which Zachariah supplicated for a son ! Προσευχη, translated supplication, (Ephes. vi.,) he refers to that kind of prayer in which men ask for what is good, as opposed to what is evil ; but the term seems to be otherwise used in Matt. xxvi., where our Lord used it to signify, not a direct request for what is good, but a supplication in which evil is deprecating.

So also επιευξεις, intercession, is not confined (1 Tim. ii. 1) to the expression of sympathy in prayer for the afflicted, but employed by the Apostle Paul (1 Tim. iv. 5) as a prayer in which we ask God for a blessing upon our food.

my God!" will he not be disposed in public prayer to make the same confession and grateful acknowledgment, and offer up the same petition in behalf of Christians assembled in worship?

For this purpose, it has been recommended to pastors, to keep diaries or daily written records of their own trials and encouragements, in walking with God. But whether this be done or not, we must say, "Commune with thine own heart in thy chamber, and be still."

2. To procure matter for prayer, the pastor must diligently read and study *the Sacred Scriptures*, especially the devotional parts of this wonderful book.

The written Word of God is rich in matter suitable for prayer, both public and private. It shows what the saints of old, "who lived by faith," have prayed for; it places an infinite variety of choice petitions upon our lips; it describes the wants of the sinner—his helplessness and insufficiency, and the declensions of the believer and his consequent troubles; and it contains exceeding great and precious promises, while it unfolds the methods of divine grace in "bringing many sons to glory!" The Word of God is, therefore, a *store-house*, from which we can be supplied with matter for prayer, as well as "an *armory*, in which are a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men!"

"Extemporaneous prayer," says one, "if made up chiefly, as it ought to be, of the thoughts and language of Scripture, no pious person who loves his Bible and is familiar with it, will have any material difficulty at all in following him who leads, and entirely uniting with him."

By studying the Scriptures, Christians deprived of a liberal education have been known to improve so much in their ability to offer up prayer, as to lead the devotions of others very profitably at the throne of grace.

3. To procure matter for prayer, the pastor must strive "*to know the state of his flock.*" Such knowledge will open to his view "the numerous dry bones in the valley of vision," and dispose him to cry mightily to God for the Spirit of life to breathe upon them. His eye will discover the sad condition of those who are led captive by the Devil; the various deceits of sin, and the various errors by which the human heart fortifies itself in impenitence. He will become acquainted with what God's dear children

need, with their trials and complaints, and with what they are solicitous that he should pray for in their behalf; while, in the view of the various mercies bestowed on the many around him, his lips will be richly laden with various thanksgivings.

4. The pastor must also be engaged in *secret prayer*. God has established a blessed connection between closet worship and public duty. Certain it is, the minister who prays often in secret will find his "strength renewed for his work, and will be rewarded openly," if not by many converts immediately given as seals to his ministry, at least by receiving much of the "spirit of supplication," and having much matter collected for public prayer.

In secret prayer the heart is made, in all its states and exercises, the subject of particular reflection. Evil, springing from the law of sin in our members, is discerned and felt, and the result of such painful experience invariably is, that we groan inwardly and find much to pray for. MARTIN LUTHER, that successful reformer,

"Whose least distinguished day  
Shone with some portion of that heavenly lustre,  
Which makes the Sabbath lovely in the sight  
Of blessed angels pitying human cares,"

was much engaged in closet worship. John Knox wrestled in private prayer with God, and hence derived that grace which enabled him to speak boldly in the Lord, and to roll forward with much strength and speed the chariot of gospel truth in Scotland. It was when Mr. Welsh, that faithful minister of God, was engaged at midnight in secret prayer, at an obscure lodging place in his travels, that a Popish friar, who overheard him, was savingly impressed. Sweet to spiritual taste, and richly laden with precious truth, are the sentiments of the distinguished Leighton on this subject: "He that is much in prayer," the Archbishop writes, "shall grow rich in grace; he shall thrive and increase most that is busiest in this which is our very traffic with heaven, and fetches the most precious commodities thence. He that sets oftenest out those ships of desire, that makes most voyages to that land of spices and pearls, shall be sure to improve his stock most, and have most of heaven upon earth; but the true art of this trading is very rare. Every trade hath something wherein the skill of it lies; but this is deep and supernatural, and is not reached by

human industry. Industry is to be used in it; but we must know the faculty of it comes from above, from that spirit of prayer without which learning and wit can do nothing. Therefore, this is to be our prayer often—our great suit for the spirit of prayer, that we may speak the language of the sons of God, by the Spirit of God, which alone teaches the heart to pronounce aright."

5. Again, to procure matter for prayer, the pastor *must carry all his knowledge* of the particular wants, temptations, and various faults of the human heart, with him into the sanctuary. He should consider that he is to pray for many, whose necessities are many and various. Let him, then, pray under the impression of this fact, and he will find much to ask for; for are not the ungodly to be converted? Is not the proud sinner to be abased; the awakened to be directed to the Saviour; the self-righteous to be undeceived; the wanderer to be sought after and restored; the weak in faith to be strengthened; the mourner in Zion to be comforted, and all the saints in all their helplessness to be "kept by divine power through faith unto salvation"? And having all these various characters around him, when he rises up to offer prayer, and their eternal interests weighing upon his heart, will he not find matter for prayer? Oh! if the pastor reflects upon the pressing wants of his hearers, and is indifferent about his own reputation as an eloquent prayer-maker, he will often be full and fervent at the throne of grace. It is, therefore, a good rule in practice, that the pastor should spend a few moments in serious reflection, before he rises to pray in the congregation, pondering the solemn fact that he is to address a Being of infinite majesty and glory, in the behalf of the many, and running over in his thoughts the various mercies which his associates in worship need; as, for instance, the spirit of supplication, conviction of their need of Christ, pardon of sin, repentance unto life, faith, sanctified affections, deliverance from various troubles, support under various afflictions, grace to persevere, comfort on the way, hope in death, and everlasting victory and glory.

6. In a word, to procure matter for prayer, the pastor must feel his dependence upon, and supplicate habitually for himself, *the aids of the Holy Spirit*. With all that improvement which the ministers of the Word can make by their own efforts, they still "know not what to pray for as they ought;" and if they are born

again, they will be conscious of their insufficiency. "The opening of the mouth" (Ps. li.) in holy freedom, and the enlargement of the heart in prayer, must come from God. Eminent as the apostle Paul was in gifts, he solicited the prayers of the saints, "that utterance might be given unto him, that he might open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel." (Ephes. vi.) Accordingly, another apostle exhorts Christians to build themselves "on their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." (Jude xx.)

The pastor, therefore, should prepare himself for public prayer, as if he expected no Divine assistance; and he should depend on Divine assistance as if he had made no preparation.

I have done with the matter of prayer, and will next consider,

## II. THE ORDER OF PRAYER.

But here let me remind you, that the whole matter of prayer is substantially asking and giving of thanks, but preaching the Word is *teaching* and directing others. Do not, therefore, confound these two ministerial acts, either by praying as if you were instructing Almighty God, or by preaching in a tone of voice which suits the exercise of prayer. Do not address the Supreme Being in the language of dictation and command, but supplicate humbly and earnestly His mercy, in all poverty of spirit, and with every mark of reverence.

It is almost unnecessary to say that pastoral prayer demands *order* or *method*, to subserve the ends of social worship. Such worship requires the exercise of the understanding and the hearts of all who engage in it, though but one person be called to pray audibly. Now, both to be understood and to call out the religious affections of others in worship, *order* in the pastoral prayer is indispensable. Without method in communicating his ideas, the priest's lips cannot teach knowledge in this or any other pastoral duty. True religion, as it springs from and rests upon divine truth, differs in this, as well as in many other respects, from the devotional acts which were seen in the temples of ancient Paganism, and from the course which fanaticism has taken in Christian and Mahometan countries. The priests of Baal, Bacchus, and other false deities, were known to yell and cut themselves in wor-

ship, and to create various alarming noises, to strike forcibly the senses of the worshippers, and thereby to agitate their minds. In like manner, among sects nominally Christian, we find some who sing and dance in their public worship, and others who make sweet religion a rhapsody of incoherent words; words uttered in loud outcries, interrupted by groanings, screechings, and other noises intended to subdue weak, superstitious minds. But these human devices do not belong to Christian faith and worship; they are inadmissible in the great duty of pastoral prayer, which must be so conducted as, in the first place, to adore the omnipresence and omniscience of Deity; and, in the second place, to speak to the understandings and the hearts of Christian worshippers. For God is the author, not of confusion, but of peace and order in all the churches of the saints. Let it then be observed, that order in prayer is requisite,

1. To express the nature of that worship in which the church assembled in one place is engaged; for that worship is paid to the high and holy One; that worship is social, and consists in the expression, by intelligible language, of the common desires of those who seek for mercy.

2. Order is also required, in pastoral prayer, to prevent omissions of important things, and to guard against repetitions of the same petitions. We know enough of those powers of the human mind which are called memory and the association of ideas, to perceive the great use of *method* in aiding those faculties in their exercise. The strength of memory depends much on habits of association, and these habits become useful just in proportion to the regular train of our thoughts on subjects of deep interest. If our thoughts be jumbled together, we shall forget much that ought to be remembered; we shall repeat what has just before been said, or distract the minds of those who hear us, by flying from one subject to another, without any preparation for such unexpected transitions and digressions.

3. It may, then, with propriety be said, that *order* is requisite to excite and maintain the spirit of devotion in a worshipping assembly. An artificial devotion, in which nervous affections have more influence than the graces of the Spirit, does not depend upon *order* in prayer or in preaching, but derives its aliment chiefly from incoherent sentiments, expressed in a frenzied man-

ner, and accompanied by groans, shouts, and other bodily exercises. Hence it has been remarked, that in proportion as reason is subdued, and animal feelings are excited among religionists, that kind of devotion becomes warmer and more strongly marked by extravagances. It has also been the subject of painful observation, that those persons are less under the benign influence of true religion at home and in retirement, who exhibit in public worship an uncommon degree of bodily agitation and frenzied emotion. Be this, however, as it may, by the term *devotion*, I mean that engagedness of mind which is produced by the truths or realities of revealed religion in the exercises of worship; such as adoring the infinite attributes of God; bowing before the throne of his majesty with the confession of sins; feasting upon his promises, and rejoicing in the hope of future glory. Now, in all these exercises our understanding must be employed, in order to affect our hearts deeply with reverence, with penitential sorrow, with grateful sentiments; in a word, with those thoughts and emotions which correspond with the import of divine truths. For truth must be apprehended before its power can be felt in the heart. Now, to facilitate such an apprehension of truth by us, while another prays or preaches, method is necessary; for the want of method tends directly to obscure the truth, and to produce confusion in our thoughts. Let then order be preserved in prayer.

To keep order in prayer and render it habitual, it is not necessary that the pastor should bind himself to any unvaried arrangement of the parts of prayer, nor that he should adhere to one set of phrases in expressing the matter of his prayer. Variety relieves the mind in this exercise, but it must be a variety that is consistent with order.

1st. The *rules* to be observed in maintaining *order* in prayer are the following:

1. To cultivate habits of thinking on all important subjects, which shall conduce to a better understanding of them. He who is accustomed to arrange his thoughts well, on the various subjects of his studies, will naturally fall into method whenever he engages in prayer.

2. Let generals be distinguished from particulars, and generals be called up first. If in prayer confession of sins be made by

the pastor, let the acknowledgment of the original apostasy of our race, and the total depravity of our nature, precede the confession of our own sins.

3. Let things of the same kind be connected together. If a person in prayer asks for the Holy Spirit to convince of sin, and to break the heart with penitential sorrow, and in the next sentence he utters thanks to God for national prosperity, and in the next again laments over the unbelief and lukewarmness of the heart, and then flies off and prays for Bible societies, he surely prays without *due order*, and his prayer is calculated to disturb the minds of others, instead of exciting in them a devotional spirit and frame.

4. Let pressing evils and special mercies occupy much thought in prayer, and the transition from one to the other be natural and easy, not violent and abrupt. Graces, and duties, and deliverances have a connection which it is good to observe in prayer.

2nd. Various general methods have been recommended by practical writers, to be observed in pastoral prayer.

Some have distributed the matter of prayer into ten parts, viz: 1. Invocation; 2. Adoration; 3. Confession; 4. Petition; 5. Intercession; 6. Pleading; 7. Dedication; 8. Thanksgiving; 9. Deprecation; 10. Blessing.

Some writers dispose the matter of prayer into eight parts; others place the whole under five heads; to which let me add, that there are writers who divide the whole matter into two great parts, viz: the more principal, and the less principal. Under the *more principal*, they comprehend confession, petition, and thanksgiving; in the *less principal*, they place the preface or introduction—the transitions and the conclusion of prayer.

It is not necessary that any particular distribution of the parts of prayer which has been recommended should be insisted upon; nor does order and the usefulness of prayer in public worship require that the pastor should invariably adhere to that arrangement which he himself approves. It is, however, of much use that he should keep in view the various *leading parts* into which the matter of prayer, from its variety, divides itself, and to have some arrangement of the whole in his thoughts.

The distribution which I take the liberty here to recommend, is that which divides the matter of prayer into five principal parts,

viz: invocation, confession, petition, thanksgiving, and intercession. Let me direct your attention to each of these parts in particular; and,

1. Of *invocation*. This part of prayer consists of those words which distinguish the *grand and only object* of religious adoration, namely, the one living and true God, by his proper titles and peculiar works.

In his revealed Word, the Supreme Being has described himself by *certain names* or terms, which are expressive of his *eternal self-existence and infinite* perfections, and separate him from all other existences—from all the superior and inferior gods of the idolatrous nations; and the import of these names is clearly unfolded by the description of those mighty works which are peculiar to his supreme intelligence and mighty power. “He is Jehovah,” and there is none like him, and no other gods beside him. “He is the Father of Light, with whom there is no variableness;” “The Maker of heaven and earth, the Lord of Hosts;” “He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth,” etc.

Under the dispensation of grace, and in his Church, he reveals himself to be “the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” “the God of Israel—Zion’s God,” the God of truth keeping covenant for ever, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in invocation, we express our belief of the unity of the Divine Essence, and our adoration of the glorious attributes of that one God, as they are revealed in his Word, and made known by his works of creation, providence, and redemption.

For this part of prayer the Sacred Scriptures furnish the pastor with the most correct and sublime sentiments respecting God, as he is distinguished from the creatures which he has made, and from the gods of the heathen, and as he exists in the immensity of his own nature. With those recorded sentiments the pastor should have his memory well stocked. He cannot invoke Jehovah in better language than the Holy Spirit has employed in his written Word. He cannot describe the divine attributes in terms more choice and significant than those which inspired men have had occasion to use.

This part of prayer ought to be of various length, according to

the various assemblies in which the minister of Christ officiates. In ancient times, the Church was environed by idolatrous nations; their priests were constantly thrusting the claims of their false gods before the eyes and minds of the Hebrews. This circumstance led the pious to invoke the Supreme Being by using terms which affirmed his unity, his nature, and moral greatness, as the sole Creator and Governor of the Universe, and his infinite elevation above all that were called gods. The Psalms of David abound with such invocations. Read the 96th and 97th Psalms, as illustrations of this fact; and mark the language of the prophet Jeremiah, who saw the powerful forces of idolatry in battle array against the citadel of divine truth, and felt in his own personal ministry the fury of their rage. Jer. x. 10: "But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation."

In imitation of these examples, the gospel missionary in heathen lands, having all around him the symbols of idolatry, will do well in lengthening his invocation in prayer, to bring up frequently into view the unity of God—his peculiar attributes, works, and claims upon the affections and services of all his intelligent creatures, and thereby make known to them "the unknown God." Nay, the Christian minister, if called to pray in any place with many of the wicked and atheistical around him, should make the invocation long, and dwell upon the infinite greatness and universal moral government of God, with every expression of profound adoration.

But in Christian lands, the Evangelical Pastor usually leads in the worship of God those who have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father, (Rom. viii. 15,) and who have from children been instructed in the Holy Scriptures. In such worshipping assemblies, the invocation in prayer may be and should be *short*, recognizing the unity and majesty of God, as Creator, Lawgiver, and King, and the covenant relation of his people to Him. This we find to be happily done in those forms of prayer which begin with the words, "Almighty God and most Merciful Father;" "O Eternal God and most Merciful Father! we humbly prostrate ourselves before thy High Majesty," etc.; "O Heavenly Father, thy Word is perfect," etc.; "Merciful God and Father,"

etc. See the Liturgy of the Reformed Dutch Church. Ephes. iii. 14: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It ought, however, to be well considered whether at this day the words, "Our Father in heaven," do not, from the influence of fashion, occur too frequently in the prayers of some pastors, and occupy the place which should be allotted to the acknowledgment of the greatness of God, of the majesty of his throne, and of his marvellous works. (Exodus xv. 11.)

Immediately after the invocation, petition or thanksgiving may be occasionally introduced, with a view to vary the order in public prayers; but ordinarily, after addressing the Most High, we should,

2. Make *confession of sins*, and humble ourselves before him. *Confession* is an important part of public prayer; important in itself, as it discloses those exercises of the heart which are essential to unfeigned repentance before God, to faith in Christ, and to the enjoyment of pardoning mercy; for it is written, whosoever abaseth himself shall be exalted. Jesus came, as he tells us, "to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." "Unto this man I look," (with complacency,) "saith the Lord, even unto him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word," (Isa. lxvi. 2;) and it is important in its effects, as it serves to prepare the minds of those who worship to supplicate more earnestly for the undeserved mercies which they have received.

Accordingly, confession of sins formed a part of revealed religion from the days of righteous Abel. It accompanied every propitiatory sacrifice on the altar; it dropped from the lips of sinners and saints, of priests and people in worship; it meets our eyes every where in the devotional parts of Scripture; and our Lord describes the prodigal son returning to his father's house, with the confession of his sins expressed in these affecting terms: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." (Luke xv. 16, 19.)

Confession of sins in prayer comprehends two things, namely, acknowledgment of our sinfulness, criminality, and subjection to the penalty of the law, in consequence of our transgressions of its holy precepts, and professions of contrition before God.

Acknowledgment of sinfulness and guilt embraces confessions

of the apostasy of our race, (Isa. vi. 1-5; Psalm xiv.) of our original and total depravity; of actual transgressions committed by ourselves, by the Christian congregation and nation to which we belong; of the aggravations of our sins, as it respects their number and greatness, and the circumstances which have served to aggravate them.

Acknowledgments of our righteous subjection to punishment, and our unworthiness of the Divine regards, very naturally follow the confession of sins. (Ps. cxxx. 3; cxv.) But confession also includes professions of contrition, the hearty expression of shamefacedness and sorrow, in the view of our many offenses; deprecation of the Divine displeasure, (Ps. cxliii. 2;) avowals of the insufficiency of our own righteousness to procure our justification; determination to abandon every self-righteous hope; resolution to amend our ways and turn unto the Lord, whose arm alone can save us; avowing that we are encouraged to pray, and seek, and hope, because a Saviour has come into the world. The Reformed Church furnishes in her liturgy an excellent form of such confession, in public social worship, in these words:

“O Eternal God and most Merciful Father! we humbly prostrate ourselves before thy High Majesty, against which we have so often and grievously offended, and acknowledge, if thou shouldst enter into judgment with us, that we have deserved nothing but eternal death; for, besides that we are by original sin unclean in thy sight, and children of wrath, conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity, whereby all manner of evil lusts, striving against thee and our neighbor, dwell within us; we have also, indeed, frequently and without end, transgressed thy precepts, neglected what thou hast commanded us, and done what thou hast expressly forbidden us. We have strayed like sheep and greatly offended against thee, which we acknowledge and are heartily sorry for; nay, we confess to our shame and to the praise of thy mercy towards us, that our sins are more than the hairs of our head, and that we are indebted ten thousand talents and not able to pay. Wherefore, we are not able to be called thy children, nor to lift up our eyes towards heaven, to pour out our prayers before thee. Nevertheless, O Lord God and Merciful Father! knowing that thou dost not desire the death of a sinner, but that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and that thy mercy is infinite, which thou showest unto those who return unto thee; we heartily call upon thee, trusting in our Mediator Jesus Christ, who is that Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, and we beseech thee to commiserate our infirmity, forgiving us all our sins, for Christ’s sake,” etc.\*

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\* I here insert the “prayer of general confession” from the Book of Common Prayer: “Almighty God and most Merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from

This branch of pastoral prayer should scarcely ever be wholly omitted, for it essentially belongs to the worship of the Supreme Being, by sinners.

After confession, and before petitions be offered in prayer, the pastor may happily introduce, in behalf of the church praying, *short professions of faith* in the revelations and promises of God; for her petitions rest upon revealed facts, and she draws her warrant to ask for blessings from the divine promises given in the written Word. Such professions of faith we find in the Holy Scripture incorporated with supplication. A beautiful example of such union occurs in Psalm cxxx.: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord! hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication. If thou, Lord! shouldst mark iniquities, who shall stand? *But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.*"

In conformity with such recorded examples, the pastor, after confession, may say: We believe that thou hast sent thy Son into the world to save sinners; we believe that Jesus Christ is the stone—the tried stone—the precious corner-stone which thou hast laid in Zion, for a sure foundation, and that other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. May we, as living stones, be built upon this divine foundation, and grow up into an holy temple in the Lord!

3. *Petition*, is the third part of prayer. It is, strictly speaking, direct praying, and, therefore, should occupy a large place in the exercise, and constitute its body. Some, however, seem to forget this fact, and instead of humbly asking God for mercy, when they pray, are employed in those exhibitions of truth which belong to preaching.

The subjects of petition are many, for our wants are many, and the evils from which we desire to be delivered are various. All

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thy ways, like lost sheep; we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts; we have offended against thy holy laws; we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders." Between the two forms just presented there is a striking agreement in sentiment; yet if they are carefully compared, in respect to the amount of truth which they respectively avow—the depth of confession, and the extent of contrition—the judgment will incline favorably towards the prayer in our liturgy.

those subjects, however, may be reduced to four classes, namely: 1. Deliverance from evils; 2. Supply of wants; 3. The continuance of present Divine favors, especially of the abiding influences of the Holy Spirit; 4. Arguments and pleadings.

Petitions for deliverance from evils relate to sin in its power and pardon; to temptations from our corrupt nature, from the world, and from the great adversary, the devil; to the distressing troubles of the heart, arising from declensions in religion, and the withdrawal of the Divine presence, and to the pressure of external afflictions.

Petitions for the supply of wants refer to all needed grace now and in time to come, and "to that glory which is to be revealed hereafter."

Petitions for the continuance of mercies abound in Holy Scripture, and refer either to earthly comforts or to spiritual blessings; the latter of which are briefly comprehended by the Psalmist in these words, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me—uphold me with thy free Spirit." (Ps. li.)

Petitions embracing arguments and pleadings are those which drop from the lips in holy importunity at the throne of grace. God permits his people to wrestle with him in prayer:—then they earnestly plead the infinite merits of the Saviour; the promises are converted into arguments, and former deliverances and helps in extremities are employed, not with irreverence and undue familiarity, but with holy liberty and trembling, in pressing their humble requests. (Ps. li.)

4. Another part of prayer is *thanksgiving*. This is such an obvious duty in worshipping that Being who "is the giver of every good and perfect gift," and who also giveth the spirit of prayer, that though it be in its nature something different from direct petitioning, it is to be considered a constituent part of public pastoral prayer. Phil. iv. 6: "In every thing, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

The subjects of thanksgiving are the various displays of the Divine goodness made to us in creation, providence, and especially in redemption.

Some of the mercies of God, for which we are to be thankful, are ordinary, and others occasional.

Some are common to the wicked and the righteous, as rational creatures—the inhabitants of the same country—the citizens of one commonwealth, or subjects of one kingdom; and other mercies are peculiar to those who dwell on Mount Zion, and are actually redeemed by grace.

Some blessings are such as improve the outward condition in this world, as bodily health, food, raiment, peace, prosperity in our secular affairs, fruitful seasons, etc.; and other mercies are of a spiritual and heavenly nature, and do the soul good, even when afflictions abound, and when the body is decaying and dying.

Who can count up the mercies of God? They are more than we can number, and new every morning. They flow out and fill up every moment of our existence. It cannot be expected, therefore, that a complete enumeration of them can be made in a few pastoral prayers; but great mercies ought not to be forgotten, inasmuch as they comprehend the less, and special mercies and remarkable deliverances ought to be particularly mentioned; and if the whole cannot be enumerated at one time, and in one prayer, their very *number* will serve to give a *pleasing variety* to the *matter* of prayer.

The pastor, therefore, may on one occasion, in giving thanks in public prayer, dwell particularly on common mercies bestowed on the people and on the church; and on another occasion, his lips may be occupied with an accumulation of special mercies. This part of his duty cannot be mistaken; it obtrudes itself upon his attention.

5. I shall, therefore, proceed to speak of *intercession*, as it constitutes another constituent branch of pastoral prayer.

Next to praying for ourselves, it is our duty to intercede for others. The Christian Pastor especially must engage in intercessions; for he is expressly commanded so to do. 1 Tim. ii. 1: "I command, therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, *intercessions*, and the giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in authority." "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"—"pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

Christians are members of "one body," and Christian congregations are parts of the visible Church Catholic. As men, we are related to one another in various ways; and upon these relations,

natural, civil, and religious, the duty of intercession in prayer rests. Love prompts this expression of our desires, that others may partake of the common salvation.

Intercession is either general or particular.

(1.) General intercession may be made for all classes and conditions of men: for the nations that sit in darkness; for the outcasts of Israel, and for the whole Church militant. Examples of such intercessions are to be found in no small number in Scripture, and serve to unfold the noble spirit of benevolence that characterizes our religion. Moses was a mighty intercessor for the children of rebellion in the wilderness of Arabia. The apostle Paul interceded much "for his brethren and kinsmen, according to the flesh."

(2.) Particular intercessions in prayer are made for individuals: for the godly under temptation and persecution; for the bereaved, the sick, the needy, the awakened in spirit, and those who are far off upon the sea.

The pastor in prayer must intercede for the families under his oversight—for the ministry of reconciliation—for the missionaries whom the Church has sent abroad, and for the persons in distress who solicit his prayers.

To aid the pastor in this good work of intercession, let him, under proper regulations, institute societies for prayer, and call on the pious to bear up his arms, while he intercedes for sinners and prays for the prosperity of Jerusalem.

I have now spoken of the principal parts of prayer; but must not forget to observe here, that some attention should be paid by the pastor to the manner in which he concludes his prayers. The conclusion must not be abrupt, nor uttered in a rapid and slovenly way, but easy, solemn, and dignified. It must be such as to show that the prayers of the Church are offered up in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; for no man cometh acceptably unto the Father but by him: or the conclusion may consist of some *such doxology* as will serve to strengthen faith, and leave suitable impressions of God's majesty, and of covenant relations to Him, upon the heart.

### III. MANNER OF PRAYER.

The manner of prayer remains to be spoken of; for as the pastor is considered to be in a worshipping assembly, and not in his

closet, he may give offense by his manner of uttering prayer, although his matter be excellent, and his heart burn within him in holy affection. To the manner of prayer belong three things: 1. Gesture; 2. Pronunciation, or tone of voice; 3. Style, or language in prayer.

1. Gesture includes the attitude or position of the body, the use of the hands, and the expression of the countenance.

With regard to the posture of the body to be observed in prayer by the pastor and the congregation, there is no scriptural rule, excepting the general one, that the *posture* must express *reverence*. The examples recorded by the sacred writers recommended three positions of the body, viz: bowing the head, (Heb. xi. 21; Exod. ix. 31; Ps. xcv. 6;) kneeling, (Acts xx. 36;) standing, (1 Kings viii. 14.) But these various modes are overlooked by many, and the violence of sectarian zeal will fasten to one particular example, and give to it alone the authority of a divine law. Some insist that the assembly in prayer should kneel, because the Saviour knelt; some contend that we should all *stand* in prayer, for in this solemn exercise we read that individuals and congregations *stood*; whilst others adopt the practice of bowing the head in worship. Let us not convert our customs into divine laws, binding the conscience of others, but speak with caution on this subject.

*Kneeling* is to be recommended in domestic or closet worship; but it is inconvenient in public religious assemblies.

*Bowing the head*, from the mode of seating the worshippers in our places of worship, has many conveniences attached to it.

But *standing* in prayer was the posture in the congregations of old, and generally adopted in the primitive Christian churches. Justin Martyr, in his Second Apology, tells us, "that the congregation all rose up and offered their prayers to God." The preachers called upon the people to stand up and pray for a Divine blessing. Origin says, "Wherefore, standing up, let us beg help from God, that we may be blessed in Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever." And again, "Standing up, let us offer sacrifices to the Father through Christ, who is the propitiation for our sins, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." Kneeling in worship became the custom on penitential days.

But while standing in worship is commendably observed by

religious societies, it is to be lamented that so many, during prayer, stand up, not to worship God in deep reverence, but to conform to custom and stare around them.

But our business at present is to consider what is the proper posture to be observed in prayer by the pastor. Various considerations urge that he should stand in prayer.

Observing this attitude, his action and countenance should be marked with solemnity. He is standing upon holy ground, in the more immediate presence of the Great King, before whom the angel Gabriel stands, and seraphs veil their faces in heaven.

*Gestures* in prayer should be few. The hands may indicate supplication by a significant intertwining of the fingers, or be occasionally raised a little, in token of the engagedness of the mind; but active movements of the whole person do not look well in a pastor. Some of the dissenting ministers of London had the practice of raising their hands high above their heads in prayer, and throwing their arms up and down, to express fervency; but such gesticulations were better omitted.

Some pastors in our own country keep their eyes open during prayer, and roll them about in view of the congregation. This practice is not to be commended; it is very remote from the appearance of devotion; and those who indulge in it either must be men of uncommon powers of abstraction, of which there is no evidence, or they must have committed their prayers so well to memory as not to suffer interruption, in reciting them, from the vision of sensible objects around them.

2. With respect to the *pronunciation* of words, and tone of voice, in prayer, care should be taken to avoid indistinctness in utterance, often created by rapidity of speech and a uniform drawling tone. Especially should the pastor guard against a *manner* in prayer, which would seem to indicate that he was *dictating* to the Almighty, or authoritatively giving orders in a loud and commanding tone to an inferior. This mode of expressing words, however wholesome the words themselves may be in prayer, is very offensive. It grates upon the pious ear, and lacerates the pious heart. Oh! let the voice in prayer express humble supplication; let the pastor ever realize before whom he stands in prayer, and how unworthy he and all with whom he prays are of the Divine regards. To which let me add, that his voice should

be neither too *low* nor too *elevated* into a screeching pitch; his articulation should not be rapid in prayer, but his tone that which combines fervency with humility. There have been instances of pastors, who, driven by the ardor of their own minds, have rushed into prayer "as the horse rushes into battle," and by volubility of speech left the congregation to guess at what they were saying.

3. Special attention should also be paid to *style* or language in prayer.

Two extremes, in relation to the language to be used in prayer, are to be carefully avoided. The *one* is a low, familiar style, in addressing the Supreme Being as if he were one like ourselves; the *other* the affectation of too much neatness and elegance. Rhetorical ornaments are hardly to be tolerated in this part of divine worship. Simplicity and clearness should characterize the language which the pastor is to use in prayer. He is leading the devotions of persons of various mental powers. Some of them are not only poor, but illiterate. His words, therefore, should be such as may be easily understood, and so arranged at the same time as to take hold of the heart, and call out and express all its desires. His language must be plain, neat, and pathetic. He may not in the use of such language be admired, but he will be felt by those who have the spirit of prayer.

Some, indeed, pray in a style of composition which approaches to *blank verse*, and in a strain which shows that they are more intent on displaying their art and fine taste in composition, than on prevailing with God to grant the requests of their lips.

It has been strongly recommended to use much Scripture language in prayer. "The style of the Holy Ghost," as one remarks, "is fittest for holy and spiritual exercises." Yet words from Scripture may be improperly used and applied in prayer. A minister once in my hearing prayed "that the Church might *not be* as Mount Gilboa, on which there fell neither rain nor dew." Now the fact is that there fell on Mount Gilboa rain and dew in as large quantities after David wrote his celebrated elegy as before. The minister, therefore, stated as a fact what never occurred. Other misapplications of Scripture might here be mentioned. These are sometimes detected in the prayers of the pious illiterate, who may be excused this impropriety; but they ought not to appear in the supplications of an Evangelical Pastor who is set apart to study and to expound the Scriptures.

I here terminate my remarks in relation to pastoral prayer as a *gift*; and shall, in the next lecture, discourse of the great gift of preaching the Word of God.

#### PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

I have just discussed the relation which the ministry sustains to the important gift of prayer; and the best improvement of the subject which I can suggest to you, is by careful study to distinguish—

1. Between the extraordinary and the ordinary gifts of the Spirit; and especially,

2. Between the gifts and the graces of the Spirit.

Better knowledge of the difference of these endowments will enable you to understand the Scriptures; to ascertain the nature and the evidence of divine life in the soul; to examine into your state, under clearer rays of divine truth; as well as to judge more correctly respecting the characters of those around you who profess the Christian faith.

Most certainly this is a subject which claims your serious consideration. To understand it well, cannot fail to undeceive some who cherish false hopes, and to resolve difficulties which disturb the peace of others. Not a few have viewed the *gifts* of the Divine Spirit which they possess, in the light of the graces which distinguish “the new man of the heart.” Not a few have been tempted to think that they were destitute of spiritual life, because their minds were so ill furnished with the gifts of knowledge, of utterance, and of prayer. Under the influence of error here, many persons who believe and have a right to the precious promises of the gospel, have refused to receive those consolations which it is the will of their heavenly Father that they should richly enjoy.

The apostle Paul, who lived in an age when both the extraordinary and the ordinary gifts of the Spirit were imparted to many, directs our attention to the momentous difference between the gifts and graces of the Spirit, in that chapter (1 Cor. xiii.) which has never failed to seize upon the solemn thoughts of those who read his Epistles to the churches. His words are these: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and

though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing," etc. Such was the doctrine of that apostle, who was himself richly endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. His words plainly teach that, to be an heir of eternal glory, *gifts are not sufficient; grace* must be implanted and seated in the heart; *faith* must appropriate the Saviour in all his offices; *love* or *charity* must be the predominant sentiment in the soul.

Let me request you to ponder this doctrine. Fix your thoughts on those various gifts of the Spirit which may be possessed by one who is not actuated by "*charity*," that heaven-born principle of life and action; and

(1.) Of *prophecy*, an extraordinary gift of the Holy Ghost. Those men who, in former ages, had this wonderful gift, were enlightened to see in vision future events—to know what should happen at particular periods to nations and individuals.

It will be readily acknowledged by every person who considers this particular endowment, that it is the greatest which a finite mind can receive. How astonishing is it that men, whose prescience does not extend to the events of a single future day, should be able to describe the rise and fall of empires for centuries to come, and to predict truly what should befall individuals and nations before they existed? Yet these things did the ancient prophets of Jehovah, and some of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They foretold revolutions in the kingdoms of men in their own day, when the instruments for such work were not in being. They prophesied that certain events should take place, when, to human foresight and calculation, the very reverse was likely to happen. Yet the gift of prophecy was not saving grace. One might be filled with prophetic inspirations, and still not possess a "heart right with God." Balaam was a true prophet, yet he anxiously desired "to curse the people of God." Depravity was unsubdued in his soul. "He loved the wages of unrighteousness." He was "a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal," instruments of music that emit sounds, but have no living principle in themselves.

(2.) Another extraordinary gift of the Spirit was *miracle-working*.

A miracle need not be defined here. It will be sufficient to

observe that miraculous works, by suspending or exceeding those laws which establish a fixed order among natural phenomena, attracted the attention of men in whose presence they were wrought, and were considered to be striking evidences of the almighty power of God.

It requires but little reflection to be convinced that for one to possess the gift of miracles, to be able to heal the sick by a touch, to call down fire from heaven in his own defense, and to have the seas divided by the movement of his rod, is, in respect of gifts, to be greatly distinguished among men, as a special agent of the Most High. Such a person is invested with an endowment with which the combined wisdom and power of the creatures cannot furnish him.

Yet the possession of such miraculous power does not make a sinner "a new creature in Christ Jesus." He may be used as an instrument by the Holy Spirit, to confirm the truth of his revelations, and still remain a stranger to the joys of God's salvation. He may have faith enough to "remove mountains," and yet not exercise that "precious faith which works by love and purifies the heart."

The gift of miracles is not the grace of love. Judas Iscariot was for a season a miracle-worker. In common with the other disciples, sent out on an extraordinary mission by their Master, he was enabled to heal the sick and to cast out devils; yet with this endowment, bestowed on him for an important purpose, the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit was not united. The heart of Judas was the seat of covetousness, and sold under sin. In his walk with the Son of man here, "he was a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal," on which the fingers of the priests and rulers afterwards played successfully.

(3.) *Doctrinal knowledge* of the Scriptures is another, though ordinary gift of the Spirit.

Of this gift a large measure may be communicated to unrenewed man. Such may be qualified to explain difficult passages of the Scriptures, to trace the connection of divine truths, to defend the articles of the Christian faith, while he brings out of his mental faculties things new and old, and nevertheless be blind himself to the glory of God displayed in the face of Jesus Christ. The heart, and not the understanding, is the principal seat of that

charity which shall outlive faith and hope. From the manner in which the devil once tempted our Lord in the wilderness, we have reason to conclude that the impure spirits of hell possess no little knowledge of what is written in the Bible.

But knowledge of Scripture doctrine is *only a gift*. It may be found in those who are not "born again of water and of the Spirit." Hence the promises are given, not to the wise, nor learned, nor mighty in the Scriptures, but to the "poor in spirit;" to those who lean upon and "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;" to those who "love much," because "much has been forgiven them;" to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness," for such alone are "partakers of the divine nature."

(4.) Another ordinary gift of the Spirit is *utterance*. By utterance as a gift, is meant the ability to speak readily, pertinently, and fluently on religious subjects, to the edification of others. This gift in the primitive Church was rendered miraculously great, for the speedy propagation of the gospel faith.

At this day, the gift of utterance is not marked by any extraordinary operation of the Holy Spirit. It now consists in being able to speak on religious topics, in public preaching and in private conversation, with much facility and propriety. Those who possess this gift can readily express their ideas, and unfold to others the knowledge which they possess of doctrines, of religious exercises, and of the history of the Church in past ages.

But this gift, however richly conferred upon men, does not prove that they have experienced "the renewing power of the Holy Ghost." Diotrephes, "who loved to have the preëminence," was no doubt gifted with utterance. Judas Iscariot preached the Word. He was so bold and free in utterance, that he did not hesitate to find fault with others in the very presence of his august Master.

Like him, one may preach the gospel and exhibit great boldness of speech; his gift of utterance may rise up to the highest style of eloquence; he may talk much and well on religion, and be listened to with delight, and yet lie in the bond of iniquity. Hypocrites have had more of the gift of utterance than many of God's dearest children. The Pharisee's trumpet is sometimes heard the whole length of the gospel street. Every where and in every company his tongue may be fluent in religious discourse;

“but though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.”

(5.) The talent of performing *audible prayer* in public worship, is another gift of the Holy Spirit, and intimately connected with that of “utterance.”

The grace of God disposes to prayer. Afar from the throne of mercy renewed minds cannot remain. But while it is a fact that all who are born again do give themselves unto prayer, it is nevertheless true that they do not all pray with equal capacity. The gift of some Christians is small, indeed, while others not renewed in mind display much talent in that exercise. They can pray with fluency in appropriate language, and in an affecting manner. But it is the prayer of faith, defective as the language may be, which Jehovah has promised to hear. The latter is grace, the former is a gift merely.

Keep then in view, the important distinction which you are instructed by the apostle to make, between the gifts and the graces of the Holy Spirit; and in your future ministry let those two classes of endowments be kept distinct. Do this, not only for the encouragement of some of the pious who have slender gifts but strong faith, but also for the regulation of your own judgment respecting professors around you.

Ministers are disposed to be pleased with those professors in their congregations who have an uncommon talent in prayer; but be careful that you do not confound this talent with that “charity” which assimilates man to God and his holy angels. Let it not be forgotten by you, that the gift of prayer is not piety, nor is it an evidence of an adoption into the divine family and heirship with Christ.

Often has it been seen that those persons who disturbed the peace of a church, decrying the existing ministry and introducing new religious notions, were *professors distinguished* by their superior gift in prayer, but wanting in humility and that holy heart without which no man shall see the Lord. Undistinguished by gifts of a certain kind, which recommended him to the notice of others, would Diotrephes have sought the preëminence? I trow not.

## LECTURE VI.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

IN this lecture, I must direct your attention to that second and more important gift, which the ministry of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ brings into immediate and constant requisition, namely:

#### SECOND.—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD OF GOD.

This gift especially qualifies those whom the Saviour calls into his special service, to be “teachers”—guides—“lights” of the world.

It is true that prayer is designed to be a means for publishing gospel truths, and that when pastors pray, they should aim to instruct all around them in sound doctrine: still, the instruction of others in the science of divine truth is not the *direct object* of public pastoral prayer.

If, then, the gospel is to be preached, and its glad tidings to be spread abroad, there must be *another exercise* in which the pastor is to engage, and in which he is to sustain the full and proper character of a gospel teacher—an instructor in the doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. “Ye are the light of the world,” said the Saviour to those whom he had selected to be his apostles. “Go, preach the gospel to every creature.” “Go ye and teach all nations.” Accordingly, in happy union with other names descriptive of their office, its duties and its end, we find them in Scripture called “teachers.”

Every fact recorded by the Evangelists and Apostles, most plainly shows that the gospel ministry was instituted by the Head of the Church, *not so much* that he might be supplied with officers who should lead in prayer, or conduct well the ritual part of wor-

ship, or even afford much aid and instruction to others by their pious examples; but, *principally*, that the Church might be furnished with those who should make known “the mystery of Christ” crucified and raised from the dead as the medium of pardon, and beseech sinners to be reconciled to God by his death; and who should feed the flock, nourish it by the words of truth, and sustain it by the promises and ordinances of Divine appointment. Fix the eye upon the great commission, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark the particular work assigned to them, Ephes. iv. 11, 12; and the names by which they are distinguished, such as “apostles,” “teachers,” “ambassadors,” “stewards,” “preachers” of the gospel, set up for its defense and promulgation. Note how their energies were to be employed in their Master’s service, together with all the directions given to Timothy and Titus, in relation to the duties of their ministry, 2 Tim. iv. 2; and no doubt will remain upon the considerate mind, that ministers are called, not to officiate in *ritual services*, as the pagan priests were seen to do; not to usurp authority over human minds, as the Druidical priests claimed the power of doing; but to dissipate ignorance, awaken thought, sow the seeds of truth in the minds of men, and make them “the children of light and of the day.” “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor: *especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine.*” (1 Tim. v. 17.)

*Publication* of the truths of the Divine Word by suitable ministers, is obviously every thing in the Christian system. The religion of Christ, although it comprehends all the doctrines of natural religion, is a *Supernatural Revelation*. Jesus Christ is a Saviour come from heaven, the extraordinary and unspeakable gift of God; and salvation by him will continue to be, as it was in ancient times, to the nations, “a mystery,” unless it be published orally or by writing. So the Saviour taught, and consequently made special provision for the publication of his gospel: for “how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” And so the past history and experience of the Gentile world has taught; for no heathen nation acquired the knowledge of the “mystery of Christ,” but by means of missionaries and of the Scriptures.

And who does not perceive the wisdom of God in appointing special ministers to preach his Word, and that *preaching itself* is

a most important means of salvation? 1 Cor. i. 21: "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." Look, for a moment, at the gospel ministry, with relation to the great interests to be promoted and secured by it; and then view this institution comparatively with the means of publication employed in apostolic times by pagan priests, pagan philosophers, and civil governments.

The redemption of sinners is the greatest of all God's works, as it makes the clearest displays of the moral excellences of the Divine nature. Heaven is interested in it; earth is made to be the theatre of its exhibitions; all nations are to be affected by it; and its momentous results are to extend through eternity.

But, from the very nature of the salvation of God, from the very character of the doctrines and laws connected with it, and from the effects it is calculated to produce, it must encounter the vigorous and incessant opposition of a "world that lieth in wickedness." The Saviour foretold this fact on more than one occasion, and we know from the history of the past that he spoke truly. Error and false philosophy; idolatries and delusions of every kind; the pride of power and the pride of life; the course of this world in its prevailing sentiments and fashions; in a word, the depraved passions of the human heart, directed by an ingenuity as depraved, have been, and are still, all combined against the reception and influence of true Christianity.

Now, when such formidable opposition is made against the gospel of Jesus Christ, when such momentous interests are connected with its preachings, can we think for a moment that "the wise God and Saviour" would leave the whole concealed, without suitable agents to carry it into execution? that he would let a work of such magnitude hang entirely upon human devices and caprices? No, indeed; such a disposition of things in relation to the Christian religion (unless miracles were daily and every where wrought to attest its divine origin, and then miracles would cease to be miracles) would be a strong argument to prove that it did not proceed from the wisdom and goodness of God, but was, after all, "a cunningly devised fable."

The divine Author of our salvation has herein acted consistently with his glorious attributes. He has appointed a special

ministry to preach his Word, to extend his kingdom in the earth, and to be co-workers with himself in bringing many sons to glory. "Now then," as preachers, said Paul, "we are ambassadors for Christ:" we constitute an embassy to a lost world, and "by manifestation of the truth commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God: for if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." (2 Cor. ii.)

But the wisdom displayed in the institution of a ministry to preach the Word, cannot fail to strike us, when we compare this ministry, as an instrument of publication, with those means of the same general character used by the priests, philosophers, and magistrates in ancient times.

Orators of old were few in numbers; the masters in philosophy were still fewer. Their orations and discourses were confined to their own nation, their own political assemblies, and their own schools. Of the people, but a moiety ever heard them; and of that small portion of the human family near them, but a mere shred, on many occasions, understood the metaphysical, rhetorical, and technical terms in which they expressed their various doctrines. The agriculturists and laborers, the mechanics and servants, male and female, constituting more than one half of the whole population in those days, were *entirely excluded* from the benefit of their speeches and philosophical discourses.

But mark, now, the great superiority of the divine ordinance "*of preaching*," as a means of publication. The number of the preachers of the gospel, after the day of Pentecost, soon became great: for when "God gave forth the Word, great was the army of them who published it." They were raised up in every land, and among every people. They spoke very often, and not like the orators, who waited for events to create suitable occasions for the display of their talents, but always on every Sabbath, and frequently through the week, "being instant in season and out of season." They preached to the poor and unlearned, as well as to the wealthy and well-educated in society. They spoke earnestly, with all the advantages of voice and action, in a language understood by the common people, and on subjects of the highest interest to all who heard them. How far in the work of publication they transcended all the orators, philosophers of the schools, and heralds of the civil magistracy, may be seen in the

wonderful effects of their preaching labors. The servants of the Saviour triumphed in every place where they were permitted to preach the gospel. Idolatry and philosophy fell before them, like Dagon before the ark. Multitudes were converted; the Church extended from Jerusalem, far and wide; her enemies, though armed with all the power of the sword, supported by all the authority of an ancient priesthood, with its splendid ritual of worship, and all the influence of the schools, could not arrest her onward march. The blood of the Christians was profusely shed; but that blood became the seed of the Church, and seed, too, which yielded an abundant harvest.

The facts which have been detailed in the preceding observations, serve to show, that the gospel ministry is of *divine origin*, most wise in its constitution, and designed to be a *preaching ministry* of the written Word of God, and not conductors of ritual service, nor men whose principal labor was to be expended in reading prayers and hearing confessions. The Jews and Gentiles vociferously cried out, *The Altar—the Altar*, with its holocausts; but the apostles and ministers said, Christians, all the world over, have but “*one altar*,” (Heb. xiii.,) and to worship acceptably, “let the Word of Christ, which we preach, dwell in you richly in all wisdom.”

In evident disregard of the divine constitution of the gospel ministry, its principal service, and its great end, are the attempts made in some corrupt churches to elevate the “*service-book*” at its expense. Priests, it has been said, are not called to preach much, but to read prayers, and administer the sacraments. Accordingly, in some places of worship, the pulpit has been pushed aside, to give place to a splendid altar, and sermons *short*, even to leanness, have been thought to answer every purpose “of instruction, reproof, and correction in righteousness.”

But the Scriptures of the New Testament every where exhibit the ministers of Christ as “preachers of his Word;” and place them, as such, under awful responsibilities. (1 Cor. ix. 16.) They also describe them as “stewards,” to whom the Master of the house has intrusted a most precious treasure. (2 Cor. iv. 7.)

Now such a ministry, employed in a work of such magnitude as the salvation of immortal souls, evidently calls for the “gift of preaching.” God does not send his messages by the hands

of fools. His agents must be qualified for their special work, and the "GIFT OF PREACHING" *must be an essential qualification for*, the gospel ministry.

Let me then fix your thoughts upon this important gift, and press you, in your course of theological studies here, to aim at the possession and improvement of that gift.

I. Preaching is expressed by the Greek term, "κηρυγμα;" and a preacher is, κήρυξ, a herald or public crier.\* The original term is applied to one authorized to convey a message, or to publish, by verbal proclamation, any law or ordinance of the civil magistracy. It is descriptive of the Christian ministry, as an *office*.

Now, the message which the Christian pastor is appointed to convey to others, is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The laws which he is employed to publish, are the various revelations of the Divine will contained in the Holy Scriptures.

Those revelations are *various*: for they relate to various facts, duties, characters, and states of men; and to various Divine dispensations, both of judgment and of mercy. Every thing that the Christian pastor delivers in his official capacity, must correspond with, illustrate, and enforce what God has revealed; while he is forbidden to conceal any part of the revealed will of God, through fear or favor of man, or because he cannot perceive its accordance with received systems of philosophy. "Son of man," saith Jehovah to his gospel herald, "thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me."

1. Preaching the Word, is both a *gift* and a *duty*. Your attention is just now called to it *only as a gift*; and then it is to be defined thus: Preaching is the talent of communicating instructions from the written Word of God, in such a manner as to edify the body of Christ, awaken the attention of men to the concerns of their souls, and to lead the awakened to the cross of Christ for relief.

Being a gift, preaching is *susceptible of improvement*. This is a most encouraging fact to the young, who have determined to devote themselves to the special service of their Saviour: for,

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\* "κηρυκες," among the Greeks, signified as much as "caduceatores" and "sociales" among the Romans; heralds who published the laws, and proclaimed war or peace to a foreign power. Herodotus writes, κηρυκες και αποστολοι, heralds and apostles.

though just now but little ones among the "thousands of Judah," they may, through improvement of their gifts, yet stand among the mighty men of David their king.

Certain it is, that if the Christian Pastor were required to do nothing more than repeat to others the very words contained in Scripture, like a servant in a human family conveys a command to others in his master's own words, then it is acknowledged that a very slender furniture of intellect would be sufficient for the execution of his office, and that the gift of preaching would not require improvement. But while Jehovah commands his ministers to preach his Word, that written Word is so disposed in its parts and matter, and the revelations which it contains are such, that two important duties devolve upon them. They must explain portions of that Word to the understandings of the common people, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and ascertain the sense of the words employed by the inspired writers; and they must defend the character and doctrines of that Word against those who deny its divine inspiration and authority, and those who assail its important doctrines, and bring in "damnable heresies:" for the ministry has been instituted "for the defense of the gospel." (Philip. i. 17.)

Now, for the performance of these duties, a *gift* of no ordinary kind is required; for "who is sufficient for these things?" Such a cultivated mind, with other qualifications, is so imperiously demanded by the nature of the service itself, that many who are young in life, and not richly furnished with various knowledge and superior gifts, might consider themselves wholly disqualified for the sacred ministry. But, amid their perplexities, this consideration must afford them much encouragement: *The gift of preaching is susceptible of great improvement.*

(1.) The apostle Paul plainly expresses this fact in his various exhortations and directions to Timothy, who was young both in years and in the gospel service. With a view to the improvement of his pupil, that eminent master-workman said, "Give thyself to reading;" "Neglect not the gift that is in thee."

(2.) The same fact is also evident, from the nature of the duty of preaching; for if this duty depend on the exercise of the intellectual powers, we know that those powers, according to the constitution of the human mind, are capable of improvement.

2. I proceed to observe, second, that the *gift of preaching* may be improved—

(1.) By more renewing grace received into the heart; by richer experience of the power of divine truth, in special manifestations of the Divine presence and love.

Such experimental knowledge of the affecting realities of religion has a powerful effect upon the judgment and the affections. "I believe, and therefore have spoken." "From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit: then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." (Ps. li.)

Much, therefore, should the Evangelical Pastor pray, that he may feel in his own soul the power of the Word, and enjoy, amid the trials of the gospel ministry, and in an humble walk with God, special displays of Divine love. It was this happy communion with God that rendered Martin Luther and John Knox such able and successful ministers of the New Testament. They did not rely, in the great work in which they were engaged, upon the strength of their own intellect and the force of their own eloquence, but upon the fact *that God was with them*; of which precious fact they had acquired an assurance, from the sweet experience of the Divine presence in their closets.

How often was Brainerd supported in his trying missionary labors, by special manifestations of the Divine presence in love! In reference to one occasion he says: "I was feeble in body, perplexed and weak in faith. I was going to preach a lecture, and feared I should not have assistance to get through. I lifted up my heart to God, and had not gone far before my soul was abundantly strengthened with those words, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' I found more of God's presence to-day than I have done at any time in my late wearisome journey. Though my body was feeble and wearied with preaching, yet I wanted to sit up all night to do something for God. To God, the giver of these refreshments, be glory for ever and ever!"

(2.) The gift of preaching may be improved, even more than the gift of prayer, by the improvement of the mental powers. The scribe may enrich his treasure of things new and old, by increasing knowledge of facts, especially of those various momentous truths

which God has revealed in his Word. Even the communication of miraculous gifts in the primitive Church could not supersede the importance of such improvement in knowledge by personal efforts. Accordingly, the apostle Paul said to Timothy, "Give thyself to reading."

I need not here dwell upon the connection which intellectual improvement and the acquisition of various knowledge has with the gift of preaching; for it is sufficiently obvious, and is often exhibited in the lives of young preachers, who, in consequence of diligent study and increase of knowledge, have risen from the weakness of infancy into the strength of manhood in the gospel service, and both astonished and delighted those who had witnessed their first exercises in preaching.

(3.) Again: The gift of preaching may be improved by frequent conversation with pious and experienced Christians.

Such Christians exhibit in their discourses those dealings of God with his people, which serve to illustrate the methods of divine grace in redemption; to inspire hope; to resolve difficulties; to impart consolation in the hour of distress; to preserve from undue dejection and despair, and to touch all the springs of action in the human mind. Let then the young pastor listen attentively, when the aged Christian, who has long lived by faith, is heard to say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul."

From what the experienced in religion say, the minister of the Word may obtain knowledge of trials and deliverances which he has not himself experienced in kind, and thus be better able "to speak a word in season to him that is weary."

(4.) The gift of preaching may also be improved, by outpourings of the Spirit of God upon the congregation committed to the care of an Evangelical Pastor.

There may be excitements in religious society which are gotten up mechanically, to answer the purposes of sect and show; and these excitements or revivals may operate upon the minds of preachers who are engaged in them, and for a time render them exceedingly zealous and quite eloquent. But the stream can rise no higher than its fountain. Such excitements are usually followed by very striking declensions, and very distressing feuds among Christian professors, and misunderstandings between pas-

tor and people. Those who at one time were ready "to pluck out their own eyes" to give them to their pastor, are seen to combine together to *pluck* out their pastor's eyes.

But, "what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Such excitements as have just been described would not exist, were there no actual outpourings of the Spirit, producing great awakenings and many conversions. It is of these operations of the Holy Spirit that I now speak. They are seasons during which great power seems to attach to the preaching of the Word; seasons of great searchings of heart, and deep humiliations of the proud; "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." Such seasons invariably have a powerful influence upon the mind of the pastor: he is excited to preach more and better, by throwing his whole soul into his work; by exhibiting more faithfulness in warning and in directing sinners to the Saviour.

Very fervently, therefore, should the pastor pray that the Word which he preaches may be attended with Divine influence, so that "the dry bones may be shaken;" so that the dry land which he cultivates may abound with springs of water.

(5.) It remains to add here, that the gift of preaching is improved by observing a proper method in the composition of a discourse; by selecting useful matter; by the choice of fit and acceptable words; and by the study of manner in preaching.

II. Preaching comprehends two things, namely: The sermon itself, as a piece of composition; and the delivery or pronounciation of such sermon.

1st. The composition of discourses to be delivered, in fulfilling the great end of the gospel ministry, includes—

1. The proper subjects.
2. The thoughts or sentiments which make up a discourse.
3. The style.
4. Texts; and
5. Arrangement or plan.

The written Word of God, or Holy Scripture, furnishes the pastor with—

#### FIRST, THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF DISCOURSES.

This Word is the directory of Christian faith and practice, and

consequently must be preached. The minister of Christ is set apart to teach the Word; he is a "steward of the mysteries of God," and must render every subject which he discusses, and all the instructions which he communicates, directly subservient either to the defense or to the promulgation of its interesting doctrines, commands, and promises.

Here it may be said, "Every one knows that the Evangelical Pastor must preach the Word; for what else in Christian places of worship can he make the subject of his discourses?" But is it not true from history, that while nations retained the name of Christians, and daily repeated the Apostles' Creed, the written Word of God was unread and unseen? And in the darkness of the age, men who professed to be ministers of Christ, selected the subjects of their learned discourses from the philosophy of Aristotle. Dr. James says, in Wickliffe's time "Few sermons were preached, and those few were on fabulous subjects and on traditions, and profaned with much scurrility and emptiness. Friars persecuted the faithful, and said *it had never been well with the Church* since lords and ladies regarded the gospel, and relinquished the manners of their ancestors." (Apology for Wickliffe.)

Under the garb of the sacred ministry, men professedly under the most solemn vows to serve the Lord Christ, and to preach his Word, have committed the most flagrant acts of treachery towards him. Not only may this be done, but the records of the visible Church show that it has been done in innumerable instances.

Roman Catholic preachers in France, Spain, Italy, and other countries, in times past, preached the opinions of the Fathers, often absurd and contradictory, instead of the pure Word of God. Their sermons contained the lives of their favorite saints, and the stories of their imaginary miracles, and, like the Levite in the parable, passed by the precious doctrines of the Bible, which alone can pour oil into wounded hearts. This practice is still rife in places where Rome exhibits her false merchandise for sale, and binds the minds of the ignorant by her superstitions and idolatries.

Many Protestant preachers and writers of sermons have done "the work of the Lord deceitfully," by rendering their pulpit services subservient to the suppression of the grand doctrines of the Bible, and instrumental in disseminating their favorite theories in moral philosophy, and the philosophy of the human mind; or,

they have confined themselves to that moral code which *Deists* claim in common with the Christians. Sterne's sermons are of this class. The spirit and tenor of numerous other sermon books cannot be misunderstood by those who watch over the interests of the Christian religion; for they indicate a settled purpose to overlook all those doctrines which impart a glory to the gospel, and render it "the power of God unto salvation," and to exhibit in the fairest dress, a morality, which is not baptized into Jesus Christ. What is, at this day, the preaching of the disciples of Socinus? It is *Deism*, dressed up in Christian externals of the most flimsy texture; it is philosophy, expressed, so far as it can be, in Bible terms; it is a covert hostility against "the Cross of Christ," as the medium of pardon and reconciliation with God; the betrayal of the Son of man again with a "Hail, Lord! and a kiss." A sermon that attempts to set aside the necessity of a vicarious atonement, and to teach the sufficiency of repentance for salvation, is a denial of the Father who gave the Son to save by his atoning blood a lost world, and a denial of the Son as the "propitiation for our sins."

With these facts before us, are we not authorized to insist that the *subjects* of pastoral discourses must be those on which Paul and his fellow-apostles dwelt in their ministrations of the Divine Word? Can we forget that it was with a special design to make those apostles, in their ministerial labors, *examples* of preaching the Word to those who succeed them in the same service, that the Saviour selected them to be not only the *instruments of written communications* from God, but also active and incessant preachers of the gospel?

The subjects of preaching are *various*; and in the system of divine truth, are more or less important. All that can be done here is, to give a general sketch of those subjects which should ordinarily form the grand themes of pastoral discourses, and on which special attention should be fixed. Such subjects are the following, viz:

(1.) The fall and depravity of the human race. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

(2.) The evil of sin, and the certain destruction of those who remain under its dominion, and under the penalty of the moral law, and without the righteousness of that law. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." "The wages of sin is death."

(3.) The perfection of the moral law, and consequently the fact, that it forms the basis and is the rule of the moral government of God in all places of his dominion, and the dreadfulness of its penalty.

(4.) The Saviour, in the wonderful constitution of his person; in his offices, and in his estates; in a word, “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ,” and the efficacy of his cross. “For I determined,” said Paul, “not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

(5.) Another subject of ordinary preaching should be, the constitution of the covenant of grace, to be exhibited in its Mediator and federal Head, as the second Adam; in its promises and requirements; and in its grace and its benefits.

(6.) Again, the operations of the Holy Spirit, in awakening, converting, sanctifying, and sealing.

(7.) The privileges of God’s dear children, together with their temptations, their distinguishing exercises in the life and walk of faith, and their abiding interest in the promises. To which I may add, as subjects that will be more or less discussed, death, judgment to come, heaven, and hell.

These, I have said, should be the ordinary subjects of discourses by the pastor, in consequence of their relative importance among “the mysteries of God.” Of design, I have used the terms *ordinary discourses*; for we all know that, in fulfilling his ministry “as a workman that need not be ashamed,” the pastor must occasionally select other subjects of discussion in the pulpit; he must sometimes defend the gospel against the assaults of infidels, who occupy various grounds in opposing the divine inspiration of the Scriptures; he must contend with weapons suited to the versatility of error and heresy; and with a view of communicating better knowledge of what is recorded in the Scriptures, he may preach historical, prophetic, and typical discourses. Still, it must be prescribed as a *rule* to pastors, that they should dwell upon those subjects of deeper and general interest, which I have before enumerated: while subjects of the following kinds, should seldom be discussed, namely, the doctrines of natural religion, and the evidences of Christianity, especially in congregations that admit the evidences and acknowledge the divine authority of the Bible. The higher mysteries of our religion, such as the Trinity of Per-

sons in the Godhead, which should be stated as a doctrine clearly revealed in Scripture, and entering into all the dispensations of redeeming mercy to mankind, however unable the human mind may be to bring within the narrow limits of its comprehension every fact which relates to a self-existent and infinite Essence; also, passages of Scripture in which difficulties arise, perplexing to the learned, and which have no direct connection with faith and godliness; also, types and prophecies relating to nations long since destroyed, and to the series of prophetic revelations contained in the Apocalypse—these should be well studied, with prayer, but be seldom made the topics of pastoral discourses. And if at any time the pastor, in discoursing from a passage somewhat difficult, should, on consulting the original text, not approve the received version, he should hesitate long before he introduces into the pulpit what he is pleased to call mistranslations of the Scriptures. The translators of our modern version were not unripe scholars, men whose work can receive corrections from every lad who has looked into Greek and Hebrew grammars, and imbibed from the German commentators of the present times, doctrines subversive both of natural and revealed religion. To which, let me add, that the pastor should not ring the changes, from Sabbath to Sabbath, upon ancient heresies, which are unknown to those who hear him; nor dwell constantly upon the Divine decrees, upon Millerism, upon temperance, or upon controversial points which have little connection with a life of faith and godliness. Still less frequently should he preach about the dissipations of the gaming table, theatre, and ball-room, in places where those dissipations do not exist; especially when the prominent sins under his eye are those of Sabbath-breaking, inordinate thirst of wealth, covetousness, and the pride of life.

2nd. In selecting, however, the subjects of his frequent preachings from among those which have been mentioned, good sense and careful observation are necessary; and in making such selections, four things should be constantly kept in view by the pastor, namely:

1. The *great end* of the institution of the gospel ministry. Is it not the design of this most important institute, to call sinners to repentance; to recommend "*the crucified One*," as a suitable and all-sufficient Saviour; and to convert sinners unto God? This is

the object to which the efforts of ministers are to be directed; an object very different from that of displaying either profound learning or superior eloquence. Try to save souls from everlasting destruction, is the Divine command which they have received; and when they set themselves to do God's bidding as good stewards in his household, they will ordinarily choose those subjects of discourse which shall lead them to warn sinners of their danger, to stir them up to implore mercy, to receive the Saviour in his offices, to deny themselves, take up their crosses and follow Him. In the execution of their office, they will delight to say, as John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

2. To select subjects wisely, for ordinary pulpit services, the pastor must keep in view that he is to preach to those who *hear him*, and not to those who, from their situations, cannot hear him; and in this respect a sermon spoken differs from a religious treatise printed and published. How often is this fact overlooked in the ministry! How often are sinners reproved for particular sins, and violently scolded at by their pastors, when the sinners are not in the congregation, but far removed from it! How often are errorists and heretics solemnly admonished, when they are not present to hear the admonition! while the wrong doings and the lamentable condition of those who *are* before the eye of the preacher, are unattended to, and a "generation of vipers" is left to encircle him in all the twistings of Pharisaical formality, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy!

3. In order to do his work well, the pastor must also know the state of his flock. The *states* of religious societies are various, and the state of the same society may be rendered various by its growth or decline in religion, and by the variety of prevailing sentiments and practices prevalent therein.

Now, let the pastor suit his subjects to those various states. Let him not preach continually upon Christian experience, and the promises given to the godly under their "many afflictions," when his congregation is full of hardened, Antinomian and gospel-ridden sinners! Let him not preach on the moralities from Sabbath to Sabbath, when many around him are asking "what they must do to be saved."

It is to the people of his charge that he is to carry God's Word,

and it is among them "that he must rightly divide it." To execute this part of his duty well, he must ascertain, so far as he is able, what are the sentiments, the moral habits, the religious difficulties, the wants and desires of those to whom he is to dispense the Word.

Let him move with caution and address on his first settlement among a people. In every congregation there are little family feuds, rivalships, and jealousies, of which, as a stranger, he can possess little knowledge; for strangers well received see the fairest face of society. Let him, therefore, take pains to inquire, and in the mean time be guarded in his observations on men and things. In addition to the information he may obtain from personal intercourse with various individuals, let him seek further knowledge from judicious officers of the church, from the humble and not frowardly pious. Mischievous persons are sometimes very much inflamed with religious zeal.

But let the pastor, in attempting to acquire a knowledge of the state of his flock, never make his own house the centre to which the gossips shall direct their steps, and open their budgets of news. Let him moreover not dissipate the hours to be devoted to study and prayer, in idle visits, and in agricultural pursuits and trading speculations.

A pastor may be too much in the streets; and rambling ministers, like rambling mechanics, provide little food for those dependent on them for sustenance, but often preach rambling sermons.

4. To choose proper subjects of discourse, let a pastor be a careful observer of the leading exercises of his own mind, whilst he implores the direction of the Holy Spirit. He will preach better on subjects which deeply impress his own heart. Most frequently, those things which occupy his serious thoughts when he reflects on his future accountability, will promote the good of his people; add to which, that by attending to his own spiritual exercises, trials and enlargements, he will be preserved from converting the pulpit into a gladiator's box, where nothing is done from Sabbath to Sabbath but drawing the sword of argumentation, and making thrusts at sects and heretics, known and unknown. A pastor will have a starving flock, who does nothing more than fight the wolves. He must *feed*, as well as defend his sheep from beasts of prey.

Sufficient has now been said in relation to the proper subjects of pastoral discourses; especially when it is considered that subjects may be judiciously selected, and still be very imperfectly, not to say imprudently and unprofitably discussed. More, therefore, of what is useful in pastoral discourses, must depend on the sentiments which they contain, and on the instruction which they convey. To those thoughts and sentiments which should enter into a gospel preacher's discourse, and constitute the matter of it, I shall direct your attention in the next succeeding lectures. Just now, let me awaken in your minds some *practical reflections*.

The gift of preaching, you perceive, acquires its *value* from its immediate connection with the ministry of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. That ministry it will be your duty to maintain, in its Divine institution and in its all-important services as a *preaching and teaching ministry*. As such, it presents itself to our view the very day on which the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles at Jerusalem, and endowed them with power from on high; as such, and not as prayer readers and ritual servitors, its acts, after the day of Pentecost, are described by the inspired historian of what transpired; as such, it called for special epistles from the apostle Paul, addressed to Titus and Timothy; *as such*, in the exercise of its *preaching* gift, it could reach the hostile multitudes in every city, publish the tidings of a Saviour come, spread light abroad, disturb the heathen philosophers in their various schools, and the priests of idolatry in the recesses of their temples; arrest, by its brilliant victories over innumerable minds, the attention of civil magistrates, even of emperors, and cause the enraged mass of idolaters to cry out in alarm, "Those that have turned the world upside down, have come hither also." (Acts xvii.)

By what *means* did these primitive ministers of Christ effect such a surprising revolution in the sentiments, hearts, and habits of thousands in every country? The sacred historian Luke, and the actors themselves in that great work, tell us that they used "no carnal weapons," and seduced none over to their opinions and sect by offers of place and power in the empire; that they did not allure men into their despised association by inviting them into gorgeous temples, before splendid altars, and a priesthood dressed up in rich vestments, to render their ceremonial services more impos-

ing: for they had neither temples, nor altars, nor meeting-houses for their accommodation, but “were troubled on every side,” persecuted, and treated with scorn by the noble and the mighty. Yet they triumphed over opposition, and added multitudes of converts to the Christian faith “by the foolishness of preaching.” They preached the Word of Christ, and that Word was the power of God unto salvation.

Now if preaching the gospel be the ordinance of God; if by it he has determined to execute the purposes of his grace; if it be, in its simplicity and purity, a *means* so powerful in storming the strongholds of Satan, so efficient in rousing a sleeping world, then we may rest assured that, if evil be at any time meditated against the Church—if her light is to be so far extinguished as to introduce superstition, ritualism, and a lordly priesthood into her courts—*opposition*, more or less open and vigorous, will be made to that ministry which the Saviour appointed to be a *preaching and teaching ministry*, and which his apostles so nobly fulfilled. *Then* the absurd doctrine of apostolic succession will be revived, so that preachers shall not be called by the Church, and set apart by her ministry, but depend upon the pleasure of a “Lord Bishop” for their assistance, and receive the word at his mouth: *then*, in places of worship, pulpits will be thrust out of their proper situations for addressing an audience, to intimate that preaching the Word is an ordinance that may be dispensed with, and only occasionally observed: and *altars* built up and decorated, as if they were pieces of furniture essential to Christian worship. *Then* the fashionable cry will be raised in favor of *short* sermons; sermons resembling Pharaoh’s lean kine, fit only to devour the doctrinal richness of that gospel which Paul preached, as he said to believers, “that the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places.” (Ephes. i.) *Then*, too, the sacraments, which derive their being and utility from the Word, will be made the great instrumentalities for conveying saving

grace to souls, while the ordinance of preaching the Word itself will be treated as of little significance.\*

What I have just said, corresponds with facts recorded in Church histories. It is now seen in its realities and effects in the Church of Rome, and in the doings of those who would extend the power of Rome into Protestant countries.

But, happily, you know the gospel ministry to be a divine institution of a high character, as an *instrument* of "making known the mystery of Christ," and as a means of feeding the sheep and lambs of his flock; and your duty will lead you to defend it as such, to maintain its great importance among the ordinances of God. It is indeed one of the most precious, as it is the *first* gift of the Saviour after his glorious ascension into heaven. Words cannot express its full value to a lost world; for though it be "a treasure put into earthen vessels," yet it is a golden treasure, to be more carefully preserved than the wealth of empires. Events which have transpired through centuries past, and the present condition of nations and kingdoms, prove that the *moral elevation of man* in the social state depends not on the advance of science, nor on improvements in the arts, but upon an enlightened, faithful, and *preaching* ministry of the Word. Oh, with what importunity should the Church supplicate "the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into the harvest-field: for the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few!"

Into this harvest-field you have expressed a desire to enter, and to be actively employed. It therefore becomes you, as theological students, especially to reflect, that the office of a minister of the Word brings men into a *relation* to the Most High God, such as no other class of human beings sustain. For the office is one appointed by "God manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, justified in the spirit, and received up into glory:" an office designed to supply, in the Church here below, the absence of the Saviour's bodily presence and instructions; and as that Church is a visible society, to be a *visible* instrument in the hand of the Holy Spirit for promoting her interests, and for

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\* Those who thus exalt the sacraments, will not require the knowledge of divine truths: it will be sufficient, in their judgment, if Christians can repeat the Lord's Prayer, the creed, and the approved catechism.

“bringing many sons to glory.” The Evangelical Pastor stands and speaks in the name and stead of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a high and momentous embassy! It lifts a worm of the dust above earth’s most coveted employments, and places him with ministering angels in a service, the honors and rewards of which far exceed all earth’s glories. No wonder that Paul said, “I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, *I magnify mine office.*” No wonder that the learned and pious Whitaker, in the view of all the duties and trials of the gospel ministry, should still say, “I had rather be a preacher of the gospel than an emperor.”

The relations and ends of the gospel ministry do indeed confer on a faithful Evangelical Pastor honors peculiar and sublime. Hence it may be said that, under the constitution of things in this world, the Supreme Being employs civil magistrates, and those whom men call “the honorable of the earth,” as overseers and keepers of the wicked, restraining them from doing harm to their fellows. He uses kings and princes as he did proud and mighty Nebuchadnezzar, in all their transitory greatness, as “rods” in his hand, to scourge the ungodly; as the executioners of his wrath, directed against nations who have filled up the measure of their iniquities. But ministers of the gospel are God’s stewards in his household of grace here, and they stand next the Master himself in his establishment: stewards, set over God’s precious things; the mysteries of his kingdom, the souls of his people; the interests of that Church, which is dear to him “as the apple of his eye,” and which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Not only are ministers “stewards,” but they are stewards in their Lord’s absence from his house here below; called to act in his name, and agreeably to the orders which they have received from him.

Among those orders, the first and most prominent is this well-known one: “Go, preach the gospel.” “Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.” Accordingly, the apostles themselves were abundant in labors as *preachers*, and their labors in preaching brought them into conflict with Jews and Gentiles, and exposed them to severe persecutions.

That Divine command to preach the Word is *unrepealed*, and brings with it into requisition the *gift* of "preaching," as a qualification for the gospel ministry; and this important gift it is now your duty assiduously to cultivate. Men may be mighty in the Scriptures, and compose approved sermons; but with a slender gift in speaking their sermons, or exhibiting their knowledge of divine truth, they will fail in attracting and fixing the attention of their hearers, and especially in impressing conviction on their minds. Many pious and learned divines have been inefficient and neglected preachers; and some in the ministry, by their talent in preaching, have covered many imperfections in their compositions.

This gift of preaching will be called up again, when I shall come to speak of the delivery of sermons. In the mean time, I shall remind you that the gift of preaching, which should rest on various knowledge, comprehends the happy and ready exercise, not merely of mental power, but also of bodily endowments and personal accomplishments. Cast then your eyes around, and every faculty which yields an item in constituting the gift of preaching, seek to improve. You may not perhaps, after all your study and care, be able so to preach as to command popularity, and have your name inserted among the pulpit orators of the day; but your improved gift in preaching, supported by the piety of your hearts, will render you instructive and useful preachers, "workmen that need not be ashamed," "teachers that will command the attentive ear of all but scorners." But "who is sufficient for these things?" Under a sense of your insufficiency for preaching the Word, look up "to the Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift," the sufficiency of whose grace can supply your needs, and make "the weak things of this world confound the things that are mighty." It was in direct relation "to the foolishness of preaching," and the gift of preaching in its exercise, that the apostle Paul penned those soul-encouraging words, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (1 Cor. i. 25.)

Depend not then upon your natural endowments for public speaking, nor upon the applause which you have received in the course of your literary studies as orators; but seek your

ability for the work of preaching, which requires attributes in some measure peculiar, where Paul sought it, "by bowing your knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," (Ephes. iii. 14,) by feeling your need of the influences of the Spirit of grace and power, and by enduring "as seeing him who is invisible." Be solicitous so to do, so to act, and so to feel. Let faith look at the sacrifice on Mount Calvary, and then raise her eye still higher, and look at your High Priest interceding in heaven.

Be not discouraged by any difficulty in your first attempts at preaching the Word; for if the gift can be improved, then it is not for yourselves *now* to say what you will be as preachers of the Word, if "the Master has need of you," nor to predict the effects that will result from your preaching power. Was it not Curran, who tried to speak for the first time at the meeting of the Irish Historical Society, but the words died on his lips, and he sat down amid titters, characterized by one "as milk and water"? Yet at what elevation did this man reach as a public speaker!

## LECTURE VII.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

#### ON THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS.

KNOWLEDGE, so far as it is a valuable attribute of mind, is made up of facts in the arts and sciences; and composition, whether written or spoken, derives its relative value from the number of facts which it contains, and the manner in which those important facts are exhibited or expressed.

A sermon or pastoral discourse is a composition, and as such its utility and value will depend upon the good thoughts, ideas, truths, or sentiments of which, in the interesting concern of gospel publication, it is the vehicle.

In speaking of those things which enter into the composition of a sermon, I have, in the preceding lecture, shown the *subjects* ordinarily to be selected and discussed by evangelical pastors, as the themes of their public discourses; and must now direct your attention,

SECOND, TO THE THOUGHTS OR SENTIMENTS WHICH SHOULD FORM THE MATTER OF THOSE DISCOURSES.

It is almost unnecessary to observe to you that it is *not* the subject selected, nor the style used, nor the method adopted by the preacher, that gives a character of value or otherwise to his sermon; but the sentiments, truths, and reasonings which that sermon comprehends. The other requisites have their proper place in compositions; but it is by the ideas and arguments which the Christian teacher expresses in his discourses, that he is to communicate instruction to others. Speak to their understandings and their hearts, and thereby "edify the body of Christ." It was with

a special view to this *effect* of preaching the Word, that the apostle Paul said to Timothy, "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith." "Give thyself to reading." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth: 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 their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. iv.)

Impressed by the fact that the sentiments or truths expressed must give a sermon its proper character, I proceed to observe—

1. That those thoughts or sentiments, to answer the end of preaching, must be pregnant with and *illustrative* of divine truth, and instructive and profitable to the hearers. The minister of Christ is a "teacher of good things," and, as Paul said to Timothy, he must so preach, "that his profiting may appear to all." (1 Tim. iv. 15.) *Instruction* in the things of religion was contemplated by the Saviour, when he instituted the ministry. (Matt. xxviii.) The Christian religion is called, preëminently, "light come into the world," "knowledge," "wisdom." The Divine Word is made up of truths to be published, taught, known, and believed. It is said, "to give understanding to the simple, and to make the foolish wise." Now, this high character it should sustain in the preaching of the Evangelical Pastor. His lips should teach sound doctrine, though his arguments and illustrations in confirmation of such doctrine, may be drawn from various sources. "Take heed to thy doctrine," said Paul to Timothy, "for in so doing thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee." His sermons should enlighten the mind, and enable those who hear him to know what the "will of the Lord is," and to discern the way which leads to the heavenly city. He is set apart to war against that "kingdom of darkness" which sin has erected in this world, "by holding forth the Word of life, and speaking the truth in love." Satan, "a pyramid of mind on the dark desert of despair," builds his empire

"On opinion, fount of action, falsely held."

The gospel preacher is directed to meet this foe in combat. His

weapon is the Word of God, so published in instructive discourses, as that it shall recommend itself to every man's sober reflection and "conscience in the sight of God."

Sermons replete with metaphysical subtleties, like those of the schoolmen in the dark ages, may do honor to the philosophy of Aristotle, or to some other philosophy, fashionable for a day, but they detract from the high character of the religion of the crucified One, (1 Cor. ii. 2,) and are unprofitable and mischievous.

So also discourses filled with light and frothy sentiments, in which, as Archbishop Usher says, "Corinthian Vanity" displays herself, or Ignorance betrays her slender resources, by harping upon one or two ideas hastily snatched from some commentator, (though there be no direct violation of the law of truth,) or by misrepresenting facts, are disgraceful to the gospel ministry. (1 Pet. iv. 11.)

It is not required, in the composition of pulpit discourses, that they shall be equally instructive; this, from the variety of subjects discussed, cannot be expected: but let the preacher speak sound doctrine and good sense; then he will always edify his serious and intelligent hearers. Perhaps the greatest pulpit orators are not so useful in communicating solid instruction as those who, without oratorical powers, enrich their sermons with deep thought, with heart-searching and practical divinity; nor are those persons who, on the Sabbath, are seen to be in chase of popular preachers, found to have furnished their minds with a large measure of Scripture knowledge. Great will be the mistake of such persons, if they suppose that they are to be lifted up to heaven by their ears. (Jas. i. 22, 23.)

2. But the thoughts in a sermon may, in themselves, be good and useful; still, they may be out of their proper place, because unconnected with the subject, or with one another. In preaching well, it is therefore required that the thoughts or sentiments in a sermon shall be *pertinent*, growing naturally out of the subject selected by the preacher, and tending to exhibit it in a clear light.

Bishop Porteus, so remarkable for the good sense of his writings, disappoints his readers by selecting for the subject of one of his sermons, *Evangelical Sober-mindedness*, inculcated by Paul in these words to Timothy: "Young men likewise exhort, that they be sober-minded." But his thoughts in that sermon have little con-

nection with the subject proposed in the text, but are employed about the advantages to youth of an *academical* education. How very remote from Paul's thoughts, at the time he penned those words, was either a liberal education in the literary institutions, or any benefits which resulted from such culture of the human mind!

But less pertinent still are the thoughts expressed in a sermon, when the preacher writes or speaks as if he were anxious to accumulate matter, without any regard to the connection of its parts, running out into digressions until the subject be lost, and a new one introduced. Such a discourse may well be compared to "a rope of sand." I once heard a preacher, when his subject was the resurrection of Christ, and its effects upon the minds of his disciples, (John xx. 20,) deliver a piece of a dissertation going to prove that *assimilation* is one of the original principles of the human constitution. On another occasion, I heard one who had the reputation of being "a master in Israel," enter into a long disquisition, philosophical indeed, respecting the *principle of animal life*, when his text was, Rom. i. 21, "Neither were thankful;" and his subject, the *duty* of national thanksgiving. If the preacher is to enjoy such license, the pious poor especially will seek instruction from the Word elsewhere.

You will consider pertinency as standing opposed to *unnecessary amplification*, to superfluous reasoning, and also "to a cumbersome citation of Scripture passages." The last-mentioned fault was committed by preachers much engaged in controversy, after the dawn of the Reformation. At this day, no such defect attaches to sermons heard in Christian assemblies. On the contrary, many preachers are so enamored of their own phraseology, so impressed with the worth of their own ideas and arguments, that in their sermons they will permit scarcely *one passage of Scripture* to fall upon the listening ear.

3. Again: The thoughts in sermons should be not only pertinent, but also *profound*.

By the use of the term profound, in this connection, it is not my design to insinuate that the preacher should, in the discussion of his subject, introduce as many metaphysical terms and propositions as he can drag in, or attempt to show the extent of his literary studies, and the depth of his philosophical researches, or his inti-

mate acquaintance with scholastic and controversial theology. Far from it. Such profundity of thought usually characterizes the sermons of those "who aim to pervert the gospel of Christ," and is no doubt partially referred to by the apostle of the Gentiles, in Col. ii. 8: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

But I here apply the word "profound" to the subject proposed by the text itself to be discussed. Accordingly, the thoughts of a preacher on any given subject are said to be profound, when they do not skim along the surface of the subject, nor exhibit the least important part of it, but serve to unfold clearly the subject itself; or in other words, when they enable those who hear, to know the mind of the Spirit and the will of God expressed in the text. For instance, were a preacher to speak from the words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," and in the discussion of this subject were to expand his remarks in the exhibition of our Lord Jesus Christ as *a man and a teacher*, distinguished by the purity of his life, and the heavenly sweetness and meekness of his temper, and forbear to preach him in his office of a Saviour from sin, to exhibit him in the interesting light of a "Lamb" or sacrifice offered up to make atonement for sin, he would do violence to the evident sense of the passage; and though his observations in relation to the Redeemer, as being an illustrious example to us in every virtue, should be both correct and eloquent, yet they would *not be profound*.

Let the preacher, then, study to exhibit the mind of the Holy Spirit, in the passage before him; let him enter into the core of his text. Divine truth is valuable, not merely as it serves to correct the judgment where it errs, but as it exhibits objects of moral beauty to attract the heart with its affections.

4. The thoughts in a sermon should also be *select*. This requisition is a *law* in all good writing and speaking, and is particularly in force in the composition of a sermon, which ought to abound in good sense, and which, from the frequency of preaching, ought to be made as awakening and impressive as the best thoughts of a preacher on a subject will permit.

That discourse in which a subject is attempted to be exhausted,

is like a river which, in proportion to its breadth, becomes shallow and less useful for navigation. Do not, therefore, say *all* that you can say on a subject; do not introduce into your sermon every good thought that may arise in your mind, or every good extract which you have made. Condense the rays of light, that they may acquire the energy of fire.

It is known, indeed, that the young preacher is not much in danger of exhausting a subject, but more disposed to introduce irrelevant matter into his sermons. His difficulty, at the beginning of his ministry, arises more from penury than exuberance of thought. Still, as his reading extends, and as he becomes more free and careless in his compositions, he is apt to say too much, when fewer thoughts forcibly expressed would be better.

I now proceed to point out the *method* to be observed in acquiring *matter* for discourses, such as will render the pulpit service of a pastor more acceptable and edifying.

(1.) The preacher must study his subject and ruminate upon it. "Meditate on these things." (1 Tim. iv. 15.) "Give thyself wholly to them"—*ἐν τούτοις ἔστι*—"be in them;" a phrase evidently intended to express the steady application of the mind to the consideration of divine truths, in their connection.

That study here referred to includes *two* things, namely: the reading carefully of the Holy Scriptures, and of the most approved writers on the subject of our study; and reflection, united with various reading.

It has been strongly recommended, that, apart from the exercise of domestic worship, the pastor devote an hour each day in reading the Scriptures in order, noting in each chapter or portion the passages which are not plain to his understanding, and which therefore require more particular study, and especially those passages which speak to his own heart: the latter ought to be read frequently over, and committed to memory, for the preacher will find much use for such passages, both in composition, and when he is addressing a Christian congregation.

The approved writers to be read are happily many, and to be found in the book-stores. They comprehend *four* classes, namely: commentators and paraphraists; writers on some branch of didactic or practical divinity; writers of sermons; and writers of religious essays and treatises. Readily do young ministers furnish

their rooms with books of sermons, especially those which are applauded as being the productions of genius, and are extensively circulated among the literary and fashionable in society; such as Blair's sermons, the sermons of Saurin, Bourdaloue, Massillon, Wardlaw, Chalmers, etc. These are supposed to afford the best helps to those who have just entered the ministry. Doubtless they are useful, in respect of matter and style; but, it ought to be remembered, that these discourses were written and corrected with much labor, for the defense of certain great principles of the Christian religion, and were addressed principally to men of superior intelligence, taste and station. Unless delivered by superior oratorical powers, they would make little impression on the common mind, and are not good models to those who are called to preach "both to the wise and the unwise." They aid the young pastor very little in his attempts to relieve the wounded Samaritan, or to fix the arrows of conviction deep in the heart of the careless sinner. Be this, however, as it may, I am persuaded that young preachers, after their style has been improved in our academical institutions, will derive more immediate help, in their ordinary preachings, from Flavel's sermons, the sermons of Davies, Jay, and others. Religious treatises, such as Witherspoon on Regeneration, Simeon on the Holy Spirit, ought to be well studied.

But some who preach the Word keep their minds unfurnished with much useful knowledge, by restricting their reading to sermons and theological works. The facts contained in the Bible, the doctrines which the Christian minister is bound to teach and defend, are connected, by stronger or feebler relations, with almost every department of knowledge. He cannot, therefore, extend his researches too far, provided his official duties be not neglected. Every useful and ornamental art, and every branch of science, afford facts which serve to enlarge the range of his thoughts and to supply him with illustrations, in discussing well the very various subjects which he selects as the themes of his successive discourses.

(2.) But reading, as you already know and have often heard, to be profitable, must be followed by *reflection*. Father Augustine long since said, "Leetio inquiri—oratio postulat—meditatio invenit—contemplatio degustat." Some young men in the gospel ministry exhibit a voracious appetite in reading books; but there is no

digestion by them of what they read. Hence, when they take up their pens to compose sermons, they are obliged to borrow without ceremony from the writers before them too lavishly. It is an unhappy condition, in natural life, *to live by borrowing*. Such a life usually is the result of indolent habits: but “the pastor must not be slothful in business;” he must give himself to reading and collecting facts; he must hold in his hands other writings than popular sermons; and must discipline his mind to deep reflection. “I will not offer unto the Lord,” said one, “that which cost me nothing.” Certain it is, the priests of the tabernacle were required to use, not merely oil, but *beaten* oil, in the divine service. So ministers of the gospel, by study and reflection, must beat that oil wherewith they attempt to enlighten Christian temples.

Here I must observe that *time* is necessary, both for study and reflection. A pastor therefore should husband his time well; for he will find many interruptions in his course of study, some of which arise from urgent calls to parochial duties, and many of which it will not be in his power to set aside. Early after the Sabbath, and even on Sabbath evenings, if he can, he should select the subject of his next discourse. The sooner he makes this arrangement, the sooner he can put his mind into a course of reading, and into a train of reflection suited to the better performance of his work. Very injurious is it to a pastor, to dissipate the first days of the week in what he is pleased to call recreation. An idle Monday makes a daughter of Tuesday, and a step-son of Wednesday; and a few days expended in doing little to purpose, create towards the end of the week a severe pressure of disagreeable study and torturing anxieties, an undue hurry in preparation for the Sabbath; or obliges a pastor to depend on old sermons, or to repeat sentiments which are uppermost in his memory, and delivered in his preceding sermons. And is it a matter of small moment, to be unprepared for a service of this solemn kind? “What impudence,” says an old writer, “is it in the great business of salvation, when a man appears before the church, before angels, before God, to discourse in a loose manner, so as to flatten devotion instead of exciting it, and to prostrate the esteem and authority of the great ordinance of preaching!”

(3.) Let me add, that to be rich in matter for pastoral preaching, *prayer* must be united with habits of study and reflection. It was

a saying of Martin Luther, "Bene orasse est, bene studuisse!" He always found himself in a better disposition for study and for preaching, after he had composed his thoughts and lifted up his heart to God in prayer. Bradford, who died a martyr to the faith under the reign of Queen Mary, and who was successful in preaching the Word and defending the Reformation principles, united much prayer with study in his preparation for the pulpit.

Much help do we need from God in this great work. To do good to souls, our own insufficiency must be felt; and in proportion to the consciousness of our inability, not to compose a speech which rhetoricians will approve and the multitude stare at, but to preach so as to bring sinners to Christ, will be our disposition to implore the aids of the Holy Spirit. That Spirit has access to the mind of a pastor, can direct his thoughts, enlarge his views, and work effectually in him to render him an instrument by which "many shall believe." (1 Cor. iii. 15.) Study therefore with the knees of your heart habitually bent before the throne of grace.

### THIRD, THE STYLE ADAPTED TO DISCOURSES.

I must now direct your attention to the third thing which enters into the composition of approved discourses from the pulpit. This is *style*.

1. Style, as you know, "is the manner in which a writer or speaker expresses his thoughts to others, by means of language." Accordingly, language is the great instrument which the preacher is obliged to employ in the gospel service, not merely to express his sentiments, and pass on, but especially to persuade men, to incline their minds to believe as he believes, and to enlist them "on the Lord's side." It must, then, be a matter of no little importance, that his style should be such as to awaken and fix attention, to exhibit truth clearly, and thereby impress the minds of his hearers, and promote the end of preaching the Word. Every one knows, that the best thoughts on a religious subject may appear to be of an inferior character, and lose half their value, in consequence of that dress of language in which they are exhibited. Style, therefore, should be a particular subject of study by those who preach the Word. Eccles. xii. 10, 11: "The preacher sought

to find out acceptable words; for the words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies."

Draw your words as much as possible "from the wells of English undefiled." Our language happily abounds in small words. These, both in prose and poetry, give not only perspicuity but force to style. No writer can inflict awful gashes, no speaker can thrill the hearer, who rejects the monosyllables in our language, and comes slowly riding upon the top of long, swelling words derived from the Greek and Roman tongues. It is true that Pope says, "Short words are stiff and languishing," and he has attempted to condemn their use in this line:

"And ten small words creep on in one dull line;"

but his judgment is false, and may be set aside by what he himself wrote. Had he attempted to express that idea by long words, he would have exhibited an instance of dulness indeed.

Wisely did the translators of our English Bible use small words, which impart a beauty and force to innumerable passages in their excellent version. Coleridge admired this passage for its sublimity: "And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God! thou knowest."

Milton gives energy to his poetic thoughts by monosyllables. Young does the same. Is there any dulness in these lines?

"The bell strikes one: we take no note of time  
Save by its loss; to give it then a tongue  
Were wise in man."

2. Style is *various*, according to the various powers of conception, the various associations and tastes of writers and speakers, and according to the various subjects of composition and discourse. Letting alone here intellectual capacity and taste, I proceed to observe, that the style of the gospel preacher, if it be in his power to vary it, should be suited to the particular subject of his discourse. In one point of view, all the subjects of his preachings have one general character: they are *religious subjects*, clothed with the majesty of the Divine Word, and connected with the solemn character of a divine religion, while they are designed to promote the high eternal interests of man. With a direct refer-

ence to this fact, the apostle Peter says, 1 Pet. iv. 11: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."

But while all the subjects of evangelical preaching have one general character, it is nevertheless true that they are *diversified* in respect to the particular branches of truth and duty to which they more directly relate. Hence there are historical and didactic subjects of discourse. There are subjects which call for the descriptive powers, and subjects which demand the plainness and severity of logic, as when one attempts to prove the existence of God from the creation which we behold, or to show the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth from the prophecies of old. There are subjects which speak almost wholly to the understanding; and others, again, which address themselves particularly to the conscience and to the heart, in its finer feelings and affections. The propriety of the rule just laid down is therefore obvious: the style should be suited by the preacher to the particular subject to be discussed. The outbursts of a rich imagination should not be seen amid a series of arguments detailed to establish a fundamental doctrine of either natural or revealed religion. Nor should the narrative style of history be used, when the speaker addresses himself to the results of personal experience, and strives to win over and excite the affections. Let him vary his style, if he can, with his subject, and not give the stiffness of logical dress to a sermon intended to describe the constraining influence of the love of Christ, (2 Cor. v. 14;) nor indulge in flights of a poetic fancy, when he is called to fix the actual conditions of Christian discipleship. (Luke xiv. 26.) The common hearers say of some, not without reason, "that they are cold preachers, and deliver dry sermons;" for they preach on every subject in the style of a logician, or after the manner of a plain matter-of-fact lawyer.

3. In respect of style in sermons, the *general rules* for good writing taught in the schools, with slight modifications, must be prescribed to those who engage in compositions for the pulpit. Such compositions demand every attribute of good writing: they require that the style should be *perspicuous*, neat, chaste, dignified, forcible, and bold; for the sentiments in good sermons, from the various subjects to which they relate, will call for those qualities of style to aid in their happy expression.

(1.) I observe, then, that *perspicuity* is one of the characters of style suited to the pulpit.

Thoughts, in speaking and writing, are said to be perspicuous, when the words and sentences employed are easy to be understood, and the subject of remark and reasonings are readily apprehended by others.

Perspicuity stands opposed to *obscurity*, in the communication of thought; and a preacher, to whom we must here confine our attention, may render his meaning obscure in various ways: as for instance, by the use of scholastic terms which are no longer well understood even by the well-informed; of metaphysical terms and phrases which perplex the common mind; by the employment of long words strung together in sentences, and seldom heard in ordinary life; by rendering sentences, even when plain words are used, too long and too much involved; and by excess of metaphors. This evil should be studiously avoided. Obscurity in a discourse is a proof of ignorance in the mind. The better we understand a subject ourselves, the more easily can we expound it to others.

(2.) Perspicuity, especially in sermons, is *all-important*. For the great object in preaching is, not merely to alarm the fears of sinners, but to enlighten their minds, to teach divine truths, to enable men "to know what the will of the Lord is," and to enrich their understandings with knowledge of various facts, with a view to improve the state of their hearts, and to guide their feet into the ways of practical godliness. Now this blessed effect cannot be produced by preachers whose discourses perplex, but do not inform, their hearers. And who are those hearers? Is a Christian worshipping assembly composed of those only who have received a liberal education, and who have occupied seats in the schools of philosophy and theology? Are they exclusively "the wise, the scribes, and the disputers of this world"? No: blessed be God! "the gospel is preached to the poor." In ordinary congregations, convened to hear the Word, the greater number are illiterate; men and women whose occupations do not permit them to bestow much cultivation on their minds by various reading and study.

Now, with an audience made up of a few well-informed, but many unlearned persons, how necessary is it that the Christian teacher should put his instructions into a dress of perspicuous words and sentences. If he must abandon elegance of style, (of which there is no necessity,) in order to be perspicuous, let him do it without hesitation. Paul did this when he preached among

the heathen, who were ignorant of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. "His preaching was not in wisdom of words or excellency of speech," but in the best mode the manifestation of the truth could be made. "Non quærit æger," says Seneca, "medicum eloquentem sed senentem"—a sick man does not seek for an eloquent physician, but a skilful one.

(3.) To render style perspicuous, you know it must be *grammatically correct*. Arrangement is necessary to fix the meaning of words in a language, and by words to construct sentences which shall convey to others the ideas expressed, in a clear and striking manner. Now, that arrangement or plan is the grammar of that language.

It is to be regretted that so many of our youth, after passing through the forms of an academical education, think that they are elevated above the study of English grammar, and need no longer consult their dictionaries. The wise scholar, on the contrary, may be said ever to carry his dictionary under his right arm, and to hold his grammar in his left hand. How careful is the skilful mechanic to know and to keep in order the tools by which he operates from day to day! Now words are the instruments by which the preacher is to operate upon the minds of those who hear him. To preserve these instruments in order, let him refresh his memory with the rules of grammar, and study the proper construction of sentences in our language. Some enter the ministry too wise in their own conceit, to learn the art of speaking and writing with propriety, the language in which they are to preach the gospel.

It is acknowledged that violations of the rules of grammar may be detected in the discourses of the best preachers, who speak without written notes before them: yet their discourses are such in their whole structure, as to show that those errors are the offspring of mere haste and inadvertence, and therefore are not noticed by men of sense; but when it is discovered that such errors originate in ignorance, they are severely criticised, and the reputation of the preacher is deeply affected.

Let then the minister of the Word not neglect the study of words, and their grammatical construction, that he may be perspicuous in his observations and arguments, and "give no offense" through ignorance of what he ought to understand, when he assumes the office of a public teacher.

(4.) But perspicuity requires also *the use of plain words* in pastoral discourses, or words which are known to be the signs of those ideas which the preacher intends to convey. *Words* which are obsolete, or just compounded of words from a dead or foreign language; words which are scholastic, confined in their use to theological systems and doctrines, and seldom heard in religious conversation, ought carefully to be avoided.

But *new* words, in the discussion of religious topics, may be introduced with a view to define thought more clearly, or to supersede the use of old terms and phrases, the meaning of which has long been known among Christians; or it may be that new meanings may be attached by some theological writers to old terms, in order to let in error. Now, shall the writer or speaker of sermons catch at these new terms with eagerness, or take the liberty of coining words for his purpose, and of changing the signification of old terms at his pleasure? By no means. He is not invested with authority to do this, and his style of writing would fail in *perspicuity*.

In teaching the doctrines of truth, terms and phrases which theological writers have long used, and to which Christian ministers and people have attached certain definite meanings, are the proper vehicles of instruction from the pulpit. I should not be disposed to affirm, with a distinguished writer, "that the coining of new terms is the unfailing expedient of those who cannot make a right application of old ones;" but it is certain that, from the long teaching of the Christian religion, and the many controversies in times past to which error and heresy have given birth, there is now a form of sound words established by usage and theological disquisitions, from which it is not safe to depart in preaching the Word, and from which, frequent departures cannot be made without exciting suspicion in serious minds, and certainly rendering the style of the preacher less perspicuous to those who hear him. Words are signs, and if what they signify be determined and known, it is better to retain old words and phrases of this character, than to coin new ones which may perplex, if not mislead others.

The history of the Church tells us that truth depends for its preservation on "right words;" and that heretics, by changing a single syllable in a word, have taught very evil doctrine. New

terms seldom explain better old doctrine, but often conceal *new* doctrine under the pretext of an improved style. *New* phraseology is introduced in the service of religion, by those who would subvert the received theology in a sound confession of faith. What evils resulted in the early days of the Reformation, from the use, by Luther, of the term, "consubstantiation!" So the terms, "justification and sanctification," had early, among the Reformers, definite meanings, when applied to the states of Christian converts. But John Wesley, to perfect his system of Arminianism, would have us to understand by a justified state, that into which one converted and sanctified by the grace of God comes, when he professes to have joy and peace in believing, or to have wrought himself up into an happy and assured frame of mind. Hence it follows that a believer in Christ may be renewed and sanctified long before he is *justified*, whereas he was justified the very first moment he believed with the heart. (Rom. viii. 30; John iii. 15, 16.)

So also the word, "feeling," is at this day employed to express the religious exercises and the state of the heart. The term is an unhappy one: it stands, in its ordinary acceptation, connected with bodily sensations, and may be easily perverted to sustain "quietism" and mystic theology. I have remarked that those who make religion to consist "in feelings," are the first to cry down the use of sound doctrine in the Church, and to have very obscure ideas of that precious faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

The *terms* therefore applied to the doctrines of the Christian religion, sanctioned by long usage, again and again explained and generally understood, are those which should characterize the style of pastors in preaching. Some have given to this quality in the composition of sermons the name of "orthodoxy of style." The name unquestionably is not the best, but the thing which it is designed to express is all-important in maintaining sound doctrine.

True it is that language is an imperfect instrument in conveying thought, and that error is both versatile and prepared to hide its variations by new terms and definitions. Hence some old terms do in theology become obsolete. Better words than those before used may occasionally be found and introduced, for the purpose

of detecting error and of exhibiting truth in a clearer light. We know that phraseology has in some instances been improved in the defense of sound doctrine, but let the minister of Christ adopt these innovations with caution. Let him adhere, in teaching doctrines, *to old words*; and be sure, before he uses new terms, especially those drawn from metaphysics, that they harbor no new unsound philosophy or old error. Men who wish to bring in heresies craftily, will either invent new words or apply old ones in a various sense.

Let me add here, that an accurate knowledge of connective words in our language, is highly important in constructing sentences which shall be plain to the understanding of others. In this lies much of the skill requisite to successful public declamation.

But in arranging the sentences in a discourse, let long words, drawn from the Greek and Roman classical writers in the taste of Dr. Samuel Johnson, be excluded, and preference be given to short terms of Saxon origin. This will impart not only perspicuity, but force, to style.

(5.) Perspicuity in a sermon further depends on the *connection of the thoughts*, as propositions, however well selected the words may be, of which those propositions are composed. Now that method is to be always pursued which leads the mind from one idea to another by obvious associations, and by those relations which connect the steps of a clear process of reasoning.

When, however, in order to secure perspicuity, I recommend the use of plain words and a simple construction of sentences, it is not to be understood that the preacher should adopt the low style of the illiterate in society: such style is altogether inconsistent with the dignity and sublimity of the Christian religion. The apostle Paul did not so speak, as we may learn from his epistles. He did not use that "plainness of speech" which degrades a subject, nor those low phrases which are not heard in good society; but "that plainness of speech" which he employed as the vehicle of his thoughts, was that style which stood opposed to the metaphysical and rhetorical style of the heathen philosophers and orators.

The philosophers prided themselves on the use of terms in reasoning which were unintelligible by those who had not fre-

quented their schools. The orators embellished their speeches with all the figures (and they were numerous) which the art of rhetoric could furnish. They sought the praise of elegant writing, and arranged their discourses rigidly in conformity with the rules prescribed in the schools of oratory. But the apostle Paul had more important objects to employ his thoughts and his talents. He therefore used that style which did not offend by its vulgarity, nor attract certain classes by the studied variety of its ornaments. It was plain, but chaste and dignified. It was occasionally obscure to those who had not learned the alphabet of gospel truth, but suited to the conveyance of a new system of religion, formed by the cross of Jesus Christ, and to the important subjects which he discussed.

Robert Walker of Edinburgh, in his printed sermons, has avoided those extremes which render the style of the preacher bad, and shown that the style may be sufficiently plain, while at the same time it is chaste and elegant.

Bishop Porteus, though his manner of writing is different from that of Walker, has also exhibited the same fact in his instructive sermons. And it is recorded in praise of the Rev. James Harvey, that, however reprehensibly florid his style is in some of his writings, yet in his sermons, spoken and printed, he used a very plain and neat manner of expressing his thoughts. His printed discourses, though few in number, are well written and very instructive.

4. The remarks made on perspicuity of style lead me to observe, that another attribute of that style which is suited to the pulpit, is *chastity and dignity, united with force of expression.*

By the use of the term "dignity" in its direct application to pulpit style, (and in this application, it will of course include chastity or neatness,) I mean that the manner in which the gospel preacher shall express himself by language, shall be such as to correspond with the solemnities of divine worship, and with the important and elevated nature of the subjects which he is set apart to discuss. Every thing connected with the religion taught by the gospel is deeply interesting, as well as sublime. Many of its truths are awful and grand. It speaks of God in his immensity, and in his moral government over his intelligent creatures. It speaks of eternity with its affecting realities. It reveals

a Saviour from everlasting misery. Now, let the style of the preacher be adapted to subjects of this kind.

This dignity of style, it will be perceived, stands opposed to all low and vulgar phrases. These are inadmissible in the pulpit, where chastity of thought is supposed to be natural, as the preacher there is considered to stand "on holy ground," and to officiate in the name of God.

In this respect, preachers in England, before and under the reign of Queen Anne, transgressed frequently the laws of good style. Dr. South, who thought he did God much service (as he doubtless did the royal court and hierarchy in Britain) by misrepresenting the Presbyterians and Puritans, has indulged in language inconsistent, not only with facts, but with dignity of style in the pulpit. Even in our times, preachers have been heard to give the "lie direct" to their adversaries, in attempting to prove their own doctrine by arguments. Speakers among the Friends have called regular ministers of other religious persuasions "hireling priests," forgetting that in this very character of an hireling the apostle Paul placed himself before the eyes of the world. 2 Cor. xi. 8: "I robbed other churches, *taking wages of them*, to do you service." Other ranting preachers, in their zealous efforts to increase their sect, have cried out that "Calvinism is Devilism, and Calvinistic ministers the Devil's ministers for the destruction of souls." Language such as this is very remote either from sound argument or from "speaking the truth in love." It is not to be tolerated in good society, and savors too much of the market and the tavern.

Especially is dignity of style in the pulpit opposed to all pert, quaint, and witty expressions. Displays of wit are out of place in the sacred desk; for in proportion as wit excites our admiration of certain associations of ideas in men of wit, it stirs up those emotions which are more allied to merriment than devotion, and which divert our attention from the sublime realities of religion. Hardly should a good religious anecdote be introduced into a sermon, if, with all the instruction it may afford, it contain much wit, and is calculated to make some hearers smile and others laugh. To use the language of Seneca, "Quid mihi lusoria ista proponis? Non est jocundi locus."

George Whitfield was occasionally too witty, and too fond of anecdote in the pulpit; and this fault would have produced dis-

gust in the minds of many pious persons, had it not been quickly covered by bursts of holy affection and impassioned oratory.

Some very respectable preachers since, as Rowland Hill, have indulged in quaint and witty remarks while preaching, arising from a natural vein of humor running through their temper and ordinary conversation. This circumstance has caused many stories to be told, in places where men sought to create mirth by rehearsing the very quaint and witty sayings of preachers, but has not contributed to give those preachers that kind of reputation which the servant of Christ should covet; and had not such preachers been sustained by uncommon talents and fervent piety, their preachings would very soon have been treated with contempt by the judicious. Restrain therefore every inclination to be witty in discourses of a sacred character. Religion abhors the ridiculous and the witty in the pulpit, as bordering too much on levity. The thoughtless in public worship may be amused by remarks which inflict pain on the hearts of the pious.

Again, dignity of style is inconsistent with all those expressions in the pulpit which appear to spring from anger and malignity. Some preachers will rail in harsh terms at those who differ from them in doctrine, applying to them improper names, as if they were in anger, quarrelling with persons in the streets. Some preachers will exclaim against the ungodly, in language marked more strongly with resentment than with compassion. Some, if persons withdraw from the assembly during sermon, have been heard to speak under the evident influence of angry passions; and other preachers have cried out, that ministers who required time in preparation for public services, and were not disposed to comply with every call on every occasion to preach, "were dumb dogs, who could not bark," "note preachers, and college-bred preachers;" and all this in an acrimony of spirit, and with bitterness of language, which plainly discovered "that they knew not what manner of spirit they were of."

Let the gospel preacher guard against such undignified language, and every expression of anger in the pulpit. Our doctrine can be maintained without reviling others. Our Master's cause and service do not require "railing accusations."

In a word, dignity of style stands opposed to all excess of gaudy and glittering ornaments of speech, and overloading epithets,

which are usually accompanied with unmeasured sentences. "Exuberance of metaphor," as Dr. Campbell observes, "is apt to impose upon us by words without meaning." This mode of composition indicates, on the part of the preacher, a studied effort to display his rich imagination and refined taste, and to elevate himself as an eloquent writer, instead of doing the work of the Lord fully and with "singleness of eye." By some, a highly rhetorical discourse in the pulpit is considered to denote a mind occupied with little things. Hence it has been said, "Cujuscunque orationem vides, politam et sollicitam, scito animam in pusillis occupatam." I need not say this opinion is incorrect. Productions of genius and taste, abounding with perhaps too many flights of a poetic fancy, exist, which nevertheless exhibit profound thought and cogent reasonings, and are replete with instruction. Some of the compositions of Edmund Burke are evidences of this fact.

Yet, that mode of writing ought not to be copied by preachers in general. It is not the best style, even for the common essayist, and in Christian assemblies of worship is not altogether suited to that measure of understanding which ordinary hearers possess. Especially when the object of the preacher is to produce a conviction of the truth of his doctrine, the style which he adopts should be marked with terseness and force of expression.

5. This quality of a good pulpit style, usually called the "*nervous style*," is so much the result of superior strength of mind, strong conceptions, a happy selection of words, and nice arrangement of sentences, that it is an attainment which but few writers and speakers possess. Not every one who thinks strongly and correctly can write or speak forcibly. The stringing together of short sentences, while it violates a rule of good writing, adds nothing to the strength of style. One-sided views of subjects, supported by bold affirmations of propositions which require to be proved, may impose upon the unthinking, and have the semblance of strength; but it is in fact a trick, to which just reasoners and "men with the pen" will not have recourse. Invective and sarcastic language, in a piece of composition, is no evidence of either strength of mind or strength of style. Some writers, by the use of strange and hard words, involved, abrupt, and scarcely coherent sentences, give a peculiar character to their style; but it is a character of strangeness which excites a stare, and sometimes

affords amusement, but not of strength, which is consistent with all the other attributes of good writing.

Writers who combine perspicuity, chastity, eloquence, and strength, are few in number. The eminence on which they stand, gospel preachers in general cannot reach. Yet, every one who preaches the Word should aim to throw force into his language, and give not only sweetness but keenness to his diction.

6. Nor should the gospel preacher neglect to add the *pathetic* to the qualities of a good pulpit style: for though it cannot characterize, like perspicuity, chastity, and strength, a whole discourse, yet it is required in certain parts of a discourse, where description is attempted, or where the heart is addressed, with a view to excite its affections. It is, therefore, a very desirable property in good writing and speaking. "But who is sufficient for it?" Some imagine that it consists in delivering very flat sentiments in a whining, half-crying tone of voice, accompanied with a few tears which they shed, while all around them are unmoved. Some suppose they reach the pathetic by the frequent use of interjections, such as "Oh! alas! ah! hark!" and by the affectionate terms which they apply to their hearers, as "dear brethren," "dearly beloved hearers," "beloved brethren over whom my bowels yearn in pity." Some think that their description of a moving scene must be pathetic, if it be minutely accurate; just as others flatter themselves that they rise into the sublime, when they exhibit vehemence of sentiment and action in a vapid declamation. Ah! the pathetic in a sermon is always under the control of a sound taste. It requires good thought, a style founded upon that of our beautiful version of the Scriptures, a sweetness of voice and manner, and a mellowed tenderness of heart, which shall show that the preacher takes a deep interest in the welfare of those to whom he speaks.

The French call this "*unction*," in a speaker. It is a compound of language and delivery of a certain character, and is an attainment at which the gospel preacher should aim. Some who preach the Word have sentiments suited to the exhibition of this quality, but they fail in voice and manner, for they speak those sentiments in a harsh and pompous tone, or in a whining or drawling manner, very offensive to good taste. Others who attempt to move the hearts of their hearers possess the suitable voice and manner, but are deficient in sentiment, and in that refined sensibility with-

out which it is difficult to touch the sensibilities of human hearts. To be impressive, good thoughts must be expressed in plain words, and in a tone of voice such as we employ in conveying our feelings in ordinary life, when our souls are deeply interested in a subject. A natural manner of speaking is universally and justly considered to be allied to sincerity, and what is called "unction" can attach to no speaker who does not exhibit the proper marks of sincerity.

Your attention, in the next ensuing lecture, will be occupied with remarks relating to texts, and the proper arrangement or plan of discourses from the pulpit. Just now, I shall pause to drop a few *practical reflections*.

1. The statement which I have been led to make of the important subjects which the Evangelical Pastor is called to discuss; of the thoughts and reasonings which enter into such discussions; and of the style in which he is to conduct the minds of those who hear him to listen to, and be impressed with what he says, cannot but convince you that the gift of preaching the gospel well is a talent of a superior order, and requires for its display in the work of the ministry various knowledge, literary taste, and much discipline in the arts of writing and speaking. Great orators are, in every age, few in number; but instructive and acceptable preachers may be many more than they are, if licentiates and students of theology shall choose to cultivate with care the powers with which God has endowed them. But, unhappily, some think that when they deliver trite sentiments with a loud voice and much action, they are eloquent; especially when they have "torn a passion into rags," they conclude that their gift of preaching has reached up into the sublime. Some suppose that when they speak good sense, in sentences grammatically correct and logically arranged, with a distinctness of pronunciation, their gift in preaching requires no further cultivation. And others, who write sermons in a style highly polished, conclude that the elegance of their compositions leaves nothing more to be demanded of them as preachers. Now, such opinions are obvious errors in judgment, and ought to be corrected. The gift of preaching does not, in its exercise, terminate at composition, but is to be displayed in the delivery of sermons. Many well-written discourses are stripped of half their

excellence when spoken, in consequence of defects in the speaker. Cast, then, your eyes all around; inquire what qualities and attainments enter into that complex power called the gift of preaching; use every help you can derive from the schools of rhetoric and oratory; strive to be great in useful accomplishments. The very effort at improvement in any art or science, though it fail in securing eminence, is productive of good. For whoever, with an earnest soul,

“Strives for some end from this low world afar,  
 Still upward travels, though he miss the goal,  
 And strays—but toward a star.  
 Better than fame is still the wish for fame,  
 The constant training for a glorious strife:  
 The athlete, nurtured for the Olympian game,  
 Gains strength at least for life.”

2. In cultivating the gift of preaching, you are excited to make strenuous exertions by the considerations of the noble service in which it is to be employed, and of the great ends to which it is directly subservient. These considerations confer a high character on this endowment, and elevate it above that of oratorical power, by which senates have been moved in their legislative halls, and the minds of the populace stirred up to tumults and deeds of war. By the gift of preaching, those who are called of God to the ministry of his glorious gospel, bring their cultivated intellectual powers and their choicest bodily gifts, and lay them down at the feet of their Divine Saviour, and seek to entwine around his cross wreaths of honor, glory, power, and dominion, for ever and ever. By the faithful exercise of this gift, united with their prayers and example, they are “workers together with God,” (2 Cor. vi. 1,) in revealing to others the doctrines “of grace,” and in bringing to the sinner’s aching heart, redemption’s healing mercies. In the exercise of this gift, they are by divine ordination “leaders” (*ἡγούμενοι*, Heb. xiii. 17) in the sacramental host of God, in repelling the forces of darkness, “in pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” They are appointed to be not only “fishers of men” in waters where sharks abound, but “helpers of their joy” who stand on Mount Zion, and sing the songs of salvation. Into what an elevated position does the gift of preaching

place them, when in the due exercise of it they are made "the light of the world," "the salt of the earth," not only, but "suns of consolation" to the pious, amid their various afflictions in this state of trial.

Now, in this view of the high relations of the gospel ministry, and of the great ends to which the gift of preaching is subservient, what importance should we attach to that gift! How earnestly should those who desire to serve the Lord Christ, pray that they may be richly endowed with it by the Holy Spirit! With what assiduity should they use all those means and appliances which contribute to its improvement, in order to pay a portion of that immense debt of gratitude which they owe to Him who died to save them, and

"Who from the guarded sepulchre arose,  
With power invested, to draw their hearts  
Into his sacred service here below."

3. But, in whatsoever measure it may please the Master to bless your efforts in his special service, and by his Spirit to endow you with the gift of preaching, keep ever before your minds the great end to which that talent is to be consecrated. For you will be set apart "to preach, not yourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord," (2 Cor. iv. 5,) and to serve as Levites of the tabernacle—the High Priest, and that priesthood in the New Testament Church, which is composed "of the body of Christ," (Ephes. iv. 12.) Hence, in the cited passage from the Epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul immediately adds, "and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Rome, and the hierarchy every where, have adroitly perverted to their own aggrandizement the ancient typical and prophetic pictures of the gospel ministry, and converted "the Levites" into the high priest and lordly priests, and the truly "royal priesthood," made up of believers, into Levites. But God has appointed those whom he calls to this ministry, to be "the servants of Christ," and the servants of his Church in a hard service.

This service you are disposed to undertake; but in the view of its peculiar nature and requisite qualifications you may, under the consciousness of your own insufficiency, exclaim, How shall I be able, by my preaching gift, to discharge the duties of this ministry?

Happily, the Saviour himself was, on earth, a preacher. He taught men, and spake as never man spake. Look at his min-

istry of the Word; mark the manner in which he exercised his superior gift of preaching, and imitate his example.

The Saviour taught with wisdom. His words were like "apples of gold in pictures of silver," (Prov. xxv. 11;) gracious words, replete with instruction and kindness; powerful words, which fixed the attention of others, because they touched the heart while they threw rays of light abroad.

Now, like the Master, aim to preach wisely and impressively. Seek to have your minds enriched with various knowledge. Read much, reflect deeply, that when you preach, important truths may flow from your lips, and those truths be recommended to the ears of others, by your style and the manner of delivering them.

The Saviour, in addition to wisdom, adopted that mode of preaching which expressed great kindness to the poor, and was suited to their understandings. They were delighted to hear him: his illustrations were drawn from objects and scenes in nature, from relations and events in civil life; and his doctrines were such as elevated their conceptions of the pure nature of true religion, while they served to answer that momentous question, "What shall I do to be saved?" In this respect, his preaching as well as his doctrine differed from those of the Jewish scribes, and are to be distinguished from the lessons of all the philosophers of the schools. The latter did not aim to instruct the common people. They left the indigent to grope in darkness. They were willing that the illiterate should believe every absurdity, and be enchained by all the laws which power and priestcraft could devise and impose, provided they were allowed to dispute in their schools on subjects which they supposed required a stretch of intellect.

But the Saviour of men cast his eyes in compassion on the poor, who were as sheep without a shepherd. He exhibited himself as their teacher, their friend, their light amid surrounding darkness, their deliverer from the wrath to come. Now, it is still the glory of the gospel, that it "is preached to the poor;" that they are called equally with the rich, and are to be sought after and invited to the feast.

If you enter into the ministry, imbibe much of the spirit of your Lord. "Condescend," as Paul exhorts, "to men of low estate." Let the poor see that, so far from being neglected on account of their depressed condition, you are anxious to enlighten and

save them, and that you are prepared to receive them with joy into the communion of the Church. Enter into their humble dwellings, speak to them in kindness, preach to them the Word of Life.

There are ministers who can hardly see the poor in their congregations. Their efforts are directed to the winning of the favor of the rich; they court the smiles of the great and fashionable. But do *you* follow the example of the Redeemer, and you will please God and show yourself to be an approved servant of Christ, (Gal. i. 10;) a pastor,

“Detached from pleasures, to the love of gain  
Superior, insusceptible of pride,  
And by ambitious longings undisturbed.”

It is recorded of Archbishop Usher, one of the greatest and most learned men of his age, “that he was more propense to communicate himself to the poorest, than to others who were more learned, which strangers wondered at, as the disciples marvelled at our Saviour talking with the poor woman at Jacob’s well. (John iv.) Some affected a frothy way of preaching, by strong lines, as they called it, and were much ashamed after they heard him preach at Oxford, and reprove this Corinthian vanity.

“When he became an Archbishop, some plain Christians, who had been intimate with him, told him that they must now keep their distance. To whom he replied, that he was the same man still, and that they should be as welcome as formerly.” Paul said, Rom. i.: “I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise.” How fondly he cherished Onesimus, a converted fugitive slave, we may ascertain from one of the most delicately polite and heart-affecting letters that was ever written by the human hand—Epistle to Philemon.

## LECTURE VIII.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

#### COMPOSITION OF SERMONS—TEXTS—PLAN OR ARRANGEMENT.

IN consequence of the established mode of exercising “the gift of preaching” in the Protestant churches, sermons are usually associated with TEXTS;\* and a text is considered to express the subject of the sermon to which it is prefixed. The next subject, therefore, to which your attention will be directed, relates,

#### FOURTH, TO THE SELECTION OF SUITABLE TEXTS.

The term “text,” in the science of the Christian religion, signifies that written composition which receives explanatory remarks, or on which comments are made. In the Church of God, the *whole written Word*, given by Divine inspiration, is the *text* which the ministers of Christ are called to expound and preach. “Preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season.”

Now, when a *part* of that sacred text, the Bible, is selected by a preacher to be the subject of his remarks in Christian assemblies, that particular passage, or passages, is very naturally and with great propriety called the *text* of his discourse.

1st. I have said that the written Word of God, as contained in the canonical books, which are two, namely, the Old and New Testament, is *the great text* of all evangelical preachings. Some

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\* Some writers distribute texts into four classes, viz: Historical, Dogmatical, Parabolical, and Moral.—See Vitringa.

priests select from the apocryphal books, when they speak in public Christian worship. This practice is an ill one: it turns the eye, in the sacred service, from the great Directory of faith and practice; it clothes what is uninspired with a color of divine authority, and opens the way for the neglect of Holy Scripture, and the introduction into the pulpit of human compositions, such as the Lives of the Saints, various legends, and theological collections from the Fathers. "The apocryphal books are far from having such power and efficacy as that we may, from their testimony, confirm any point of faith or of the Christian religion, much less detract from the authority of the other sacred books." (Confes. of Faith, Art. v., vi.)

Those who are ordained to preach, are not speculating philosophers, who, under the pretense of searching after truth, may, in their speculations, wander whithersoever they list. No; they are "ministers of *the Word*," "the servants of God in the gospel of his Son;" which gospel they are commanded to preach and to defend. Their power is restricted "to the law and the testimony." They must receive the "word from God's mouth:" that Divine mouth speaks only through the canonical Scriptures.

Admitting now, that the written Word of God *alone* is to be the text-book for gospel preachers, two questions have arisen, which must here be answered, namely:

First. May an edifying sermon be composed and spoken without having what is called a text prefixed to it? and

Second. May a passage or passages of Scripture be introduced as a text, and be used as leading to a subject which the preacher wishes to discuss, without referring to every fact or circumstance which the words of such a text express?

1. In answer to the first of these questions, I observe, that every one knows that texts were not taken by our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, in their discourses to the people on religion; and the reason is obvious. The ministry of the incarnate Son of God, the great "Preacher of righteousness," and his servants the apostles, was instrumental in communicating to men those revelations and facts which are contained in the Scriptures of the New Testament; or, in other words, in composing a most important part of that Sacred Book out of which texts are to be selected by preachers.

Our Saviour was the fountain of wisdom—"the Word," pre-eminently, by which God spake from the beginning to the fallen race of Adam. Moses, and all the ancient prophets, were but instruments employed by him in revealing the Divine will. He came into this world to fulfil what had before been spoken concerning himself, and to add with his own lips new and momentous revelations.

Yet, with a view to set an example to his ministers, he expounded that moral law which had been written on tables of stone, and which he came "to magnify." He called up types and prophecies on record, and referred constantly to the Scriptures of the Old Testament. On one occasion, he went into a synagogue, read out of the book of the prophecies of Isaiah, and expounded to the people what he had just read.

His immediate apostles also made the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and what the Master himself had said and done, their text-book. They expounded the prophecies, showing their fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth; they expounded the types or "figures of good things to come," so that the whole of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews is an exposition of certain parts of the ancient Scriptures, particularly of the book of Leviticus; or they discoursed of the works of Christ, of which they had been eye-witnesses, or reported his doctrines, of which they had been ear-witnesses; or they delivered communications from God, under the inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

While, therefore, it is conceded that there is no express command of God binding his ministers to preach from texts of Scripture; while it is conceded that an approved sermon may be composed without having a passage of Scripture prefixed to it; yet, it must be insisted upon, that the written Word of God is to be the great and comprehensive Text of all gospel preachings, and that the mode usually adopted of taking one or more passages of the Bible as the text of a discourse, naturally results from the Divine command "to preach the Word," and from the inability of the preacher to expound the whole Word in one sermon. From the necessity of the case, then, Scripture truths must be exhibited in portions, and it is evidently better to announce the portion or doctrine from the Word itself, than to leave the hearers to find it out from the train of the preacher's observations or comments.

The practice which experience has now established, of selecting texts for the particular subjects of pastoral discourse, is to be highly commended and steadily followed. Its utility is evident: for, it proclaims aloud, that the written Word of God is the rule of Christian faith and practice, and that what ministers preach, must be the doctrines and precepts of that Word, and not the decrees of councils, nor the creeds of princes and states, nor any immediate inspirations of their own minds, nor any deductions of their own reasoning powers. It exhibits at once to the understandings of the people in worship, that what is considered to be true in fact, binding in precept, encouraging in promise, derives all its authority and virtue from God's own Word. It announces to the hearers the particular subject to which their attention is to be directed, and prepares their minds for the consideration of it. It enables the hearers of the Word, if they are intelligent, to detect deviations from the truth, and by the very ingenious efforts which the false teacher makes to pervert the sense of the text, to discover that his doctrine is not sound. The twistings of a serpent will sometimes indicate his uneasy position. In a word, it furnishes the hearers with a memento, by which they can recall the subject, and many parts of the sermon.

2. The second question proposed, namely, whether a passage may be used merely to introduce a subject which a preacher wishes to discuss, must also be answered in the affirmative, provided the passage so selected sustain a strong relation to the subject; otherwise the text, as it conveys some doctrine, precept, or promise, will be disparaged by the very place which it occupies, or the preacher will be justly charged with ignorance of the meaning of the text. To be "a motto," and not a mere device, the text should contain the subject; and if the preacher does not choose to consider the words of the text particularly, and all the facts to which they refer, then he should at the beginning of his discourse state distinctly the subject or proposition which he intends to discuss. Some sermons, speeches, and essays, are in this respect very defective, and it is well that in their printed dress they have some motto prefixed to them.

But admitting the text of a sermon to refer to the subject, the preacher may happily discuss the subject without a particular analysis of the text.

For the purpose of illustrating here this mode of preaching, let me observe, that a preacher wishes to discourse concerning *the obstinate unbelief of the Jews, and its causes*. This therefore is his *subject*. He selects for a text, 2 Cor. iii. 16: "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." In this passage, the fact in relation to the mental state of the Jews, in rejecting the cross of Christ as the medium of a sinner's deliverance from the curse, (and this fact constitutes the subject,) is affirmed. Now, the preacher proceeds to discuss this subject without any minute explanation of the words of the text, which refer to the reading of the law of Moses in the Jewish synagogues, and to the veil which covered for a time the face of Moses.

Take another example: A preacher chooses, from Psalm xiv. 1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," to speak of the sin of atheism, its character, and dreadful effects. Now, this great sin is held up prominently to every eye in the text; but the preacher discusses his subject without dwelling upon the true and full import of the term "fool" in the text, and without showing particularly what is meant in Hebrew phraseology by "saying in his heart."

Should a preacher, however, undertake to discuss the subject of the glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a fact abundantly proved by testimony, and all-important in the system of Christian Faith, and select as a motto, Col. iii. 1, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," he would act unwisely; for the subject of Paul's discourse in those words is the duty of cultivating *heavenly-mindedness*. The resurrection of Christ, and the experience of its power and blessed effects, are referred to as suggesting the most powerful motives to engage Christians in "seeking those things which are above."

Often, indeed, may pastors profitably discuss subjects without fully opening up every part of a cited passage; but there are passages, of which the terms used in new senses and relations are so peculiar to Christian theology, so interwoven with the whole framework of salvation by Jesus Christ as a substitute of his people in law, that the text should be the subject of a *careful analysis*. To illustrate: In preaching from numerous passages, it would be sufficient to discuss redemption by Jesus Christ as the great subject; but were one to expound those words, "for

what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh," it would be more edifying to speak, I. Of the great work of God in redemption: "he condemned sin in the flesh;" II. The means by which this work was effected: 1. Negatively, not by the moral law or the Mosaic institutes; for "the law was weak through the flesh," and could not give life; 2. But positively, "by sending his own Son into the world," with every attribute to save; for he came in the flesh, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and made that atonement by which sin was condemned in the flesh, and righteousness imputed to all who believe.

Many distinguished writers in their sermons, as Tillotson, Bourdaloue, and others, are not textuarians, but *discuss* subjects. "Two of my sermons," says Bishop Warburton, "are in the common way of choosing a text, to give one an opportunity of saying what one wants to say: the *other two are in what I think the better way*, the explanation of the text." (Letters to Hurd, 43d.)

But whilst the *utility* of speaking from texts is so obvious, the measure of that utility will depend much upon the *proper selection and use*, of texts.

(1.) In illustration of this fact, let me observe, that when a pastor designs to call the attention of those to whom he ministers in the gospel to a certain doctrine, or a certain course of action which is either beneficial or pernicious, he may select a text *disconnected* entirely with, or very slightly related to, his subject. Some who are professionally ministers of the Word, but who do not believe in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, nor feel any indebtedness for pardon to the cross of Christ, have dared to set up pregnant passages, like Samson in the temple of Dagon, to be mocked at, and given to the poet occasion to say:

"How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,  
Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preach'd."

Others, through ignorance "of what is written," have let their remarks in preaching run wide from the text, so as to distract the minds of some hearers, and to leave the more intelligent to say, "that if the text had the small-pox, the sermon could not have caught it."

(2.) Again: in the choice of portions of Scripture to be used as texts, such portions must be taken as will form a distinct proposition in grammar and logic, and such as shall express the meaning of the sacred writer in that place or chapter.

A preacher pays but a poor compliment to the understandings of his hearers, or to the Bible itself, when he draws out of it (and he might just as well have taken it out of an almanac) the single word "remember," in order to publish his philosophical theories respecting the power of memory, and its indestructible tenacity. With a like liberty, another might from the word "consider," give his audience a dissertation on other intellectual powers.

But a more serious fault is committed by a preacher when, by the choice of his text, he conceals or perverts the truth designed to be expressed by the Holy Spirit in that text with its context. Examples might easily be collected of passages in Holy Scripture, which stand so connected with what precedes and follows, that to remove them from their connection, and then confine the attention to what the words would seem to express, would be a manifest wresting of Scripture to make it subservient to error. By dropping some words from a passage, we may make it to mean something not intended by the inspired writer. Thus, we should be able to prove that human legs were displeasing to God, by tearing a part of the 10th verse of the 147th Psalm out of its connection; for there we read these words, "The Lord taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man."

A text, therefore, should of itself form a whole proposition; and so much should be taken for a text as to express clearly the mind of the Holy Spirit. The aphorism of Donne, though quaintly written, contains an important truth: "Sentences in Scripture or passages of Scripture, like hairs in horses' tails, concur in one root of strength and beauty; but, being plucked out one by one, serve only for springes and snares."

(3.) A fault opposite to that which I have just mentioned is, the forming of a text out of so many passages that the passages shall extend beyond the subject of the discourse. This fault frequently occurs in the ministry of those preachers who seldom commit their thoughts to writing; for, not being able to know beforehand how richly invention and memory will supply them with matter, and unwilling by a short text to confine themselves

to boundaries too narrow, they frequently take too many passages together, and mark out more ground for a sermon than they can cultivate well. George Whitfield often erred in this respect: hence some of his sermons which we have, fail in the proper exposition of his texts. Texts, therefore, should not be redundant, comprehending too much matter, and violating the unity of the subject.

If one give notice to the people that he designs to preach a series of discourses on an important doctrine of the Christian faith, he may then select what has been denominated a *copious text*, and apply the sermons as parts expository of the several parts of the text. This however is a *plan* which the young preacher should not adopt early in his ministry; for, to be usefully prosecuted, it ought to be the result of various extensive reading and careful study.

I have now done with texts; and have no additional observation to make in any manner relating to them, save this one: that when study and composition become irksome, the young minister will at times fluctuate much before he can fix upon a text that pleases him. Now, to surmount this difficulty and remove perplexity from his mind, let him reflect that he is called to preach, not what is called a *great* sermon, but an instructive and practical one: this reflection will soon furnish him with a subject and suitable text. Let him pray to be guided in this matter by the Holy Spirit, who has at all times access to his mind, and has often, as I believe, diverted the thoughts of ministers from texts on which they first wished to preach, to other texts and subjects, from the discussion of which much good resulted. Further, let him note from time to time, in reading the Scriptures, those passages which arrest his attention and deeply affect his own mind. In a word, let him, when he is tempted to waste too much time in fixing upon a text, revert to some part of the system of didactic theology with which his thoughts have long been familiar, select a corresponding text, state the doctrine, and then improve it by exhibiting the various practical uses of that doctrine. Doctrines have been fixed as truths in the mind of the young preacher, the practical use of which he has not yet well studied.

## FIFTH. THE PLAN OR ARRANGEMENT OF A SERMON.

But the subjects and texts may be well selected, and the thoughts in a sermon may be well expressed by the preacher, yet the whole composition may be markedly defective, through *want of method and connection*. “I went,” says President Davies, “and heard Dr. Guise, in Pinner’s Hall. His sermon was well adapted to comfort the people of God, but the languor of his delivery and his promiscuous and undistinguishable manner of address seemed to take away its energy and pungency.” Sermons may contain some good thoughts, but if those thoughts are separated by irrelevant matter, or hang together by slight threads, they are ill calculated to enrich the minds of the hearers with doctrinal knowledge. Nay, a preacher who speaks on matters and things in general, may, by introducing happy religious anecdotes, entertain an audience and please the young and thoughtless especially; he will not make the truth sink deeply into the heart; and if the seed sown lie upon the surface, the birds of the air will soon pick it up.

Hardly an observation can be necessary to convince you that in every piece of writing designed to communicate instruction to others, order or logical method in the arrangement of the thoughts, should be studied and observed. Such method stands opposed to a loose and incoherent mode of expressing a number of thoughts. Now, where thoughts are thrown together in a confused and disconnected state, obscurity must exist. Hence we sometimes hear sermons which, from the absence of a plan, perplex instead of enlightening our minds, and which permit our thoughts to rest on no one grand truth or doctrine, no one important duty or precept of religion, but hurry us on in an excursion from Dan to Beersheba, so rapidly that we very imperfectly discern the face of the country over which we have travelled.

Arrangement of matter in the discussion of a subject, or a proper method in the composition of sermons, is therefore important, not only as it serves to aid the memory of the preacher himself, both in composing and in delivering his discourses, but also as it operates directly in enabling those who hear, to understand and to remember what is spoken.

An inmethodical discourse may contain some important thoughts,

but these lose much of their weight in our consideration, through want of that connection with other thoughts to which they stand related, either as arguments or illustrations. They are like blocks of valuable marble intermixed in one heap with sand and pieces of timber, in which the eye can discover no form of the building intended to be erected; but where method is observed, the marble and other materials are arranged in a structure useful and beautiful.

Want of method in a sermon is a serious defect. Hence it has been strongly recommended, not only that method should be observed, but also that in worshipping assemblies which comprehend so many unlearned persons, the general plan should be clearly stated by the preacher; and this course is usually pursued by instructive preachers. For variety's sake, however, it has been said that the speaker should occasionally conceal his plan; as "*crypsis dispositionis lollit fastidium auditoris.*" As an occasional deviation from usual order, such concealment may be admitted; in other respects, it is not the better mode, as the common intellect, in a Christian congregation, stands in need of every help which the skill of the preacher can afford, in directing their thoughts in the discussion of his subject.

To facilitate the proper arrangement of matter in sermonizing, some have advised that the preacher should always first make a *written analysis* of his text. Certainly one should be able to analyze well a passage which he makes the theme of his discourse. Such analysis will suggest the proper method of treating the subject, and should be attempted in writing by the young preacher; but when a pastor has been some years in the gospel service, and in the practice of arranging his thoughts in due order, a written analysis (unless he preaches extempore) is altogether unnecessary, and the making of it is a waste of time, as his mind, if he studies and understands his text, will quickly analyze it.

In speaking, now, of the PLAN, or the proper method to be pursued in the composition of sermons, let me direct your attention,

First, To the constituent parts of a sermon; and then,

Second, To the various modes of discussing subjects in the pulpit.

I. *The constituent parts of a sermon.*

As the principal duty and design of a preacher of the Word is, to teach its truths clearly, so as to convince and persuade others, the great parts of a pastoral discourse are considered to be *two*, namely: the explication of the text, or discussion of the subject, and the application or improvement of it. But there are less important parts of a sermon which also deserve attention, as they serve to prepare those who hear for the discussion and the improvement. I shall therefore consider the constituent parts of a sermon to be *five*, namely:

1. The introduction, or exordium;
2. The nexus, or connection;
3. The division;
4. The exposition; and
5. The application, or improvement.

On each of these parts a few observations must here be made.

1. The *introduction*, or exordium.

The exordium or introduction is not an essential part of a sermon. The preacher, without any prefatory matter, may engage immediately in the discussion of his subject, as is done by Dr. South in his sermon from Psalm lxxxvii. 2. He omits a formal introduction, tells us that the words of the text, which institute a comparison of Zion and the dwellings of Jacob, express two things, difference and preëminence, and divides the subject into two propositions: I. That God bears a different respect to places consecrated to his worship from what he bears to other places, etc. II. That God prefers worship paid him in such places, etc.

Texts, I have before said, are very various. Hence it is true that a text may be well understood by all, so soon as it is read. It may express a moral precept, about which the thoughts of men are daily conversant in society; as for instance, Rom. xii. 17: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Now, in the discussion of this command, the preacher may withhold an introduction, and proceed immediately to define, I. things honest; and, II. show wherein the moral law is violated by various dishonest practices, and the benefits which attend obedience to the precept in the text.

But, as a general rule, it must be prescribed that sermons should commence with regular introductions; for an exordium to a pul-

pit discourse is very useful. It serves to awaken, and especially to fix the attention of the hearers on the subject; and it requires all that time which an introduction usually occupies, to gain the composed attention of a large audience, and prepare them for the division of the subject, or the course of discussion which the preacher intends to pursue; and it affords, on many occasions, to the preacher, an opportunity of dropping remarks both pertinent and striking, which cannot be happily introduced into any other part of the sermon.

(1.) But, if an introduction be made to a sermon, it should be *short*. A long exordium is like a long porch to an ordinary building: it is of no use, while it disfigures the structure to which it is attached; it keeps the minds of the intelligent too long in suspense, like a story which is told as a preface to some important business transaction in which men are solicitous to engage. Robert Walker, in his sermons, is usually happy in his introductory matter. Preachers, under the reign of the Stuarts, still untrammelled by the logic of the schools, were frequently too long, too scholastic, too digressive in the remarks by which they introduced their subjects. Those who compose their discourses in the pulpit, ordinarily bestow most thought on the introduction, and often either wander from the subject or enter too far into the discussion of it; they express an idea, then try to express it in better terms, and thereby become tedious to those whose thoughts are fixed upon the text.

(2.) The introduction should also be *natural* and *pertinent*; not far-fetched, but relating to the subject, and leading to it; otherwise it cannot be called an *introduction* of the subject proposed to be discussed, when it actually introduces some other subject to our thoughts.

I heard, some years ago, at New-York, a Doctor of Divinity who, after announcing as his text the words of Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works," introduced his subject by going back to the institution of marriage in Paradise,—“and the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone.” This curious and remote introduction excited many smiles, and some witty remarks, at the conclusion of the divine service.

(3.) But the introduction should also be *clear*, not involving ob-

scure points, which cannot be discussed in that place, nor made up of metaphysical reasonings and hard and scholastic words, but composed of truths and facts easily understood, readily admitted, or well supported by Scripture. Often an introduction appears well, if it begin with a Scripture passage or proverb, expressing the principal idea one wishes to convey, as introductory to the subject, and confirmatory of its great lesson or doctrine.

(4.) To which I must add, that the introduction should be *modest*; that is to say, the preacher should neither in language nor in action introduce his subject so as to lead his hearers to think that the sermon will be a most brilliant exhibition of talent, raising immediately their expectation of something grand to follow, when in fact there may be a gradual sinking as he advances in the discussion.

Much does the preacher err, who in his introduction breaks out either with a display of learning, or with sentiments highly impassioned; thus attempting to awaken the admiration of his hearers, before he has conciliated their favor or excited their interest in his subject. "Headiest horses soonest tire." It is difficult, after a flaming introduction, to support and increase the *fire* to that degree which such an introduction promises; and a burning commencement ill accords with an icy progress. The preacher, in such attempts, it has been said, resembles a sky-rocket: he rises in a flame, and falls a mere stick.

Let the introduction, then, be marked with modesty. Let it be such as not to promise more than you can execute in the body of your discourse; let it indicate to others (if there be a fit place) that you feel what Paul felt, when he exclaimed, "And who is sufficient for these things!"

And by all means, let the introduction be very short, or be wholly omitted, unless it be necessary by a train of observations to trace the connection of your text.

## 2. The *nexus*, or connection.

But it is not always necessary to show the context, for the purpose of elucidating the text. Many passages of Scripture stand as it were independent of the preceding and following verses; thus, many portions of the Book of Psalms, and all the Proverbs, may be happily discussed, without referring to the context. In like manner, some passages in the Evangelists and in the Epis-

bles, may be considered apart from their immediate connection in the chapter; indeed, there are some passages which have their connection in sense, not with the verses which go immediately before them, but with some passage to be found in a remote situation. But, leaving the latter without further notice, we remark, that the words of Paul are examples of the former class: "Pray without ceasing;" "Despise not prophesyings;" "Quench not the Spirit," are passages which may be explained without referring at length to the context.

But there are innumerable portions of Scripture which require that their connection should be traced, inasmuch as they are linked by particles to what goes before, and form a part of an argument, or are the conclusion from premises. Can the Supreme Being bind himself, consistently with his glory, to give grace and eternal life to those whose sins are not atoned for? This will not be affirmed by those who believe the Scriptures. When, therefore, an exposition is attempted of 2 Pet. i. 4, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that," etc., it is obvious that the connection of this gift, expressed by the term, "whereby," in the text, must be either traced in the introduction, or, which is better for the hearers, made one of the heads of the discourse.

When it is necessary, in unfolding the sense of a passage, to exhibit the context and scope of the chapter, the epistle, or the prophecy, the following rules should be observed:

(1.) The connection should be traced by as few remarks as possible; especially should this be done when the preacher has a regular introduction to his sermon. Plain words and simple sentences are to be used for this purpose.

(2.) There should be no play of the imagination, but logical process, when we are exhibiting the connection of passages. Little or no gesticulation should be used, for this part of a sermon does not admit of any action save that which is simple and graceful, but calls for distinctness in pronunciation and emphasis.

(3.) When the text is selected, the chapter or psalm of which it forms a part should be studied, and the commentators consulted. As I have before said, the context in sense and argument is sometimes remote from the text; for the distribution of the Bible matter into chapters and verses is the work of uninspired men, and as such many mistakes may be found in it.

But let me here arrest the course of my remarks on the constituent parts of a sermon, with a view of making a few *practical reflections*.

1. The gospel ministry was divinely instituted, as you have heard, to secure *two great ends*, namely, the publication of gospel tidings, or the "making known the mystery of Christ;" and, the oversight or episcopal care of the flock of Christ. Now, what has been taught you in this and the preceding lecture, is designed to qualify you better for the great duty of publication to the world, and in the Church, of the grand doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion. To the faithful in Christ Jesus of every age and condition, the Holy Spirit saith, "Search the Scriptures:" strive to know and understand what God has revealed in his Word, that ye may be able to give a reason of the hope that is in you; that ye may be witnesses for God, (Isaiah xliii. 10;) and that you may teach your children divine truth, and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But to the ministers of the Word, to the stewards of the mysteries of God, the same Holy Spirit saith, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee:" aim at its improvement; qualify yourselves by prayer, study, care, and exercise, to be the *publishers* of that Word in a world that lieth in wickedness, and dispensers of "milk to babes" and of "strong meat to them that are of full age." (Heb. v.)

If, then, ministers have the great duty of publication assigned to them especially; if it be in this important service that "the gift of preaching" is required, then you cannot fail to perceive that all I have said in relation to various knowledge, the composition and style of sermons, to subjects and texts, should command your serious attention: for these are acquisitions which, in civilized countries, fit you to publish "the glorious gospel of the blessed God," so as to gain more and better hearing; so as to win over the curiosity of the thoughtless to inquire, to listen, to ponder; so as to repel the enemies of your faith, and to stir up to action all the living men in Zion. Endeavor, therefore, to profit by all the advices, rules, and appliances which shall give to your "gift of preaching" a potency in its exercise, that shall add a dignity to public worship, and make the gospel "the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation." Increase your intellec-

tual stores, husband your time well, be diligent in your studies, "that you may prove to be workmen that need not be ashamed."

Mohammed, the Arabian impostor, said many foolish and hurtful things. The ancient heathen philosophers erred seriously in every metaphysical speculation. But the gospel preacher must speak the words of soberness and truth, as a teacher of good things, an instructor of the ignorant, a light that does not bewilder and mislead, but guides along the way that leads to eternal life in heaven.

Eminence in knowledge, eminence in the gift of preaching, is not to be acquired, save by study and painstaking. Relax not, then, your efforts to grow in knowledge, in grace, and in gift. Some pastors discover a disposition to be too much abroad, and too little in their study-chamber. Much visiting renders them popular; movements along the streets have a show of activity and zeal, and give them the reputation of being diligent pastors; while that application of the mind to the proper subjects of study and to the improvement of their gifts, is neglected, so that they are obliged to bring out of their scanty resources only "things old," or to preach sermons written by others. Perhaps that class of preachers who are professedly "revivalists," have in this respect done much injury to pastors who have solicited their aid in the gospel service. They have come into congregations after assiduously cultivating their gift of preaching, having furnished themselves with a score of sermons containing pungent and awakening remarks, and displaying no little knowledge of the human heart. These sermons, from frequent delivery in various places, are always fresh in their memories; hence, for a limited time, they can move incessantly among a people, preach and exhort every day, add fuel to a religious excitement, and place upon the church-book many hopeful converts, ill-instructed in the knowledge of gospel truth, and still much unacquainted "with the mystery of Christ" as "Jehovah our righteousness and strength," but demanding from a pastor all that activity abroad, all that zeal and stirring influence which the revivalist, before he retired, exhibited. With this demand the pastor is unable to comply; but he attempts it, and is thrown out of his study too much upon the streets. The natural consequence of such doings is abundant complaint that religion is dead, and that the pastor's services are no longer useful. Unhappy

in such circumstances must that pastor be, whose knowledge, piety, and "gift of preaching," do not give him a commanding influence, to repel the aggression upon his proper domain, and to maintain the authority of the divine laws in the Church, which the Saviour never designed to be a "town meeting," but directed to be a "household of faith," and "a garden inclosed from the spirit of this world." Certain it is, a good measure of knowledge, piety, and industry alone, will not be able to counteract the turbulence which error united with fanaticism create, after a religious excitement in a church: there must be gifts suited to the day of trial, in a pastor; especially "his gift of preaching" must be in that improved state which shall render it a sword and shield of defense to him.

"Covet then the best gifts;" attend to every circumstance, study every accomplishment that will operate to recommend your preaching, and make you an acceptable and forcible speaker. Overlook not "small things" in the art of good speaking; cultivate the graces of elocution; learn to use, not merely the tongue, but the hand well: for, though the mimicries of the play-actor are out of place in the pulpit, yet the ill pronounciation of words, the unmodulated voice, and awkwardness in action, are often destructive of the effect which might result from a well-written sermon.

2. But let me remind you here, that there is a publication of gospel truth which you are required to make, as Christian, and especially as theological students, and hereafter as pastors, in private religious conversation with the pious, and in your social intercourse with others. In the discharge of this duty, let your style in conversation be marked by those very attributes which should attach to your written compositions. Be perspicuous. Every one, it is said, who speaks, wishes to be understood; yet there is sometimes an affectation of learning, to be seen in language which some persons employ in ordinary religious conversation with common people, who suppose that words strange and hard cover a great deal of science. Let this affectation never appear in your style of speaking. Talk not, as one did, of this "world springing from the womb of nihility." Be more solicitous to instruct others when you speak, than to acquire the reputation of a man so learned that when he discourses he cannot be easily understood. Such a reputation is not an object of desire by men of sense.

Avoid the use of scholastic terms, of new and long words scraped from the dregs of Johnson and Gibbon. Speak plainly, neatly, and cordially. Such speech, by a countryman of rich Christian experience, first awakened the mind of the celebrated Francis Junius, of Leyden, to serious reflection. This great scholar, in his youth, was atheistically inclined. He regarded the Christian religion as a cunningly devised fable. In this temper, while travelling in Germany, he accosted a plain man whom he met on the way, and thought of perplexing him on the subject of religion. But the countryman spoke so sensibly, so heartily, on matters connected with his faith; he described his own peace of mind to be such, his comforts to be so rich, that Junius was impressed by his talk, and under anxiety of mind sought to find the one pearl of great price. He sought and found mercy. Hope and peace were brought to his anxious soul, while reading the first chapter of John's Gospel. "A word fitly spoken, how good it is."

Especially as preachers, avoid the display of your classical reading of Greek and Roman writers, by perplexing the minds of the common people with using mythological terms and allusions. A preacher compared the proud sinner, when he reflected on his own imperfections, to "the bird of Juno," which, after displaying himself proudly, drops his wide-spread beauties when he looks at his own feet. Plain people after divine service, expressed much curiosity respecting "the bird of Juno." One said, he had known, when a lad, a colored woman who bore the name of "Juno," but never heard that she was the owner of any strange or remarkable bird! Now, had the preacher cared to designate the bird to which he referred by the name of peacock, he would have been understood; but then he would not have shown that he had read the heathen writers and their fables.

Let not even scientific terms be used, to throw obscurity over the facts communicated by you in religious conversation or in preaching. Call not the prophet Daniel a "moral asbestos," unless you know that your hearers are versed in mineralogy, and can distinguish the stone "asbestos" from the bird "albatross." Do not copy such instances of bad taste.

Further: Let your style in ordinary conversation, as well as in the pulpit, be dignified and chaste.

Some who preach the gospel, are not sufficiently attentive when

out of the pulpit, to those proprieties of speech which are required particularly of ministers of the Word. They delight in anecdote and wit. Their joyous spirits sometimes urge them on to express things in words, whether witty or plainly narrative, which should not have dropped from their lips. It is difficult to maintain a due guard upon our tongues; but let us at least attempt it. "Let no filthy communication proceed out of your mouth." Habituate yourself to a dignified and chaste strain of conversation. Be not witty at the expense of decorum. Remember what is said of the Church, Canticles iv. 11: "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb: honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."

In a word, let your style in ordinary intercourse with others be kind and affectionate: "no man liveth to himself." Let it be seen that religion sweetens your temper and sanctifies your conversational powers. Harsh and blustering words and manners do not suit the Christian, and are no evidence either of uprightness of heart or uprightness of conduct.

Perhaps your solicitude not to give offense, your moderation and gentleness, may subject you to the charge of being a "very cunning man, who guards every word he utters, and is selfishly prudent." Let Shimei revile: be as cunning as you please in doing what is right. Of duty it may be said:

"Stern lawgiver! yet thou dost wear  
 The Godhead's most benignant grace;  
 Nor know we any thing so fair  
 As is the smile upon thy face.  
 Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,  
 And fragrance in thy footing treads:  
 Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,  
 And the most ancient heavens through thee are fresh and strong."

## LECTURE IX.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS—THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

##### PLAN OR ARRANGEMENT OF SERMONS.

THE remaining constituent parts of a sermon to be discussed are, 3. Division; 4. Arrangement or discussion of the subject; and 5. Application or improvement.

#### 3. The *division*, or analysis of a sermon.

The analysis of a subject, directed as it should be, by the science of logic, is essential to a full and clear exposition of it. Now, analysis consists of the distribution of a subject into its parts. Hence, what is called *division* of a text, is necessary to an understanding of its sense or meaning. Whether that division shall be drawn out in form, or, without a logical and scholastic dress, shall be rigidly observed by a writer or speaker, is a matter of little importance, and shall be adverted to when I come to speak of the various modes which are pursued in the discussion of subjects by preachers of the gospel. Just now, I assume that the portion of Scripture selected as the *text* of a sermon, should be analyzed or logically divided, and therefore proceed immediately to inquire what are the rules to be observed in the division of the matter contained in texts. Here I would observe,

(1.) That no one invariable rule can be prescribed, for dividing those various passages comprehending the very various subjects which the Evangelical Pastor is called to discuss, in preaching the Word of God. But, while this fact is obvious to every one who reflects on the passages themselves, their import and relations, it

is to be carefully noted that the common understanding of men would suggest the natural order into which propositions divide themselves. That order dictates the division of the subject and its predicates: of a law and its sanctions; of a duty, and the considerations or motives by which its practice is recommended and enforced; of a promise, and the character of those persons to whom such promise is made; of a threatening, and those to whom exclusively it is addressed; of a type divinely instituted, and its anti-type; of a prophecy, and its past, present, or future accomplishment; of a state, and the evils or benefits connected with it; of a doctrine, thesis, or argument, and the proofs offered in support of it.

Innumerable passages of Scripture which form the texts of sermons, will find their proper division under this rule. To illustrate by examples:—Let Paul's words, 1 Cor. i. 23, 24, be the text: "But we preach 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." Here, I. Christ crucified is the subject; and, II. It is predicated of this subject, that to the Jews it is "a stumbling-block;" to the Greeks, "foolishness;" to the effectually called, "the power of God and the wisdom of God." Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." I. Christ is the subject; II. Immutability is predicated of this Divine Saviour.

Again, in Isaiah i. 19, a law is enacted: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land." In this passage we find the law, I. requiring obedience to the Divine will; and then, II. its sanction, consisting in a promise, "ye shall eat the good of the land."

Again, in Hebrews xii. 14, a duty is prescribed: I. "Follow peace and holiness;" and II. Its practice is enforced by the solemn consideration that holiness is essential to the enjoyment of everlasting life in heaven. In discussing this text, the duty and the consideration will form the two parts of the discourse. Here it may be asked, In discussing a passage which prescribes a duty, is the preacher to be restricted to that consideration which is contained in the passage? I answer, By no means. Sometimes a text will comprehend considerations or motives sufficient for the sermon; but should the text not do this, the preacher is at liberty, when exhorting to a duty, to add to the consideration suggested by

the passage, other motives furnished by Scripture, reason, history, and experience. Let me illustrate from the words, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, that thy barns may be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine." Here the preacher may add to the consideration of future plentiful seasons the following considerations, as so many motives to duty: I. How infinitely worthy the Supreme Being is, in himself, of all the honor which his intelligent creatures can by any means confer on his name; II. That he has claims upon our earthly substance, as well as upon the praise of our lips; III. That we owe him an immense debt of gratitude; and, IV. That in honoring him with our substance in the way he requires, we shall directly promote the best interests of civil and religious society. But let it be carefully observed, that while the preacher is at liberty to draw motives from every quarter, the particular consideration in the text, by which the practice of the duty is urged, ought to occupy a first and prominent place in his sermon. Let him press the performance of duty by the strongest arguments, and condescend even to entreat sinners to be reconciled unto God.

Again, Rev. ii. 26: "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." In this passage, the natural division will be, I. The promise, "I will give power over the nations;" II. The character of him to whom the promise is given, namely, the persevering and conquering believer.

So also in dividing a passage conveying a threatening, as Rev. iii. 16: "So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Here we have, I. The persons described by their religious temper and state; II. The threatening addressed to them.

Again: When a text contains an ancient type "of good things to come," we must divide into, I. The *type*, confining ourselves to the typical character of the thing or person brought up as a "shadow" by the Holy Spirit, and not describing all the attributes and relations which such an object may sustain in natural and civil life; and, II. Consider its marked antitype. Thus in discussing John iii. 14: I. The type; not the flying serpent of the wilderness, not any poisonous serpent, but a "brazen serpent," externally resembling the serpent that had inflicted death in the

camp, but having in it no particle of poison: detail the occasion, circumstances, and effects of what Moses did. II. Exhibit the anti-type—that Saviour who came in the likeness of corrupt flesh, but was himself holy and harmless, who was lifted up on the cross, and in whom, believing, the sinner shall be saved.

Typical theology is an important branch of *revealed* religion; a science which enables us to understand the great design of the Mosaic Institutes, and to answer the objections which infidels have brought against the divine origin of these institutes. It serves in an especial manner to explain to us portions of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and some passages in his Epistle to the Galatians. But while these are divinely appointed types, the preacher must be careful not to add to their number by his own invention and authority. It has been said by the poet, that we may find sermons in "brooks and in trees;" but let us not attempt to find *types* in every passage in which figurative language happens to be used.

Again: In explaining a prophecy, let the division which is natural be pursued, viz: I. The sense of the prediction; II. Its past, present, or future accomplishment. Thus, Haggai ii. 6, 7, is a prediction concerning the coming of the Messiah: take, as the first division, the sense of the words which refer to the second temple, and its superior glory derived from the personal appearance in its courts, of the Saviour, not in a shekinah, but in our nature; for the "seed of the woman must bruise the serpent's head;" second, the complete fulfilment.

But the text may contain a doctrine: I. Let the doctrine be clearly stated, from an examination of the terms used; and II. The arguments by which it is supported be given, with a direct view to their logical dependence and connection. To illustrate by an example: Rom. iii. 23, publishes a fundamental doctrine of the gospel, and is selected for a text: "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." Now, in the discussion of this subject, let, I. The doctrine be clearly stated, by an explanation of the terms, "justified," "faith," and "deeds;" and as a conclusion from the facts previously taught, "that all have sinned," etc.; and then, II. The arguments which the apostle offers in the third, fourth, and fifth chapters of the Epistle, be detailed and enforced.

But while that order in division which I have just recommended

in discussing those passages which will admit of it, be pursued, every one who reads the Scriptures knows that texts may be, and often are selected, in the proper discussion of which the observance of that order would be an error of judgment. For there are passages in which cause, means, and end are combined, as it were, to form one proposition. Thus, in John iii. 16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son," etc. Here redemption, as a glorious work of God, is proclaimed, and its source, the wonderful means by which it is effected, and its end, are all at once brought up into view. The discussion therefore would call for the division of the text into *three great parts*. Leaving the preacher, however, in such cases, to be guided by good sense, we pass on to the second rule, which is to be carefully observed in the composition of sermons, namely:

(2.) The division should be such as to comprehend the whole subject. The propriety of this rule is obvious, from the very terms in which it is stated; for it is the subject that is to be divided. If, therefore, an important part of it be omitted, the division will be neither logical nor expository. It is true, that what does not appear in the general disposition, may still find a place in the discussion; but this defect, if the subject be divided at all, is calculated to produce perplexity in the minds of those who hear the Word, and to throw into an obscure situation what ought, for the sake of divine truth, to occupy a prominent place. Take the words of the Saviour for an illustration: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." In dividing this text, the natural division, inasmuch as the simple propositions contained in it are *three*, would be into three parts, viz: In what respects Christ is "the way;" in what respects he is "the truth;" in what sense he is "the life." Throw any one of these parts out of view, or merge it into another part, and you at once reduce its relative importance, and render what is designed to be highly doctrinal and emphatical, comparatively insignificant. Let the division comprehend the text.

(3.) The general division must consist of as few heads as the subject will admit. Texts comprehend more or less matter: if the matter contained in a text be abundant, and if for that reason it requires to be divided into many distinct parts, let it be announced that a series of discourses will be delivered on the same subject; or let the text be abandoned, and only a portion of it be

made the subject. Rarely should a sermon have four heads; *three* parts are necessary, to dispose happily the matter contained in many passages; generally, two heads are sufficient for subjects which can be discussed within the space of an hour; besides, that number can be retained by the common hearers, and enable them better to recall, at home, parts of the sermon.

At the Reformation from Popery, A. D. 1517, and during the sixteenth century, the Protestant preachers who had been educated in the logic of the schools, and whose education embraced a considerable portion of the scholastic theology of the dark ages, were in the practice of multiplying their divisions, in consequence of the severe analysis to which they subjected their propositions in metaphysical science, and of the nice verbal distinctions which were necessary to bring their philosophic dogmas into harmony with the doctrines of Popery. Instead of giving a clear and simple exposition of any passage, by distributing its parts into two or more divisions, they sought to present the matter of their discourses in that form which the *Dialectics* of Aristotle, somewhat modified, recommended, and which would add to their reputation as acute reasoners and profound scholars. This mode of sermonizing was very faulty. It instructed very few persons, and deprived the illiterate of that food which the gospel is designed to afford them. Nay, the very numerous divisions and subdivisions in a sermon of that day, served to perplex the minds and overburden the memories of the better informed.

But is it not a fact, that the disgust with which that mode of treating texts has long been regarded, has driven preachers of this day into the opposite extreme? Are not many sermons now composed too much after the manner of the essayist, who, though observing to connect his remarks, wanders whither his taste and fancy may direct him, not adhering to those rules which the ancient orators were careful to adopt, when they aimed to enlighten and persuade others?

Two facts are certain: 1. A little smattering of theology will suffice, if there be a good measure of literary taste, to write a discourse for popular assemblies, provided the action and voice of the speaker be agreeable, and his anecdotes be interesting; to which add, 2. The other fact, that where the common people have been instructed by discourses regularly distributed into parts, with-

out running into the numerous divisions of Gray, Andrews, and others, there is more knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, than among those who hear sermons which are eloquently written, but loose in their structure. In the churches we find learned and able preachers; yet the people under their care are more ignorant of the doctrines taught in Scripture and contained in their confessions of faith, than their fathers were. To what shall we ascribe this general declension in Christian knowledge? May we not trace it in part to the fact, that sermons are prepared more to gratify the taste of literary men, than to feed, by a clear exhibition of the truth, the common mind with knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures?

(4.) Here let me add, that while texts, as subjects of discourse, should be properly divided, there is no necessity that the parts should be enumerated before the discussion, or that, in the discussion, the preacher should announce that he proceeded from the first to the consideration of the second head of his discourse, and then to the third head. But as the parts are connected to form one subject, let him preserve the strong thread of connection in his head, and from one branch slide into another, logically and sweetly.

#### 4. *The discussion, or exposition.*

The most important part of a sermon (though perhaps not the most difficult to be executed well) is *the discussion*. On this depends our understanding of the Scriptures, as the directory of faith and practice, and by this part the preacher is to prepare the way for the proper application and improvement of the subject.

Before I speak, as I shall presently do, of the *various modes* of discussing texts, let me here make a few remarks on discussion in general.

The whole business of discussion is made up of *two parts*, namely: First, explication of the text, as it reveals doctrine, prescribes law, describes character and state, and communicates promise and consolation; and, second, confirmation of the truth.

*First.* By *explication*, the text is opened, and the subject is stated. This is done by explaining the terms used by the sacred writer, and settling their meaning, if that be not sufficiently obvious, and by exhibiting clearly the doctrine or truth which those terms, in their connection, express.

*Second.* By *confirmation*, the preacher supports the doctrine and facts which his text teaches, by proofs or arguments drawn immediately from Scripture, or resulting from processes of reasoning: if the fact be historical, by the testimonies of history; if it be a doctrine, by Scripture and reason; if it be one of experience, by appeals to the conscience, feelings, and recollections of those to whom he speaks.

It will therefore be perceived, that according to the *nature* of the subjects to be considered, the discussion ought to be didactic, or persuasive, and sometimes pathetic.

Here sound judgment and good sense ought to be brought into exercise. Some preachers attempt to be *pathetic* in parts of a discourse where they ought to be wholly and plainly didactic. Some suppose that they have executed their work well, if they have so stated their doctrine and the arguments which support it, as to satisfy their own minds of its truth, without showing its importance, or so *speaking* as to persuade others to believe as they believe. Others again cry out against all attempts at persuasion and pathos, as being mere declamation, unsustained by argument; Methodism or fanaticism, to be repudiated by sound sense and good taste. They will lean upon their soft cushions, and give a cold exhibition of doctrine or duty, as if they were employed in a mathematical lecture-room. Paul said, "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men." How forcibly does this apostle sometimes argue! How anxious is he at other times to impress every heart with the importance of divine truth; to move all the affections, and to rouse all the springs of action in the human mind! His soul burns with an inextinguishable ardor in the sacred cause; "cast down" indeed, at times, by the hand of violence, but ever intent on converting sinners; and, animated by the Paraclete, he

"Communed, and gathered from the Cross new power  
O'er famine, danger, loneliness, and death."

Imitate the example of this apostle; and while you teach, aim to persuade and move men, though you should be called by those who hate religion, and those who envy your talent, declamatory and methodistical.

In order to discuss a text well, four things must be attended to, namely:

1. Be sure to understand the meaning of your text, or in other words, be master of the subject which you undertake to discuss.

2. In discussing a subject, regard the intellectual attainments and moral character of the people to whom you preach. Enter not deeply into metaphysical discussion, when you are addressing the men who require plainness of speech. Examine what prejudices against the truth exist in the minds of your hearers, and let your discussion point at those prejudices, and the lusts from which they spring. Let not your arguments be drawn wholly from Scripture, when you are preaching to many wicked persons who deny the divine inspiration of that precious Word.

3. Let your motives to a godly life be drawn from gospel considerations. Always preach Christ: he is made of God unto us "sanctification," and "we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."

4. Endeavor to throw as much animation as you can into the discussion. It is that part of a discourse which, being chiefly argumentative, attracts less attention from the many; for it is difficult to create in the common mind a deep interest, when doctrines are discussed. Let, then, an increasing engagedness of manner appear in the preacher; let him exhibit more life, make every effort to awaken attention, and give force to his arguments.

Again: discussion, it should be borne in mind, admits of various modes to be pursued, in explaining the Word of God. Some of these modes better please one class of preachers than others; and all of them, as approved modes, serve to give variety to that part of a sermon, in the delivery of which the attention of those who hear should be fixed on the subject.

The distinguished Claude enumerates four modes of discussion, namely:

- (1.) By explication;
- (2.) By observation;
- (3.) By continued application; and
- (4.) By distinct propositions.

On each of these modes a few remarks may here be useful.

i. That mode of discussion denominated "*explication*" has much to recommend it. It treats the text as expressing the subject under consideration, and with a view to exhibit that subject clearly, it proceeds to fix the import of the words, and from their gram-

matical connection in sentences to ascertain the grand doctrine, lesson, or fact which they were designed to convey to our understanding, and to which all that is comprehended in a complex text, made up of one or more verses, is subservient. Hence springs what is called the *unity* of the subject under discussion—a unity which must be preserved by the preacher who is solicitous that his sermon shall develop clearly the mind of the Holy Spirit in his written Word. If the Redeemer says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” he does not present to our view *three* distinct subjects; by no means. He is himself, in these words, the *one* subject of his discourse, and proclaims that he is the *true* and living “way” to the Father and to eternal life. In accordance with this revelation of himself, must be the proper explication of that text.

Thus also in 2 Cor. iv. 6: “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” In these words the apostle may be said to give us a summary of Christian theology. Yet the subject is *one*; namely, the nature and invariable effect of that conversion which God works in the human heart. Every true convert, the subject of a creating power, analogous in its operations to that which in the first creation “caused the light to shine out of darkness,” has a realizing sight of the matchless excellencies of Christ, by whom the glories of the Divine character are illustriously displayed. Such conversion, would Paul say, we his faithful ministers have experienced. Accordingly, “we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

The mode of discussion by explication of the words of the text, is that which calls for that logical division of which I have before spoken. It is that mode which the greater number of our best sermon-writers and instructive preachers adopt, as they wish “not to handle the Word deceitfully;” the mode which corresponds more directly with the office of one who is set apart to expound the Word; and though it has greater difficulties than any other mode, it ought to be the pastor’s ordinary mode of discussing his texts: for it is better adapted to instruct hearers in general in the

knowledge of divine truth, and to educate their minds in searching the Scriptures. When the intellectual state of these is well considered, we shall find it useful to be particular in our explanations of passages. The busy and illiterate in society require for their instruction in religion "line upon line, precept upon precept." A good expounder of Scripture, if he be regular in his mode by explication, will inform and elevate the common intellect of those to whom he ministers. He will make them deeper thinkers and more acute reasoners. Hence arises the superiority in understanding, of a Protestant population, when compared with those who traffic in rituals, and to whom the Word of God is preached irregularly and in a loose way.

Especially should the mode by explication be pursued, when, as often occurs, difficulties present themselves in texts. These difficulties attach, first, either to terms, or second, to things. Sometimes the terms in texts are used by the sacred writers in various senses. This, from the paucity of words and imperfection of language, is of frequent occurrence in the Bible as well as in other writings. Sometimes terms are used in a figurative sense, and in a sense peculiar to one sacred writer. In other cases, the meaning of the terms, though clear, may be controverted. Hence exposition is rendered imperiously necessary. There are also difficulties connected with the *things* expressed in texts. Sometimes the principal subject is in its nature a "mystery," and requires, in our exposition of it, nice discrimination and great precision of language; while other subjects, from their great importance, from their connection in passages with various circumstances, and the allusions in such passages to certain past events, customs, laws, etc., demand particular explications, and may, for that purpose, call for a series of sermons.

In expounding difficult passages, we must inquire whether the natural and most obvious meaning of the words is evidently discordant with other plain passages of Scripture: if so, then we must seek for some other meaning; but that meaning must not be suggested either by our fancy, our philosophy, or our favorite doctrine, "for no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation;" but the sense of the text under consideration must be expressed by the Holy Ghost himself, either in the context or in parallel passages. There is much truth in what the Jewish rab-

bins have remarked, and what has been repeated by others: "Nulla est objectio in lege, quæ non habet solutionem in latere." All our interpretations of Scripture must be agreeable to the analogy of faith. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, is the direct means of preserving us from perverting the Word of God by any fanciful or erroneous exposition of its sense.

Discussion by exposition, it has been said, is of two kinds, simple and compound.

It is simple, when the truth need only be stated and recommended, and enlivened by agreeable remarks and pertinent illustrations.

It is compound, when the truth must not only be stated, but *proved* and enforced: if an historical fact, by historical testimonies; if a doctrine or proposition asserted in the text, by proofs drawn from Scripture, or by such arguments as our reason, in connection with the Divine Word, can collect. But here care must be exercised. We must not so argue on a subject as if a "thus saith the Lord" were insufficient to command our belief and obedience; but after having stated our reasonings, we must remember to exhibit the authority of the Divine Word as a directory of our understandings, and as a law binding upon our consciences and our hearts. The Supreme Being speaks by the Bible. "In Deo, omnia jura et omnes tituli concurrunt." He is our Maker, our Lawgiver, and our King: his Word is truth, and must be believed and obeyed.

It remains to be repeated here, that in explaining texts we must not consider *particles* beneath our attention. In the structure of language they are important signs, serving to show sometimes the connection, and sometimes the limitation, in which words are to be understood.

In speaking of "explication" as a mode of discussion, I have considered the text as containing *one* subject; but a preacher may choose to expound, in an exercise which by some is called "*lecturing*," and in one discourse, many passages in succession, forming the whole or a large portion of a psalm or chapter. When this is done, the whole falls under the head of discussion by "explication." The difference between regular sermonizing and lecturing by this mode, is to be found in the fact that in the former *less* of Scripture is expounded, and the exposition is extended by what

the preacher chooses to say; in the latter, the expository remarks are *few*, in consequence of the extension of the text.

Lecturing is a useful mode of preaching; it opens up a larger portion of Holy Scripture for examination and improvement: but, to be profitable, the preacher must be a careful student of the Word, select his points well, cultivate the art of expressing much in few words, and trace well the connection of the passages before him. Few preachers are qualified to lecture well.

ii. The second mode of discussion is by *observations* or considerations.

This mode is to be pursued when the text is in its terms free from difficulties, and easy to be understood. Historical texts require to be treated in this manner; but there are some pieces of history which, from their references and their terms, ought to be explained before we begin with our observations.

If, however, the subject selected from sacred history be a Scripture character, the mode must not be by observations. The better mode of treating such subjects is to give the history of the person, and from the history, after the manner of Plutarch, draw the character, and then make the uses of the history to constitute the improvement of the whole subject. Dr. Hunter's Sacred Biography exhibits many examples of this instructive mode of preaching.

If the mode of discussion be that by observation, care must be used to make the observations directly pertinent to the text, and explanatory of the whole subject; and to let them sustain an obvious relation to Christian doctrine or practice. The observations, too, should, in the delivery of a sermon, be distinctly announced, so as to fix the attention on each. To illustrate this mode by an example, let the text be Heb. vi. 7: "For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God." After an introduction, let the following observations be discussed, and the text will be explained, and open the way for a profitable improvement of the whole subject, namely:

1st observation: God, in his Holy Word, exhibits his visible Church under the image of a vineyard or piece of ground which he cultivates. 2nd observation: As the cultivator, God uses means adapted in the order of nature to make this ground productive of

fruit. 3rd observation: He asks for corresponding fruits. 4th observation: He blesses those who bring forth fruit meet, etc. Then,

Improve the subject: 1. By showing the richness of that dispensation of grace which sinners now enjoy under the ministrations of the gospel: it constitutes an accepted time: God is working through his Word and Spirit, and his ministry coöperate with him in cultivating the ground, etc. 2. By warning sinners that they are now under trial, etc. 3. By exhorting them to bring forth fruit meet, etc. 4. By encouraging the pious to bring forth more fruit, inasmuch as more blessing is promised, etc.

iii. The third mode of discussion is, *by continued application*.

This mode does not exclude "explication," but requires that when a part of the text is explained, the practical improvement of that part should immediately follow. This mode, in relation to some subjects, is to be recommended. It keeps attention alive, admits of searching applications of the Word, and is to be pursued in societies convened for prayer and conference. But in the use of this mode, which is adapted better than any other for the instruction of the illiterate, the preacher should have much knowledge of human nature, various Christian experience, and a flow of tender religious affections; otherwise his applications of the various parts of his subject will not be sufficiently interesting and diversified.

The Wesleyan preachers in England used this mode very successfully. The celebrated George Whitfield, in his popular discourses, adopted this mode of preaching, and the effects of his speaking were wonderful. But two things rendered his sermons impressive and awakening: his powerful, flexible, and musical voice, and his fund of religious anecdotes. What he delivered was said in a manner in which no other preacher could say it. A story which he chose to relate was told in an inimitable way. Let no one attempt to follow his method, unless he discovers in himself *gifts* similar to those of that eminent man of God. Imitators of popular preachers are seldom successful.

iv. The fourth and last mode of discussing a subject is that by a *formal proposition*.

Immediately after reading the text, and adverting to the context, the terms and phrases in the text are briefly explained;

then from the text a proposition is drawn containing the great doctrine therein taught; and the preacher proceeds to discuss the proposition, by proving it to be true, and by enforcing it as a law regulating faith and practice. This mode has the air of the schools of logic and philosophy, and was adopted by many of the Puritan divines in England. It may be sometimes happily employed to give variety to the mode of discussing subjects in the pulpit. But it is not ordinarily the happiest method. It is too stiff and scholastic. It directs the attention too much to the terms of the proposition, instead of fixing it steadily on the words of the text.

Much do we prefer that the *text* should be considered as the proposition to be explained, proved and applied. Such indeed it is, if it be a *text* and not a *motto*. The words of Scripture we are called to consider as *alone* invested with Divine authority.

I have now done with the various modes of discussion, and am pleased to think that the good sense and taste of Christian audiences will allow preachers to pursue those various modes. In former ages, a sermon was not considered to be well written unless it conformed exactly with the rules of logic and rhetoric prescribed in the schools: but at this day a preacher may vary his mode without giving offense; and this variety, while it affords him greater *liberty* in arranging his thoughts, serves also to gratify the various tastes of those who hear him.

5. The last constituent part of a sermon, *is the application, or improvement.*

This is a difficult, but most important part of a sermon. For the design of all those expositions of the Word contained in the introduction, division, and discussion, is to bring that Word directly to the hearts of the hearers by an application of it to their various tempers and ways. Hence, in the Reformed Church, it was usual to find one half of a sermon made up of application, or the improvement. Vitringa is short in his explications of texts, but long in his application. This practice better answers the end of preaching, than the one now adopted, of making little or no practical improvement of the subjects discussed by the preacher. When religion declines, thoughtless men will sit in worship, and hear with pleasure an argument well arranged and expressed, for they delight in the displays of the discussive faculty; but they will not endure to have the Word of God closely

applied to their hearts. Searching sermons disturb their minds, and awaken those fearful apprehensions of judgment to come, which they would wish to have allayed or banished.

The improvement of sermons is of two kinds: first, by inferences, and second, by direct address or application.

(1.) *Inferences* may often serve as a profitable improvement, if the subject of discussion be a doctrine, from the truth of which naturally result evidences to establish other controverted doctrines, and to evince the obligation to perform certain duties which men owe to God and to one another. Historical subjects, proverbs, and parables, call especially for an improvement by inferences. If, however, the text presents for our consideration a duty, a prevailing sin, or a state of the mind which involves Christian experience, a direct application of the whole subject will form its best improvement.

What has just been said shows that inferences are of *two* kinds, namely, doctrinal and practical inferences.

By doctrinal inferences errors are refuted, and connective doctrines are proved. Such inferences, as they must be made in few words, should be logically clear and striking. Lengthened argumentation belongs to the explication, and not to the improvement of a sermon.

But there are also practical inferences to be drawn from a subject. These suit well in the improvement, and, according to the import of the text, may be extended to the good or evil affections of the mind, to the diversified and deceitful operations of sin in the heart, and to the development of the distinguishing exercises of the renewed mind. Practical inferences will also, through certain texts, naturally lead a pastor to speak of various wicked practices in life, and give room for reproof, expostulation, warning, and entreaty.

(2.) The improvement may also be made by *direct application*, and addresses to various characters, and to persons of various ages and states. The impenitent may be addressed as lost and undone sinners, exposed to the wrath to come. The careless may be addressed either as wedded to particular lusts, or as deluded, self-righteous, and proud in spirit.

Sinners may be addressed as awakened to seek God, or as struggling in the pangs of the new birth; true believers may be

addressed as weak in faith and babes in Christ, or as more advanced in the divine life; and “young men in whom the truth abideth,” as laboring under the pressure of afflictions and contending with the tempter of souls, or as enjoying “a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;” as declining in religion and waxing lukewarm, or standing fast and recovering from backslidings.

I need not enlarge here. An extensive field lies open for the range of the pastor, in his attempts to improve the various subjects of his discourses. And whatever his text may be, he will find, in the mode of addressing characters, abundant matter at his hand for profitable applications.

But let the pastor, if he adopt this mode of applying his subject, guard against scolding at particular persons, and making invective personal descriptions, when he has to do with characters. Let him be particularly solemn in his manner, when he reproves the wicked, and warns sinners of their danger, instead of raving at them as if he had “the terrors of the Lord” at his disposal. Let him confine his application to the sense of his text, and not wander away to say any thing and every thing he pleases. Let him watch over his own flock; and to speak to the consciences and hearts of others, let him recall his feelings and sentiments when he was himself a careless, impenitent sinner, making light of the gospel call; his exercises and troubles when he was awakened and began to pray; his difficulties in entering in at the strait gate, and his peace and love and gratitude when he obtained mercy. Like a skilful anatomist of the heart, let him draw a line of discrimination between the unconverted and the weaklings of the flock, and be solicitous to “strengthen the feeble knees.” The Master said, “Feed my lambs.” Let this charge rest upon the memory and conscience of the pastor. It seems to be forgotten by many preachers of this day. Sermon after sermon is delivered as if all addressed either hesitated to believe in the Christian religion, or were renewed exactly into the same stature in grace.

From what has just been observed, we perceive that a good application of a sermon must have the following properties:

*First.* It must be so connected with the subject as to enable every one to perceive that it is drawn from it.

*Second.* It must be pointed, in opposition to those looser reflec-

tions which are but little adapted to excite serious thought, and to operate conviction.

*Third.* It must be faithful, not flattering, so as to sew pillows under every arm-hole. "For say ye to the wicked, it shall be ill with him;" "not handling the Word of God deceitfully," to gain rich and powerful friends, but conveying reproof and warning to the ears of those who are on the broad road to destruction.

There is an application of a sermon which is easily made, and in the making of which some preachers suppose they are exceedingly faithful. The application to which I refer, consists in exclaiming aloud against prevailing sins, calling up to view drunkards, gamblers, revellers, and the openly profane; but all this may be done very zealously, and yet a pastor remain very unfaithful to his trust. Faithfulness in the ministry of the gospel (apart from bodily labor in the service) consists in two things: the one is, a fearless publication of the will and truth of God, expressed in his written Word, whether the worldly great and dissipated, whether our nearest kindred and benefactors, "will hear or will forbear." This branch of faithfulness will appear in the explication of a sermon. The other is, looking deep into the human heart, exposing the various deceits of sin therein, tracing the workings of self-righteousness under religious professions, and describing the foundations of delusive hopes. This kind of faithfulness will enter into the application of a sermon, and give it a proper tone and character.

*Fourth.* The last property of a good application is, that it be *animated*. Not only an increased earnestness of manner is here necessary, but the language, as being addressed to the fears and hopes of sinners and of saints, should be more of a familiar style, more impassioned, and sometimes very tender and affectionate.

I have now completed my view of the constituent parts of a sermon. It remains that I should add a word respecting *the manner* in which a sermon is to be concluded.

Some writers have recommended that, at the conclusion, a short recapitulation should be made of the points discussed. For this the *bar* is a more proper place than the pulpit. It may be admitted happily, when many arguments in support of a doctrine have been given in a series of discourses; but if there be a recapitulation, it ought to be introduced immediately after the discussion, and before an improvement of the subject is attempted.

The conclusion of a sermon should not be abrupt, but be made up of such remarks as serve to announce that the preacher is about to close his discourse—remarks affectionate and impressive.

Some preachers, at the conclusion of their sermons, address the wicked, and use the words of a curse: rather should sermons terminate with a gospel invitation. If ministers of Christ are required to say, "Woe unto the wicked," still they should remember that they are ministers of reconciliation and of peace.

Having spoken of the composition of a sermon, I should now speak of its *delivery*; but it may be useful here to dispose of a *question*, connected with the gift of preaching, which is often asked, namely, Whether a sermon should always be a composition committed to writing before it is spoken?

In answer, it must here be said, that the practice which best fulfils the end of a preacher's mission, is best. He is sent to communicate religious instruction: he should habituate himself to the regular mental composition of his sermons, that he may preach to edification, and store the minds of those who hear him with divine truths. He must not depend upon what memory and invention may suggest, just when he is about to preach, and thus "in the spirit of indolence offer unto the Lord that which cost him nothing;" but read, meditate, reflect, compose, in relation to the important subjects of his discourses. Now, if by such mental composition he is qualified to preach well, then his thoughts and researches need not be committed to writing: his preparations are good, his work is well done.

The composition of a speech, either for the parliament or for the pulpit, does not necessarily imply writing. The minds of many eminent speakers study and arrange the matter for their eloquent discourses, without the use of the pen in what is called regular composition. Robert Hall recalled by his memory in the pulpit, very accurately, the sentences, with their words, which he had before arranged mentally on his sofa. Other men, distinguished by the strength of their mental powers, and the extent of their knowledge, while they enjoyed the gift of utterance, have preached well from short notes—from little memoranda, as helps to memory. But such men, so richly and peculiarly endowed, are always few in number. What they could do in the exercise of the gift of preaching, let not every preacher attempt; otherwise, it will be seen that "a message hath been sent by the hand of a fool."

The careful composition, in writing, of sermons for the exercise of public worship on the Sabbath, is to be strongly recommended to pastors, and is almost indispensable to the future usefulness of those who are young in the ministry.

Writing sermons is a practice which operates directly to promote the progress of the young preacher in intellectual strength. Composition requires much reading and reflection, to be easily and well executed; and writing, which puts down and records the results of such labor, tends to fix in the mind whatever acquisitions it has made in the school of knowledge. The careful writer, like the laborer in the field, invariably finds his own strength increased, in proportion to the vigorous exercise of his powers.

Writing secures the preacher from a hasty and superficial view of the subject which he proposes to discuss. If he rely on what he can at the moment of speaking collect, in relation to a subject of thought, he will not be able, without extraordinary vigor of mind, to search deeply, and to separate the precious ore from the dross. But when he writes, the subject must pass again and again through his thoughts; he must read over what he has written; and the eye will aid the judgment in discovering defects and errors in the composition. Most certainly, writing a discourse is favorable to order in the arrangement of the matter, while it enables the composer to give to his style a proper variety of words on the same subject.

When thoughts are not written, the memory will so fail one in speaking, that the speaker will leave out or displace important facts; but admitting that one who does not write preserves order, still his phraseology on the same subject will not be sufficiently varied. The last words used in discussing a subject will be those which, from habits of association, will most readily occur to the memory when that subject again employs the thoughts. Hence, extempore preachers have been complained of as repeating the same ideas often in the same words.

To which let me add, that writing will preserve the preacher from a hesitating and stammering manner in the pulpit, and from adopting careless and unsound expressions. Rich must that invention be, which can supply a speaker with plenty of words, and those words such as are adapted to express his meaning correctly and forcibly. Errors may be detected in the off-hand speeches of

men of the finest talents. But if, in the senate or at the bar, good speakers use at the moment incorrect words and expressions, they are at liberty to recall and amend them; but this is a privilege which cannot be enjoyed by the preacher, without producing pain in the minds of his hearers. The pulpit is not the place where one is allowed to correct his own errors in speech, to stop, alter, and improve what happens to be faulty and inelegant in his phraseology.

It is true, that the talent for correct speaking, without writing, may in process of time be so improved by practice and with the increase of knowledge, as to supersede the necessity of writing every word and sentence. With a view to this fact, let the preacher, when he becomes accustomed to the exercise of public speaking, and finds his knowledge more comprehensive, gradually cultivate the talent of extemporizing, by bringing it more and more into action, by preaching from an analysis, in catechetical and evening lectures. Much may be done in this way, if the young preacher be not too early in attempting the work. Let him discipline his mind to think continuously on a subject, and put his thoughts into the best language, and into regular sentences. He will at least be partially successful; and the power, if acquired, will be a most valuable acquisition to him. It will enable him to save time and labor for study, to extend his reading, and to be more occupied in parochial visitations. It will give him more confidence and animation in speaking, and will qualify him to serve his Master better in conversation with individuals, and in church courts, and when he is called unexpectedly to preach at funerals and on other occasions. Little can be done in a missionary tour by a minister who depends upon his written sermons; on the other hand, little advance in knowledge will be made by one who thinks he can preach well at any time, without preparation by writing, by reflection, and industry in collecting facts.

The art of composing sermons is scarcely superior to the art of delivering them, when we contemplate the preacher as one who is to address himself to the ear. The delivery of sermons must, therefore, in these lectures, command your serious attention. I shall close the present, however, with a few *practical reflections*.

When we reflect on the ministry, the gift of preaching, the com-

position of sermons; on the quick return of the Sabbath, and on the demand for well-written and well-delivered sermons, by men of literary taste, by the thoughtless young in society, who run to hear preaching as they run to hear a celebrated actor on the stage, and expect to be agitated in church meetings as they are moved in a play-house, we are ready to exclaim aloud, "*Who is sufficient for these things?*"

But let me request you not to be unduly troubled, when you look at your present slender resources, and on those unjust demands which are made on preachers; but to reflect, that in the visible Church there are among professors those "who are the salt of the earth;" men of sound judgment, piety, and evangelical taste, who sympathize with ministers in their mental labors, and discern the good qualities of what President Davies called an "honest sermon." These men are "the conservative party" in Zion; they watch over her best interests; they keep the truth, and consider it to be of priceless value: they judge of sermons, not by the rules of the mere rhetorician, not by the standard of those who profess to be critics in elegant writing, or who require to be surprised by novelties under the name of originality of thought, to be entertained by anecdotes, and to be moved by the beauty and splendor of diction and imagery, but by the requisitions of their religion, and the adaptedness of sermons to maintain the truth and majesty of that religion, and to bring souls under its heavenly influence. These men are the best judges of good preaching; they are the children of wisdom, and the children of light, and not only turn their ears to, but fix their hearts upon, such exhibitions of divine truth, in language and manner, as ought to recommend the gospel to every man's conscience in the sight of God. These men will do you justice: they will not ask that your ordinary sermons, generally the productions of forty-eight hours of studious application, shall be faultless compositions; they will not depreciate your weekly discourses, by a comparison of them with those elaborated, corrected, and polished sermons which men of superior genius occasionally deliver in the churches; they will not expect that whenever you preach, the effects of impressive oratory, united with displays of a rich imagination and highly cultivated taste, shall be produced in the minds and on the nerves of your hearers; *they* are not so unjust, though many, especially among the young, are,

who read little else than the popular novels, and who, with itching ears, run from one meeting-house to another, to be entertained for an hour. No; they are sober-minded men, well-informed, religious, who require to be edified by sermons rich in good sense, well expressed and well delivered; who seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. These persons will sustain you, if you prove to be an edifying preacher, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

To obtain the approval of such in the Church, to make truth and duty known, to awaken and convert sinners, and to feed the flock of God, cultivate your gift of preaching; attend to every thing that relates to the composition of sermons; seek to be eminent for clearness and force of reasoning, for the unadorned purity of your style, and the soundness and elevation of your sentiments. Never sink into vulgarism, nor swell into bombast. Preach after painstaking to correct your defects, both in writing and in speaking; and preach so instructively and forcibly, that those who hear will be edified, and desire to hear again. Guard against loudness and vehemence in expressing the common truths of the gospel, as though you were saying something which no one present had known or heard of before, and never exhibit a warmth of feeling overdone. Study to be approved first by God, and then by the pious of sound understanding and correct taste. What has been said in relation to the proper discussion of subjects drawn from the Word of God, and connected with man's highest interests, must have impressed you with the fact, that mental labor is before you, and that certain habits of analyzing texts are to be acquired, to render your course in the ministry more easy and more useful.

It is true, there are preachers abroad who deliver sermons without any particular consideration of the text and context, and without care in the arrangement of their matter; and it is easy to be a preacher of this kind, if you are fluent in utterance, and bold in speech. You might acquire the little theological knowledge which such possess, in a short time. Throw out your sentiments in an earnest manner, and obtain the reputation of an awakening preacher and a revivalist, crying out, "Onward and onward! you will be for ever damned, if you seize not on the present moment, and repent immediately! Only resolve! you can love God if you will!"

etc.; but it becomes you, as men who desire to be permanently useful in your Master's service, to reflect on the following facts:

1. There is no need of much reading, to qualify you to deliver a few popular sermons: but the apostle Paul says, "Give thyself to reading;" "Study to show thyself approved;" "Let no man despise thy youth."

2. Preachers of that style have one set of ideas, which they all deliver. Instead of studying the Scriptures, they borrow the one from the other certain phrases, sentiments, and measures. Hence, if you hear two or three sermons which contain some of the excellent thoughts and searching remarks of Nettleton, Griffin, and others, you will find the storehouse of the preacher nearly exhausted; and if other preachers in the same line succeed, you will hear those thoughts and remarks repeated; and if any excitement be created, impudent attempts made to deviate from a wholesome confession of faith into those notions which lead to Pelagianism, and ultimately into Unitarianism. But a man is not an able minister of the New Testament because he dare contradict the sentiments of those who have gone before him. Such courage is no evidence of either much knowledge or piety. Paul says, "Meditate on these things." Every thought that appears to the thinker to be a new discovery of truth, is very remote from the character which it sustains in his own mind. Often it is found, on examination, to have the marks of very old age, and to be *an heresy* long since avowed, but repudiated by the Church. When a speaker gives unrestrained course to his imagination and passions, and runs in search of novelties, by which to distinguish himself, he may sometimes hit upon a combination of ideas which is strong, if not striking. Especially is this the case with regard to style. Those who in writing disregard the recognized models of judgment and taste, will sometimes express ideas in a most forcible manner. Copy neither after such thinkers, nor such writers. Remember that ancient landmarks are entitled to respect, and that in writing, "the artificial is easier than the simple; the extravagant than the natural; the exaggerated than the just."

3. Religion, as it is taught in the Bible, is a system of divine truth, and consequently the parts are connected. Study that system; trace the relations of every passage which you select for a text; and expound it, not according to your own mind, but

according to the mind of the Holy Spirit. Never lose sight of the fact that you are set apart, not to maintain the dogmas of popes and councils; nor, on the other hand, to make a new system of religion, in which doctrines are to harmonize with the fashionable philosophy of the day, in which the taste of this world is to be gratified by new colors daubed over old truths; but to preach the Word that is written by the pen of divine inspiration.

4. It is your duty to prepare yourselves for the gospel service, so as to be able (as far as the gift of preaching is concerned) to remain in that service through successive years, *in one place*.

Formerly, pastors did not remove, from any deficiency in the gift of preaching; for their instructions were profitable to the people, and sound doctrine had a predominant influence. But what do we now hear and see in the churches? We see pastors removing from place to place, to prevent their ministry, defective in knowledge, from falling into contempt. And how can it be otherwise, if those who preach are not "scribes well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven;" if they can deliver only a few edifying discourses, and then must either repeat these, or fall upon extraneous measures, to supply their own deficiencies, or remove from their pastoral charge?

Seek to be qualified for your work. "Hoc age!"

## LECTURE X.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### GIFTS— THE GIFT OF PREACHING THE WORD.

#### ON THE DELIVERY OF SERMONS.

THE gift of preaching is more fully displayed to the public eye in the Church,

#### SIXTH, BY THE DELIVERY OF SERMONS.

Such delivery, therefore, is a most important quality of that gift. Whatever may be the intrinsic merit of a composition, if it be so delivered as not to excite attention and keep it alive, as not to please, but to disgust and tire, it must lose all its proper effect. Hence it is that many valuable sermons appear, when heard in a Christian assembly, inferior productions, in consequence of defects in delivering them; while some poor discourses are applauded, because they have passed through the lips of skilful speakers. For the gospel's sake, then, particular attention should be paid, not only to the composition, but the delivery of sermons.

Here let me make a general remark upon the great organ of delivery, and the great influence which that organ has in determining an audience to approve or disapprove a sermon which they hear. The organ to which I refer is,

I. The *human voice*. By this instrument we are to make the sentiments which we deliver agreeable and impressive, awakening and convincing. Movements of the hand and the arm may aid the voice; but it is the voice, in its tones and modulations, its sweetness and its power, that does more for the speaker than either the

hand or the eye. This fact ought to claim the special attention of those who begin to preach the gospel. Such are apt to overlook the instrumentality of the voice in a happy delivery, and to imagine that if their compositions be good and their gestures graceful and forcible, their delivery must be proportionally good; but this is a great mistake. Gesticulation or action is of no use, but as it helps the voice in expressing variety of sentiments. We may study gesture with particular care, but if we neglect the voice we shall fail in delivery. How many young preachers use graceful and strong action in the pulpit, yet make very little impression on their hearers! Nay, some appear to disadvantage, in consequence of their over action and ill-regulated voice in the sacred desk. On the other hand, a preacher may use little or no action, he may read his sermon, and nevertheless, by his well-trained voice alone give force to the sentiments or truths which he utters, and excite in a very high degree, as did Dr. Dwight occasionally, the passions of his hearers. Certain it is, all the great specimens of pulpit oratory have been distinguished by simple action operating in aid of thought and voice. George Whitfield wrought upon his hearers principally by his voice. The celebrated Chalmers created among his hearers a deep and awful silence and strong emotion, with very little gesticulation. Pay attention to your voice: if that organ be well regulated, a few gestures will render a speaker of sound sense and chaste style, impressive.

The delivery of sermons, though it be not an expression either of piety or theological science, though it be more of a bodily effort than an intellectual attainment, is still a talent which, as it recommends what the preacher says to those who hear, should be assiduously cultivated: I say cultivated, because it is a *talent* which admits of great improvement. We have all read how much Demosthenes, by painstaking, improved his powers for public speaking. Ancient orators were not *born* such. Some of them, with but few advantages from nature, acquired an influence over public assemblies by the art of delivery, which it could be wished that gospel ministers every where possessed, for the advancement of the high interests of their Master's kingdom. But some pious men think that if the matter of their sermons be instructive and attractive, and their style chaste and eloquent, the people are bound to hear them with attention; but such preachers should

reflect that the question to be considered is *not* whether the people ought to hear attentively, and even tremblingly, the “Word of the Lord”?—this is readily answered in the affirmative by every Christian.

But the point to which, on this subject, the attention is to be directed, is this: whether preachers can gain, by means of an approved and affecting delivery, more and better hearing of their discourses from men, such as they are—men whose hearts are naturally depraved, whose ears in matters of religion “are dull of hearing,” and whose infirmities, in their best estate of sanctification on earth, are many?

If this question be answered also in the affirmative, as it must be, then should delivery, in a degree, it is true, subordinate to higher pastoral duties, be carefully studied and improved.

It will not be necessary here to point out particularly the methods to be pursued, for the improvement of one’s delivery. Some observations connected with this art will be made presently, when I shall come to give some directions for a proper delivery of sermons. Meantime, let it here suffice to say, that whatever rules are prescribed in academic halls to form good speakers, apply fully to the delivery of sermons from the pulpit, so far as the pulpit is consecrated to the exhibition, not of the passions, but of the claims of religion. In addition to those rules, practice should be attended to, in order to overcome, so soon as may be, any constitutional timidity or inordinate diffidence; to give exercise to the chest and lungs, and habituate the speaker to that elevation and force of voice which the gospel service in public worship requires; to correct faults, such as rapidity of speech, indistinctness in pronunciation, levity of manner, and awkwardness in attitude and gesture, together with excessive action. Much, in the improvement of the talent for delivery, depends on the young preacher’s distrusting of his own capacity to judge correctly of his public exhibitions in speaking, and his readiness to receive the corrections of men of judgment and taste. Some exalt themselves into the best judges of their own delivery. Hence, if they have faults, they are soon wedded to them. They cannot be persuaded that they speak too fast, because they hear their own words very distinctly; and they refuse to forsake a whining and drawling tone, because their own ears are pleased with it. This reliance upon their own opinion is, in many respects, very hurtful.

I shall now briefly state the properties of a good delivery of sermons, by the Evangelical Pastor :

1. A good delivery of sermons is distinctly marked by *solemnity of countenance and of manner*. This quality is indispensable, in a work so sacred as that of preaching the Word of God ; a *work*, too, to be performed in worship, and consequently in the more immediate presence of God. What the Angel of the Covenant said on a particular occasion to Joshua, may be fitly said to every servant of God, while publishing his Word, and discussing the awfully important and sublime subjects of religion : “ The place whercon thou standest is holy ! ” Feel it to be such ; for “ God is in his holy temple, and in his temple doth every thing speak of his glory ! ”

Solemn feelings will naturally produce solemnity of manner, and give to the countenance all that solemnity of which it is susceptible. To beget and nurture such feelings, let the preacher compose his discourse in his closet, in the spirit of prayer, lifting up his heart, from time to time, to God, as he proceeds in his work ; let him, in his domestic worship on Sabbath morning, bring his holy duty of preaching, together with his own insufficiency, before God, and supplicate the special aids of the Holy Spirit for the performance of this duty ; let him avoid, at the place of worship, much talk with others, especially much conversation on worldly matters, and rather collect the pious to pray for a blessing on the word to be spoken.

That solemnity of countenance and manner which the delivery of sermons calls for, is neither gloom nor sourness of aspect, but a natural expression of the sacredness and the importance of the work which the Evangelical Pastor is about to perform, and of those reverential feelings which enter into acceptable worship.

Now, this becoming and expressive solemnity stands opposed to an air of careless indifference, or of mere mechanical effort and zeal in worldly employments. The eye of Garrick could detect the want of due solemnity of manner in the gospel preacher, when he saw him springing up the pulpit stairs as if he were entering into a theatre, and handling and tossing about the Bible as if it were a merchant's ledger.

This solemnity is also inconsistent with a smirking and smiling countenance, maintained through the service and in the delivery

of discourses, very various in their matter. This is a serious defect in delivery. To hear a preacher uttering the threatenings of God in his Word, or describing the miseries of the damned with a smiling countenance, cannot fail to displease, if not disgust, every serious hearer. A smile should seldom be worn in the pulpit: in its smallest degree, it is admissible only when the preacher is encouraging God's people by an exhibition of promised blessings, and by describing the elevated joys of the heavenly state.

This solemnity is moreover opposed to every attempt at being quaint and witty in the pulpit, supporting such wit by look and manner. Even when the preacher preserves his own countenance when he causes others to smile or laugh, he violates the decorum of the place, and impairs the solemnity of divine worship.

In a word, this solemnity stands opposed to theatrical mimeries, and every effort to show off the mere orator, at the expense "of honesty in the sacred cause." The chaste pulpit orator will above all things preserve solemnity, and all the gestures which he employs will tend to enforce the sentiments which his lips utter, and to awaken solemn thoughts and feelings in the worshipping assembly.

2. Another property of a good delivery is, *distinctness of pronunciation.*

This is a truth so obvious, that nothing more can be necessary here than to state it, excepting perhaps to remark, that this attribute of a good delivery in the pulpit stands opposed to rapidity of speech, to a low depression of voice at the end of sentences, to stammering, and to a neglect of accent in words, and of emphatical words in sentences. These faults, if they exist, should be early corrected. But a preacher, in attempting to be distinct in his utterance of syllables and words, may fall into a disagreeable swell, and pain the ear instead of pleasing it, by putting the same stress of voice upon every word, and by clothing all his sentiments, whatever they may be, in the dress of loud command. His words perhaps may be expressing affectionate entreaties, rich consolations, while his very tone is that of magisterial authority. This is evidently unnatural.

3. But a third property of a good delivery is to be found in *animated speaking.*

This quality expresses earnestness in the preacher, and there-

fore should by all means be exhibited; for if he do not himself appear to be in earnest, he cannot expect to call up the attention, and interest the minds of those who hear him.

But this animation, which is so essential to an impressive delivery, must not be misplaced, nor overleap the bounds of propriety. This remark I here make, because some preachers neglect every grace of good speaking, in order to appear animated. They begin their discourses under the impulse of high animal spirits; deliver their introduction with a force of voice which ought to be applied only to the more important part of the sermon; find it necessary, as they proceed, to increase in animation, and to dignify trite sentiments or mere connecting remarks, with all the voice and action of the impassioned orator. All this is done in bad taste; it is ranting. If we can agitate the ocean, still it ought not to be put into commotion by us "to waft a feather, or to drown a fly."

Let, then, animation in the pulpit be various in its degrees, and suited to the diversified sentiments which he has occasion to deliver, and to the very different subjects which he is obliged to discuss. There are parts of a discourse which ought to be delivered in the sweet tone and animated manner of ordinary agreeable conversation; other parts require more warmth and increasing animation; and when the subject is changed, the manner should follow the change. The celebrated pulpit orator, George Whitfield, delivered his sermons in a manner very different from that which many Methodist preachers in this country choose to adopt. The latter begin with a low voice, and, regardless of the variety of sentiments to be uttered, uniformly rise higher and higher in vociferation, until they preach themselves out of breath. This may be animation mounting up to zeal, but it is too mechanical and unnatural to be approved by any, save those who think noise and violence to be good preaching. Whitfield, in delivery, usually adopted the conversation style; and he became highly animated and strong in action, when he uttered impassioned sentiments. Never should the animation of the preacher exceed the bounds of nature and propriety. It is an unnatural animation in *voice*, when its sound is so harsh and loud as to torture the ears and afflict the heads of those who hear it with pain. In action, too, the animation becomes unnatural, when the sentiments expressed do not support the number and the violence of the gestures. It is easy

to tear even a passion to rags; but, to exhibit it well, every expression of it must conform to nature.

Here let me correct a mistake into which a young preacher is apt to fall. He supposes that all animation in delivering a sermon depends upon the action of the arm and the hand; whereas it is the *eye* especially, united with proper modulations of the *voice*, that inspires animation in the whole manner of the speaker, when his matter and style are good. Hence some preachers, who use little action, but look a subject well, and give the proper variations to their tones in speaking, are heard with more attention and pleasure than others who neglect the voice and the use of the eye, and play much with their hands. The eye can be very eloquent; the voice alone can speak powerfully to an audience; and when, in addition to these instruments, appropriate gestures are used, the preacher, *cæteris paribus*, acquires deserved celebrity.

4. A good delivery must be *affectionate and pathetic*, in those parts of a sermon which admit of the exhibition of affectionate concern and pathos. Religion allows a preacher to feel much solicitude about those whom he addresses, and its momentous subjects of thought may well awaken the attention, and deeply interest the affections of the heart. But it is the most difficult part of a good delivery, to show those tender feelings in a manner which shall move the hearts of others. The tears which drop naturally and at a proper time from the eyes of a sincere preacher are very moving; but, in some instances, the preacher seems to know this fact too well, and to let his tears fall too frequently and too mechanically. It is not necessary, however, that the preacher, in order to be pathetic, should shed tears. Pathos can be produced by sentiment and voice alone. This fact is well known. Let the preacher, then, speak skilfully to the affections of the human heart, when his subject admits of it, and let him use an affectionate tone and manner on such occasions, and he will recommend his delivery and also his religion to those who hear him.

Very remote from the pathetic, in speaking, is the course which some preachers adopt. They address themselves wholly to the principle of *fear* in the human mind; delight to thunder out the threatenings of the divine law, and to dwell much upon the damnation of hell, and the miseries of the damned. Their souls appear to be in their true element, when they are uttering the denuncia-

tions of Divine wrath, and painting in language the terrific scenes of the final judgment. Ah! such men ought to inquire seriously, "what manner of spirit they are of?" It is true, "that, knowing the terrors of the Lord," ministers must endeavor "to persuade men;" but they must not show that those terrors are delightful topics of discourse to themselves; on the contrary, they should let it appear that they approach, in divine service, the awful realities comprehended in the damnation of hell, with pain and trembling.

Nearly allied to the temper just mentioned, is that which is to be perceived in the delivery of a few gospel preachers. These servants of Christ, who "are men of like passions with others," labor under certain irritabilities of natural temper; they are peevish and fretful, or are soon inflamed with anger and perturbed by contradictions, or discontented and sour. Now, these sharp angles of their temper too often discover themselves in their voice, countenance, and manner, while preaching the Word. This is a serious defect. The sacred desk is not the place where the evils of natural temper are to be exhibited, but the holy ground on which ministers are to tread, showing "that *the love of Christ* constraineth them."

I have dwelt longer upon the properties of animation and pathos in a good delivery, because of their importance, and the infrequency of their attainment by ministers of the gospel. Most preachers are more intent on correctness and elegance of diction, than on the acquisition of a good delivery, though it is the latter which covers many faults in grammar, and in the construction of sentences—such faults, I mean, as are committed inadvertently, and through hurry in speaking. Without a good delivery, choice and impassioned sentiments will appear too didactic and tame; they will play around the head, but will not touch the heart; or if they sometimes come to it, it will not be, as one says, in "those strong strokes, those deep and awful gashes, which constitute the very essence of effective oratory, and which the elevated spirit of the gospel is so directly calculated to give, in public addresses."

I shall close my remarks in relation to delivery, by a few directions, which may aid the pastor in the exercise of this function.

(1.) While the pastor is writing or committing his sermon to memory, let him mark with his pen *the most important passages*, with a view to render them more conspicuous and emphatical in

his delivery. This will prevent him from speaking his introduction with too much voice and animation, as that part will of course (or generally) remain unmarked by him. This practice will enable him to throw a greater force of voice on words, on important parts of the discussion, and at the conclusion of certain sentences.

(2.) Let the preacher guard against *the waste of his bodily strength* before preaching, either by too much muscular action, or by too much conversation; or, in worship, by singing with too loud a voice, or especially by continuing too long in prayer, before sermon. Prayer is an exercise of elevation; and it is found, at that elevation of voice which public worship requires, to exhaust the strength sooner than the exercise of preaching.

(3.) Again: Let the preacher seek to obtain *a composed and solemn frame of mind*, by looking up to God for his assistance, and by making due preparation for his work in his closet. The consciousness that one possesses good ordinary preparation in matter for preaching, imparts confidence to the mind and strength to the nerve, and operates to remove those anxieties and fears which greatly disturb the pastor, and sometimes unfit him to bring out those good things, new and old, which are in the treasury of his thoughts. It will also tend to create composure of mind in delivery, to reflect that a Christian audience are not disposed to criticise with severity, when they are addressed by one who speaks good sense in plain language.

(4.) Let the preacher *feel deeply* that he is to preach the “glorious gospel of the blessed God;” that he is to deliver truths of vast importance, and to be a worker together with God in “destroying the kingdom of darkness,” and he will exhibit some of the properties of a good delivery. The doctrines of the Bible are truths which communicate the knowledge of the most interesting facts and duties, and means, selected by infinite wisdom and mercy, and owned by the Holy Spirit, to effect conviction and conversion, to promote sanctification and growth in grace. How solemn is the thought, that the words spoken by a preacher may be used by a superior power to awaken the stupid sinner, to bring him to the enjoyment of redemption’s healing mercies here, and of eternal glory hereafter; and in this connection meet the preacher again in heaven, and form an important fact in the history of an immortal soul redeemed for ever and ever!

(5.) Especially, while preaching, let the preacher attend to his *voice* and his *gestures*. The voice, I have before said, and I repeat it here, is a most powerful instrument in oratory. Its sounds can dignify very trite sentiments, and render sentences well written, and conveying important ideas, very forcible. Correctly may it be said, that the voice does much more for a good speaker, in a public assembly, than the most graceful action. Indeed, the latter is useful only so far as it aids the former; hence, it is by the former that the latter must be regulated. So true is this, that it may be set down as a rule to speakers, that whoever has a feeble tenor or treble voice, should rely much on the weight of his sentiments, and use, in delivery, very moderate action: for in such cases, if strong and very animated gestures be employed, they are unsupported by strength of voice; and the want of harmony is perceived by every hearer, and tends to render the speaker ridiculous.

Early, therefore, should those persons who consecrate themselves to the service of the Divine Redeemer to preach his gospel, study the power of their own voices respectively. If the voice be weak or slender, it may be improved by proper exercise and care. If its tones be harsh, though sufficiently loud, this fault may be corrected by studying the proper modulations of the voice. Every effort should be made, by practice in reading loud, and speaking and singing, to render the voice so flexible as to suit the variety of sentiments which a preacher is obliged to deliver. Nor should one's own ear, though it be musical, be set up as an infallible judge of the use of his voice. I have known speakers who possessed the sense of harmony in a high degree, deliver sentences very unmusically; whilst others, whom nature had deprived of that sense, spoke, nevertheless, in tones very agreeable to the ears of others.

Let me then urge you to attend to the voice and its improvement. In preaching, begin in a low tone; be slow, not hurried; articulate distinctly; use the natural key; give more force to the voice in the heart of your discussion; keep the eyes from roving; look earnest; make the proper pauses; be deliberate, and modulate the voice to the sentiments to be delivered; do not utter, if you can help it, "the consolations which are in Christ Jesus," and the denunciations of Divine wrath, in the same manner, and with the same tone of voice.

II. But ACTION must also be attended to, and well studied.

1. In the first place, action in delivery must be made to correspond with the voice. To see a man gesticulating with violence, while his voice is squeaking out sentences, is no pleasant sight.

2. Action must be made to correspond with *the sentiments delivered*. If a preacher should point with his finger downwards from the pulpit, while he was speaking of the glories of heaven, there would be a manifest impropriety in his action. Should he lay his hand upon his heart, while he was describing the value of intellectual attainments, the action would be equally improper.

3. The action must also correspond with *the sacredness of the place* and the solemnities of divine worship. The gospel preacher is not an actor in a tragedy; he is not called to show how accurately he can represent a character, by his manner and voice. His work is far more serious and noble. His imitations of persons mentioned in Scripture, of whom he has occasion to speak, should scarcely ever be attempted. No theatrical art should be seen about him. His action should be artless, easy, and dignified, and appear to be drawn from him by the force of the sentiments which his mind conceives and his lips utter.

I shall not enlarge on this subject, for here apply all the rules of good speaking which nature and the best examples suggest. Let the preacher be neither a play-actor, nor a marble statue, nor an awkward clown: let him be sure that the action which he uses will neither be so stiff and ungraceful, nor so artfully elegant, as to give offense to persons of sense and taste.

4. For the gospel's sake, strive to be a good speaker. Do not rely so much upon the stores of your classical and theological knowledge, upon your metaphysical acumen, and upon the excellency of your composition, as to conclude that you may safely neglect to cultivate the graces of a good delivery. There is more of pride in a sloven than he is willing to acknowledge.

And if you should improve your gifts, and prove to be an acceptable and impressive public speaker, let it not discourage you to hear your sermon pronounced by some to be mere declamation, and your manner too theatrical. Superiority in any gift must pay this tax to the envious, and to those who are defective in matters of judgment and taste.

The public, if you speak and write well, "holding forth the

Word of life," will do you justice, and show its commendation of your delivery by a respectful attendance on your ministry. Wear your faculties meekly, covet the best gifts, and move on steadily and prayerfully in the walks of duty.

It pertains to the delivery of sermons to discuss the question, whether it be better to deliver sermons by *reading from the notes* which contain them, or to *speak what has been written and committed to memory*?

On this subject, there is a great diversity of opinions in the churches. Ministers of the gospel generally, maintain the expediency of reading their sermons from their manuscripts, for the labor of committing them to memory is very irksome to most, whilst a few meet with insuperable difficulties in attempts to speak extempore. But the sentiment of the Christian multitude, when not sunk into ritualism, or mad with metaphysical schemes and speculations, is favorable to the practice of writing sermons in the closet, and in the pulpit delivering them *from memory*. Dr. Campbell has decided in favor of reading sermons. Dr. Blair's judgment inclines favorably towards the old practice in the Scotch and Netherland churches.

The arguments offered *in support of the reading method* are the following, namely:

(1.) "That good readers are more frequently to be found among those who enter into the gospel service than good speakers." But this fact is denied. If by good speakers we are to understand great orators—eloquent and impressive speakers—the fact, stated in the argument just mentioned, is doubtless true; but great and distinguished orators are, in every age, very few in number. Let, then, the argument turn upon ordinary and acceptable speakers, and that fact may justly be controverted. The reverse is true. Good reading is a very difficult and rare accomplishment; especially that reading which is required in the happy delivery of sermons: for such delivery demands that the reader shall exhibit all the attributes of a good speaker. His reading must be such as to draw every eye away from his notes, and have in it so much real eloquence as to engross every mind with the subject. To effect this, the reader must have the sentiments to be delivered all nearly in his memory, so that the glance of his eye at the manuscript is sufficient to enable him to move on, attend to the tones

of his voice, and maintain the necessary ease and grace in his action. But will those in general who read sermons, because to commit them to memory is irksome to them, take the pains thus to accomplish themselves to be eloquent readers? No, indeed: they will apply to their notes, as a relief from all trouble; they will read in the ordinary uninteresting manner of readers in general; and unless there be in their sentiments much to employ thought, and in their voices much to please the ear, they will fall below the plain and honest speaker.

Certain it is, the preacher who neglects writing because composition is hard labor, will naturally run into sameness and repetition, foolish talking, or extravagance; and the preacher who neglects to cultivate the highest style of reading, depending upon his manuscript, will very seldom escape dulness, and stand below the common animated speaker.

(2.) Another argument used is, that reading *saves time and labor*. But the saving of time can hardly be admitted into calculation here, as in the one case as well as in the other, the sermon must be composed in writing: but some hard labor is saved—that of committing sermons to memory; and this pressure of labor is, after all, the reason why so many preachers readily adopt the practice of reading. If the greater hardship were connected with reading, we should hear but few sermons read. Yet it is most true that there are some in the ministry who, through weakness of memory and through defect of the gift of utterance, cannot place sermons in their memories, nor speak well extempore. Such are bound to make all use of their manuscripts: they must read, or cease to preach; they have no choice in this matter, if they shall continue in the service of Christ. Necessity binds them to their notes: they are not influenced in their course by the consideration that by reading they will save labor, but by the fact that they cannot depend upon memory in preaching.

(3.) A third argument employed in favor of reading manuscript sermons is, that this practice secures *order and accuracy* of expression; excludes loose and declamatory sentiment, and preserves the preacher from both grammatical and doctrinal errors.

Perhaps this is the strongest argument which the friends of reading have to offer; and it is one of overwhelming weight, when men undertake to preach, not from written composition,

but from the invention and associations of the moment. But if the sermon be written and committed to memory, the argument is an arrow which will not stick, and which falls harmlessly to the ground: for he who writes in his closet what is trifling, irrelevant, mere declamation and bombast, will read what he has written; he who through ignorance falls into grammatical and other errors in his study, will surely retain them while he is preaching.

Long since, in these lectures, has it been said that ignorance is a disqualification for the pastoral office. But while we require in those who preach the Word, minds well furnished with knowledge, let us be careful that we do not "speak unadvisedly with our lips," respecting accuracy and elegance of expression in sermons, and run our demands on preachers into absurdities. Let us remember that the heathen philosophers complained that the Christian preachers did not speak elegantly; that they were wanting in the refinements of taste, and defective in style and in logic. It was easy, when they had heard Paul, to call him "a babbler;" and it is easy now, for unripe scholars, to denominate a regular train of argument "mere declamation."

The comparison here to be instituted is, between a discourse written and *read*, and a discourse written and *spoken*. The mere circumstance of reading it in the pulpit, is to be sure an evidence of closet-study through the week, but is no proof of either grammatical precision or force of argument.

But while one who speaks his sermon, either from memory or present associations, shows by his whole train of thought in speaking that he understands his subject and his grammar, why should a few inaccuracies that drop from the lips of the preacher disturb the mind of any hearer, and become the subject of his severe critical remarks? Has the like fault a similar treatment at the bar? Has it the appearance of such a serious defect in the senate-house or in Parliament? When the lawyer is speaking eloquently and argumentatively, do we stop to count his errors in grammar? No. Why not extend the same generosity to the preacher? Has he all the time for his preparations, that one should look in his sermons on the Sabbath for all the attributes of deep thought and elegant composition? It is a mark of good sense, when the mind of a hearer scorns petty criticisms, and

forms its judgment from the manner in which the whole subject is discussed by a preacher. Certain it is, the pious and judicious in worship never sit as critics of a literary club, when a pastor uses good language, and speaks to the purpose: their minds are better occupied.

But let me briefly state the arguments which have been offered in favor of preaching *without reading the sermon*:

(1.) This mode of preaching, it has been said, was adopted by the apostles and Christian fathers. But surely no argument ought to rest on what the apostles, who were men of extraordinary endowments, did, in this respect. The Christian fathers, we know, did write many of their discourses, and delivered them from memory. They often spoke extempore. Their sermons in general were not rhetorical, but marked by simplicity and plainness of speech; not elaborated, but full of gospel facts, and suited to the understandings of the poor, who constituted the larger portion of their audience, and who were to be fed like "babes, with the sincere milk of the Word."

If the Reformers, who wrote much, preached without reading; if they did not satisfy themselves with now and then reading a homily, like the better-informed priests of the dark ages, it was because they were called to preach oftentimes, and in preaching, to teach the simple doctrines of the gospel, in opposition to the corruptions of Popery. They adapted their mode of preaching to the circumstances of the times; and should pastors *now* also do the same, they should make the best preparations their leisure hours will admit, and by notes or without them, try to gain the greater attention to the word to be spoken.

(2.) But it is further said, that the practice of committing a sermon and speaking it, has a direct tendency to strengthen the power of the preacher's memory, and therefore should be pursued by pastors: for it is an ultimate law of our nature, that memory is strengthened by its own exercise.

This fact is not denied; but then it is to be observed, that when Sabbath days occur in such quick succession, the practice of committing sermons to memory is attended with two evils: it causes the preacher to rely too much upon memory, and to keep his invention and judgment too much in a state of abeyance. Hence it is seen, that if at any time the preacher's memory fail him in the

pulpit, he is obliged to stop in the further discussion of his subject, or awkwardly to draw his notes out of his pocket. The other evil resulting from the practice of committing sermons in quick succession is this: that function of the memory called retention is impaired, though its power of susceptibility or readiness in collecting facts may be improved.

(3.) Again, it is said that preaching without reading, but by committing to memory, is calculated to make a preacher familiar with the Scriptures. All the passages contained in sermons must in such case be deposited in the memory. Hence, the choicest portions of the Divine Word will in process of a few years be so fully acquired as to be ready for use, either when the pastor is writing, or when he is called to speak extempore.

This is an argument of great weight. All things considered, perhaps it is the strongest that can be offered in favor of speaking written sermons from memory.

(4.) But it is also argued, that preaching without reading has the general sentiment in its favor. This fact, however, is controverted. It may be safely affirmed, that a certain class in society are not friendly to reading sermons, unless the reader be so accomplished in his work as to exhibit all the attributes of an energetic speaker. Then they may tolerate it, rather than part with the ministrations of the Word. But the more intellectual and literary class in society, in order to secure premeditated matter expressed in good style, show a preference for the practice of reading sermons. Indeed, in some parts of the Church, there are those who foolishly conclude that the absence of notes in the pulpit is the absence of good sense and chaste style from a sermon. So far will prejudice sway "the little minds of little men."

In the established Church, reading sermons was the fixed, universal practice. Most of the Dissenters, too, adopted this mode. Religion declined, and formality and immorality abounded, when the Methodists arose, conducted by the Wesleys, Whitfield, Morgan, and others, and produced that happy change in the state of the churches, the effects of which are still seen and felt. Now, the Methodist ministers, both Arminian and Calvinistic, preached without reading. Their sermons were not refined productions, but edifying, warm-hearted, animated and pungent discourses, which awakened deep attention, interested the common mind,

and spoke powerfully to the understandings, consciences, and hearts of their hearers. Hence, under the Divine blessing, their efforts were remarkably successful: though persecuted, their converts increased and multiplied into an host. But ministers and churches, especially when religion declines, choose to have sermons read; but this practice, in process of time, will augment any denomination among whom good sermons are spoken, notwithstanding those who speak them shall be called "ranting, fanatical preachers, Methodistical and extravagant."

Impressed with this fact, which has been and is now disclosed in the history of the religious denominations, a Unitarian divine of Cambridge, Dr. Ware, has strongly recommended the practice of speaking a sermon without reading it, in order that the sentiments of his sect may be more extensively spread, and be better received among the common people of this country. But if Socinian and Universalist preachers are wise in adopting this popular mode of preaching error and heresy, it is to be hoped that the faithful servants of Jesus Christ will employ the best means and measures for the dissemination and defense of the truth. When men engage in the gospel service, do they not consecrate their memory, as well as every other power, to the service of Christ?

(5.) Another argument in favor of preaching without reading sermons, is, that it corresponds better with those parts of pastoral duty which relate to the administration of reproof, admonition, and affectionate expostulation, and enables the preacher to inspect the congregation in worship. Reproofs in writing, or when read, lose half their force. Masters and parents understand the art of rebuking better than to commit their rebukes to writing, and read them to their servants and children. The eye conveys reproof with much pointedness of either compassion or severity; and the eye should examine the persons admonished, and be an instrument in regulating the judgment and the discourse.

Further: The preacher who delivers his sermons without reading them, commands a view of all those to whom he dispenses the Word, and derives from this circumstance many advantages which are lost to the mere reader. Oft have I ascertained, by looking at the countenances of those to whom I preached, that some were seriously impressed, and others under concern of mind about their future state, before they were willing faintly to acknowledge the fact to themselves.

(6.) To preach without reading enables the preacher to introduce (as he can in prayer, without written forms) many useful and pertinent thoughts which occur while he is speaking; at the same time that it serves to improve his talent for extemporizing, and to qualify him to preach to edification when his written preparations are not to be had.

Considering the many interruptions to study in the life of the Evangelical Pastor, the frequent calls made upon him for preaching, it is certainly his bounden duty to cultivate his talent for communicating religious instruction "in season and out of season." Now, it is obvious that in committing words arranged in sentences to memory, he is pursuing the direct method to furnish himself with phraseology, when he is called to speak extempore. How much of an eloquent orator's speech, whether at the bar, in the senate, or in the pulpit, as it respects both ideas and words, is furnished by his memory presenting what he had before thought and said, in the very words in which he had before clothed his thoughts and sayings, has perhaps never been accurately determined by himself. Doubtless a large proportion of every off-hand speech is made up of old ideas and old phraseology, with some modification and various arrangement.

I have now stated the arguments by which the friends of reading sermons, and the enemies of that practice, which is now almost universal, support their respective opinions. My own judgment in this matter may be collected from the following remarks :

i. Those who are preparing for the gospel ministry, should be educated for both reading and speaking sermons well. A good reader is often a poor speaker; and one who can speak forcibly sometimes reads ill. Hence arises the relative importance of cultivating both the arts of reading and of speaking well in a public assembly. A good reader, let me observe, will require more training than need be bestowed on one of a good voice and respectable mental power, to make him an impressive speaker. Hence, among the great number in the churches who restrict themselves closely to their manuscripts, few read well. Doubtless they might do better; but content themselves with their written work, pass the eye over it on the morning of the Sabbath, and are never able to exhibit in their reading any thing of the grace and force of the speaker.

ii. The natural endowments and gifts of men are various; so much so, that there are those who can deliver sermons better by reading than by speaking them; and there are those who never can read with that fluency, modulation, and propriety which is necessary to excite in hearers a deep interest in a subject. They must be untrammelled by notes, and then they speak well. In the view of these facts, shall one way of delivery be prescribed to all who preach? No, indeed: let those who read well never injure their sermons by attempting free oratory, for which they are utterly disqualified. Let those who can commit their compositions and speak them with grace and dignity, avoid through indolence every awkwardness to which reading will subject them.

iii. What then must be the conclusion of the matter, so far as students of theology are concerned? It is obviously this: I. They should aim, in the course of their education, both to read and speak sermons well. The best speaker may, through age and the loss of memory, or the want of time to commit his sermon, find it necessary to fall back upon his notes, and read them: then the art of reading becomes a valuable acquisition. So the best reader may be placed in circumstances which require him to speak without notes: how useful, then, will be his speaking talent. He will not be silent, but do the best he can; for he is not a bound slave to his manuscript. Let, then, both the gift of reading and the accomplishment of speaking well be cultivated in a theological school. II. Every theological student should seriously examine into his natural and acquired gifts, and try to ascertain whether those gifts fit him to be a better reader of sermons than a speaker, or *vice versâ*. Some, through indolence, will give the preference to reading, though they read ill. Others, from love of praise, will play the orator, when they should adhere to their manuscripts. That mode of delivery should be adopted by the preacher which corresponds best with his gifts; and thus he should pursue.

In closing, I add the following

*Practical Reflections.*

What I have said respecting the composition and the delivery of sermons, is entitled to your serious consideration. You live in a country where, and in an age when, letters are cultivated to such a degree by means of primary schools, as to imbue the minds of

the populace with a taste for literature, and to create public speakers in all the departments of life. Our free institutions encourage the poorest in the pursuit of knowledge, urge the young to aim at distinction in letters and in elocution. Hence, from the schools of agriculture and trade, as well as from the halls of science, proceed numerous public speakers. They start up on every side,\* and display no small share of intellectual and oratorical power.

Now, in the midst of such a people, shall the preacher neglect his gift of preaching? Shall he in the best of all causes exhibit inferior capacity and little persuasive influence over others? Shall he write carelessly, and speak ineffectively? This he cannot do but by disregarding the injunctions of Paul, and the obligations of religion. Ministers particularly are soldiers engaged in the war of which the Saviour said, "I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword;" a war of truth against damnable heresies; a war of righteousness against unrighteousness; of Christ against the kingdom and the power of darkness. This momentous conflict, which involves the best interests of precious souls, and the enjoyment or the loss of the favor of God, which is emphatically "life," surely demands the exertion of your best powers, and the improvement of your best gifts. These are your weapons as soldiers. Let them be polished and bright; and be skilful in the use of them, that you may be more successful in battle. Try to compose sermons and to speak them so well, that your ministry shall be attractive, and your work approved. Never tire in the work of preparation for the pulpit. Guard against the thirst of acquiring worldly property; for under the influence of this passion, your mind will surely turn away from those applications to study, and oblige you to preach slovenly, and to be stationary, if not to retrograde, in your mental power for the gospel service. Intent upon laying up mere treasure on earth, upon possessing a farm or shares in banks, stocks, etc., many ministers in this day are indolent pastors, and conclude that any kind of preaching on the Sabbath will satisfy the demands of an indulgent congregation.

But let it be your study to "be able ministers of the New Testa-

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\* The movements of political and religious benevolent societies constantly throw out many of various sex, who occupy the public attention by speeches on various topics. It is indeed with us an age of public talking, with the exhibition of every grade of talent.

ment, faithful stewards of the mysteries of God." "Give thyself wholly to these things." Be willing to make every sacrifice of choice, of worldly enjoyment, to be "mighty in the Scriptures," wise in counsel, powerful in preaching, and successful in your ministry.

Here, however, your efforts at improvement in writing and speaking well may be arrested, by hearing it said, from the lips of some who claim to be eminently pious, "Away with your college rules and directions; let us have no oratory in the pulpit. Plainness of speech and gravity should characterize the pastor, not eloquence." Of the eloquent preacher they are disposed to say, "He does not preach by the Spirit; he is too learned, too theatrical, all declamation," etc. Such persons little understand what eloquence is; and they would have condemned the apostle Paul (had they not known him to be an apostle) when, on many occasions, he preached most eloquently and forcibly. There is no hostility between science and religion, between eloquence and the spirit of Christianity. The highest intellectual attainments, the noblest powers of oratory, are in their choicest place when they serve the cause of truth, and operate to turn the wicked from the error of their ways.

# LECTURE XI.

## PART II.

### DUTIES OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

#### THE DUTY OF PRAYER.

THE *qualifications* required for the office of the Evangelical Pastor, have a direct relation to the *duties* which that office imposes on him. Office, strictly speaking, consists of duties to be performed by him who holds it; and in proportion to the high character of the office, in its relations and ends, is always the weight of the obligations to execute it well. The pastoral office is the highest wherewith a human being can be invested in this world; hence its duties have a corresponding elevated character. Hence the apostle Paul said, "I speak unto you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles: *I magnify mine office.*" "For necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.)

I shall commence this second part of Pastoral Theology with the consideration of that particular course of public action in which the gifts of a pastor are to be displayed; or in other words, with an enumeration of *the various solemn duties* which the laws of Christ and his own ordination vows render incumbent on him: for here duty is every thing, and gifts are valuable only as they serve to qualify a minister of the Word better for the discharge of his important trust.

Had the Saviour instituted the gospel ministry merely for the purpose of advertising his laws, and of publishing certain facts in which men as sinners have a deep interest, that ministry, it will be

perceived, will be fulfilled by a faithful preaching of his Word; even as a public crier or herald of a city discharges his duty to the magistracy, by duly proclaiming in the streets the laws which they have enacted. But the Saviour came to save sinners, and to gather a people unto himself, to show forth his praise; he came to destroy the works of darkness, to form a kingdom made up of those of every nation who submit to his sceptre, to organize a society united to him by special ties, and governed by special laws. This society is the Christian Church; a Church which, from its unity and social constitution, is exhibited in Scripture under the expressive images of an organized living body—"a flock"—"an household"—"a city"—"a kingdom"—"a temple."

Now, if it be in *the Church*, as well as in the world, of importance to sinners that the gospel ministry are to be employed in active service, then it is obvious that ministers must be more than heralds and preachers; they must be also pastors—bishops—stewards—watchmen over souls—rulers, who hold "the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Such the Saviour constituted them. "He gave pastors and teachers." (Ephes. iv. 11.) He charged Peter "to feed his sheep and his lambs;" and lest it might be thought that Peter alone was invested with a pastoral office, he directed, by his Spirit, Peter himself to say to his fellow-presbyters, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly;" and he led Paul to ascribe the same official character to ministers: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed (as pastors) the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts xx. 23.)

The *pastoral office is inseparably connected with the gospel ministry*. Ministers may have no special charge; but they are *officially* prepared to exercise pastoral functions, whenever circumstances require it. As evangelists and as missionaries, they may be set apart to do gospel service where no organized church exists; but they carry with them power to watch over, feed and nourish all the converts the Word can make; or in other words, to exercise immediately pastoral care over all who shall believe under their ministry.

In what particular manner, whether by a fixed settlement among a people and in one congregation, or by itineracy among religious

societies distributed in towns or districts, ministers shall discharge the pastoral office, is a matter which need not here claim our special attention. Pastoral care may be exercised by ministers, whether they are itinerant or settled pastors. As care implies inspection, such inspection can be better made and maintained by assigning to one minister the charge of one religious society, and rendering his relations to such society as intimate and fixed as circumstances will permit.

Ministers of the gospel regularly called and ordained, are then, by a divine constitution "*pastors*," as well as teachers. They are here "shepherds," subordinate to the "Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls," and as such, various arduous duties devolve on them; duties which have an awful responsibility attached to them.

Let me enumerate the principal pastoral duties in this place, for the purpose of bringing each one under particular consideration.

All pastoral duties may be comprehended under the name of *Pastoral Instruction*; for a pastor is called to instruct, both by *teaching* and by *example*.

The particular duties to be performed by the pastor, in teaching, are these, namely:

- I. OFFERING UP PRAYER IN SOCIAL WORSHIP.
- II. PREACHING THE WORD OF GOD.
- III. ADMINISTERING THE HOLY SACRAMENTS.
- IV. CATECHISING THE YOUNG OF HIS FLOCK.
- V. VISITING THE FAMILIES, ESPECIALLY THE SICK.
- VI. GOVERNING THE FLOCK—EXERCISING DISCIPLINE.
- VII. COÖPERATING WITH THE MINISTRY IN EXTENDING THE CHURCH, AND IN EXERCISING CARE OVER ALL THE CHURCHES.

From this enumeration of duties it will be perceived that the pastor has much to do, and may well exclaim, "*Who is sufficient for these things?*" Blessed be God! the promise of a crown of life hereafter is attached, not to perfectness of work, nor to success, but to "faithfulness." Rev. ii. 10: "*Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*" The first duty is—

#### I. OFFERING UP PRAYER IN SOCIAL WORSHIP.

Of pastoral prayer, as it is a *gift*, I have spoken in Lectures IV. and V.; but pastoral prayer, as well as preaching, sustains an-

other character. It is *an important duty* of the sacred ministry; and in this light I shall now consider it.

The apostles, in actual service after the day of Pentecost, were bound by their office "to give themselves to *prayer*," as well as to "the ministry of the Word." These words express clearly the fact, that while pastors are to pray in their closets and in their families, like all other Christians who walk along the heavenly road, and "follow on to know the Lord," they are to be engaged in prayer, while leading in *the worship of Christian assemblies*, as their frequent and set business, and to be employed in the same duty, *in visiting families* under their care, especially when they attend on the sick, the afflicted, and troubled in mind.

For the performance of this duty, as well as that of preaching the Word, the pastor, as I have before said, should "covet the best gifts," and seek to do his work with a praying heart, and in an edifying manner. The preparations, on his part, for this particular service, have been adverted to in the fifth Lecture. It remains here to remind you, that it will be highly advantageous to the young pastor, to store his memory with those passages of Scripture which are petitions to God by the pious of former times, and which may be easily converted into supplication now: for religion in every age is the same in its nature, and "the just," from Abel down, have lived by faith and prayed "in the Holy Ghost;" also to write down and commit to memory those petitions which constitute the substance of prayer, and apply to the circumstances of particular Christian congregations, and to the state of the Church at large; and especially, in public pastoral prayer, to remember that believers in Christ are "all members of one body," and that it is the duty of ministers to recognize this fact, and to pray, not only for a particular church, but,

1. For "*all the saints that are in the earth.*" Ephes. vi. 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication *for all saints.*"

Is it asked why pastors should pray in a particular manner, and with great engagedness of spirit, for all the saints? I reply, that this duty results—

(1.) From *the near relation* which Christians sustain to one another; a relation more intimate, honorable, and lasting, than that which children sustain to their parents.

Children and other earthly kindred are bound to us by blood and natural affection; but death soon severs this feeble tie. Saints are united by one Holy Spirit together in one Lord. The chord which connects them is a heavenly and everlasting one, and their transition from this life to a future one will serve to bind them still closer. In heaven, shall be fully exhibited that glorious union of the saints to one another, and of all to himself, for which the Saviour prayed and died: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be one, even as we are one; that they may be made perfect in one." (John xvii. 22, 23.)

Here let me observe, that in relation to the 22d verse, just quoted, Socinus (Cont. Wick., c. 5) attempts to convert its words into an argument against the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "Christ is not of the same essence with the Father; but has with him only a unity of will, such a unity as his redeemed ones have with him: for they are one in Christ, not by a unity of essence, but a oneness of will. Our proposition is evidently true," he adds, "because Jesus here likens the oneness of believers with himself, to his oneness with the Father."

To set aside this erroneous comment, it is sufficient to ask: Does our Lord here say that he has *no other* oneness with the Father than that of which his union with his people exhibits a likeness? Not at all: yet, it is upon this false assumption that the whole argument of the Socinian chief rests. Besides, the words of the Saviour express only a similitude of oneness in a certain respect, not *an equal* oneness in all respects; just as his words do in Matt. v. 48: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

But, nevertheless, the union of believers to Christ is *most intimate*. There is a mysterious glory in it. The connecting tie is that Holy Spirit whose work is perfect; and in heaven, where "the Lamb's wife," having made herself ready, shall appear "without spot or wrinkle," that union shall be manifested in all its extent and perfection. But let me hasten to say, that, standing here thus united to Christ and to "all the saints," our prayers must correspond with that high relation. As being "partakers of the same divine nature," as children by regeneration and adoption of one heavenly Father, as members of the same body, as soldiers engaged under one chief in the same conflict, as travellers on the

same highway, and as fellow-heirs of an eternal inheritance in glory, the saints should occupy a particular place in our supplications. With what weight did their spiritual prosperity press upon the hearts of the apostles! "I have," said John, "no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth." "I live," said Paul, "if ye stand fast in the Lord." So now we must habitually say at the throne of grace, "Let there be dew upon Israel;" "Feed thine inheritance, and lift them up for ever;" "Help, Lord! for the godly man ceaseth;" "Let grace abound to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" "For my brethren and companions' sake, we must say, Peace be within thee: because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good."

(2.) The duty of praying for "all saints" also results from the fact, that they are "*the excellent of the earth*"—"a chosen generation"—"a holy nation." Their moral worth is vastly greater than that of multitudes of ungodly men, formed into either civil or literary societies. They constitute "the house of the Lord"—"the habitation of God, through the Holy Spirit"—"a building fitly framed together, and growing up into an holy temple in the Lord"—"a body, joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, and in which there is to be an effectual working, in the measure of every part, to the increase of the whole." (Ephes. ii. 21; iv. 16.)

But will not God surely bring his saints to the enjoyment of everlasting glory? and if he will preserve them unto his heavenly kingdom, do they not stand in less need of our prayers than those who are still afar off? Jehovah, it is true, who hath effectually called, will glorify his saints. But, be it observed, that there is an established order in accomplishing this work, and *that order* requires the intervention of the prayers of the Church. If, therefore, we desire that our fellow-travellers on the heavenly road shall be supported and guided all their journey through, we must pray especially for them. "I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it." Is it then unnecessary to pray? No, indeed; for it is immediately added, "Thus saith the Lord, Yet for all these things I will be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."

In praying for all the saints, the pastor will remember, of course, that portion of them which is committed to his pastoral care,

and will supplicate with a special reference to the states of those of this number who are involved in trouble of mind, laboring under the pressure of affliction, exposed to any threatening evil, or giving any evidence of backsliding, though such may not be present in the worshipping assembly.

Prayer for those who decline in religion is always better received than reproof, and may be happily used for their recovery when reproof would be an imprudent measure. But let no pastor discover his displeasure at particular persons by his public prayers. Those who do this, degrade the sacred office: "they know not what manner of spirit they are of." Compassion and benevolence towards others must leaven our hearts in prayer; otherwise we cannot say, as our Lord hath taught us, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

There may be occasions on which a minister of the Word is unjustly treated by persons under his pastoral care, and it may be his duty to complain of such at the throne of grace. In those cases, let his complaints be made in secret prayer, and his supplications be offered up at the same time for the conversion of all who despitefully use him and persecute him.

2. Another prominent subject of petition in public prayer by the pastor is, *the conversion of sinners*. For this end the ministry was instituted; for this end the gospel is to be preached. The conversion of sinners is necessary to the perpetuation of the Church: hence our Lord directed his disciples to pray, "thy kingdom come," and to be solicitous that more laborers should be sent into the harvest-field. Especially should pastors pray that sinners should be turned from their evil ways to God: for this is the Divine command, "Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest until he make Jerusalem a name and a praise in the earth."

Supplication of this kind, is but asking a blessing upon a pastor's own labors in the field. How then can he forbear to entreat that the Word may be accompanied with Divine power, and that new accessions may be made to the sacramental host of God? This part of duty in prayer is scarcely ever neglected.

It has however been asked, How far is a pastor authorized to pray for any particular person by name, who is in a distant land and remote from the worshipping assembly? For instance: A

minister in one of our city churches prayed that God would bless a convert from Islamism in Asia, mentioning him by name, "if he were yet alive." Is such an act to be commended and imitated? In reply to these questions, I would observe, first, that mentioning names in public prayer, even of those who belong to the society, after their names have been read, with their request for the prayer of the church, is not necessary, and by no means to be commended; second, that it is hardly to be permitted that a pastor shall introduce by name, in public prayer, a person who is a stranger to the greater part of the church, and of whose particular circumstances, from his remote situation, we can have no knowledge at the present time. Prayer is an act of *social* worship. The church must pray with the understanding, as well as with the heart. Every duty of the church in relation to the welfare of her distant members, will be comprehended in her supplications for "all the saints."

3. A third prominent subject of petition by the pastor in public social worship, is, *the enlargement of the visible Church of God in this world.* This, you will perceive, is connected with the duty of praying for the conversion of sinners, through the effectual operation of the Word just preached upon the hearts of those who heard it. This latter has more particularly in view the conversion of those who enjoy, in Christian lands, the ministrations of the gospel: but the former has respect to missionary efforts; to the conversion of nations still in darkness; to the spread of truth abroad; and to the removal of all those obstacles which have hitherto obstructed the onward march of pure Christianity, and checked the enlargement of the Church among the Gentiles.

Early in the dispensation of mercy to the human family, did God declare, that through the appointed Redeemer, "the seed of Abraham," all the families of the earth should be blessed. With delight did the saints subsequently dwell upon this fact, that all nations should see the salvation of God, and that all "should call him blessed who should procure that salvation, and the whole earth in process of time be filled with his glory." The promised Saviour came to Zion; he wrought gloriously, triumphed over the prince of darkness, and made not Jerusalem and Judea only, but the whole world, the theatre of his operations. The Gentiles were called; parts of the earth were enlightened and Christian-

ized; but much land remains to be conquered and possessed by the tribes. And are they not at this day moving, and going up to the noble conflict; and shall not prayer be incessantly made by pastors for their success? Surely, the words of the prophet mark out the duty of every Christian minister in this respect: "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." (Isa. lxii. 1.)

For encouragement in thus praying, how much hath God spoken in his Word! How numerous and rich are his promises! What glorious things are spoken of the final victory of Zion over all her foes! "Her King shall reign from sea to sea, from the rivers unto the ends of the earth." "All the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness," saith the prophet Isaiah, "and all kings thy glory."

The last clause of this prophecy, a Jewish writer has used as an argument against the Christian faith. "It is here promised to Zion," he says, "that the Israel of God shall be very glorious in the days of the Messiah, so that all kings shall submit to him, and see the glory of his Church: but this has not yet been fulfilled, therefore the Messiah has not yet come."

I reply, briefly, that this prediction cannot refer to the day of the Messiah's manifestation in the flesh, for the same prophet tells us that then he should "be despised and rejected of men." But the prophecy must refer to events under the new dispensation, to be introduced by the Messiah in person. Now that dispensation actually came after the day of Pentecost. It still exists, but is not yet terminated. Before it closes, the prediction, which is now in progress, shall receive its full and glorious accomplishment. "All the Gentiles shall come to the light of the Church, and all kings shall see her glory."

In looking back on past dispensations, we find that God has exercised a sovereign pleasure with respect to the exact times when he should fulfil his Word. He promised to give to Abraham's descendants by Sarah the whole of the land of Canaan. This promise was partially fulfilled in the days of Joshua, but its complete fulfilment did not occur until the reigns of David and Solomon. So it will be at the "end of these days," that the pre-

dictions and promises in relation to the glory of the Church shall receive their full accomplishment.

Besides, it is to be remembered that the predicted glory of the Church shall consist in her purity and spirituality, and not in worldly grandeur and visible splendor.

Here, while pressing the duty of pastoral prayer for the enlargement of the Church throughout the earth, let me remind you that it was usual with the primitive Christians to pray for the conversion of the whole world to the gospel faith. This fact, which is very interesting to us, we are told by Father Origen, that "The Gentiles wondered, when they heard such prayer drop from the lips of the despised Nazarenes, who were but as a handful of corn upon the top of the mountains." Celsus, the philosopher, whose heart was fired with rage against the Christians, raised a contemptuous laugh at what he considered to be an absurd and extravagant prayer. He said: "*ὅτι ὁ τουτο οιομενος, μηδεν ουδεν;*" that is, "he thought such a universal agreement in one mode of religious belief a perfect chimera, and those who prayed for it deserved the contempt of men of understanding."

Regardless of the sneers of this self-conceited philosopher, the Christians continued to pray for the conversion of the world, until corruptions seated themselves in the vitals of the Church, and many lights in her courts were extinguished. Some thought that the external prosperity of the Church under the reign of Constantine, was the promised millennium! The Scriptures on this subject were sadly misinterpreted. Presently, as the darkness thickened under the sway of "the man of sin, seated in the temple of God," the principal doctrines of the gospel were untaught; the prophecies relating to the subjection of the whole world to the Saviour's sceptre, were not studied in their series and connection; and, down to A. D. 1600, the ancient prayer for the "conversion of the world," excepting as this event was contemplated in the Lord's Prayer, was no longer heard in the churches. The book of Revelation by John, beyond the first three chapters, was a sealed book.

But it pleased God, as years rolled away, after the Reformation, to awaken the minds of certain learned and pious men to the study of the prophecies of Daniel and Isaiah, in connection with those things which the apostle John on the isle of Patmos heard and saw in vision. The result was, the fullest conviction that the

conversion of the whole world was promised and predicted. God has so spoken; his words admitted of no other interpretation; the nations should be blessed with the blessing of faithful Abraham; the whole earth should be filled with the knowledge and glory of the Saviour. Another result was, the revival in the churches of the prayer of the primitive Christians for "the conversion of the world." The Church of Scotland by her "Memorial," stirred up the hearts of Christians to pray every where for the enlargement of the Church by missionary efforts, for the liberation of all nations from the power of the prince of darkness, and from the fetters of gross error, superstition, and wickedness.

Let, then, the pastor pray especially for this great mercy. Let him supplicate, that millions yet unborn may see the salvation of God, and that the glory of the Divine Redeemer may be displayed before all people, and his Spirit descend like floods upon the dry ground.

I have here fixed your attention upon three important subjects, to be comprehended in public pastoral prayer; while you need not be reminded, that such prayer will of course embrace those petitions which the ordinary wants and circumstances of a Christian congregation naturally prompt.

On the questions as to *how often* is the pastor to offer up prayer at one season of public worship in one place? and, when is prayer to be introduced? the reply to be made is, that the Sacred Scriptures give us no particular rule to be observed in this branch of duty. They permit us to adopt those regulations of order, or such ordinances for conducting public worship, as shall appear to be most convenient and edifying. Hence various denominations have various modes.

Some however contend, that we ought to open our worship with prayer, as we need divine grace to render immediately every act of worship acceptable. Others affirm that prayer is a most solemn act of worship, and that to prepare the heart for it, *singing* is a very suitable exercise. The question of preference is not entitled to a serious dispute. It is of more moment to preserve *the order* which the Church to which we belong has adopted, than to insist upon innovations which are not always *improvements*.

Again, whether prayer shall be offered up in the public worship of God, once, twice, or thrice, is also a matter to be left to the

judgment of the Church. There appears to be a call, arising from the very ordinances of worship, that we should address the Lord more than once in prayer. It seems very proper that we should supplicate the Divine aid before sermon; hence, all the churches are seen to do it. In like manner, after the Word of God is preached, shall we not unite to give thanks for this mercy, and pray for a blessing upon the Word spoken? Surely the duty is obvious. The hearing of the Word is adapted to awaken serious thoughts, and to prepare the mind for prayer. Accordingly, in the early Christian assemblies, we are told prayer usually followed the sermon. And though the Church of England (attaching, as she does, less importance than we do to the ordinance of preaching) has reversed this order, yet even she, with many popish vestments hanging around her, cannot dismiss the assembly without a short supplication.

The customs of the Protestant churches have fixed upon one of the prayers offered up in public worship by the pastor, as being that which should be more full, and comprehend the various desires and wants of the Church, particular and catholic. Hence it is usually called the *long prayer*, and is made before the delivery of the sermon. In this prayer particularly, the pastor must observe the order which I have recommended in Lecture V. He must be more copious in his praises, and requests, and pleadings, casting the eye of his mind around upon the circumstances and wants of those whom he leads in prayer, and upon the various interests of the whole militant Church, and upon the state of the world at large.

But, in this longer prayer, *three defects* which pastors betray, are to be carefully guarded against, namely :

(1.) Some drop the language of direct supplication, and use the *didactic* style of preaching the Word. This faulty mode of praying may discover versatility of talent, and admit of rhetorical touches, but it subtracts from the spirit of prayer, while it assumes the dress of instruction to Almighty God. When it becomes familiar to the hearers, however favorably it first fell upon their ears, whatever admiration of the beauties of diction it first awakened, it presently fails to excite devotional feelings, and to lead the heart to respond to petitions which are so exceedingly few. Let the general strain of prayer then be an *answer* to that question

which a gracious God and Father asks us, whenever, in the spirit of prayer, we approach his throne of grace: "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

(2.) Another defect in the long prayer is this: Some pastors, in this prayer, make very intelligible references to the particular sins which certain persons in the congregation have lately committed, and express, indirectly, *censures* of their conduct. This mode often excites the resentment of those who are thus prayed at, and leads the assembly in prayer, from what concerns the whole, to what relates to individuals as sinners.

(3.) Some pastors continue too long in prayer. The Pharisees made long prayers. The prayers of the synagogue were oppressively long, a fault which our Saviour condemned; a fault of which many of the infirm in worship have a just reason to complain: for prayer is an exercise of elevation; it calls for much abstraction from the world of sense; a spirit that will converse only with God. Now, the minds of worshippers in general cannot stand at that elevation, nor be wrapped up in that abstraction, during an hour. Besides, regard should be had by the pastor to his immediate subsequent duties, in reading and preaching the Word of God, and to the infirmities of the aged in the worshiping assembly. Some err, in this respect. They love to hear themselves pray, and protract the exercise to the wearying of others. If we think that our gift for any religious exercise is good, we shall, unless grace prevent, be too fond of displaying it.

The *shorter prayer* is to follow the sermon. But first, let it not be *too short*. Its length ought, in some measure, to be regulated by the length of the preceding sermon, the nature of the subject of the discourse, and the intervention of other occasional exercises, such as the administration of the sacraments. Secondly, if any thing of moment has been forgotten in the long prayer, it ought to be introduced into the shorter, to which the Lord's Prayer may sometimes be happily appended. Thirdly, let not the shorter prayer be slovenly performed, and hurried over in a low tone of voice, as if the preacher were tired of the exercise of worship, and anxious to have done with it. Fourthly, let the shorter prayer be enriched with thanksgivings; let it supplicate a blessing upon the Word spoken, and contain a happy reference to the subject discussed. Formerly, it was the custom of the Re-

formed Church to introduce into the short prayer, supplication for the nation and its rulers. This arrangement has its use; for it is certain that distinct subjects of prayer are not so easily forgotten when they occupy an assigned place. Be this as it may, the pastor must ordinarily pray for "kings, and all that are in authority in the land."

But there are additional prayers to be offered up, on occasions of the administration of the sacraments. To these prayers, as well as to those which are to be made by the pastor when he visits families and the sick, I shall refer when I come in course to speak of those parochial duties incumbent on pastors. Here, it will be sufficient to observe again, that the Evangelical Pastor should, more than others, "give himself unto prayer." He should pray in his study, while engaged in composing his sermons. Such prayer will repress in his mind the pride of knowledge, divert his mind from unprofitable speculations, rouse him to feel his dependence upon God, and his own entire inability "to give an increase to the seed which he sows, and to the plants which he waters," and to ask for special aid and blessing, and dispose him to infuse into his compositions more of the vitality and tenderness of religion.

The pastor should be regular in maintaining *domestic worship*, by reading the Scriptures, and by prayer. If circumstances should admit, he should make short comments upon the portion of God's Word while reading it, for the better instruction of all in his household. The Puritan divines, when ejected under the reign of Elizabeth from their parishes, and prohibited from preaching the Word publicly, were kindly received into the houses of nobles and gentlemen, and requested to officiate as chaplains. This they did; and in conducting morning and evening devotions, did great good. In those domestic establishments God gave them many converts, as seals to their restricted ministry.

Need I say, that the pastor should pray, when requested, by the family which he visits, and at the close of a religious conference with two or more of the pious? Should he not lift up his heart to God when he enters the pulpit, and is about to preach that Word, the efficacy of which depends not upon the strength of his logical powers, and the charms of his superior eloquence,

but upon the power of the Holy Spirit? "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?" "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

And on various other occasions which suit the exercise, the pastor should ask to introduce prayer, as befitting and profitable. But here, not an overwrought zeal, but prudence, should be displayed, lest prayer should be pressed when the work to be presently done, and the circumstances of a family, do not accord well with that solemn exercise.

But while the pastor is to be a man of prayer, let him not be wanting either in hospitality or in charity to the poor. Let him not be avaricious while he prays much, and give the people who observe his disposition to make a gain of godliness, to have just reason to say: "He is ready to pray, for words are cheap; but his heart is niggardly, and his hand is never extended in deeds of melting charity."

I shall conclude my remarks in relation to this pastoral duty, by refreshing your memories with the few canons which regulate it.

i. Let the pastor, for this public duty, be diligent "to know the state of his flock."

ii. Let him seek in this public duty the aids of the "Spirit of grace and supplication." The commission to preach the Word does not remove the poverty of a pastor's own resources, nor subdue the corruptions of his own heart. He must receive Divine influences to pray by faith, with humility and holy fervency.

iii. Let the pastor, in prayer, accommodate himself to the intellect and the infirmities of those with whom he prays. The many require plain language, language in which the heart is wont to express itself in the momentous concerns of religion. Surely, simplicity is every thing in supplication. Rhetorical flourishes are out of place in this solemn exercise.

iv. Let the pastor, as I have before taught, avoid the evil of a distressing prolixity in prayer. What is said by P. De Aliaco on this subject, forms an excellent canon: "In divino officio, non tam onerosa prolixitas, quam devota et integra brevis servatur."

In the discharge of this pastoral duty, it is obvious that

much will depend upon habitual intercourse with God, and upon the enjoyment of his special presence in prayer. Hence every serious mind will inquire, How shall I be able to ascertain that I have at any time the special grace of God in prayer?

To aid such an inquirer, I shall here remark that the new man in Christ Jesus is distinguished by a happy combination of all the graces of the divine life, and that those graces live together in the same renewed mind, and are so many evolutions of one great principle. Whenever, therefore, any one grace is brought prominently forward into exercise, the Christian may be assured that all the graces do exist in his soul; for they are inseparably connected together, though in certain circumstances, and on particular occasions, but one grace is strongly exhibited to one's consciousness. Sometimes in prayer, naked faith in the Divine Word, without strong movements of the affections, without any increase of comfort and joy, is brought into vigorous exercise; so that the heart, in wrestling with God, says with the ancient patriarch, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

Sometimes in prayer, the heart sinks deep into self-loathing and self-abasement, and is not so immediately conscious of an overcoming faith, or of any special warmth of the affection: it is brought by the Holy Spirit, not so much to admire and appreciate the excellencies of Christ, as to survey its own sins, to feel its own vileness, and to say, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Again: In other circumstances, *love* will melt the heart in prayer, and stand out in bold relief, as a grace that rises above either repentance or faith. The Christian then feels that he is called "to love much, because much has been forgiven him." Whether his Saviour will own him or not, whether his faith is weak or strong, he does not at the moment stop to inquire: he is conscious that the Saviour is most precious, and that he does love him in sincerity.

Once again: Change the circumstances of the Christian, let new trials await him, and his soul feels sorely the pressure of affliction. Then, sometimes in prayer, patience, fortitude, and acquiescence with the Divine will, will be the predominant exercises of his soul. His heart will bow submissively, and be disposed to say, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it."

On other occasions, and in other circumstances, the heart of the believer in prayer, will be inspired with sympathy for the heathen, or for Christians under persecution, or be actuated in a high degree by the love of the brethren, or by zeal for the brighter displays of the glory of God among the nations.

Be it then remembered, that under Divine influence, some one particular grace will, in prayer, be called out to view by circumstances and fit occasions, when the heart of the Christian is enlarged at the throne of grace. Keeping this fact before us, we can be at no loss to ascertain when we enjoy the special presence of God in prayer; for the evidence will be found in the conscious exercise of any one grace of the divine life when we pray.

Mark, then, that the special presence of God in prayer, is plainly indicated by holy trembling of the heart in our approaches to God, and in our attempts to address his awful majesty; or by the holy ardor of our desires, deep anxiety to obtain the smallest token for good; or by penitential exercises of the soul, when one mourns over his sins, laments over the hardness of his heart, and lies low before the mercy-seat, we are sure that he is imbued with the spirit of grace and supplication. But, in the absence of deep feelings of godly sorrow, the special presence of God in prayer is also signified either by strong faith in the Divine promises, or by the heart taking a deep interest in the work of missions and in the conversion of the world, or feeling much sympathy with God's afflicted children.

Let us not err in judgment here. It is not, as some think, by rich consolations and joys alone, that we acquire evidence that God is near to us when we pray; but the enjoyment of his special presence is proved by the exhibition of *any one grace* prominently in prayer. Jacob, in wrestling, had the help of the Angel of the Covenant: Job, when bereft of all comfort, but actuated by ardent desires "to find God" in the sensible communications of his love, had, at that very moment, much grace given. I therefore repeat the doctrine, "to which ye will do well if ye give heed," that God is specially present with us in prayer when any one grace is found in vigorous exercise. He may be near to sustain us, not only when every difficulty is resolved, and when light gladdens the soul, but also when we are abased,

when we take pleasure in the dust of Zion, and forgetting ourselves, "weep with those who weep, and rejoice in the gladness of God's people."

I purposely turn aside, and direct your attention to the fact, that the special presence of God is evinced by any one of the graces of the Spirit vigorously exercised in prayer, in order that the heart may be encouraged, in depressing circumstances, "to pray and not to faint." We are apt to conclude that lively peace, comfort, and joy, are the only evidences that God is near us when we pray. This is a mistake; otherwise his divine hand could not raise us from the dust of self-abasement, and draw our "feet out of the miry clay;" otherwise, amid the darkness of the prison, Paul and Silas could not have so prayed as to unite with their prayers loud songs of praise. But he hath said, "I will be with thee in trouble." When amid that trouble, there is little to be found in the heart of the sufferer, save patient endurance and fortitude.

Further, for your encouragement in offering up pastoral prayer, remember that you shall not stand alone. The pious are near you to aid you in inquiring of the Lord God of Israel for blessings needed. These, however few in a congregation, let the pastor bring together in a praying society, and exhort them to call upon the name of the Lord. Such concert in prayer is implied in the Saviour's promise, Matt. xviii. 20: "Verily, I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree, on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." How can a good pastor, intent on the good of souls, live long without the aid of praying associations, when this promise meets his eye? Surely, it should excite him to action, in the way of social prayer! But the pastor, to gain his end, should discover uncommon diligence in introducing regular family worship among the people of his charge. Domestic prayer is the school for public social prayer. He who can pray in his family, unembarrassed and ready in utterance, will soon be qualified to lead in congregational prayer-meetings. This fact is every where manifest in the churches.

A pastor however may say, "I can find but one or two persons near me who will undertake prayer in public, and but very few willing to attend prayer-meeting." In reply, the Word of

God, as you well know, does not call every pastor to bestow his labor upon fields richly cultivated, and exhibiting much precious fruit to the eye. No, indeed; some of the Saviour's servants, like Paul, and the greater number of the apostles, were directed to work where no one had wrought before them: they were pioneers into a wilderness; builders, who had to convert rough stones into shape and polish, for their peculiar building; gardeners, who encountered thorns through all the ground which they were sent to till, and to sow the first seeds. Their duties were arduous, and their trials severe; but they persevered through all difficulties, and triumphed in many places most signally.

Other ministers are employed in raising dilapidated churches; in restoring, after much declension, the decayed body of a neglected Christian society; in infusing some additional vitality into the heart, and vigor to the members. Such is the supposed charge of the pastor who says, "I have few persons to aid me publicly with their prayers. Religion is in a low state; 'few come to the solemn feasts, and the ways of Zion do mourn.' What can be done to revive us again?" A response to this inquiry stands out in bold relief from the Sacred Scriptures. It is this: Preach the Word faithfully; and instead of being employed in the first instance in building new and costly meeting-houses, and embellishing them to please the eye with fashionable decorations, draw the pious around you into praying associations. If the pastor is obliged to begin such an institute—"such a church in a house"—with but two or three near him, with a number of souls not exceeding that in Noah's ark, let him go forward without noise or parade in the good work. Praying societies, if pastors are faithful and wise, never fail to secure their own growth and increase, and to promote the interests of religion. How many revivals of religion, how many wonderful displays of the power of the gospel, have begun at prayer-meetings!

And can we wonder at such results, when societies for prayer are means directly in the walks of duty, and evince a disposition to comply with the requisitions of the Word of God, in supplicating by concert the communications of his Spirit? If we must knock and inquire, and seek by prayer, shall we not unite our hearts and voices in this duty? "A threefold cord is not easily broken." Union gives confidence, and creates strength.

It is hardly possible to enumerate all the benefits which the pastor may enjoy from praying societies, or to over-estimate their value in the Church. By such associations, the spirit of piety, mutual love, brotherhood, and peace, is promoted in a religious society. Those who unite to pray together for one another, for their pastor, and for the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, must love one another; their prayers carry with them a deep sense of the obligations under which all are to seek the good of the chosen, to forbear and forgive one another, and to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace." There will be no disposition in a neighborhood among professors, to "bite and devour one another," where a praying society exists. Such neighborhoods are generally distinguished by the absence of fightings and civil broils. The intervention of a praying association banishes the required agency in other places of "courts of law and their officers," to restrain the bad passions of the human heart. If those who fear the Lord speak often one to another in mutual prayer, "the Lord hearkeneth and heareth, and there will be dew upon Israel."

But praying societies have a blessed reaction, not only in binding hearts together in love, but also in preserving sound doctrine in the Church. Prayer will express doctrine, especially an entire dependence upon the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the help of his Holy Spirit, for salvation, and is a direct application to God alone for the pardon of sin and the purification of the heart. Accordingly, praying societies, in which men ask God for the mercies which they need, are hostile to the use of breviaries and beads, crucifixes and relics. Popery is a stranger to a well-regulated praying society; and if any where Fanaticism throws her fire-brands around, through the agency of praying societies, it will be invariably seen that gross error in doctrine was at the foundation of all her extravagances, and that "another gospel" is attempted to be introduced.

I hardly need observe here, that praying societies operate directly to give the pastor "a better knowledge of the state of his flock," and stand near him to hold up his hands, like Aaron and Hur relatively to Moses in the war with the Amalekites. His heart is encouraged and strengthened by hearing prayer offered up for himself, and enjoying the sympathy of his brethren. He feels like one of a host called to surround the walls of Jericho. Let

the pastor then form and cherish praying societies, and not rely on his personal pastoral prayers, nor on Sabbath-schools, nor on Bible-classes, all of which are useful in their places, but cannot yield the precious fruits found in the meeting of two or three to ask in the name of Christ. Hence the absence of praying associations may be discerned in the religious states of many congregations; for they are like gardens little watered from above, walled around perhaps by the truth, but unabounding in living plants, which show their life and beauty to the eye. Custom may perpetuate certain religious habits, and fill houses of worship, but "a whole valley may be filled with little more than the semblance of living men."

It is true, religion may decline, and praying societies decline of course in proportion; and it is equally true that, through error in doctrine, such societies may be perverted into instruments of wild, fanatical practices. But surely the abuse of such an institute (as all divine ordinances may be abused) should not operate to its disuse, but bind us more strongly to maintain it.

But praying societies fall under the special care of the pastor and his elders. They are and must be kept under church rule, directed and controlled by experienced men, and constantly inspected by the pastor.

Such associations, I repeat, the faithful pastor will form and cherish. They are important helps to him, and will be rich blessings to others. I recollect that, in an enfeebled state of a church bereft of its former pastor, two elders conducted prayer-meeting, in which the "Village Sermons" were read, and prayers offered up: presently the arrows of conviction were directed by the Holy Spirit to many careless hearts; the power of truth was felt; tears of penitence were shed; efforts were made to enter in at the strait gate; and in the course of a few months upwards of a score of persons "believed and rejoiced in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh."

To the above, let me now add a few *practical reflections*.

The subject of this lecture is, pastoral duty, to be very frequently performed: hence many practical reflections on what you have just heard, are not called for.

But it may be profitable to remind you here, that in conse-

quence of the frequency of prayer<sup>1</sup> to be offered up by the pastor, it is obvious that he will need large measures of grace to keep his heart in the spirit of prayer, warm with new holy desires and affections, and strong in faith. Without help from above, he will slide into formality, and pray mechanically, not fervently.

Be therefore impressed with the fact, that you never possess a sufficiency in yourselves for this duty. "You know not how to pray as you ought." Earnestly, therefore, should a pastor supplicate the aids of that "Spirit who maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." An habitual dependence on Divine help, in this and every other good work, prepares the Christian mind to effect much. Too often it cannot be said to the pastor, after all the intellectual ability he has acquired in prayer, "Wait, wait on the Lord, and he shall strengthen thine heart."

But whilst the Evangelical Pastor may sink into formality in this duty, let it be remembered that he is also liable, if he be fluent and affecting in prayer, to be proud of this attainment. But here it may be asked, wherein a pastor can exhibit pride in prayer, a duty which has its very foundation in humility and penitence? Aside from the thoughts and intents of the heart, we observe, that when a pastor appears in all he says, with the manner of saying it, to be particularly anxious to show his great talent in prayer before men, to exert himself, that he may appear to be uncommonly eloquent and forcible in that solemn exercise, forgetting that his chief business is with God, is not this to be ascribed to *pride* of heart?

Again: When a pastor in prayer expresses many beautiful sentiments, and asks for many needed blessings, but betrays a want of those self-abasing confessions which belong to sincere repentance—is silent almost with respect to that entire dependence upon the cross of Christ, which the exercise of living faith implies—is there not in this case an absence of that *poverty of spirit* which distinguishes as well as adorns the new creature in Christ Jesus? The martyr, when he was led to the stake, cried, "None but Christ." Should not this be the prevailing sentiment of our hearts, whenever we approach the throne of grace? Can we ever forget that "of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption"? Oh! be

humble, keep the eye of faith fixed upon "the High Priest of your profession."

Here let me remind you, that in the discharge of the duty of public prayer, the Evangelical Pastor is one of many engaged in an undying conflict with the powers of darkness, and with a world hostile to the gospel faith, and estranged from God. He is enlisted with all those who serve the Lord Christ, and directed to use, as the accredited weapons in this warfare, "prayer, and the foolishness (as the Greeks called it) of preaching." To the eye of sense, and in the judgment of reason and philosophy, how feeble are these weapons! But what saith the Spirit, that knoweth the mind of God? and what say the events which transpired in apostolic times? You have the record in 2 Cor. x. 1: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Raise then the war-cry of prayer in every battle: the Lord will hear and help you. Fear not the multitudes arrayed against the Church. History records mighty combinations formed, and crowned with partial success, which existed in former ages, but which were dissolved like the dense mists of the morning before the stormy wind, when God arose to answer prayer, and to fulfil his Word. Continue to pray; never tire in this service, but wax bolder in it; and you will find that what the primitive Christians prayed for, and what you should pray for, namely, the conversion of the whole world, will be effected, when the Saviour shall come again to Zion to receive the homage of the nations.

## LECTURE XII.

### DUTIES OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

#### THE DUTY OF PREACHING THE WORD.

IN the preceding lecture, I have spoken of pastoral prayer as a duty. Let me now direct your serious attention to the preaching of God's most holy Word, not so much as it is a *gift*, but as it is an important *pastoral duty*.

#### II. THE PREACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD.

Preaching the written Word of God, if it were a mere accomplishment, would not here arrest our attention. If it were a talent subservient only to political and scientific purposes, it would not in this place attract our special notice. But it is a *gift* of value in the visible Church of God, and therefore to be cultivated by those who serve the Saviour; and above all, it is a *pastoral duty* of the highest grade—a work arduous, and an employment to which life and every power are to be consecrated.

The dispensation of the Word of God by a pastor is either public or private.

1. The *public* ministration of the Word has its degrees, and is that which is usually called *preaching*.

For the due performance of this duty, the gospel ministry was instituted, and an order of men appointed to do a special service; men invested with special authority, and brought under solemn obligations to serve the Lord Christ, who said, "Go—preach the gospel to every creature—teach all nations—lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Hence, his gospel servants are called "teachers of the Word," "stewards of the mysteries of God," "ambassadors for Christ," etc.

What the Evangelical Pastor is to preach, so far as respects the subjects of his discourses, and how he is to exhibit those subjects to others, by style, arrangement, mode of discussion, and delivery, I have stated in preceding Lectures. See Lect. VI., VII., VIII.

I therefore now consider the pastor to be furnished with proper subjects, with a good share of theological science, and with other furniture for the ministry; and proceed here to discuss immediately two points which are directly connected with preaching the Word as a *duty*.

(1.) The first point I state in the following question, which must in this place be answered, viz: "*When, and how often, must the evangelical pastor publicly preach the Word of God?*"

The general answer to be given to this question is this: The evangelical pastor must preach the Word publicly whenever, and as often as he can do it, without injury to the cause which it is his particular office to promote, without injury to himself in states of bodily sickness and infirmity, and without doing injustice to those whom Divine Providence has placed under his pastoral care, and called him to provide for and to protect.

To begin with the last of these restrictions: A pastor standing in the relation of husband and parent in a domestic establishment, may engage in preaching the Word so often as to neglect the duties which he owes to a wife, and to children in their education and government, and to the proper supervision and management of his temporal concerns.

This sin, we know, is not often committed by pastors; on the contrary, they are too frequently found to be remiss in the performance of their duties, in consequence of an undue attention to their families and their secular interests. Yet it is proper to point out here the *lines* beyond which they are not to pass in frequent preaching, excepting in those extraordinary circumstances, such as a copious effusion of the Holy Spirit creates, and especially such as a violent persecution of the Church produces; for in those circumstances, there is always an extraordinary call for the Word of God, and for increased ministerial labor and exertion.

Perhaps that eminently godly man, George Whitfield, erred in this respect. When his mind became set on extensive itinerant preaching, it had been better for him not to have contracted marriage, and not to have been so much and so long absent from

his family. This connection became a source of unhappiness to that laborious minister of Christ. I have said that during a general awakening and revival, there will be an extraordinary call for frequent preachings: this is true. In the harvest season, greater exertion than usual is required, to gather in the fruits. Yet it often happens at such times, that ministers do not content themselves with acting in correspondence with the blessing given, but regarding the blessing as reflecting much honor upon themselves, and their pride somewhat stimulated, they run beyond their duty, preach too frequently and too carelessly, acquire some foolish notions, ascribe too much to human agency, exert themselves to maintain their influence and popularity, work beyond their strength, destroy their constitution, and sink into an early grave. Let the pastor study occasions, look into his own motives, and act wisely.

Again: In an infirm state of body, a pastor may preach too frequently, and thereby render the means which duty bids him employ for his recovery, entirely inefficacious. But on this point further observations are unnecessary. When health declines, ministers at the present day know how to spare themselves, and the pretense of ill health is made to cover the effects of pure sloth and negligence. The devil often says to the pastor, "Spare thyself." Still, it is true that the young zealous pastor is apt to be careless of his health in observing irregular hours of rest and of study, in sitting up too late at night, and rising too late in the morning, and especially in preaching during the winter season in a crowded school-room at night, and then passing soon after the exercise into a cold and keen atmosphere. Preaching at night ought to be avoided by the weak in body.

But again: The pastor may in another way injure the cause which it is his aim to promote, by too frequent preachings. "In much talking," says Solomon, "there is sin:" and preaching may be so frequent as to exclude a proper measure of study and preparation; and then, in *much preaching*, there will be, especially if the pastor be young, and not a person of uncommon endowments, some nonsense, some misstatements of facts, some misapplications of Scripture passages, some weakness of intellect in playing around one idea, and some things hastily spoken which ought not to have been spoken at all. Grand themes of religion will be frittered

down into little things; incorrect views will be hastily taken of the evidences of the new birth in the exercises of the soul; the minister of Christ will sink below his proper standard as an able expounder of the Divine Word, and the cause to which he devotes his labors will be exposed to severe animadversions, if not to ridicule and contempt. Some young preachers, under the influence of a burning zeal, which did not permit them to stop and to make a proper estimate of their own gifts, have preached themselves out of habits of study, and consequently out of growing usefulness.

Keeping now the limitations just set in view, we observe that preaching, if hearers can be procured, cannot be *too frequent*. "Preach the Word: be instant in season and out of season;" or, as one of old expounds the sense of these words, "arripiens omnem verbi dispensandi occasionem." (2 Tim. iv. 2.)

i. Now, such an occasion is afforded *every Sabbath*, when the tribes of Israel go up to the house of God to worship at his footstool. Sabbath days return quickly, to bless mankind with renewed proclamations of redeeming mercy; and the voice of the Christian ministry must be heard on that day, "warning every man," and exhibiting the various excellences of the Divine Redeemer. Since the overthrow of the temple and its figurative rites, the Sabbath day, denuded of the faithful preaching of the Word, cannot be maintained in its sanctity. It soon becomes a day of religious ceremonies, mixed up with carnal pursuits and dissipations; and under this unhallowed admixture, is a *curse* instead of a blessing to any land. Hence, in Popish countries, the Sabbath day is the devil's holy-day.

ii. But, in addition to the Sabbath day, *the other days of the week* will afford occasions for dispensing the Word of God. The pastor may appoint any suitable day for the delivery, in any neighborhood, of a sermon by himself; or preaching may be requested at their dwellings, by the aged and the infirm in body. But here I must throw in a caution. Let not the pastor in country parishes conclude that every request made to him for sermons, originates in a desire to hear the Word. Persons sometimes make such requests to recommend their own piety to their pastors, or to have some employment for their minds during the long winter evenings, by worship in their neighborhoods. Every request for a sermon, therefore, is not to be complied with instantly. To

many applications for preaching, the pastor must, under a wise discretion, learn to say, *No*.

iii. Occasions for preaching are also created, by the assemblage of many to *bury their dead*. Sermons at *funerals* are to be carefully distinguished from what have been called funeral sermons; the latter having been devoted chiefly to heap eulogiums upon individuals deceased, instead of a simple and solemn exhibition of gospel truths to the living.

Gospel preachings in the "houses of mourning" are very seasonable exercises, when accompanied by other parts of divine worship; but they are not to be converted into vehicles for conveying one's judgment respecting the final state of the deceased. No; God has not instructed his ministers concerning the future condition of departed souls. Let them preach his Word, warn sinners, encourage the righteous, and pour fresh oil into wounded hearts.

Funerals, however, occur so frequently, that no pastor can make a regular preparation for each. He must either extemporize, or use a form. In making up the latter, which may consist of several written funeral addresses, let the addresses comprehend chiefly passages of Scripture relating to life, its uncertain continuance, its troubles and evils, and its connection with a future world and judgment to come, and exhortations to prepare for such a momentous change by repentance, faith, watchfulness, and prayer. Many pastors can qualify themselves for ordinary funeral services, by cultivating the talent early of speaking from mental arrangement at the hour, or from a short analysis of a text. Much feeling, united with solemnity, is here required. A funeral assembly is not a debating society.

iv. A happy occasion for preaching is also afforded whenever the church meets in social prayer, and the children are to be catechised.

The Saviour preached in the temple, in private houses, on the mountains, along the highway, at the sea-shore, at the grave of Lazarus. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, and lead or send forth thither the feet of the ox and of the ass." (Isaiah xxxii. 20.) "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand."

(2.) We now proceed to show that *diligence* in dispensing the Word publicly, is required of those who serve the Lord Christ in the gospel ministry.

i. *God has commanded* his gospel ministers to be diligent and active in fulfilling their ministry. 2 Tim. iv. 2: "Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." "Meditate on these things; give thyself wholly to them," etc.

ii. The pastor is also urged to be active in preaching, by the consideration that it is by the "*foolishness of preaching*" that God is pleased to call and convert sinners; that nothing short of the salvation of immortal souls, is the *end* which the institution of the gospel ministry has in view. Now, what a great work is the conversion of a sinner! Deliverance from great dangers and evils is accounted a signal display of human power. Who then can calculate the exceeding greatness of that Divine power by which "sinners are drawn as brands out of everlasting burnings"? And what an honor shall it be to have been in any degree "a co-worker with God" in producing effects lasting as eternity, and rich beyond all thought in blessing and glory! No wonder the learned Whitaker said, "I had rather be a preacher of the gospel than an emperor!"

When the pastor reflects, that omnipotent and sovereign grace is in operation, and that he may be an instrument which that grace may be pleased to employ, how forcibly will this thought move him to "sow his seed beside all waters"! He may be less learned and less eloquent than others, yet with all his inferior attainments he may convert "many to righteousness," and speak words so blessed to saints that their memories shall carry the words and the instrument of their conveyance into eternity. "By the weak things of this world God is able to confound the things that are mighty."

iii. Connected with the consideration just mentioned, is another, which is intended to impel the minds of ministers to be diligent in their work, and therefore mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. It is this fact: The Saviour *will surely reward his faithful servants* in the life to come! "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." In evidence of this fact, two prophets, very unsuccessful, but very laborious and zealous in their ministry, were taken up *bodily* into heaven! And Paul saw that his course of active exertions in the gospel service would terminate in the enjoyment of "a crown of righteousness" which his

Lord would give him in the last great day. If therefore a pastor, amid his trials here, has any respect, as Moses had, "to the recompense of the reward," he will be diligent in his Master's service, though his situation and his talents may allow him to "be faithful only over a few things."

iv. But a pastor is further urged "*to be instant in season and out of season,*" by the condition and wants of the people committed to his care. Some are ignorant, and require frequent instructions; and others, from their occupations in life, need "line upon line, and precept upon precept." Some are averse to the truth, and others are "slow of heart" in believing. Some are aged, and of feeble memories; others are inattentive to what is spoken at one time, and require the word to be repeated at another. Some are sorely tempted; and others, from their weakness of faith and their instability, require the constant exertion of pastoral care.

v. And is not the pastor excited to diligence by *the example of his Master*, during his abode with men, and of *his apostles*, after his ascension into heaven? The Master could say, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." In Luke xxi. we read: "And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him." (Luke xxii. 53.)

Of his apostles we read, Acts v. 42: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ."

If now, at the peril of their lives, these servants of the Saviour so acted, shall not his ministers speak boldly and preach diligently, when the faith of a Christian nation affords them every facility in the performance of their work?

(3.) You perceive, then, that pastors are excited to labor zealously in the ministry of the Word, by all the regard which they have for the glory of their Divine Master and Lord; by the respect which they have for his divine authority; by every feeling of gratitude to him for their own salvation; by a knowledge that they are, as "stewards of the mysteries of God," grand instruments by which grace operates in the salvation of others; by compassion for souls; and by the interest which they are called to take in the prosperity of Zion, and in the maintenance and propagation of the

truth. For, in proportion to their success in preaching the Word, the name of the Lord Jesus is known and glorified; the Church is supported and enlarged; the kingdom of darkness is reduced; wickedness is restrained; error is routed; sinners are snatched as "brands out of the burning," and saints prepared for heaven!

Surely the excitements to this duty are many and powerful. They need only to be mentioned, to convince a pastor that he is called to be active, zealous, and patient in the work of the ministry.

(4.) But whilst the pastor should feel the force of those excitements, and act accordingly, we repeat it, there are *occasions* on which he must restrain his zeal in preaching, that he may preach with more wisdom and force. "*Festina lente*," is a caution that has here also its place. There are times when we must say *No*, to those who apply for preaching, and exercise a sound discretion in this matter. A pastor must not be hasty "to offer unto the Lord that which has cost him nothing;" nor, on the other hand, must he wait until he can collect a quantity of gold from Ophir, before he makes an offering to the temple.

In one word, he must feel the force of those divine laws which bind him "to speak the words of soberness and of truth;" "to give himself to reading;" "to meditate on these things;" to maintain the dignity of his office, as an "ambassador of Christ" and an instructor of the people, and to let his "profiting appear unto all." The salt of his preaching must not lose its savor, by being too much diluted with water!

2. We come now to the second point connected with this pastoral duty, viz: *In what manner* is the pastor to preach the Divine Word?

In former lectures we have said that he must preach the truths, commands, threatenings, and promises contained in the Holy Scriptures. These are to form the grand subjects of his discourses, and not the doctrines of either moral or mental philosophy, as they happen to be approved in the schools: for some of those doctrines may be compared to those "foolish genealogies," on which Paul looked with contempt. "To the law and to the testimony," are words that must be inscribed on the discourses of the Evangelical Pastor. I observe, then,

(1.) That he must "*declare the whole counsel of God*;" that

is to say, he must exhibit truth as it is written, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear: he must not shun to preach any doctrine of God, because his hearers disbelieve or dislike it. This cannot be done at once, or in the course of a few sermons. What therefore is incumbent on the pastor, in his ministrations of the Word, is to keep nothing back which belongs to the scheme of divine truth, but to preach every doctrine in its proper place and time.

Here let me stop to say that, from the words of Paul just quoted, a Baptist writer has argued thus: "Paul declared the whole counsel of God, but no where has he commanded infants to be baptized; therefore infant baptism is not a part of the counsel of God." We answer, this is weak reasoning: for,

- i. Has Paul any where forbidden expressly "the worship of images"? If not, must we then conclude that the worship of images is a part of the counsel of God?\*
- ii. All that Paul declared or preached is not recorded.
- iii. But, in exhibiting the identity of the Church under both

\* Dr. Holcombe, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia, in his work called *Primi. Theol.* p. 63, says: "Under the law, (Mosaic economy,) when the kingdom of Christ was of this world, if the roots were ceremonially holy, such were the branches; but now, his kingdom not being from hence, the metaphor will not apply to Christians and their natural offspring." Now look at these words, in which a number of false facts are stated, to escape the force of argument. We remark on them:

1. That we are pleased to hear him acknowledge the existence of a kingdom of Christ in this world under the Old Testament dispensation. Now, when was this kingdom brought into existence? If it was a kingdom of Christ, which was "of this world," it was not created in the times of the patriarchs, nor by the Sinaitic covenant, for we read of no such kingdom then. God established a Theocracy, but was that a kingdom "of this world"? Is it so called in Scripture? Surely not. God was the only King, and if it were a worldly kingdom, he must have been an earthly king; but all its laws and ordinances came from heaven.

2. If we admit that the Theocracy was a kingdom of this world, yet the federally holy relation of a believing parent and child was not created by that kingdom, nor founded upon it, for it was a relation existing long before the Theocracy, in the time of Abraham, and founded upon the covenant of circumcision.

3. Holcombe says that, under the New Testament dispensation, law or relationship does not exist; whereas it is under that dispensation, with direct reference to Gentile Christians, that Paul teaches.

4. Holcombe states that we affirm that the children of believing parents are inwardly renewed and holy. A falsehood.

Testaments, and the spiritual nature of the sacrament of circumcision, which he calls "the seal of the righteousness of faith," he has shown clearly the broad foundation on which infant church-membership rests. To which add lastly,

iv. That we have much reason to conclude, that the apostle did declare infant baptism to be a part of the counsel of God; for he tells us that he "baptized the household of Stephanas," (1 Cor. i. 16,) "and the household of Lydia," etc., (Acts xvi.)

To return: We have said that the pastor must exhibit every doctrine in its proper place, and at the proper time: for while he is to be fearless in preaching the Divine Word, it is his duty,

(2.) To preach that Word in *wisdom*; that is to say, with that regard to persons and circumstances which promises more success in his work. There are elementary truths in religion—"first principles of the doctrine of Christ." In the Scriptures, "there is milk for babes," and "strong meat" for those who are more advanced in Christian knowledge and experience. There are truths which the human mind readily perceives; and there are truths, the evidences of which cannot be seen until men have searched the Scriptures, until they are awakened and endowed with a new principle and taste.

These facts the pastor must keep in view. He must not preach without discrimination as to times, any doctrine of the Divine Word. He must not ring the changes upon the doctrines of Divine Sovereignty, Predestination, and Election, whithersoever he goes. The apostles, though armed with miraculous powers, did not do this; they were "stewards," but wise stewards. "Strong meat" they withheld from those who were weak, for they knew that sincere penitence in a sinner's soul would open his eyes upon the truth of those doctrines which the hardened in heart would be disposed to reject. Hence they went forth preaching in the first instance, "repentance," and the cross of Christ, as the medium of reconciliation. Their example we must imitate, not dropping from our preaching any article of Christian faith, but presenting truths in that order, and on those occasions, and after those previous instructions, which shall recommend what we preach to the serious attention and consideration of those who hear us.

(3.) But to wisdom we must add *faithfulness* in our ministra-

tions of the Divine Word. This quality of a good minister of Jesus Christ will discover itself in the manner in which we reprove sinners, describe their character and state, and warn them of their danger. There must be in this branch of ministerial duty, an honesty of dealing which shall evince that, in carrying God's messages according to his directions, we regard not the persons of the rich, nor dread the displeasure of the haughty sinner. "We must not prophesy smooth things" to please our friends, nor sell the truth for the price of their favor, who either rule in the world of fashion, or hold the purse-strings of the congregation.

Very solemn is the charge given in Ezekiel iii. 17. Agreeably to the spirit of this charge, the apostle Paul described the primitive preachers of the gospel as acting, Col. i. 27, 28. "To whom," saith he, "God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is, Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom."

(4.) But let it be carefully observed, that while faithfulness to his Master obliges the Evangelical Pastor to speak of the moral character and states of men, of the sins of the heart, and the various transgressions which appear in human conduct, he must not so preach as to point out the sinner to his neighbor; but so exhibit sin in the heart, and its sad effects in the life, as to make the sinner acquainted with himself, and to see his exposedness to the wrath of the Almighty. There is no need of scolding at persons, in order to be faithful in the gospel service; nor does such faithfulness demand that the preacher should be a source of information on the Sabbath of the wrong doings of particular persons through the week, and that he should constantly exclaim against drunkards, swearers, horse-racers, gamesters, and dancers, while the self-righteous, the covetous, the avaricious, and the proud, encircle him. Above all, let the minister of the Lord Jesus never denounce the Divine threatenings with any indication of personal resentment, nor call persons unconverted and ready to be damned, (as some Methodist and Baptist ministers have done,) without an intimate knowledge of their tempers and ways.

(5.) It remains to be observed, that the pastor must preach the Divine Word, not in the spirit of an executioner of Divine wrath,

but in the spirit of that *compassionate Saviour* who wept over impenitent Jerusalem, even when he was constrained to say, "Your house is left unto you desolate;" and in the spirit of that apostle whose bowels yearned over his unbelieving brethren the Jews, and whose affectionate heart prompted him to say, "for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Compassion for the lost sinner, a solicitude to save him, tenderness towards the weak in faith, sympathy with those who are awakened and troubled in mind, and esteem for the saints, must appear through the preachings of the Evangelical Pastor.

We have done with the public dispensation of the Divine Word: let us now direct our attention to the more *private and limited dispensation* of that Word by the pastor.

*First.* It is well known that the services which the Redeemer requires of his gospel ministers, are not limited to the exercises of Sabbath worship, but are extended to all the days of the week, and to all those occasions on which his name and truth, his grace and glory, can be brought to the view of others, for their instruction, conviction, and spiritual benefit. "They must be instant;" stand ready to urge the Word "in season and out of season." The Saviour taught on every suitable occasion. The apostles taught daily, and "from house to house."

*Second.* But is it thence to be understood that the pastor, at this day, must be constantly employed in preaching, and go out every day from house to house dispensing the Divine Word? By no means. Preparation for his work by study is an indispensable duty, and circumstances, as well as gifts, place him in a situation in some respects different from that of the apostles. For, first, the ministry of the apostles was of the missionary character: hence missionaries at this day may, from their situation among the heathen, preach daily, and from house to house, for they are employed in teaching the alphabet of the gospel. But let it be observed, second, that the apostles were miraculously qualified to teach from house to house; but ministers now are qualified by the *ordinary* aids of the Holy Spirit in their own studious and prayerful efforts. "They must premeditate what they shall say," when miraculous communications are withheld. Third, the first gospel preachers were employed in instructing the

illiterate heathen, and in preaching against gross and idolatrous abominations; but ministers now are called to teach people who are acquainted with the Scriptures from early youth, and who read much on religious subjects, while the enemies of Christianity have taken refuge amid the subtleties of metaphysical science.

*Third.* But while circumstances so different modify the duty of private preaching, yet *the spirit* of those words which speak of instructing from house to house must be maintained and obeyed. He must be industrious in communicating religious instruction; he must exhibit this industry in catechising the young, in visiting families for the express purpose of promoting their spiritual and eternal interests. Of this pastoral duty, called "family visitation," we shall speak more particularly by and by. In introducing religious conversation when he is paying civil visits; in preaching the Word whenever he visits the afflicted, the sick, and the distressed; in preaching during the week in neighborhoods, and by dropping religious truths on every fit occasion, and in every company, the work of Christian pastors, especially, "must be seasoned with salt." Of the late Mr. Pearce, of Birmingham, it is recorded that, philosophical as his taste was, he never concluded his conversation on any branch of natural philosophy, without "serving the Lord Christ."

It remains to be observed, that the *great properties* of a faithful public dispensation of the Divine Word, viz: purity of doctrine, faithfulness, wisdom, and affection, belong also,

3. To the *more private dispensation* of it. The difference between them is made up of the following particulars only: First, the arrangement of ideas, which in public preaching is required to be more logical, while private preaching admits of the *free and loose style* of familiar conversation; and second, in the individuality of application, the Word being spoken in more private preaching to particular persons, with a direct reference to the particular state, the particular danger and troubles of each one addressed.

Much knowledge of human nature and much prudence are required, to preach well to individuals in a private intercourse. Self-conceit and dogmatism do great injuries here. But let me add a few *practical reflections*.

1. Much are those who now enter the gospel ministry disposed

to think too highly of their own compositions, and to act the part of severe critics upon the sermons which they hear. Indeed, it has been remarked that the poorest preachers are oftentimes the most ready to animadvert with unkind severity upon the sermons of others. Let me request you to exhibit a temper the very reverse of this. Be clothed with humility; estimate your own attainments low; do justice to the talents of others; remember that there is a glorious sovereignty in the dispensation of that Divine grace which is to render the Word spoken by man effectual. Hence, the "race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." The best things in a sermon are not those which excite the admiration of the inexperienced in religion. God's converts are the best judges of good preaching: the world will always judge according to its tastes and passions.

2. Another reflection that I would add here is, that it is injurious to those who begin to preach the gospel, to be very solicitous of praise. This lust is a daughter of pride. In the hearts of some, it is alive when they begin their sermon; and it is very greedy to obtain its gratification when the service is ended—so greedy, that if no body will praise their preaching, they will praise it themselves, and begin to complain of the want of time for better preparation, in order to lead others to talk of the sermon. Ah, look to the approbation of God. Cast your seed with the skill of a good sower; retire under the impression that *you* can't make it vegetate, and leave the event to God.

3. Those who are very covetous of the praise of men, are soon discouraged in the gospel ministry, when trials occur. Seldom do they stand fast in the Lord. Be humble, therefore, and wonder and wonder again, that Jehovah will employ such a poor creature as you are, in such high services.

## LECTURE XIII.

### DUTIES OF THE PASTORAL OFFICE, CONTINUED.

#### THE DUTY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

OF these there are four, viz: CIRCUMCISION, THE PASSOVER, BAPTISM, AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

In considering what those duties are which the Evangelical Pastor is called publicly to perform, we have directed our attention to the duty of prayer, and to that of preaching the written Word of God.

We now proceed to observe, that there is another pastoral duty to be discharged by him, which, though it includes virtually both the exercise of prayer and that of preaching, is nevertheless to be considered as a distinct duty: I mean the duty of administering the sacraments.

Before we consider what are the particular pastoral duties which belong to the administration of the sacraments, it will be proper to state a few facts which constitute the doctrine of the sacraments in general.

1. There are certain religious ordinances connected with the visible Church of God, and the external dispensation of the great Abrahamic covenant of grace, which are usually denominated *Sacraments*.

2. The word "sacrament" is not a Scriptural term, but is the Latin word "sacramentum" Anglicized. Some consider the word "sacramentum" to be the name of a military oath among the Romans, applied to an ordinance of the Christian religion. Some derive it from the Latin verb "sacrare," to sanctify or set apart for a holy use—to consecrate. The word "sacramentum" was also applied by the Romans to the "arcana" of their mythology. Now,

as the sacraments express the *mysterics* of the Christian religion, it is probable the ancient Fathers employed the word "sacramentum, a mystery," with a view to gain the attention of the heathens to the institutions of the Christian religion, by using a term which the heathens themselves had long used in their religious systems. But we need not be at a loss to give the true history of the application of the word "sacrament" to certain Christian ordinances, if we keep in view the following historical facts, viz :

(1.) That the Greek Fathers used the word "*μυστηριον*" to signify a sacrament, (from "*μυεω*," to instruct in sacred things—"μυω," to shut.) In the old Latin version of the New Testament Scriptures, the Greek word "*μυστηριον*" is translated "*sacramentum*." Now, as the Christian Fathers considered Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be "mysterics" of their faith, and as Tertullian found in the Latin version "*μυστηριον*" rendered "*sacramentum*," he very naturally employed "*sacramenta*" (and he was the first writer who did so) to signify the visible signs and seals of God's covenant. In this usage he was followed by the later writers of the Latin Church.

It appears, then, that we have been led into the use of the word "sacraments," as a name whereby to distinguish certain Divine institutions of our religion, by the *Latin Fathers*; and in consequence of its general use now, it may be retained.

There is nothing improper in denominating, as the Fathers did, the sacraments *mysterics*, provided by "mystery" be understood, not things either incomprehensible or unrevealed, but things pertaining to the person and manifestation of our Incarnate God, and the kingdom of his grace. Preserving this meaning of the term here, we observe, that though every sacrament be a "mystery," yet *every mystery is not a sacrament*.

(2.) There are terms which the Spirit of God employs to denote the sacraments. These terms are, *sign* and *seal*. Gen. xvii. 11: "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be a token or sign of the covenant betwixt me and you." Exod. xii. 13: "And the blood shall be to you a token upon the houses where you are." Rom. iv. 11: "And he received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of faith."

With regard to the first of these passages, (Gen. xvii. 11,) let me just remark, as I pass along, upon an erroneous comment or two.

Tiringius, a Roman Catholic writer, (Contr. 12,) says: "As circumcision took away the flesh of the foreskin by an active operation, so baptism removes original sin by an active operation."

We answer: This argument is obviously defective; for it creates a similarity between things entirely dissimilar in their nature. We therefore observe, that the uncircumcision of the heart and original sin are the same, and not the foreskin of the body. Hence we argue, that as the sacrament of circumcision could not, "*opera operato*," take away the uncircumcision of the heart, so neither can baptism take away original sin.

But a Mennonist Baptist writer says: "Circumcision, like the other sacraments, gave no sealing, but was only a token to aid the memory in thinking of the grace of the covenant."

We answer, first, It was indeed a visible token, but Paul (Rom. iv.) denominates it also "a *seal* of the righteousness of faith." But, second, signs on written instruments of contract are, as visible tokens, only so far valuable, as they *seal* the communications of rights, privileges, and goods.

With regard to Rom. iv. 11, erroneous comments are so numerous, (inasmuch as the passage is highly important in the system of divine truth,) that it would require much time to answer them all. I shall therefore just animadvert upon one Popish and Socinian comment, leaving the others to be considered elsewhere. It is said, "that in this one passage only does the Scripture speak of circumcision as being '*a seal*,' which shows that it was something peculiar to Abraham: it served to seal to him alone a certain privilege, and therefore cannot be considered as describing the general character of the sacraments." We answer:

i. That there is but one passage in Genesis in which it is said of Abraham, "that his faith was counted unto him for righteousness:" nevertheless, the apostle Paul applies the same doctrinal mercy to all "who work not, but believe on him who justifieth the ungodly;" their faith, he tells us, is also "counted for righteousness." (vs. 6.) But Paul explains the mind of God in the constitution of this covenant and its seal, in the 23d and 24th verses: "Now it was not written for his sake, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe."

ii. Peter does not consider the promise sealed by circumcision,

as the peculiar privilege of Abraham; but speaks directly of its extent, in Acts ii. 39.

iii. But Abraham is called "the father of the faithful," because the spiritual estate in church privileges, and mercies given and sealed to him by the covenant of circumcision, is transmitted to all who stand in the same covenant, in proportion as they drink into his spirit. We believe, then, the sacraments to be visible signs and seals, and therefore define them *to be visible signs and seals of the great Abrahamic covenant with the whole Church, instituted by God at various times, for the exhibition and confirmation of the grace of that covenant.*

III. Proceed we now to consider the third duty of the Christian Pastor, viz: THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

To sacraments belong five things, viz: 1. A Divine institution; 2. A visible sign; 3. The thing signified; 4. The union between the sign and thing signified; and 5. The design or end for which they were instituted.

From the definition given, it will be perceived, that though there be something *sacramental* in some of the types, yet that the types cannot be sacraments; for the types were not seals, but visible figures of things to come. Besides, it is required to constitute a sacrament, that it shall be given for the use of the whole Church, and not to cease but with that particular economy to which it belongs.

#### FIRST. *Their Divine Institution.*

The sacraments are instituted by Jehovah our Redeemer. By this Divine institution we mean, that certain visible things were appointed by the Supreme Being to be used in a certain religious manner, and to be visible signs and seals of his covenant. That sacraments must be of Divine institution, and that God has actually instituted them, are two important facts which must be supported by proofs.

1. That the sacraments must be of Divine institution, we prove by the following arguments:

(1.) Nothing short of the will and appointment of God, can make any visible object with certain actions a *sign and a seal of*

*his covenant.* This truth is obvious; and becomes more so, when we reflect, that a *seal* to any promise which must be fulfilled by God, and which relates to the communications of his power and grace, cannot be put to any transaction without an express Divine command. No creature can bring Jehovah under obligations to bestow his favors: he can bind himself by his own word and his own oath *alone*.

(2.) Sacraments are religious ordinances, and belong to the worship of God; but true religion must have God for its author: acceptable worship must be of Divine institution. Matt. xv. 9: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

(3.) None but God can be the giver of the things contained in the promises, which are signified and sealed by the sacraments. Either then the sacraments must be an unmeaning service, a mere ceremony, or they must refer to and be connected with some benefits. Now, if man institute the sacraments, man must confer the benefits; but it is acknowledged that the sacraments signify and seal privileges and blessings which *Jehovah alone* can grant; therefore, *Jehovah alone* must be *the institutor of the sacraments*.

(4.) The Church is a society which God has of his own pleasure organized, and which sustains peculiar relations to him. He is her Head, "her King, her Lawgiver;" *she* is the family of God, the city of God, the habitation of his holiness, and the kingdom of God, as contradistinguished from the civil communities and kingdoms of this world. Hence it arises, that if sacraments are to be observed as a part of our religious duty, that duty is created by law, and that *law* must have God for its *author*; more especially as sacraments are positive institutions of religion, and to be observed in the obedience of faith: now faith looks to the revelations and words of Jehovah.

We infer, then, that God alone has the right to institute, in his Church, the sacraments of the covenant.

(5.) But our last and strongest argument is, that God has actually instituted the sacraments. But this interesting fact must be proved. That God actually instituted the sacraments, we prove from his Word in relation to each sacrament, premising that we know of no other and no more sacraments than Circumcision, the Passover, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

i. Now, with regard to *Circumcision*, it is plain that God instituted it. Acts vii. 8: "God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision," says Stephen. Gen. xvii. 10: "And God said to Abraham, This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised."

ii. With regard to *the Passover*, there can be as little doubt respecting its Divine institution. Exod. xii. 1, 3: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month, they shall take unto them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house," etc. See also 2 Chron. xxxv. 6.

iii. With regard to *Holy Baptism*, the same fact is plain: Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, instituted this sacrament. Matt. xxviii. 19: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." John's baptism was divinely instituted. (John i. 33.)

iv. And who can deny that the *Sacrament of the Supper* was instituted by the Redeemer? Its institution may be read, Matt. xxvi. And Paul said, 1 Cor. xi. 23: "I have received of *the Lord* that which also I delivered unto you," etc.

The Socinians do not deny that Jesus Christ instituted Christian Baptism and the Supper; but they deny that the sacraments *must be of Divine institution*; plainly perceiving that if they admit the *Divine origin* of the sacraments, and acknowledge that Christ instituted Baptism and the Lord's Supper, they must also admit the truth of the Divinity of Christ: for the difference is striking between Abraham and Moses receiving a command from God to circumcise and keep the passover, and the Lord Jesus Christ commanding baptism and the Supper to be observed. Abraham was passive; Moses and Aaron were merely organs of communication from God, as is stated in Exod. xii.; but the Lord Jesus Christ *commanded* in his own person and by his own power: for "in him dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily" on earth, and "he was Lord over his own house."

But we might go further, and prove from the Scripture, that "the God of glory," as Stephen calls him, and "the Angel of the Divine Presence," as Moses denominates him, was no other than

“God manifest in the flesh,” preached to the Gentiles, and received up into glory. (See Acts vii.) And hence it would result, that our Saviour, before he became incarnate, *also instituted the ancient sacraments of “Circumcision and the Passover.”* But waiving this, we remark—

That the Socinians are obliged to divest the sacraments of their spiritual character, their relation to the atonement and its benefits, and their grand end in the dispensation of the covenant, and to convert them into religious ordinances subserving no other purpose than to create a badge of distinction between Jews and Gentiles formerly, Christians and Gentiles now. Accordingly, Volkelius says, (l. iv. c. 22,) “that circumcision was a kind of seal for Abraham and his seed, by which the Jews were distinguished and separated from all other people, in evidence of God’s superior regard for them.” We answer, first, that there must be ordinances which shall distinguish the members of the Church of God, if that Church be a visible society. Second, that circumcision was instituted to mark the relation of people to the visible Church. But, third, its institution had also higher ends in view; it was divinely appointed “to be the seal of the righteousness of faith,” and was the sacrament of a covenant which was rich in spiritual benefits, as the apostle Paul teaches in Rom. iv.

But were it even true that the sacraments were designed only to create, as the Socinians say, badges of distinction, still they must be of Divine institution; for who besides the Supreme Being has a right to make such distinctions in the relations of man to himself?

Having proved that the sacraments must be and are of Divine institution, we must next direct our attention,

SECOND, *To the visible sign, which belongs to a sacrament.*

1. A visible sign is essential to a sacrament. This doctrine is opposed strenuously by the Roman Catholic writers; for the Church of Rome teaches that the sacraments under the present dispensation of the covenant, are *seven* in number, and in some of these there is no visible sign. Hence their hostility to our doctrine.

2. A visible sign in general is that visible object or action which serves to signify *some other thing* to the mind of the beholder.

3. A visible sign in a sacrament is that visible substance which God has selected, and that action in relation to it which he has prescribed, and which sign he has appointed to signify the spiritual things of his covenant.

4. The material substance, together with the appropriate manner in which it is to be used, is called the element of a sacrament.

Let us now prove that a visible sign is essential.

(1.) We might argue that all the sacraments which God has instituted have visible signs; but,

(2.) We prefer to direct your attention to the very nature of a sacrament, which is an ordinance of religion in which certain invisible things of God are signified by *certain visible signs*. Take away the visible sign, and it may be something else: it may be inspiration, it may be an audible sign, like the Word spoken, but it cannot be a sacrament.

(3.) Sacraments address themselves *to the eye*, and are designed to strengthen and confirm that faith which cometh by hearing. Hence they can operate like all *visible seals*.

But is it required in a sacrament, that the visible substance, or object used, should be *either a natural sign* of the thing signified, or *wholly an arbitrary sign*, as a ribbon or star on the breast is a sign of knighthood and nobility? We answer, 1, that the visible sign need not be such as to lead our thoughts by natural and familiar associations to the thing signified; nor, 2, should it be wholly an arbitrary sign. Augustine in his Epistles (ad Bonif. 23) observes, "that if the visible sign had not a likeness of those things of which they are sacraments, they would be no sacraments at all."

The visible sign, therefore, must have *some adaptation* in its properties and previous use, to represent the thing signified by it. At the same time it must here be a *sign* by Divine selection and appointment, and no otherwise.

But here it may be asked, How are the visible signs in sacraments to be distinguished from other visible signs of Divine mercies, which God hath instituted; such, for instance, as the rainbow in the clouds, as Gideon's fleece, etc.? We answer, first, that some of those signs are to be easily distinguished from the visible signs in sacraments, by the circumstance that they are temporary signs, not permanent institutions; that they belong to the miracu-

lous operations of Deity, and not to the ordinary dispensations of his grace; and that they belong to other covenants than that covenant with Abraham, by which the Church was organized on the principle of visible unity. Secondly, that *all those* visible signs may be distinguished from the visible signs in the sacraments, by the principal end in the institution of the latter, which is, that they should signify and seal the privileges and blessings of the everlasting covenant. (Gen. xvii.)

We now come to this important doctrine, that the *visible signs or elements alone, do not constitute the sacraments.* It is the Divine Word of the Scriptures that gives, not only being, but any worth and utility, to the sacraments. Take away the word of their institution—the record in the Scriptures that God has appointed certain things with certain actions, to be sacraments—and they must cease to exist. Take away the revelations of Jesus Christ, and the sacraments have no meaning. Take away the word of promise which God has united to the sacraments, and these ordinances would be valueless; for there would be no evidence that any Divine blessing would attend their observance. Augustine correctly says: “The Word, united to the element, makes the sacrament. The element,” he adds, “is the visible sign and whole ceremony prescribed in relation to it: the Word is the promise of grace annexed to the observance of the visible institution.”

The Church of God therefore always unites the Word with the element, and is obliged to condemn, not only the idolatry of the Popish mass, but the secret prayers and mummeries of the priests in keeping mass, and the absence of the Divine Word from that awful corruption of the Saviour's institution.

THIRD. From the visible sign of the sacraments, we must turn our inquiry to *the things signified.*

1. If sacraments are of Divine institution, if they are visible signs and seals of God's covenant, and if their religious observance is a branch of Christian duty, and forms a part of public Christian worship—then, we may rest assured, that *what is signified* by the visible sign in sacraments must be important in its nature, and must relate to the privileges and mercies comprehended in the establishment and preservation of the visible Church, and in the promises of the Abrahamic covenant.

2. But the Church derives her existence from the mediation of the Son of God; and all the privileges and blessings which she enjoys, and which are bestowed as covenanted mercies, are of Christ's procuring.

3. The great things, therefore, signified by the visible signs of the sacraments, are—

The Mediator Jesus Christ, and the privileges and blessings of his procuring, bestowed on the visible Church of God. Accordingly, we are told in the Scriptures, first, that circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith, as standing opposed to the righteousness of works; and of course exhibiting that Saviour who was the sum of the gospel promise from the beginning, and who is the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. iv.) Second, that the lamb in the passover had such an appointed and sacramental relation to the same Saviour, that Paul called that Saviour "the Passover." (1 Cor. v. 7.) Third, that the application of water in baptism, is a sign of the washing away of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ. (Acts ii. 38; Rom. vi. 3.) And fourth, that the bread and wine in the Supper, "is the communion of the blood and body of Christ." (1 Cor. x. 16.)

But, while Jesus Christ and the privileges and mercies of his procuring and bestowment in his visible Church, constitute the great things signified by the visible signs of the sacraments, yet, for our better understanding of the doctrine of the sacraments, three facts are to be stated and carefully noted:

(1.) The first is, that besides the great things to be signified and sealed by the sacraments, God may make these ordinances to be *memorials* of other things connected with the preservation and local circumstances of his visible Church, according to the dispensation under which she is placed.

Thus he made, under the old economy, the sign of circumcision to be significant, not only of things purely spiritual and connected with the redemption in Christ Jesus, but also of a carnal descent from Abraham, as he was pleased to confine his visible Church to the family of Abraham. A man might be circumcised in process of time, who was not of Abram's seed; and some of Abram's descendants might retain the rite of circumcision who had apostatized from Abram's God: but no man could be acknowledged to be of the family of Abram who was uncircumcised.

Circumcision also, besides being “a seal of the righteousness of faith” to those who were circumcised in heart, as well as outwardly, was also a seal to all the circumcised in the visible Church, of the promise of the covenant relating to the possession of the land of Canaan; inasmuch as Jehovah was pleased to give his visible Church and her worship a fixed location in that particular country, and to make Jerusalem his dwelling-place.

Thus also with respect to the Passover. This sacrament exhibited “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” the bitterness of repentance, and the pilgrimage of the saint; but its visible signs were also a memorial to the whole Jewish Church of the deliverance from Egypt, and of the afflictions of the Israelites in that country. Exod. xii. 26, 27: “And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say to you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses.”

This *mixed* character of the sacraments of the ancient dispensation, must be kept in view to understand the Scriptures. The Baptist writers have attempted to remove every degree of *spirituality* from circumcision, and even to deny the existence of a Church under the Old Testament, in order that they might set aside the argument for infant church-membership, founded upon the Abrahamic covenant and circumcision.

Others, again, have contended that the sacraments of the old dispensation had no reference whatever to any thing save Christ and his benefits. According to our views, both err; for the Scriptures ascribe to circumcision and the passover a *mixed* character.

I need not observe, that on the change of dispensation, after our Saviour’s appearance here and ascension into heaven, the Church was to be extended to all people, and no longer have a locality: hence the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper could be made to suit, in their visible signs, the greater spirituality of the new dispensation, and refer to spiritual objects alone.

(2.) The second fact to be here noted is, that the privileges and mercies procured by the mediation of Christ, and bestowed upon his visible Church, are *various*: hence the apostle Paul could say,

in describing the privileges and mercies of the Jews in the ancient Church, Rom. iii. 1, 2, 3: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?" Again, Rom. ix. 4: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came."

The various blessings signified and sealed by the sacraments, it is not necessary to enumerate here. It will be sufficient to observe that *some* of them can be enjoyed by the impenitent and unholy in the visible Church, and *all* of them by those "who believe with the heart unto righteousness." This leads me to the

(3.) Third fact to be noted, and which I shall state briefly. It is this: The covenant made with Abraham, and the visible Church organized by it, were so constituted as to comprehend *a twofold seed or character*; "a seed born after the flesh, and a seed born after the Spirit." Such is the visible Church in its composition still, and such it ever will be on earth. Now, the sacraments signify and seal to all who are in the visible Church; but they do not signify and seal to *all, the same things*: for instance, circumcision did not seal to Ishmael and Esau, who were in the visible Church, all that it sealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. More of this hereafter.

At present, let me conclude this lecture, with observing that the visible sign in the sacraments is in various respects to be distinguished from the thing signified. First, the sign is earthly and visible, but the main thing signified is invisible and spiritual. Second, the one is received by the body, the other is enjoyed by the soul. Third, so far as Christ in his saving grace is signified, *the thing* signified is necessary to salvation; the sign is not. Fourth, the signs vary in various sacraments; but the thing mainly signified is the same in all: for the covenant is an everlasting covenant.

In another lecture, I shall finish my remarks on the sacraments in general.

## LECTURE XIV.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

#### OBSERVATIONS ON THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

To sacraments, we said in a former lecture, belong, 1. A Divine institution; 2. A visible sign; 3. The thing signified; 4. The union between the external sign and the thing signified; 5. The design, or end. We have disposed of the three first, and must now speak of the

FOURTH, *The union of the external sign with the thing signified by it.*

1. This union of the sign with the thing signified, is what is called the "*forma*" of the sacraments.

The word "*forma*" is borrowed from the schools of ancient philosophy and scholastic theology, and denotes a certain modification of a thing, which serves to give that thing a peculiar manner of existence.\*

In the sacraments, "the matter" consists of the visible signs or elements, and of the things represented by them; and if there were nothing more, those elements would be pictures and emblems of certain things, but they would not be *sacraments*. The form, or union of the signs with the things signified, is therefore necessary to constitute certain ordinances "*sacraments*." Supposing that the application of the water in baptism, and of the distribution of the bread and wine in the Supper, had no *specific union* to the grace of the Redeemer, or no *forma*, as the metaphy-

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\* *Forma*.—Plato considered the investigation of *forms* to be the proper object of science.

sicians say, it would then be obvious that they might be referred to other things, and would cease to be seals of that grace in particular.

2. With regard, now, to this union, there would be no need of any special instructions and explanations, had there been no errors entertained and propagated about the sacraments. The common sense of Christians under the direction of faith would have easily understood, that the institution and promise of God had made such a union between the signs and things signified, as to subserve the interests of the Church, and to promote the spiritual benefit of the true believer. But bad doctrines in connection with this, as well as of every other branch of theology, have been taught; hence we are under the necessity of inquiring, *What is the union that exists in the sacraments between the sign and the thing signified?*

(1.) The *Roman Catholics* have contended strenuously, that the signs in the Supper, after consecration by the priest, are changed into the body and blood of Christ: hence it would appear that they consider the union between the sign and the thing signified to be such, that the *one* is *locally and corporally* concealed under the form of the other. They also teach that in the water of baptism, provided the intention of the priest be good, the grace signified is so united to and incorporated with the sign, that the *sign* communicates to those who receive it, *ex opere operato*, regeneration, forgiveness of sins, etc.

The Council of Trent, in their eighth Canon, Sess. vii., speak on this wise: "Let him be accursed, who says, that by the sacraments of the new law, grace is not given *ex opere operato*; that is to say, by virtue of the duty or act which we perform."

(2.) Those *Lutherans*, also, who receive the doctrines which M. Luther taught in relation to the Supper, contend for a kind of local and corporeal union of the sign with the thing signified.

In consequence of such notions, fraught with error, we are constrained to teach, that the union of the sign with the thing signified is,

i. Negatively, not a *natural* union, such as that of matter and form, as, for example, heat and light in the rays of the sun; and not a *local and corporeal* union, as that which we perceive in bodies cemented together, so that the body and blood of Christ

are bodily united with the water, the bread, and the wine; nor such a *spiritual* union as would arise from the thing signified being infused into the sign, so that the sign acquires the virtue of the grace signified.

ii. But positively, it is a relative, and usually called a *sacramental* union, consisting in the divinely appointed relation of the sign with the thing signified in the sacraments, and no where else, and in the uniting of both *in the mind* of the believer. When the believer receives the sign from the minister of Christ, and the grace signified through the Word and Spirit of Christ, they are, on his receiving both together, united in his mind, and this is their sacramental union.

iii. Hence, it follows, that this union is formed, not by the preacher speaking certain words on the administration of the sacraments, but by the word of promise connected with the ordinance duly administered, and by the agency of the Spirit of Christ in fulfilling his promise.

(3.) Here, it may be proper to advert to another erroneous doctrine of the Roman Catholics. They teach, that the *intention* of the priest is absolutely necessary to constitute a sacrament; so necessary, that if the priest has not intended to administer the sacrament to a communicant, to that end for which the Saviour instituted it, in that case it is no sacrament at all; the child is not baptized, the Christian has not eaten of the Supper: nay, they say, that if the priest himself has not been baptized according to this good intention, he is no priest, and all his official acts are null and void. This doctrine we oppose on the following substantial grounds: First, there is no such doctrine, nor any thing like it, in the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit has not connected the true administration of the sacraments with the views and dispositions of ministers. Were this so, then, second, the efficacy of the sacraments would depend, not on the promise and blessing of God, but upon the temper of a minister. Then also, third, we could have no evidence that we ourselves are baptized, or that those who administer the sacraments have a right to do so. But, happily, the sacraments *do not* derive their existence and their usefulness from the pious intentions of their administrators. And now,

3. Having dismissed this error, let me direct your attention to a few important truths connected with this subject. In conse-

quence of *that* union of the sign with the thing signified of which we have just spoken, there is a *remarkable phraseology* used by the inspired writers, in relation to the sacraments. For, in examining the Scriptures, we find,

1st. That they give to *the sign*, in some passages, *the name of the thing signified*. Thus: First, circumcision is called the "covenant," (Gen. xvii.); second, the lamb is the "Lord's Passover," (Exod. xii.); third, the bread is Christ's body, (Matt. xxvi.); fourth, the cup of wine is the New Testament in his blood, (1 Cor. xi.)

1. With regard to the first passage quoted, (Gen. xvii. 10,) we must observe, that it has often been brought into controversy with the Papists, who misapply the words, "This is my body," to support their doctrine of transubstantiation in the Mass: for, as they argue, if circumcision, "or a man's being circumcised," which is but "the sign," is called "*the covenant*" of which it is a sign, then may the bread in the Supper be denominated Christ's *body*. Hence Bellarmine and Vega have attempted to destroy the argument which that passage affords. They have contended that circumcision was *the covenant itself*. But this it could not be, in its nature, no more than bread can be Christ's body. Besides, Jehovah calls it, vs. 11, "the *token* of his covenant."

2. In Exod. xii. 11, that which was to be eaten in haste, to wit, the lamb killed and roasted, is called the passover of the Lord: the sign bears the name of the thing signified. Hence the reformer Zuinglius drew an argument from this passage, to which he was directed in a dream, to refute the Romanists in a debate on doctrines.

3. In Matt. xxvi., the Papists understand the words *literally*. They say, the bread in the Supper is Christ's real body: but if the words be so understood, and if at the institution of the Supper the bread was in reality the body of Christ, then we are sure that he was not crucified in body; for it is acknowledged that the bread was not crucified, but *eaten*. Common sense, however, perceives that in that and other passages the sign bears the name of the thing signified by it.

4. The like phraseology is used in relation to the sign in baptism, (Tit. iii. 5,) where it is called "the washing of regeneration." But, on this passage, Liringius, the Catholic, raises this argument

to support the doctrine of the Council of Trent: "Baptism," he says, "is here called the washing or laver of regeneration, which is an evident proof that the sacraments, and of course Baptism, works the grace of regeneration in the soul." We answer:

i. If water baptism did this, Paul would not have added, "the renewing of the Holy Ghost;" showing that regeneration in the soul is effected, not by baptism, but by the power of the Holy Ghost.

ii. But water baptism is here called "the washing of regeneration," because it is a sign and seal of regeneration.

iii. Unbaptized adults who are converted, are renewed by the Holy Ghost *before* they are baptized, as was the case with Paul and Lydia: hence regeneration cannot be effected by baptism.

In noticing the phraseology of the inspired writers, we find also,

2nd. *The thing signified bears the name of the sign.* Thus, Christ is called "the Passover," (1 Cor. v. 7,) and "the Lamb," (John i. 36.) With respect to 1 Cor. v. 7, there are two comments of those distinguished enemies of our sound doctrines, Bellarmine and Crellius, very various indeed, to which I shall advert.

1. Bellarmine, the champion of the Catholics, says, (De Miss. l. i. c. 7:) "The Passover was a type of the Mass: the Passover was a sacrifice, so is the Mass." We answer: First, there is no proof that the Passover was a type of the Mass. But, second, it was the expiatory sacrifice of Christ which it signified, and not the human invention of the Popish Mass. Third, we believe the Lord's Supper to be a sacrifice, eucharistical, not expiatory. Fourth, the Mass is said to be a daily expiatory sacrifice for sin, and therefore we abhor it.

2. The other comment of the head of the old Socinian interest, whose learning now stands the modern Unitarians in stead, is more serious. Crellius, in his controversy with Grotius, who argued from 1 Cor. v. 7, that Christ made satisfaction for our sins, says, "that Paul here uses the death of Christ merely as a motive to induce us to forsake our sins; for he immediately adds, 'Let us therefore keep the feast, not with the leaven,' etc. Now, this militates against an atonement: for if Christ has satisfied for our sins, then our sins cannot injure us; we are at liberty to sin." We answer: First, the very argument which the apostle uses to show why

Christians should observe the Supper with a holy temper, is this, that the Supper is a feast in which, symbolically, Christ is the Lamb sacrificed for us. This was the strongest argument that his pen could employ. Second, the doctrine of the atonement taught in this passage was what Paul gloried in teaching. (Rom. iv. 25; 1 Tim. ii. 6, etc.) Third, the atonement is the evangelical tree which produces in believers, as its branches, the fruits of repentance, sanctification, and godly living. So the apostles taught; so converted sinners have felt. 1 Pet. ii. 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed." "We are crucified with Christ," etc. 1 Cor. i. 30: "He is made unto us," "sanctification," etc.

But, not to dwell on an argument which the enemies of Christianity used in Paul's days, as appears from Rom. vi., we proceed to observe—

3rd. That the inspired writers sometimes ascribe to the sign, *the power and efficacy of the thing signified*. Acts xxii. 16: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Regardless of the phraseology here, of which we are speaking, Bellarmine argues from this passage, "that baptism takes away sin by its efficient operation as a sacrament appointed to that end. Sins are washed away by it; it communicates regeneration and salvation." Answer: First, then is baptism substituted for the cross of Christ; for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Second, it is impossible that water in baptism can remove moral pollution. Even admitting that sins are forgiven on the administration of baptism, yet that washing away is the work of the atoning blood and grace of Christ. But, third, baptism was to the adult believer the visible sign and seal of forgiveness. In this sense it is here spoken of, etc.

But here, says a Baptist writer, it is required of him who is baptized, "to call upon the name of the Lord." Now, infants cannot do this; therefore infants are not fit subjects of baptism. Answer: First, the words were addressed to Saul of Tarsus, who was an adult, and do not apply to infant subjects of baptism. Second, circumcision bound to the observance of the whole ceremonial law; but infants could not keep this law, yet they were circum-

cised. Third, faith is as necessary to salvation, as calling upon the name of the Lord is to the enjoyment of baptism and forgiveness. But infants cannot believe; are they therefore not saved? Fourth, to come near to the point: It is written, "All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Are infants therefore excluded from salvation? for they cannot call upon the name of the Lord.

4th. *To the thing signified* the inspired writers sometimes ascribe the ceremony in relation to the sign. "The blood of Christ washes away sin." It is "the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. xii.)

5th. The inspired writers *apply the names of the sacraments of the Old Testament, to designate those who are members of the Church under the new dispensation of grace.* Believers of every nation now, are called "the circumcised and the circumcision," (Phil. iii. 3;) and we are said, in observing the Lord's Supper rightly, to keep the feast of the passover, "not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread," etc. (1 Cor. v. 7.)

This is a most important fact; for it proves two things for which we contend, against the Baptists and others, to wit:

1. That the sacraments of the Old Covenant had the same relation to the Saviour and the work of redemption, that Baptism and the Lord's Supper have: they were not ordinances merely ceremonial and national, pertaining only to the Jews as they were a nation separated by certain religious institutions from all other people; but sacraments which indicated *relations to the visible Church*, such as believers now sustain, which belonged to the gospel promise and the covenant made with Abraham, and which signified and sealed spiritual privileges and blessings.

If the passover and circumcision had no relation to the visible Church, and the covenant which organized that Church, and the promised Seed and the religion of the heart with its proper exercises, it would be difficult to perceive how believers now could be called "the circumcision," and that circumcision be described as those "who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." But, not to enlarge,

2. We observe, that the phraseology of the apostle exhibits another important fact, viz: the *identity* of the visible Church under both the old and new dispensations. If the society remain the *same*, then the members of it may be distinguished by those names which its members of old bore; for those names are expressive of

the same character and relations. Christians can be called the circumcised—the seed and children of Abraham, and the branches of the olive tree in which the Jews once grew, as natural branches. But let the churches be different societies, and that phraseology is inadmissible.

Before I proceed to speak of the *ends* for which sacraments have been instituted, let me just point out, first, in what respects the sacraments and the Word agree, and in what respects they differ; and, second, in what respects the sacraments of the Old and New Testaments agree, and wherein they differ.

(1.) The sacraments and the Word—*wherein they agree and differ.*

The Word and the sacraments have the following things in common, viz: First, they have both God for their author; second, they both address the mind through the external senses; third, they are both to be dispensed by ministers of the Word.

That there is an order of men appointed to preach the Word, and who in this particular office are the ambassadors for Christ, we have proved elsewhere. Now, that these regular ministers of the Word are to be the sole dispensers of the sacraments, we prove, *first*, from the connection which the sacraments have with the Word. They form a part of those “mysteries” of which ministers are the appointed “stewards.” (1 Cor. iv. 1.) *Second*, from the fact, that the Saviour has connected the administration of the sacraments with the office of a preacher, of a Christian teacher and pastor. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them,” etc. (Mark i. 4.) *Third*, from the fact, that sacraments are to be administered in the name of Christ, under the present dispensation, and, therefore, to be dispensed by those alone, who have authority to act in his name. “Now that we are ambassadors for Christ,” etc. *Fourth*, from the fact, that it would be impossible to take oversight of the flock in the manner which the Word requires, unless the ministers of the Word had the sole power of administering the sacraments.

This doctrine, the Papists violently oppose. They teach, that a participation in the Christian sacraments of Baptism and the Mass, is essentially necessary to salvation. Accordingly, they say, that rather than risk the loss of the soul, any one, if a priest cannot be procured, may administer baptism. Midwives, therefore, are permitted to baptize in a time of need.

On this erroneous doctrine it will be sufficient to observe, i. That the sacraments are not essential to salvation; ii. That they are not converting ordinances, though God may accompany their administration with what measure of grace he sees fit; and consequently, iii. That there is no authority and no necessity for *lay baptism*. Correctly does Augustine teach, "that it is not the want, but the *contempt* of the holy sacraments, that damns; for such contempt indicates the existing dominion of sin in the human heart."

To proceed with the agreement. The sacraments and the Word are both *means* by which the Holy Spirit operates, and they both exhibit and express the grace of the gospel.

But some expect to obtain from the sacraments, grace, of which the Word does not speak, and upon conditions which the Word does not reveal nor recognize. Towards this error, the Romish Church strongly leans; and especially many in her communion, believe that they may receive from baptism and the mass that pardon and those promises, which the Divine Word declares to be communicated to no adults but such as repent and turn unto the Lord, believe and follow Christ. It ought therefore to be strenuously maintained, that the Word and sacraments agree in exhibiting the same grace, to be obtained in one and the same way.

(2.) *Difference between the Word and Sacraments.*

Let us now proceed to consider in what respects the sacraments differ from the Word.

i. The *Word*, in its language, is made up of artificial sounds, such as by human institution signify to the mind certain things; but in the sacraments, the external signs are visible and natural objects of God's selection, and signify those things alone which he hath appointed them to signify.

ii. The Word addresses itself to the external senses of *sight* and *hearing*; but the signs in the sacraments are objects, not only of sight, but also of *taste* and *feeling*.

iii. The Word is dispensed *to all*: all may hear it, and all who hear it are bound to believe and obey it. But the sacraments are to be administered to *those only* who are members of the visible Church, or who on a profession of repentance and of faith, are to be received into the covenant.

iv. The Word goes *before the sacraments*: it is *the law* which

gives existence to the sacraments, and has a power and authority entirely independent of the sacraments. But the sacraments depend upon the Word: they imply the revelations and promises of the Word, and are altogether insignificant and powerless without the Word. Hence Augustine correctly says, "The sacrament is the Word visible."

v. Again: The Word reveals the whole counsel of God, and contains history, prophecy, and other important matter; but the sacraments signify and confirm only certain great truths and promises of the Word.

vi. By the Word, the Holy Ghost works faith in those who are capable of understanding it, and increases and confirms that grace; but by the sacraments, he strengthens and confirms the faith already existing in the hearts of adults.

vii. The Word cannot be received by infants; but sacraments may be administered to them, if they are in the covenant.

viii. The Word is necessary and sufficient to salvation; but the sacraments are neither necessary nor sufficient, of themselves, to salvation.

(3.) I shall not here inquire in what respects sacraments differ from those animal sacrifices and other similar institutions which were required under the law, as those ordinances of worship are now abolished, and no confusion or error can result from any things common, which those sacrifices had with sacraments. But Christians are now bound to offer up sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving and almsgiving, and make a consecration of their bodies and spirits to the worship and service of God. Now, *these sacrifices* are easily distinguished from *the sacraments*, as will appear from the following particulars:

i. These sacrifices are acts of obedience to the moral law; but sacraments are positive institutions, directly connected with the covenant of grace.

ii. These sacrifices are acts by which we express our affections towards God; but the sacraments are institutions by which God expresses his good will towards us, by which he is pleased to signify and seal certain things to us. It is true that the sacraments, so far as the observance of them is an act of obedience, are sacrifices, and thus the Lord's Supper may be called a sacrifice; but it is obvious that this is not their *principal end*, and does not enter

into their nature, any further than all positive institutions of religion involve the duty of obedience to Divine authority.

(4.) I shall, before I attempt to speak of the design and end of the sacraments, just remark on the points wherein the sacraments of the covenant under both Testaments agree, and on those points wherein they differ.

i. The sacraments of both Testaments *agree* in the following respects, viz: First, their Author is God: he instituted them. Second, they are institutions which are equally holy in their nature. Circumcision was as holy as baptism is, and baptism is as holy as the Lord's Supper.

The Baptists exalt the holy nature of baptism, and decry circumcision, in order to exclude infant church-membership from the visible Church under the present dispensation.

The Papists depress the character of baptism, and invest the Lord's Supper with a high degree of sanctity, in order that they might throw around *their Mass* an imposing awfulness, and a high relative importance.

But the Scriptures teach that all the sacraments are holy ordinances, and make no such difference in their sanctity as men have devised for party purposes.

Here let me observe, that the *holiness* of an ordinance does not consist in *any inherent power* which it has to sanctify the mind, for no ordinance has any such power: hence it cannot be said that any sacrament derives a superior holiness, as some have imagined, from this source.

But the *holiness* of an ordinance results from its Divine institution, and its relations to God, his worship, his laws, his Church, and the holy ends to which it is subservient.

Now, all the sacraments are of Divine institution; they all sustain relations to the Church, the laws of God, and the obligations of religion, and are subservient to holy ends.

ii. Wherein, now, do the sacraments of the old and new dispensations *differ*? Answer: In the following respects, viz:

*First.* In their external signs and elements.

*Second.* In the manner in which they exhibited the great sacrifice of atonement by the obedience of Christ unto death. The sacraments of the Old Testament referred to that sacrifice as yet to be made; the sacraments of the New Testament exhibit that

sacrifice as having been made. Hence the ancient sacraments admitted, in their external signs, of the shedding of blood, which would be inadmissible in the new. Accordingly, the ancient sacraments were abrogated, and their place supplied by Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

*Third.* The sacraments of the Old and New Testaments differ not only in the time of their institution, but in their duration. The former continued to the first coming of the Saviour; the latter are to continue to his second coming.

*Fourth.* To which let me add, that they differ in their clearness, in their simplicity, in their beauty. The ancient sacraments exhibited, together with the grand objects of faith, carnal relations and temporal mercies; the New Testament sacraments are restricted to spiritual things. The former were burdensome and expensive; the latter are simple and easy of observance, suited every way to the more extended and glorious dispensation under which the Church now exists.

## LECTURE XV.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

#### THE DESIGN OR END OF THE SACRAMENTS.

IN exhibiting, in former lectures, various truths in relation to those institutions of God called "*Sacraments*," we have spoken, 1. Of their Author; 2. Their visible signs; 3. The thing signified; 4. And the union between the sign and the thing signified. We must now proceed to speak lastly,

#### FIFTH, Of the *Design and End* of the Sacraments.

I. As the sacraments are Divine institutions, the *glory of God* must be the grand end of their appointment and observance.

II. Subordinate to this great design of the sacraments, they are appropriated to various *other important ends*, to which we must now direct our attention.

1. Sacraments are principally adapted and intended to signify *spiritual things*. This is evident from the very use of *external signs* in the sacraments. These signs could not otherwise with any propriety be called "signs." They would, in the ordinances with which they are connected, not only be unmeaning, but serve to reduce the ordinances themselves to a puerile service unworthy of God as their author, and unworthy of the observance of the Church as being a religious society, if they did not as *tokens* signify to us Divine favor, and represent those grand objects which the Divine Word holds up to our view as objects of faith, and declares to be the "*media*" through which salvation flows.

But on this point further remarks are unnecessary, as it is

acknowledged by all that sacraments are *designed* to signify spiritual things; the Socinians being the only sect who reduce that signifying property of the sacraments very low, teaching that they merely denote certain moral and ecclesiastical relations to God, and serve to distinguish Christians from people of other religions. Every recorded word of the inspired writers relating to the sacraments refutes this doctrine; for when they are spoken of in Scripture, they are made to refer to the Saviour—to the forgiveness of sins—to a communion with the body and blood of Christ, more immediately than to any distinction of Christians as such.

I shall therefore only remark, that by the doctrine of transubstantiation, the Papists have destroyed the significant and sacramental character and use of the Lord's Supper; for, if the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of Christ, they can no longer be *signs* of that body and blood.

2. But sacraments are also designed to be *seals* of the privileges and blessings of the everlasting covenant. This doctrine, the Socinians, Papists and Mennonists oppose, on various grounds. But we prove that sacraments are *sealing* ordinances, by the following arguments, viz:

The apostle Paul expressly declares, "that *circumcision* was a seal of the righteousness of faith;" and if circumcision was such, then must baptism, which has come in the place of circumcision, be *also* such; and then too must the passover and the Lord's Supper, which are designed to confirm those already initiated visibly into the covenant by the former sacraments, be *also seals*. Under the New Testament, no one will teach that baptism has less power than had circumcision; or that the Lord's Supper is inferior to baptism, when Paul emphatically asks, "Is it not the communion of the body and blood of Christ?"

To invalidate the force of this argument as it rests upon the sealing character of circumcision, every argument that ingenuity could devise, has been brought forward by various opposing sects. It is argued that circumcision alone is said to be "a seal of the righteousness of faith." We answer:

Admitting this to be so, it is sufficient. Sacraments may vary in external signs and circumstances, but their nature and grand design are one and the same. Either Baptism and the Lord's Supper are no sacraments, or they must be sealing ordinances.

i. But it is not true that a sealing character is not ascribed in Scripture to the other sacraments. It may be that the term "seal," "*σφραγίς*," is not used in connection with either the Passover, Baptism, or the Lord's Supper; yet the inspired writers may and do assign to each of them that *sealing property* which circumcision had.

The *Passover* also had a sealing power, or the power of confirming, by a visible sign, what the Word of God declares. (Exod. xii. 11, 12, 13, compared with 1 Cor. x. 3, 4.)

*Baptism* has also a sealing character ascribed to it. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.)

And also the *Lord's Supper*. (1 Cor. x. 26.)

ii. But, say the Papists, "If all the sacraments are such *seals* for the confirmation of God's promises, then the sacraments would speak more clearly and forcibly than God's Word itself, to confirm faith, which, to say the least, would be very absurd." Answer:

(i.) God's Word is in itself sufficiently clear and strong; but the faith of his people is often weak, and requires to be aided; and it is in condescension to their weakness, and because they are here *in the body*, that he hath instituted the sacraments which, by visible signs, shall seal or confirm his revelations and promises.

(ii.) God's Word ought to be sufficient; but in condescension to the infirmities of his people, he hath *confirmed by his oath*: in like manner he may confirm his word by the sacraments, even as he confirmed his word to Gideon and many others, by miracles addressed to the senses of sight and touch.

(iii.) But the Papists forget that, according to our understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, it is "*the Word united with the element*, that constitutes a sacrament." Hence the sacraments cannot disparage the Word; but whilst they derive their very being and utility from it, serve in their turn to confirm the Word.

But an Anti-Pædobaptist writer here objects, "that our exposition of the text, which makes circumcision 'a seal' by which Abraham's faith was confirmed and strengthened, implies that Abraham's faith was weak, and needed strengthening; whereas his faith, before he was circumcised, was strong, so as to be a great faith." He adds, that it would also follow from the same exposition, "that all the circumcised were true believers. Children were circumcised on the eighth day, who had no faith: how then could circumcision be a seal to confirm their faith?" We answer:

*First.* That Abraham's faith required, however strong it might have been, continual grace, and every help that means could afford, to preserve and increase its strength. Its strength might be diminished, and its strength might be augmented. When God has in view to fulfil in the hearts of his people "all the pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power," he uses his Word and sacraments, and these are the means selected by infinite wisdom and goodness.

*Second.* In reply to the second article in the objection, we observe, that *all the circumcised* professed to be *believers*; and as such, circumcision was a confirmation to them of the rich privileges and blessings which they enjoyed in God's visible Church. But if the circumcised had not precious and living faith, such as Abraham had, then it is obvious that *circumcision* could not be to them "a seal of the righteousness of faith."

The unregenerate and impenitent in heart belonged to the "*κατατομη*," the concision, as Paul speaks, (Phil. iii. 2;) their unbelief could not destroy the proper character and design of the sacraments.

To which add the plain distinction which we have before made, that the sacraments do not signify and seal "to the seed according to the flesh," all those things which they signified and sealed to "the seed according to the promise;" though both seeds were, and always will be, in the covenant.

At this day, even among the Baptists, *two adult* persons, on the profession of faith, are baptized; but the one is regenerate in heart and the other unregenerate: does the sacrament which, as a sacrament, is *equally* administered to both, *seal* to both the actual forgiveness of their sins? By no means: to the one it is a "seal of the righteousness of faith;" to the other it *is not*.

Yet the unbelief and inward wickedness of the one, does not destroy the sacramental character and design of baptism; and this is well understood by the Baptists themselves: for if they baptize a person who proves to be impenitent and ungodly, they do not, when such a person comes afterwards to repentance, *rebaptize* him, knowing that the sacrament retained its proper character as a visible ordinance of God's house, though living faith might not exist in the heart of the person to whom it was administered.

iii. We proceed to the third part of the objection, namely:

“That children were circumcised on the eighth day, who had no faith: how then could circumcision be a seal to confirm their faith?” We answer:

*First.* That this reasoning proves too much; for it is as plainly declared, that “without faith it is impossible to please God,” as it is said, that circumcision is a “seal of the righteousness of faith:” but children have no faith, and therefore children cannot please God, and consequently must perish for ever. Yet,

*Second.* God “did establish his covenant” with children eight days old. (Gen. xvii. 7.) “His promise did extend to them.” (Acts ii.) Now, circumcision was a *seal* of that *covenant* and of that *promise*, made with the *children* of parents in the covenant.

This is therefore a very plain case. Let the adversaries of the truth ascertain in what respects God did establish his covenant with children; let them ascertain in what sense and in what respects God’s covenant and promise did extend to children: then, we say in answer, that in those very respects in which God did establish his covenant with children, and in those very respects in which his promise extended to children, in those respects circumcision could be, and actually was, *to children, a seal of that covenant and of its promise.*

The real difficulty in this Divine transaction in which children are concerned, you will on reflection discover to be, not in the fact that circumcision was applied as a *seal* of the covenant, but in the higher and stronger fact, that God *did establish his covenant with them*: for, if a covenant can be established with children, every one clearly perceives that a *seal* can be annexed to that covenant. If I can make an infant to hold property by testament, there can be no impropriety in affixing a *seal* to that testament for its confirmation. If a civil constitution will permit an infant son of a king to succeed his father on his decease, there can be no impropriety, as has often been done, to *crown* such an infant in his cradle, as a *visible sign and confirmation* of his succession to royal power.

Accordingly, it will also be perceived on a little reflection, that what the Baptists under the cover of that argument do really mean, is this *broad assertion*, I will not say *impious* one: that *as children cannot know, understand and believe, God cannot establish any covenant with them, and that it would be a foolish transaction, if he did so.*

To language of this import, we have no other reply than this: We shall not sit in judgment upon God's doings and laws. It is sufficient for us, if we know that God did establish his covenant with children in Abram's family. His doings are wise and good: we shall neither condemn nor attempt to rectify them, by a constitution of our own. Let me add,

*Third.* That God can and does apply to children, the infinite merits of the Saviour for their salvation. But children in the infancy of their existence do not know that Saviour, and cannot receive him or believe in his name. And how they can be saved by Christ, without knowing and receiving him, God has not seen fit to reveal. Nor has the same infinite Being revealed all the reasons why he was pleased to institute infant membership in his visible Church. Yet he has done it. He commanded Abraham to put on the child Isaac the very token of the covenant which Abraham carried upon his own body.

Having now proved that sacraments are *seals* as well as *signs*, we proceed to observe:

3. That a third subordinate end for which sacraments are instituted, is, *to distinguish the visible Church of God—the holy nation—from the unbelieving and uncovenanted world.*

(1.) This truth is obvious: for, if the Church be a visible religious society founded upon the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, *that visibility* of the Church as a distinct society, and separate from civil communities, or from the synagogues of Satan and temples of idolatry, and schools of philosophy, can be created and maintained only by certain laws and institutions of God. There are such ordinances; and among them we find the *sacraments* instituted for that very end. The sacraments show the relation which men sustain to the visible Church of God; they exhibit the professions which the mouth has made, perhaps, in private society; and they call for renewed professions of our faith, while by a participation of them, we *declare* what cannot be declared by merely hearing the Word and forbearing to oppose Christianity.

(2.) But this is further proved by what the sacraments *actually do*, when they are administered according to the will of God: for, they are not to be *administered to all*, like as the Word may be *dispensed to all*. There are laws which regulate their administra-

tion. The adult must separate himself in his religious sentiments from those who do not believe, he must profess repentance, before he can be baptized; the child must be born in the covenant and be federally holy before baptism can be administered to it; and as no one who was uncircumcised, so no one who is unbaptized, can be a member of the visible Church of God.

(3.) The ancient sacraments did distinguish the visible Church in connection with the Word and the other ordinances of religion. They were designed to raise up “a wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles.” So now, the sacraments are designed to distinguish the Church from other visible associations of men, either civil or religious.

4. But the sacraments have another end in view. They were instituted as those means by which believers shall be able to testify *their union and communion in the enjoyment of the same covenant blessings*. This Paul teaches, 1 Cor. xii. 13: “For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, [that is, the visible Church,] whether we be Jews or whether we be Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

But here *Socinus* himself meets us with his exposition, (de Baptis. c. viii.) He says, “that in the cited passage, *water baptism* is not meant, but the baptism of the Holy Ghost: for the preposition in the text is ‘*ἐν*’—‘*καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες,*’ etc.—in one Spirit we are all baptized into one body; a phrasology,” he says, “which always denotes the gift of the Spirit, as Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; John i. 33.” We answer:

(1.) Every lexicon will instruct us that the preposition “*ἐν*” is often used to signify “by,” as denoting the agency of another. (See John i. 4; Ephes. i. 4–7.)

(2.) The apostle speaks of what was well understood to be one of the ends of baptism among Christians. And,

(3.) Let it be observed, that the baptism of the Holy Ghost does not stand opposed to water baptism.

(4.) The Socinians, to serve a turn, speak of the Holy Ghost as an *agent*, when they do not believe in his *existence*, but convert him into an *attribute* or quality!

5. Another end: The sacraments were instituted also to bind the partakers of them to the practice of all the duties of the cov-

enant; they bring the members of the visible Church under all the obligations of revealed religion. This is so obvious from the very relations which the sacraments sustain, that I shall not dwell upon it, but proceed to state,

6. That the sacraments are not signs and seals of any particular promise made to a person *in his individual character*. Such promises God has made in past times, and confirmed them by visible signs: but sacraments do not refer to such extraordinary promises; they relate to the promises of the everlasting covenant, and to no other—promises which are given *to the whole visible Church*, and in which every believer has a common interest.

Hence it will follow, that the sacraments are not signs and seals of one particular grace only: the living coal which touched Isaiah's lips was a sign of this kind, and other such signs might be here mentioned; but the sacraments are signs of that grace in which the whole Church participates. Accordingly, sacraments are standing ordinances in the visible Church, to be observed by the members of that Church of every place, and of every generation.

III. Let us now inquire respecting the *number* of the sacraments.

1. Under the *ancient* dispensation of grace, there were two sacraments, and no more, viz: *Circumcision* and the *Passover*. This doctrine is not disputed; but it must be observed, that the Papists, while they create no opposition here, unite with some of the Baptists in lowering and destroying the proper character of circumcision and the passover.

The Popish writers teach, that these Divine institutions were not properly sacraments, but figures and mere signs of certain things. This error they support, in order to exalt the sacraments of the New Covenant, Baptism and the Supper, and be better able to engraft their corruptions upon them.

Some of the Baptists represent circumcision and the passover as having been a kind of national and carnal observances; and say, that if they were religious ordinances, they formed a part of the *ceremonial* law. Their design in this is obvious: for this doctrine would make what we denominate *infant church-membership* merely a national and civil affair.

2. Under the *New Testament* dispensation, there are two sacraments also, instituted to subserve the great ends which circumcision and the passover had in view when the latter should be abrogated. These two sacraments are, BAPTISM and THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To this doctrine, the Roman Catholics raise violent opposition: for they contend that the sacraments of the New Covenant are *seven* in number.

Here let me guard your minds by one observation: The word "sacraments" does not occur in Scripture; and it may, like the Greek word "*μυστηριον*," be applied to various things connected with the service of religion: and in this *loose sense* we concede that the word sacraments, like that of *regeneration*, was applied sometimes by ancient Christian writers. In our controversy with the Papists on the *number* of the sacraments, we must therefore first fix the particular *sense* in which the word *sacraments* is to be understood; and if it be understood to mean certain ordinances of religion, in which instituted visible signs and seals are employed to signify and confirm the truths and promises of God's covenant, then we affirm that there are but *two sacraments* divinely appointed to be observed by the members of the visible Church under the present dispensation of the covenant, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It is, however, indispensable to our argument, that we understand what those *five* additional institutions are, which the Papists are pleased to convert into sacraments.

(1.) The first is what they call *Confirmation*. By confirmation they mean the following rite: The bishop, after preparing an ointment which is called the "unction of chrism," by consecrating it, approaches those persons who have been baptized and are arrived at mature age, and who, after confession, desire to be confirmed, and proceeds to *anoint* them on the forehead, making therewith the sign of a cross, offering up certain prayers, and using these words: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The bishop then gives his peace to the person confirmed, with a slight box on the head, to signify to him that he must be prepared to endure persecutions.

This is confirmation; and this is one of the Popish sacraments. But it is not an ordinance of Divine institution, much less one of

the sacraments of the covenant. We read of no such rite in Scripture, but can easily perceive whence the spirit of superstition has derived it. The *sick* among the primitive Christians were sometimes anointed *with oil*, and the apostles sometimes laid their hands upon persons whom they baptized, in communicating to them the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now, the *mixture* of those two actions, relating to *two different objects*, is the invented sacrament of *confirmation*.

(2.) In addition to confirmation, the Papists have added to the sacraments what they call "*Penitence*;" which consists in confessing to a priest, in rendering the satisfaction required of the penitent, and in the priest's pronouncing the sentence of absolution. Now, in all this we do not perceive one distinguishing property of a sacrament. Besides, we find no authority in Scripture for that *auricular confession* which the Papists enjoin and practise; and while we acknowledge that ministers of the Word are in duty bound *to announce* the remission of sins to the penitent and believing, we deny that they are authorized *to absolve* any of the human race. The forgiveness of sins is the proper act and peculiar prerogative of God alone.

But are we not commanded, James v. 16, "to confess our faults one to another"? "This passage," says Bellarmine, (de Pœnit. l. 3,) "proves the sacrament of Penitence, and shows that it was instituted in the time of the apostles." We answer:

i. There is not a word here of auricular confession to a priest, nor of absolution following it.

ii. The inspired apostle speaks of the faults which appear in the conduct of Christians towards one another, and of their confessing such faults to one another. His words refer also to the acknowledgment of our infirmities and weaknesses in our social Christian intercourse, that we may receive from others direction, exhortation, and consolation.

3. Nor can we discover any attribute of a sacrament in that "*Extreme or last Unction*" which the Papists have added to the number of the sacraments. In performing this unction, the priest anoints with *consecrated oil* the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, reins, and feet of the sick, and says, "May God, by this holy unction and of his most pious mercy, pardon the sins thou hast committed, in seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting," etc.

It is obvious here that the corruptors of true religion have taken the miraculous cures performed in the primitive Church, and converted the circumstances of them into a sacrament. This could be done only in an age of great superstition and darkness, such as the Church lived to see after the age of Constantine, when the spirit of Paganism, no longer able to keep its own, stole into the courts of Zion, and sought to appropriate her ordinances.

If the Papists still perform the rites observed once in simply "anointing the sick with oil in the name of the Lord," we have a right to look for the *old miraculous effects* of this action; but we shall look in vain. If this extreme unction be a sacrament, it has lost its virtue. But were this unction followed by healing the body, still it would not be a sacrament: for,

(1.) The Saviour never instituted "anointing the body with oil," to be a sacrament.

(2.) The only passage to which the Catholics appeal for support, is James v. 14: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

Now, in this passage it is clear, first, that this anointing refers to the sick only, and not to all believers, and therefore it *cannot be a sacrament*; secondly, that it is used as a means to recover *bodily health*, and does not refer to the soul and its moral diseases to be healed by the grace of the Lord Jesus, and therefore, etc. Thirdly, the Papists contradict the example of the primitive elders: for they perform extreme unction *only to the dying*, as a preparation for death; whereas the apostle James says, "that the prayer of faith, with that anointing," shall raise the sick up.

4. Let me observe further, that it is evidently an abuse of the term sacrament, to apply it to the institution of *marriage*: for,

(1.) Marriage was an institution of God in Paradise, and cannot be a sign and seal of the grace of the Redeemer.

(2.) It is common to idolaters and infidels, as well as *Christians*.

(3.) Its great end is the propagation of the human kind, and the benefit of man in civil society; and,

(4.) It is never spoken of as being a sacrament in the Holy Scriptures.

But the apostle Paul says, (Ephes. vi. 31, 32:) "For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined

unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his Church." These are the passages on which the Papists rely to prove marriage a *sacrament*. "It is a sacrament," says Bellarmine, "for this is the meaning of the word 'μυστηριον,' in Ephes. vi." (Bellar. de Matrim. l. i. c. 2.) We answer:

i. Then the incarnation of Christ would also be a sacrament; for it is said (1 Tim. iii.) to be "a *great mystery*."

ii. Nay, Antichrist is also called "a *mystery*." (Rev. xvii. 7.)

iii. But in Ephes. vi. 32, the word "mystery" does not refer to marriage, but to the union of Christ and his Church, called elsewhere "a betrothing and a marriage," and of which the union between a man and his wife, created by marriage, was an image. Accordingly, the apostle is careful to add immediately, "I speak of Christ and his Church."

iv. If marriage be a sacrament, it must be observed by the members of the Church. Why then do not the Romish priests observe it?

v. We have before said that every mystery is not a sacrament.

It remains to be remarked,

5. That *Ministerial Order*, or the order of the gospel ministry, is also an institution of God; but it is not and cannot be a sacrament. Bellarmine relies on Ephes. iv. 11. But in this passage every one will see that not a syllable relates to a sacrament: the apostle speaks neither of signs nor things signified.

(1.) Sacraments are common to all the members of the Church; but is the ministry common to all believers?

(2.) The Papists besides, without authority, make this sacrament of order to consist of *orders* in the ministry unknown to the apostles, and of which not a word occurs in the Scriptures. Their fancied order does not include "apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers," but consists of *seven* orders: priests, deacons, subdeacons, acolyths, readers, exorcists, and ushers; while under the denomination of priest, they conceal archbishops, cardinals, patriarchs, and popes. Add to which, that in the collation of these orders, they have many foolish and superstitious rites.

I have now finished my view of the sacraments in general, and animadverted upon the *five sacraments* of Popish invention. From what has been said, it appears there were but *two sacraments* under

the ancient, and that there are but two sacraments under the new, dispensation, of Divine institution.

Before we come to the consideration of the New Testament sacraments, we must just glance at Circumcision and the Passover.

## LECTURE XVI.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

#### CIRCUMCISION—ITS ADMINISTRATION.

WE have proved that Circumcision and the Passover were *the two sacraments* under the Old Testament. It will now be necessary to state a few points of doctrine in relation to each of these ancient sacraments; and

#### FIRST, OF CIRCUMCISION.

As baptism has come in the place of circumcision, to answer more extensively in the visible Church now embracing all nations the same important ends, it is obvious that the doctrine of sacramental baptism cannot be well understood, without a correct understanding of the "covenant and of the sacrament of circumcision," which was the visible token of that covenant, and the seal of the righteousness of faith. Of the doctrine of the covenant of circumcision I have spoken elsewhere, and shall therefore confine your thoughts to the sacrament of circumcision, and speak of the covenant no farther than the doctrines and laws may serve to exhibit its sacrament in a clear light.

1. The *original terms* are, 1. מוֹלֶה, moolah, from מוּל, to cut off;
2. In the Greek, περιτομή.

(1.) Circumcision was instituted when Abram lived, and when God organized *the visible Church in his family*. (Gen. xvii. A. M. 2107; B. C. 1897.)

(2.) God instituted it. (Gen. xvii.; Acts vii.)

Without a Divine command, it is not probable that such a rite, so painful, so inconvenient, and in some cases so dangerous as well

as indecent, could have obtained among mankind, especially at a time when there was no regular priesthood, etc.

If Herodotus tells us, "that the Egyptians practised circumcision from a principle of cleanliness," we can judge of this statement by our knowledge of the fact, that men can be perfectly clean without circumcision. To which add, that people have the foreskin all the world over without inconvenience or contracting diseases thereby.

(3.) Abram was a distinguished saint, wealthy, and a prince, having a family composed of fifteen hundred or two thousand souls, when the visible Church was organized, and circumcision was instituted.

(4.) Abraham was ninety-nine years old at the time the covenant of circumcision was given him—Ishmael thirteen years of age.

2. Circumcision, as an *external or visible sign*, etc.

(1.) The visible sign in circumcision was, partly, the foreskin of the male organ of generation, and partly the ceremony of cutting it off.

(2.) Why God selected that part of the human body to be the visible sign of the great Abrahamic covenant, he has not expressly told us. The reasons usually assigned are,

i. To hold up human depravity, and the necessity of being delivered from it. The foreskin belongs to the instrument of generation, and depravity is transmitted by natural generation. Hence the natural enmity of the human heart is called in Scripture, an "uncircumcised heart;" and regeneration is denominated the "circumcision of the heart."

ii. Secondly, to try the faith and obedience of his people.

iii. Thirdly, to confound the wisdom of the flesh, says Witsius, whom read.

(3.) In cutting off the foreskin, *any sharp instrument* was used—instruments of iron, stone, glass, wood; generally of iron, says Buxtorff.

3. The *thing signified* thereby.

The thing signified principally by the external sign in circumcision, was, the *grace* of the covenant; and therefore, by sacramental phraseology, the *sign* is called the covenant itself. (Gen. xvii. 10–13.)

i. That grace is various. It was manifested in the organization of the visible Church, as a society separate from the world, sus-

taining special relations to God, and blessed with special privileges and blessings. This separation *was signified by circumcision*, as it separated the circumcised children of Abraham from those not in the covenant: it expressed that they were a "chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people."

ii. That grace operated in the gift, and would appear in the manifestation of the "seed of the woman, and in the seed of Abram," "which is Christ," in whom all nations should be blessed. The visible sign therefore in circumcision, as it comprehended the infliction of pain and the shedding of blood, held up to view, symbolically, the procuring cause of our redemption, the atoning sufferings and crucifixion of the Saviour who should appear in this world, and deliver sinners out of the pit, "by the blood of the covenant."

iii. That grace operated also in some instances, according to the purpose of God, to produce *regeneration and sanctification*; and this also was signified by the visible sign in circumcision. The "foreskin" denoted "the depravity of the whole man," and therefore is frequently called in Scripture, "the foreskin of the heart;" and the cutting away of the foreskin signified the removal of the heart of stone, and destruction of the old man by regeneration and progressive sanctification.

iv. That grace operated to bring every circumcised person near to Abraham's God, as the God of salvation, affording to such the various means of grace—the oracles, the covenants, the promises of God, and visible communion with that people upon whom alone the dew of heavenly grace descended. The enjoyment of these rich mercies, the proper tendencies of which could be set aside only by an evil heart of unbelief, the rite of circumcision both *signified and sealed*.

#### 4. Circumcision as a *seal*.

Besides signifying the important things just mentioned, the sacrament of circumcision also *sealed* to the believer, pardoning mercy, peace with God, and everlasting life—in a word, all the Divine promises of grace and glory, as blessings imparted on account of the righteousness of faith, or in other terms, on account of the righteousness of the law (for the Supreme Being, from the very perfection of his nature, cannot save a sinner in violation of his own law) procured by the incarnate Son of God, and carried to

the account of the sinner who believes, by Him who justifieth the ungodly. This we are taught by the apostle Paul, Rom. iv. 11: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might *be imputed* unto them *also*." These words require some remarks:

(1.) The apostle tells us that Abram had precious faith, before he received circumcision.

(2.) And Moses and Paul tell us, that "this faith was counted unto him for righteousness." Now faith could not, *in itself*, be considered "as the righteousness of the law," or that rectitude in principle and in practice which the moral law requires of intelligent creatures: for, in the first place, such it is not in truth; and the judgment of Jehovah is always according to truth. Secondly, such it cannot be from its very nature. Thirdly, were Jehovah to substitute "faith" in his requirements, "for the righteousness of his law," or were to accept it *as such*, the *moral law would be repealed*; its perfection and its authority would be destroyed. And, fourthly, if faith, which is the *act* and work of man, be the *righteousness* which justifies the sinner, then is salvation "by works."

(3.) It follows therefore that Abram's faith must have acted upon the testimony of God in relation to the Messiah, who is the author of redemption, and Jehovah our righteousness; and that on receiving that Saviour, the righteousness or merits of that Saviour was *imputed* to him.

(4.) This is God's method of saving sinners, as Paul fully explains in Romans; and to Abraham, this way of salvation was revealed: he *believed* and obtained pardon, peace, and promises of grace and eternal glory.

We now proceed to observe, that God gave Abraham to know, before he was circumcised, that on his believing, his sins were pardoned, and he should be saved for the sake of the righteousness of the Saviour. Years then rolled away, during which Abram's faith was variously tried. At length, God saw fit to organize a visible Church in Abram's family. He came and gave to that patriarch "the covenant of circumcision:" that covenant had a

visible sign and seal annexed to its visible or ecclesiastical administration; it was circumcision, and this circumcision was *a visible seal or confirmation* to Abraham, of the determination of Jehovah to pardon sinners for the Messiah's sake, who should come and remove all law obstacles out of the way of his people's salvation, of Abraham's actual justification and pardon, and of his being constituted an heir of promise and an heir of eternal glory. Such is the meaning of the apostle's words, "and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of righteousness of *faith*, which he had, yet being uncircumcised."

Against the *two* doctrines so plainly taught by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, viz: first, that of justification by faith without works, for the righteousness' sake of Christ; and, second, that of circumcision being not merely a sign, but also a *seal* of the righteousness of faith, numerous foes have drawn their pens. Some of their objections we have in former lectures considered and answered; but there are other objections which ought to be attended to and answered in this place.

*First.* A Socinian writer says, "that Abraham under the Old Testament being justified by faith, was something peculiar to him. The ordinary method of the Supreme Being was, to demand a righteousness by works from man, and to justify accordingly." We answer:

1. That if justification by faith was a blessing peculiar to Abraham, then the instance of the manner in which he was justified, could not have a place in the apostle's argument, unless he were a fool or a madman. The apostle is showing on what grounds the justification of those who are saved, rests, and what is the procuring cause of pardon and eternal life: he is establishing a general fact in the dispensation of saving mercy. Now to bring up what was peculiar to one man, is to talk nonsense. Just as well may a writer undertake to prove the right of every American citizen to a township of land, by a grant which was peculiar to La Fayette. But Paul was no Socinian.

2. The apostle is therefore careful to anticipate this very objection in the context, and in the succeeding verses. And his main proposition is, that man, whether Jew or Gentile, cannot be justified *by works*. If any should say, a pious man who keeps the

law may be justified by works, the apostle meets this thought, by adducing Abraham, whose faith and piety were eminent, and proves that he was justified by faith without works.

*Second.* Another Socinian objects: "The law was given after the times of Abraham; and the *law* does not require faith for justification, but grants justification on condition of works alone; and the law regulated matters of religion, throughout the Mosaic economy." We answer:

1. If by the "*law*" our adversaries mean the moral law *alone*, with its precepts and its penalty, unhappy would have been the condition of the Jews. Not one of them would have been justified.

2. But the moral law existed and was in full force as the perfect rule of a rational creature's obedience to his Creator, in the days of Abraham. In the time of Moses, its precepts were promulgated in awful circumstances, were reduced to writing, and were rendered subservient to the gospel promise, or the scheme of redemption. Accordingly the apostle says, (Gal. iii. 17 :) "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, [and it was principally by circumcision that that confirmation or sealing of the covenant was made,] the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, *cannot disannul*, that it should make the promise of none effect."

3. But again: The law was not given by Moses, to be the condition of a sinner's justification; and therefore, in addition to the moral law, the Mosaic code contained other laws, which exhibited the Saviour, or the promise of grace: and to this exhibition of the gospel promise, even the moral law was subservient; for it was a "school-master, to bring the Israelites to Christ." See especially Rom. x. 4: "Christ is the great end of the law-givings, or law by Moses, for righteousness, to every one that believeth."

*Third.* We now turn to consider some of the objections brought against the second article of our doctrine, that circumcision was not a sign only, but also a *seal*.

1. A Socinian writer says: "Circumcision was given to Abraham merely as a testimony that the pious life he had lived before, and the faith he had exercised, were pleasing to God." We answer:

(1.) Circumcision is not described as being a *seal* to Abraham's godliness, but a *seal of the covenant*. (Gen. xvii.) Hence it is called the covenant; and in observing circumcision, Abraham is

said to keep God's covenant. "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised." How could circumcision be a proof that God approved the faith and piety of every man child?

(2.) A *seal* of the covenant is designed to confirm and strengthen faith, not to testify that faith is already strong.

2. Another Socinian writer (Slichtingius, *Disp. de Bapt.*) says: "The word 'seal' does not prove your doctrine: for all seals have not a confirming power; often is a seal nothing more than a token by which one thing is distinguished from another: so here by circumcision, nothing more was designed than to distinguish Abraham and his seed from all other people." We answer:

(1.) The apostle gives the meaning of the term "seal," when he says that "the sign of circumcision was a seal," not of national distinction, but "of the righteousness of faith;" and this cannot, in the sight of men, distinguish one people from another.

(2.) But it cannot be proved that the common meaning of seal, is a sign of distinction. The other sense for which we contend is evident. (1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 19; Ephes. i. 13, iv. 30.) In the commerce of life, a *seal* confirms and empowers. (1 Kings xxi. 8; Esth. iii. 10, viii. 10.) When letters of deliverance and mercy to the Jews were written in Ahasuerus' name, "they were sealed with the king's ring."

(3.) We grant that circumcision was designed to separate the visible Church (including Abraham's seed and other members) from other societies; but in addition to this, it had a sealing power.

3. I shall here answer but one objection more. It is that of Episcopius, the leader of the Arminians, after the death of Van Harmin. He says: "It was differently situated with Abraham, from children. He believed; and circumcision was to him a seal of the righteousness which he had acquired by faith: this cannot be said of children, much less of all circumcised children." To which we reply:

(1.) God's covenant embraced children, and circumcision was a sign and seal of that covenant: hence, in the administration of this sacrament, Jehovah made no difference between Abraham and the children of his household. (Gen. xvii. 7, 9-13.)

(2.) Faith is not the duty of infants, and their standing in God's covenant did not depend upon the exercise of faith; and therefore they were circumcised, because God commanded it, and because they were born in the covenant, which had a visible administration: hence they could receive the sign and seal of that covenant. Jehovah by this sign and seal declared that he was the *infant Isaac's* God, in a special covenant of his own giving, as well as Abraham's God by the same covenant.

5. *Union or agreement* of the signs, with the thing signified.

The agreement of the sign with the thing signified in circumcision, is sufficiently obvious from what has just been said. I hasten therefore to inquire, *to whom* the sacrament of circumcision was to be administered, according to the command and the laws of the Abrahamic covenant?

6. Those to whom circumcision was to be administered according to the will of God, expressed clearly in giving to Abraham "the covenant of circumcision," were adults and their children.

(1.) *Adults* in Abraham's family, professing the true religion. Also, those *adults* who once did not belong to the visible Church, on their professing to renounce every false way, to believe the Word of God, to exercise repentance, and to acknowledge that the obligations of revealed religion were upon them, were to be received into the covenant by circumcision, and to be accounted members of the visible Church of God.

i. When God gave the covenant, he commanded Abraham to circumcise himself and all the male adults in his large and princely household. Gen. xvii. 23: "And Abraham took every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the self-same day, as God had said unto him."

These adults were not the children and kindred of Abraham; they were men-servants who were bought with his money, and born in his house, and drawn from various nations and places into his domestic establishment.

Abraham had travelled much; his wealth was great, and his family was large, composed of a great variety of people. The natural consequence was, that as any of them went from thence, they carried whatever knowledge of divine truth and religious institutions they had acquired there into their own houses and countries, or wheresoever the providence of God removed them.

Here then we discover means for the spread of true religion among the nations, as Abraham had so many hundreds of servants, who were circumcised in his house before his death, and commanded to walk in the ways of the Lord. Here we can trace the origin of circumcision among other nations, and easily account for those variations in religious knowledge and observance.

ii. This command of God to apply the seal of the covenant of circumcision to all the males in Abraham's large family, clearly expressed the Divine will respecting those persons who should be disposed "to join themselves unto the Lord" in subsequent ages, though such persons were not the natural descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These patriarchs were constantly acquiring new servants, as their former ones died or saw fit to move away; and these new servants, when they embraced the true religion, were received into the covenant and visible Church by circumcision. Accordingly, every male in Jacob's household was circumcised. This fact is plainly stated in Gen. xxxiv. 15-22, where the sons of Jacob, in dealing with the prince and people of Shechem, said, "But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;" the prince therefore said to his people, "Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised." This extent of circumcision was required by the law. Gen. xvii. 14: "And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant."

iii. The door of Zion was kept open for the admittance of strangers: the practice among the patriarchs proved this, and the Divine law enacted that the pious stranger should be received. Exod. xii. 48: "When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover unto the Lord, let *all his males* be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it, and he shall be as one born in the land."

In conformity with this practice and law, the ancient Church invariably acted. She had her converts from the heathen nations. Hence the Jewish doctors speak of the "proselytes of the gate," who were under examination, and of the proselytes of righteousness, who were admitted fully by circumcision. But on their admission, all their male children must be circumcised. (Exod. xii. 48.)

(2.) *Infants.*

The covenant of circumcision embraced, therefore, not only adults, but the infant children of circumcised adults, and constituted the latter as well as the former, members of the visible Church of God.

*First.* I shall not detain you with the Scripture proofs that God commanded Abraham to circumcise *the children* of his household; thereby explaining *whom* he meant by the "seed" with whom the covenant was made, and enacting infant membership, as an existing relation both to himself and to his visible Church. (See Gen. xvii.) I shall not state what Abraham did in obedience to this express command of God, and with a thankful heart. He certainly did not feel himself at liberty to withhold the sign of circumcision from infants, from the consideration that infants could not understand the nature and design of the sacrament, that infants could not repent and believe, and therefore could not comply with the terms of the covenant. Abraham knew his duty: he therefore did apply the sign of the covenant agreeably to the will of Him "who gave that covenant," to his son Ishmael, to his infant child Isaac, and to the male children in his family. Nor shall I state the uniform practice of the ancient Church down to the introduction of the New Testament dispensation. She regarded the children of her visible members as being born in the covenant, and therefore circumcised them. Even in Egypt they were circumcised; and at no time were children left uncircumcised, but during the journeyings of the visible Church in the deserts of Arabia. This the sacred historian carefully notes. Josh. v. 5: "Now all the people that came out (of Egypt) were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised." But no sooner had they passed over Jordan, than God commanded Joshua to circumcise all the people. (Vs. 7, 8.)

*Second.* But it is not denied that infants under the ancient dispensation *were comprehended* in the Abrahamic covenant, and that they received the sacrament of circumcision. "And God said, He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, *every man child in your generation*, he that is born in the house or bought with money of any stranger which is not of thy seed." I hasten therefore to say, that infants were ordinarily circumcised on the

eighth day after their birth; though the birth might be at the conclusion of the first of the eight days, and the circumcision at the beginning of the last. Parts of days were accounted as being whole days.

Why God selected the eighth day—why not an earlier or later day—Witsius will instruct you. (See Levit. xii. 2, 3.) His law teaches us plainly, first, that the sacrament was not essential to salvation; second, that the sacrament was however an important ordinance; third, that infants of believers were God's children from the birth, (Ezek. xvi. 20, 21;) and fourth, that infants were defiled with original sin.

*Third.* The *time* for administering circumcision to *adults*, was not determined by the Divine law. They might be circumcised on any day, even on the Sabbath-day. John vii.: "Ye on the Sabbath circumcise a man," etc. This shows that circumcision was a religious ordinance, and connected with the holy worship of God.

*Fourth.* Having shown that circumcision was by Divine command administered to *infants* as well as *adults* in the visible Church of God, we here perceive the existence of *infant membership* established in that Church. This is an important fact in the history of the Divine dispensations, and a very remarkable law among the laws of God; for, whether baptism has come in the place of circumcision or not, two results of great moment follow:

1. The first is, that all the ordinary objections to infant baptism in the Christian Church—objections which are founded upon the natural incapacity of infants to understand the Word; to know the nature and design of baptism; to apprehend and feel its obligations; to make voluntary engagements to perform the duties of the covenant; objections, too, which in most cases weigh upon uninformed minds, and dispose them to unite with the Anti-Pædobaptists, apply with all their force against *the ancient law of God* requiring the circumcision of infants. What are those objections? They are usually expressed by the Baptists in such language as the following: "The gospel requires sinners to repent and believe. Baptism requires a knowledge of that gospel, and a previous profession of repentance and faith: it binds to duties required in the Word. Now, what does a helpless infant know about God and religion, in its obligations and duties? The infant

knows no more of Christ 'than the kittens about the house:' it has no will—no religious exercise—no rational thoughts. Even when you are administering baptism, the child does not know what you are doing; it makes no engagements of any kind; it usually cries, from painful feelings created by your sprinkling cold water in its face. How absurd then is it to administer such a solemn ordinance upon such a subject; how foolish, how ridiculous is it to baptize a child!"

Now, if there be an argument in such language, it operates in all its force against the *circumcision* of infants. Circumcision was a religious ordinance. The Word of God required in Abraham's day faith and repentance to salvation. Circumcision bound the circumcised to keep the whole law. (Gal. v. 3.) It being then obvious, that circumcision was a holy ordinance; that it derived its being from the *Word of God*, and stood connected with the obligations and requirements of revealed religion, may it not be assailed when administered to infants, in language exactly similar to that which exhibits the popular argument against *infant baptism*? May it not be said, How absurd was it to *circumcise children*? What did Isaac, when eight days old, know about God and religion? How could he enter into covenant with God, when he had no rational thought, no sense of moral obligation, and even when he felt the pain of circumcision, knew not what caused the pain, and for what purpose it was inflicted? Can any thing be conceived more ridiculous than binding an infant in this manner, without its knowledge and consent, to the duties of the covenant?

Hence it will be perceived, that the objections which the Baptists usually bring against infant baptism on the ground of the natural incapacity of infants, pass beyond that ordinance, and strike, *with an impious hand*, the acknowledged doings of the Almighty in ages past. Those objections charge God with *folly*: they stamp upon his law given to Abraham the marks of absurdity and injustice. Nor is the blasphemy thus spoken, nor the stain thus fixed upon the glorious character, work, and law of Jehovah, in any measure removed by the circumstance that the law of circumcision is *now* abrogated, and that we live under a changed dispensation. He who says that God was *a fool* in Abraham's day, can have very little respect for the Divine character now.

2. I shall not enlarge here, but proceed to say, that the second result of the establishment of infant church-membership by the Abrahamic covenant is this: *that infant church-membership remains, so long as the covenant of which it is a law, a privilege and a blessing, continues in force, unless it be removed by an express law of God.*

Here then it may be asked, first: Does not *the change* in the dispensation, of itself, repeal the law of infant church-membership? No, it cannot, without an express law of God: for it is a privilege and blessing granted to the visible Church by an "everlasting covenant," and which may be as fully and easily enjoyed under the present dispensation as under a former. Had infant church-membership borne a *typical* character, or did it belong to the Sinaitic covenant and ceremonial code, it would then have been repealed by the change of dispensation; but it had no typical character, it did not belong to the Sinaitic covenant, and it was no part of the ceremonial law. This the apostle is careful in stating. Gal. iii. 17: "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."

The coming of the Saviour in the flesh, and the finishing of the work of atonement by the shedding of his precious blood, would require a *change in the visible sign and seal* connected with infant church-membership; but that does not affect the privilege and blessing itself: especially, if *another* visible sign and seal be introduced which has the same character, and is capable of being applied to infants as well as adults.

Besides, the new dispensation, as the Spirit of God foretold by the prophets, and actually realized when the time came, was to be far richer to the Church in grace of every kind. Her privileges and blessings were to be augmented, and not diminished. Hence the change of dispensation could not, *of itself*, destroy infant church-membership.

Accordingly, the Saviour, with a view to this fact, said of little children, "of such is the kingdom of heaven;" or in other words, that the New Testament Church would comprehend children. And his apostle Peter, after his ascension, expressly declared that the covenant, with its promises, did possess the very exten-

sion which it had under the ancient dispensation: "For the promise is unto you and your children," etc. But the answer to this first question will, in part, be given to the second, which we are now prepared to state.

It may be asked: "Did not the abrogation of circumcision destroy the right of infant church-membership, and repeal the law which enacted its existence in the visible Church?"

We answer: By no means; if, upon the abrogation of circumcision, for obvious reasons, under the new dispensation, *another sacrament, or visible sign of the same covenant*, be instituted to supply in the Church the place of circumcision: for this substantial reason forms here an invincible argument, that infant church-membership did not depend upon the visible sign of the Abrahamic covenant for its existence and duration, but upon the *will* of God who gave the covenant to Abraham in his representative character, and upon the perpetuity of the covenant itself. He who gave the covenant, may alter its signs and seals, but the covenant itself remains until it be disannulled by an express law.

To render our answer more full and decisive of the question, several facts must here be stated and proved, viz:

*First.* That though the visible sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant be changed, yet that covenant has still its visible sign and seal *in another sacrament* which can be administered to infants, and by which infant church-membership can be expressed, recognized and confirmed. I need not tell you, that this sacrament of Divine institution under the New Testament dispensation is, Baptism. Nor is it necessary to observe here, that the visible sign in baptism can be applied just as well as the sign of circumcision could be fixed to the bodies of infants. Nay, it admits of a *more extended* application to these very subjects than the sign in circumcision: for the latter was limited to male infants; but the former, to wit, water in baptism, can be applied to infants of *both sexes*, and thus correspond better with the extensive grace and superior blessings of the New Testament dispensation.

*Second.* There is, then, nothing in the new sacrament of baptism which renders the application of its visible sign to infants more difficult and less seemly than the circumcision of infants. This being granted, we proceed to observe, that the sacrament of bap-

tism is acknowledged to be the sacrament of *visible initiation* into the visible Church. No unbaptized person is to be considered a member of the visible Church, or permitted to partake of the Supper. Now, whether baptism has come into the place of circumcision or not, we keep at present out of view, and proceed to observe that circumcision was the sacrament of initiation under the ancient economy, and that no person was accounted a member of the visible Church of the Old Testament, or could partake of the passover, who was uncircumcised. Baptism then occupies, as a sacrament of initiation, the very character and place of circumcision, which has been abrogated.

Hence it appears, that infant church-membership *cannot cease*, because there is no sacrament instituted which can be administered to infants, or which has the same initiatory character that the sacrament of circumcision had.

"We acknowledge," say the Baptists, "that circumcision and baptism are sacraments of initiation; but this circumstance does not prove that *infants* are to be initiated at all."

Answer: We have no where said *it does*. What we have in view here is, to prove that *if* infant church-membership exists, there is now in the visible Church a sacrament just as well adapted to *recognize and confirm* that relation of infants to the visible Church, as there ever was. Had there not been instituted a sacrament (in the absence of circumcision) of initiation, capable of being administered to infant members, the Baptists might have argued very forcibly that God had repealed the law of infant church-membership, for there was no sacrament to signify and seal the covenant to infants. But now that argument has no place whatever: and the existence of such a sacrament as baptism, which with more ease and safety can be administered to infants, affords *presumptive* evidence that the Divine law of infant church-membership has not been repealed.

*Third.* But while on this subject, we advance a step further, and affirm, that the Scriptures teach that *baptism has been instituted to occupy, as a sacramental sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant, the place of circumcision*. Thus, Col. ii. 11, 12, 13: "in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen

with him through the faith of the operation of God," etc.\* Now, we argue from these words of the apostle Paul, that the thing signified by the sacrament of baptism is the same as that signified by the sacrament of circumcision. For,

1. The apostle called those believers the *circumcised*, not because they had received circumcision in the flesh, but because they were "buried with Christ in baptism." Hence,

2. We draw the conclusion, that the sacramental character and use of circumcision *is now supplied by baptism*; so that if circumcision be abrogated, baptism has been instituted in its place.

Against this doctrine, numerous enemies have drawn their bows with all the strength their talents could supply. Their objections must here be attended to, and answered.

1. A Baptist writer says: "If baptism were come in the place of circumcision, then the baptized would be under obligation to keep the ceremonial law; (Gal. v. 3;) then would we have to baptize on the eighth day; and then must baptism be limited to male children."

Answer: This objection is certainly very weak; for it involves the absurd principle that one sacrament cannot be abrogated, and another be instituted to supply its place in answering its grand design, unless all the circumstances of both were made exactly alike; a requisition that would be impossible, if there was a change in the dispensation. This admitted, and it follows,

(1.) That the Lord's Supper has not come in the place of the passover. But, to reply to some other points in the objection, we observe,

(2.) That circumcision placed the circumcised under the obli-

\* Justin Martyr (Quæst. ad Orthod. p. 102) asks, "Why, if circumcision were a good thing, we do not use it as well as the Jews did?" He answers: "We are circumcised by baptism with Christ's circumcision." And he cites this text to prove it, "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision.

1. Literally, Christ was circumcised; but,

2. The Colossians could not be circumcised with this circumcision.

3. Their circumcision was "being buried with Christ by baptism."

The Christian Fathers so understood it. Hear Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea: "A Jew because of the threatening, that every soul that is not circumcised the eighth day shall be cut off from his people, shall not delay circumcision; and dost thou put off the circumcision made without hands in putting off the flesh, which is performed in baptism?" etc.

gations of revealed religion. "Walk before me," said God to Abraham, "and be thou perfect," etc. (Gen. xvii.) When circumcision was instituted, Abraham was not bound to keep "the ceremonial law," for that law was not yet in existence: hence the observance of the ceremonial law was not essential to circumcision—much less can it be to baptism, when God has *actually repealed* the ceremonial law; yet the obligation still remains on the baptized in full force, "Walk before me," etc.

(3.) Again: The *eighth day* was selected for circumcision, that its administration might not militate against another Divine law, under which children were considered "unclean" until the eighth day; but that law God has now set aside.

(4.) Women and female infants were physically incapable of receiving the sign of circumcision, but there is no corporeal disqualification for baptism.

Hereafter, I shall show that the females were accounted "circumcised," from the relation which they sustained to circumcised males. I shall now attend,

2. To another objection: "Paul, in Col. ii. 11, 12, 13, shows that external circumcision signified 'the spiritual circumcision of the heart,' and it is of the latter that he here speaks: hence it is not baptism, but spiritual circumcision, that is come in the place of external circumcision." We answer:

(1.) Then there could have been no spiritual circumcision or regeneration under the Old Testament, which is contrary to the Word of God, and the experience of his redeemed.

(2.) Whoever attends to the passages under consideration in their context, will find that the apostle has in view to teach that the believing Colossians had no need of external circumcision, for they had the thing signified, which was sealed now by baptism.

We have now prepared the way to answer more directly the question proposed, by proving the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant; but this must be left to a future lecture.

## LECTURE XVII.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

#### PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT—INFANT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP— CIRCUMCISION—BAPTISM.

WE were employed, in the preceding lecture, with the consideration of this question: "Did not the abrogation of circumcision destroy the right of infant church-membership, and repeal the law which enacted its existence in the visible Church?"

We answered promptly, that it *did not*; provided that, on the abrogation of circumcision, another sacrament of the same covenant, to supply the place of circumcision, has been instituted: for the right of infant church-membership did not *depend on the visible sign* of the Abrahamic covenant, but derived its existence from the covenant itself; and that, if the covenant remains when circumcision is abrogated, then the right of infant church-membership also remains, and is not destroyed.

From this answer, it will appear that two things were to be proved, viz: First, that another sacrament, on the abrogation of circumcision, has been instituted to supply its place; and our proof of this fact we immediately exhibited at the close of the last lecture: hence we are prepared to prove now the second fact, on which our answer to that question materially depends, viz: that though circumcision be abrogated, the covenant of which it was the external sacramental sign, *is not set aside by any act, law, or dispensation of God*, but exists in its full force and virtue; and hence,

#### THE PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

In another place we enumerated the properties of the Abrahamic

covenant, and spoke of its great design or end. All that was then said, and which we shall not here repeat, went directly to prove the perpetuity of that covenant. Let it then suffice to exhibit the several arguments which sustain our doctrine, in as brief a manner as possible.

I. The Abrahamic covenant of circumcision was the covenant by which God was pleased to *organize* his visible Church in this world. The visible Church is still in existence, and shall continue in existence down to the end of the world; but abrogate and destroy the Abrahamic covenant, and you destroy "the great charter," as one calls it, "of the privileges, blessings, and hopes of the Church." "Unlike to human compacts and human laws, this covenant still possesses all its force and virtue, maintaining the visible Church in existence, and extending its blessings to the nations of the earth." (See Janeway's Letters, and Mason's Essays.)

II. Take a second argument: If the covenant made with Abraham as the representative of all who believe, were no longer in existence and force, it must have been set aside by the introduction of the New Testament dispensation, which dispensation is called by the apostle Paul "*the new covenant.*" We know of no other event, no other change, that could have operated on the Abrahamic covenant, to disannul it. But we are expressly told, that the new dispensation introduced by the incarnate Son of God, *was designed to give extension to the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and to fulfil its promises.* "That the blessings of faithful Abraham should come unto the Gentiles through faith," God had promised to Abraham that in *his seed*, which is Christ, "all the families of the earth should be blessed." The Seed came: the blessings are conveyed unto the Gentiles: every enlargement of the Church among the heathen, is but a fulfilment of the promises of the Abrahamic covenant. The covenant therefore exists; and its existence gives being, virtue, and glory to its promises. Nor shall it cease to exist, until the whole earth be enlightened and blessed, and all the kindreds of the people shall see the salvation of God.

But here it may be objected: "Does not Paul tell us that Christ 'is the Mediator of a better covenant;' meaning the New Covenant or dispensation, which was established upon better promises?"

Is not then the covenant of circumcision superseded by this new and better covenant?" We answer:

1. It is often said by the Baptists, You talk of circumcision and the old covenant; but this is all done away with by the new and better covenant, established upon better promises. But in so speaking, they artfully throw a veil over important facts; for,

2. The apostle Paul, in Heb. viii. and ix., speaks of a "first covenant," and a "better covenant;" the latter of which he sets up in contrast with the former. Every thing, therefore, here depends upon knowing what covenant the apostle meant by "the first covenant." Did he mean the covenant of circumcision? Not at all: he had no design to place "the New Covenant" or New Testament dispensation in opposition to the covenant of circumcision; for,

3. He is careful to tell us *what particular covenant* he did denominate "the first covenant." It was that covenant, he tells us, (Heb. ix. 1, 2,) "which had also ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary." "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary: for there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick and the table and shew-bread, which is called the sanctuary," etc. Verse 6: "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, or first chamber of the tabernacle, etc.; but into the second apartment went the high priest alone." It was then the *Sinaitic* covenant, and no other, that the apostle calls the "first covenant;" that covenant which had a mediator, and that mediator Moses. Verse 11, in opposition to this first covenant, he places the *second*: "When Christ, being come a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of bulls and goats, but by his own blood, he entered," etc. Verse 15: "For this cause, he is the Mediator of the New Testament," etc.

4. The objection, therefore, has no force: the apostle speaks not of the *disannulling* of the Abrahamic covenant, but altogether of another covenant. It remains, therefore, to be observed here, that if the Sinaitic covenant was compatible with the existence of the Abrahamic covenant, no one will deny that the new dispensation or second covenant must also be compatible with the existence of

the Abrahamic covenant; for the New Testament accords better in its simplicity with the times of Abraham than the Mosaic economy did.\*

III. But to proceed with a third proof of the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, we observe, that Jehovah himself has denominated this covenant "an *everlasting covenant*," and explained the meaning of the term "everlasting," by declaring, first, that he made this covenant with Abraham and with his seed, *in their generations*, indefinitely: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, *in their generations*, for an *everlasting covenant*," (Gen. xvii. 7;) and secondly, by declaring, at the very time when the Jews were ready to be thrust out of the vineyard as unfaithful keepers and dressers of it, that the covenant should be made with the Gentiles who should believe the gospel: so that "the blessings of faithful Abraham should come unto the Gentiles through faith." Mark the declaration of God by Peter, when the New Testament dispensation opened: "For the promise," said he to the Jews, "is unto you and to your children;" but now it is no longer to be confined to you, but the promise is also "to all that are afar off;" a well-known phrase by which the Gentiles are meant; "even to" as many of those Gentiles as the Lord our God shall at any time hereafter "call" by his gospel, and render obedient to the faith. (Acts ii. 39.)

We shall not stop to inquire what kind of children are here meant, in answer to the strange comments of the Baptists on this passage; this shall be done elsewhere; but note only that it is acknowledged that the promise is declared to extend to the Gentiles called in their generations. These facts, just stated, obviate at once the exception that might be taken to our sense of the word "everlasting," by saying that, in Scripture, it is often used to denote a *limited duration*. So it is: but it must be added, that it is also employed to signify an *unlimited duration*. Now, in which of

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\* Eusebius, delivering the sentiments of the early Christians, refers to this fact: "They (in the patriarchal age of the Church) did not abstain from certain foods, nor regard other injunctions which Moses subsequently delivered; nor do we. The first and most ancient religion known, that of those pious men connected with Abram, is the very religion lately announced to all, in the doctrines of Christ." "The course of piety which was pursued by Abram, has appeared thus far cultivated only by Christians."

these *two senses* the word “everlasting” is applied by Jehovah to his covenant, those facts plainly show.

IV. Another proof of the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, we find in the facts which the apostle Paul evidently designed to express by the images of the *olive-tree*, of the *heir*, and of the *woman*, which he employs in Rom. xi. ; in Gal. iv. ; in Rom. vii.

1. The “olive-tree” was planted by virtue of the covenant of circumcision which God gave to Abram, in the family of that patriarch: hence the Jews became its “natural branches.” But when these “natural branches were broken off,” was the *trunk* destroyed? No; it remained, and received, by engrafting, the wild olive’s branches, that is to say, the Gentile believers. The olive-tree is then in existence, with its acquired branches, at this day; and its very existence proves that the covenant of God with Abraham is still in force. So also,

2. The child or heir, in Gal. iv., born in Abraham’s family, existed under the Sinaitic covenant, by which it was placed, as a wild and headstrong youth, “under tutors and governors, until the time appointed by the Father.” When that time came, did the heir die at manhood? No, it lived and came to the enjoyment of the rights of a “*son*,” it still lives, is blessed with faithful Abraham, enjoys the spiritual estate, and bears the name of that patriarch. “Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” See numerous other passages of the same import.

3. The woman that was married to the Mosaic economy, which the apostle exhibits under the image of a “husband,” survives the death of her husband, and is married to another.

From all these images we discover one broad fact, that the same visible Church which was organized by the Abrahamic covenant *still exists*, and proves the perpetuity of that covenant. Take another argument in support of the same fact:

V. The covenant relations which the Jews sustained to Abraham, and the covenant names by which those relations were indicated, are exactly those relations which the members of the Christian Church still sustain to Abraham, and are the very names applied to them in Scripture. Now, those relations could not exist, and those distinguishing names could not with propriety be applied to New Testament believers, if the Abrahamic covenant

were not perpetual in its existence under all the changes which have occurred. This inference is obvious; but let us prove the facts from which it is drawn.

1. Abraham is the *father* of all who now believe, and he is so denominated. Rom. iv. 11: "He received the sign of circumcision, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised," etc. Verse 16: "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace: to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."

2. The New Testament believers are the children of Abraham, by that very covenant and constitution of God which made him their father. "They are his seed;" for, Rom. ix., "the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Gal. iii. 29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." "Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." (Gal. iii. 7.) They are called "the circumcision." Phil. iii. 3: "Beware of the concision; for we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Having shown that the same relations to Abraham, and the same names expressive of those covenant relations which the ancient Church sustained, are now possessed by believers, we shall add but one argument more, viz:

VI. The blessings secured to Abraham by the covenant of circumcision, with its visible seal, are still the very blessings enjoyed by New Testament believers, and secured to them by the same covenant; but if that covenant be not in existence with its visible sign and seal, then is their privilege and their security less than those of ancient believers. But have not the very blessings of faithful Abraham come unto the Gentiles through Christ? Have they not the promise of the Spirit? Is not their faith counted for righteousness? Are they not pardoned for the sake of that righteousness of God received by faith? And is not this mode of salvation revealed by the Word of Jehovah, still signified and sealed by the sacraments?

Why then should the Abrahamic covenant be abolished and cease to exist? To use the words of a late writer, (Janeway:)

“Were the blessings of righteousness and salvation no longer given to the Church, we might infer that the covenant was abrogated. But seeing these blessings come as God promised to Abraham, to the Gentiles, what reason can any have to assert that the covenant which formerly secured them to believers, has been annulled? This is contending against plain matter of fact.”

#### INFANT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP.

Having now shown that another sacrament has been instituted, to supply the place of circumcision as a visible sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant, and that that covenant has not been disannulled, but is in full force and virtue, we are prepared to perceive clearly the truth of our doctrine, that the law of God, constituting infant church-membership, *was not repealed* by the abrogation of the rite of circumcision: for infant church-membership did not depend upon the visible sign of circumcision, but upon the *covenant itself, which is still in existence*; of which covenant it is a law, a privilege and a blessing; and, therefore, that infant church-membership cannot be done away but by an express law of God contained in the Sacred Scriptures. But no such law can be found in the written Word.

We now come to the consideration of a *third question*, which the adversaries of the membership of infants in the visible Church, are disposed to ask. It is this:

*Thirdly.* Does not *the silence* of the apostles with respect to infant church-membership at the opening of the New Testament dispensation, and *the silence* of the inspired writers of the Scriptures of the New Testament with regard to any baptism of infants, prove that the infant church-membership connected with the covenant of circumcision no longer existed either in Christian law or in Christian practice? We answer:

1. That, did the apostles and the New Testament writers observe a *total silence* with regard to infant church-membership, and the initiation of parents, with their children, into the visible Church by baptism, the fact would be such as to arrest our deep attention; but as the fact *does not exist in the sacred records*, we are not called to make it the subject of particular consideration, nor to inquire how far such silence of the inspired writers would go to prove the *re-*

*peal* of the Divine law of infant church-membership, if by uninspired writers in the ancient Christian Church, it were proved that, from the days of the apostles down, *that* law had been recognized and observed in the practice of the Catholic Church. From an inquiry of this kind, we are now preserved by certain facts, recorded in the New Testament Scriptures. These facts, we shall presently exhibit; but before doing this, we must observe,

2. That if the partial silence of the apostles and inspired writers of the New Testament with regard to infant church-membership and the baptism of infants, or in other words, if *the little* which we find in the New Testament on those subjects, would happily accord with the well-known and universally acknowledged existence and perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, and of the law of infant church-membership in the primitive Church; then it will follow, that the *very kind of silence* which our adversaries employ as an argument, can be well accounted for, and operates rather as a circumstance in favor of the truth of our doctrine.

I. But we have said, that the apostles and other inspired men have not observed in the New Testament Scriptures, a *total silence* with respect to infant church-membership and the baptism of infants. This must now be proved by us.

Let us then adduce the passages, on which our answer to the question rests, and take each passage under particular consideration.

In preparation for the coming new dispensation or covenant, which, as we have proved, should not set aside the Abrahamic covenant, but extend its blessings to the Gentile nations, the Redeemer of the world, who before his incarnation gave to Abraham "the covenant of circumcision," being now "in the fulness of time" incarnate, spoke concerning children, words which plainly taught that they were objects of his mediatorial regard; and that they sustained, *as children of the covenant*, a relation to the visible Church, not only under the old, but also under the new dispensation, which he was come to introduce.

1. In Matt. xix. 13, 14: "Then were there brought to him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray, and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven: and he laid his hands on them, and departed." In Mark

x. 13, 14, 15, 16, we read: "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein: and he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

In considering these words of Christ more particularly, we find that (whatever he said to the adults when he taught them, that they must in the exercise of humility enter into the kingdom of God) it was of *little children, in nature and in years*, that he said, "Suffer them to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," which in Mark is called "the kingdom of God:" for it appears that those children were of such tender age, that they were "brought" or carried by their parents or friends, to Christ; and that they could be taken by the Saviour "in his arms." Their infancy and very childhood evidently appears to have been the only reason why the disciples "rebuked those who brought them," and wished that their Lord's attention might not be occupied by the concerns of such little children. To this interpretation, however, a Socinian writer and several Baptist writers here object, and say, "that by the little children," in these passages, infants and very young children are not meant, but *adults*, who in the meekness and humility of their dispositions resembled little children. We answer:

1. This sense of the words is contradicted by the whole history, and involves it in unintelligible nonsense, if we may so speak. Were they adults of that excellent temper whom the disciples would have restrained from being brought to their Divine Master, and on whose account they "rebuked" those who brought them? a very poor compliment to the understanding and piety of those disciples, for it exhibits them as conspiring to prevent adults of the best temper from coming to Christ.

2. Such adults are here called "*βρεφη*," without the addition of any qualifying term, or any thing appearing in the relation in which they had stood to Christ, which would show that that term was used in a figurative sense: for "*βρεφος*," signifies "a babe

in the womb, a new-born babe," an infant, a child.\* (Luke xviii. 15.)

3. Why should these adults be "*brought*" to the Saviour by others, and why should any be rebuked for bringing them?

4. How could the Saviour take such adults in his arms, embrace them in his arms, when he blessed them, if they were adults?

5. And how could such adults be converted into a little child, "*παιδιον*," and give that illustration which the Saviour designed to give, by a familiar object of comparison, to his doctrine, "that whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a *little child*, shall not enter therein"?

"We do not deny," say many Baptist writers, "that they were infants who were brought to Christ on that occasion; but we say, that the parents who brought them desired nothing more than that the Saviour should lay his hands on them and bless them: they did not desire to have them *baptized*." Answer:

(1.) We are not to be diverted from the thing to be *now* proved by objections of this kind. We have said nothing about infant baptism. What we wish to establish here, is the fact that those who were brought to the Saviour to be blessed and prayed for by him, were indeed "little children" in age, and *not adults*.

But to remove the objection, we say, that,

i. Christ himself did not baptize. (John iv.)

ii. The parents of these children were not baptized, and therefore the children could not be baptized.

iii. The new dispensation was fast coming on, but not yet introduced with its peculiar ordinances and appropriate sacraments, to be observed as a law of "God's house." Hence the baptism of infants could not be looked for by any well-disposed parents.

iv. But these parents and their children were Jews, and therefore *circumcised*, and members of the visible Church of God. In relation to such, what did our Lord say and do? He said: "Suffer the parents to bring their little children unto me, and forbid them not to come unto me." "And he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them." What more could he do, to testify that they sus-

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\* Βρεφος is the word applied to Christ just born, (Luke ii. 12.) It is the name of an infant just born, and not yet weaned: nay, it has been used for an infant in the womb, as is plain from a passage in Phocylides: "Μη δὲ γυνὴ φθέρῃ βρεφος ἐμβρυον ἐνδοθε γαστρος."

tained a relation to him, as members of his family or visible Church? Imposition of hands was long before a token of receiving a child into one's family, as did Jacob, Gen. xlviii. 5.

But it may be said, our Saviour might have acknowledged, in express terms, the existence of infant church-membership. Now,

II. We contend that he actually did this very thing; and assigned *that very relation* of the infants of parents in covenant with his visible Church, as the *reason* why those little children should be suffered to come unto him, and as *the ground* of his parental and ministerial actions, in laying his hands upon them and blessing them: for he said, "of such little children is the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God."

Here we must inquire, what was meant by the Saviour, "by the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God"? what by saying, that such little children stood related to that kingdom?

1. God had been King in Israel by a special constitution, or the Sinaitic covenant, during many centuries before the incarnation of the Saviour. This constitution had been annexed to the Abrahamic covenant to carry out its gracious designs: by it, "the heir" was put under "tutors and governors, till the time appointed by the Father." Hence the law of circumcision was enforced under the Sinaitic covenant: "every uncircumcised person was excluded from the congregation of the Lord;" whilst infants circumcised on the eighth day, were, as they had been since the existence of the Abrahamic covenant, members of that Church and congregation in undisputed right. All the Jews, probably in our Lord's day, were initiated into the visible Church in their infancy.

If therefore the Old Testament Church state shall be considered as constituting "a kingdom of God," (Ps. x. 16; xlv. 4; xlvii. 7; lxxiv. 12; lxxxix. 18; cxlix. 20; 1 Chron. xxix. 11; Ps. xxii.,) then it is most true, that of such little children as were of the Abrahamic covenant with their parents when our Lord took "the little ones in his arms," was this kingdom of God. Hence such children were called Jehovah's property in a special manner. Ezek. xvi. 21: "That thou hast slain *my children* and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them."

2. But in predicting the coming of the Messiah and the introduction of a new dispensation, the prophet Daniel said, "that the God of heaven would set up a kingdom, which should never be

destroyed." (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) Hence the new dispensation came to be distinguished by the name, "kingdom of heaven," because there would be a superior declaration made under it of the "kingdom of God our Saviour." Augustine long since observed, "that the very name of 'the kingdom of heaven' is peculiar to the New Testament dispensation."

It is universally acknowledged, that by the phrase "kingdom of heaven," the new dispensation and the Church visible under it, are in many places denoted. No other can be the meaning of that phrase in the passages now under consideration. Then the sense of our words becomes obvious: "Of such little children as he took up in his arms and blessed, is the kingdom of heaven. The new dispensation and the visible Church which that dispensation was designed greatly to benefit and to enlarge, would embrace and comprehend them; the *infant seed* of parents in covenant should occupy the *very place* under the second covenant or gospel dispensation, which they had occupied before the first covenant was made at Sinai; for the new covenant should not be inconsistent with the Abrahamic covenant, but a confirmation and extension of it: hence *infant church-membership should remain*; and of such little children as the circumcised children of the Jewish Church, should the 'kingdom of heaven' or new dispensation also be." Such was the doctrine of the Saviour.

Objection: But how could Christ say, "that the kingdom of heaven," or gospel dispensation, did comprehend such little children, when that "new covenant" was not yet made, or that new dispensation was not yet introduced? We answer:

1. That this apparent difficulty exists in equal magnitude in the exposition of our adversaries. For, how could our Lord say, that of humble and penitent sinners, resembling in temper a little child, was the kingdom of heaven, when that kingdom was not yet in existence?

2. "But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." He was then introducing the new dispensation. Hence he often spoke of it, as being not only at hand, but as actually present. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven;" "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed," etc. "Ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men." (Matt. xxiii. 13.)

Objection: "But you altogether misapprehend the sense of

Christ's words," say some Baptists; "for he means that of such persons as were humble, little in their own eyes, believing and dependent, like as little children are, is the kingdom of heaven." Answer:

1. Our Lord does preach this doctrine, and states the requirements of the gospel: "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein;" but not in the words before us.

2. That forced sense violates the order of history; for of whom he said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," them he blessed: "of such is the kingdom of heaven; and he laid his hands on them, and departed."

3. But the words, "of such is the kingdom of heaven," express a *reason* why little children should not be forbidden to come unto him, why they should be brought to him, and why he was displeased with his disciples when they rebuked those who brought the little children unto him to bless them, and why he did take them in his arms and bless them. Now, would it not be absurd to argue, that children who are infants ought to be so treated, because penitent, humble and believing adults belong to the visible Church of God, or are in a state of grace? Could the Saviour have so reasoned? And can an intelligent Baptist use such a mode of reasoning? No: the very exposition which makes our Lord talk absurdly, is used as a shift from the force of the passage in its connection.

But it is objected, that the kingdom of heaven here means, "the kingdom of heavenly glory and happiness," and that infants dying in infancy belong to that kingdom. Answer:

1. This is a strained construction of the passage, and adopted merely to escape from the force of argument; and,

2. If children, merely because they are children, are saved, we observe, that there is no such doctrine in Scripture. If the children of covenanted parents and no other are meant, then this sense shows, that covenant relations may be so sustained by children in virtue of God's constitution and promise of the covenant, as to affect their state hereafter. Who then that believes, that infants born of parents in covenant can enjoy the greater, will deny them the less, etc., etc.?

## LECTURE XVIII.

### INFANT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP, CONTINUED.

#### CIRCUMCISION—BAPTISM.

WE are in our argument in support of the existing divine law of *infant church-membership*, showing that the evangelists and apostles do not observe a total silence on this subject. For this purpose, we called up in our last lecture what was spoken by our Saviour himself, in relation to little children of parents standing in the Abrahamic covenant, and what is recorded in Matt. xix., Mark x. 13, 14, 15, and Luke xviii. 15. From the consideration of these passages let us turn,

III. To another proof of the fact, which we affirm is expressed by the apostle Peter, under the New Covenant or gospel dispensation. His words are recorded in Acts ii. 39: "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

In ascertaining the sense of these words, it will be necessary here to inquire,

1. *To whom* the apostle Peter addressed the words, and who are intended by "you and your children"? The *history* of the solemn and transporting events recorded in Acts, chap. ii, and marking that "day of Pentecost" as a most memorable day in the annals of the Christian Church, leaves it an undisputed fact, that Peter in his sermon addressed those words "to *Jews*" assembled at Jerusalem on occasion of the feast of Pentecost, from various parts, and collected where the apostles and disciples of Christ met, in consequence of its "being noised abroad through the city, that something very wonderful was to be seen at that Christian meet-

ing." (See Acts ii. 1-7.) Now, respecting these Jews thus collected, a few facts are to be stated.

(1.) They were people to whom pertained, as Paul tells us, "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;" a people sustaining special relations to God, and standing with their children in the Abrahamic covenant. There was not a male Jew there who had not been circumcised in infancy. Down then to the day that Peter preached to them, the *gospel promise*, which gave a glorious excellency to the covenant of circumcision and other covenant promises, *pertained to them and to their children*. They so understood it; "for salvation," as our Lord taught, "was of the Jews."

(2.) Again: The Saviour had come into the world; but "his own received him not." The Jews had rejected him; and the multitude assembled to hear Peter, while they were members of the ancient Church, were those who united in that rejection. They did not believe Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ: instead of looking upon him whom they had pierced, and mourning, they were impenitent, stiff-necked, and persecutors of Christ and his little flock.

If therefore, on account of the coming of the Saviour in the flesh, and his "finishing the work which the Father had given him to do," a new dispensation was opening, and a new Church state was forming, having Jesus Christ, who had been crucified, as the chief corner-stone of the whole building, then it is obvious, that before those Jews could be received as members of the Church under the new dispensation, they must repent and believe the gospel. That gospel Peter was preaching to them, when he spoke the words now under consideration. They felt its influence. Verse 37: "Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter," etc. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for the promise is unto you and to your children," etc.

It appears then, that these words were addressed "to men of Judea and other Jews," and *their children*. True, say the Baptists; but they object—

1. That "by their 'children' you understand *infant children*, and other children of the Jews; but we consider the apostle as speaking of *adult children* here." Answer:

(1.) This is more than can be proved: but if adult children only be meant by the apostle, then there was and could be no necessity, or even propriety, of calling up the *relation* of parents and their children in this discourse, unless this relation was recognized by *some covenant*, and made to be the channel along which ecclesiastical promises and privileges of a certain kind ran.

Would it not have been sufficient, would it not have been more intelligible to the Jews, for the apostle Peter (if he meant adult persons) to have said, "The promise is to all of you, rich or poor, who hear the gospel and understand its offers and conditions: I speak to every one who understands me"? But he said, "The promise is to you who hear me, *and to your children*:" for,

(2.) He addressed himself *to Jews*, in the Abrahamic covenant. They understood him readily; his phraseology they had long been accustomed to in every part of the Jewish Church: and could the Jews have understood the apostle to mean their children grown up to *adult age*? I trow not. God himself had told them (Gen. xvii.) that by their "seed," their *infant* children were meant. If the apostle Peter had intended to introduce a new law, *abolishing* infant church-membership, and establishing the supposed fact that adults alone could be received as members of the visible Church, then he would have guarded his phraseology, (as is always the case in abrogating an old law and enacting a new one,) and not have used the ancient phraseology, when the Abrahamic covenant was given. For, let it be observed,

(3.) That when God employed this language, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed, in their generations," there was *better ground* to conclude that "seed and generation" arrived at adult age was meant, than when Peter said, "The promise is unto you and to your children." But Jehovah explained himself to Abraham to mean both *adults* and their *children*; and his gospel did not alter this explanation, for he had no authority to do so. How the *primitive* Church understood the apostle, her practice, as testified by historians, will show. One thing is certain, that had infant children been *excluded* under the new dispensation, the Jews would have objected: but there is no evidence whatever that they complained of the exclusion of infants from the visible Christian Church; and for this plain reason, because there was no such exclusion enacted by Divine authority. It was after centuries

had rolled away, that some in Germany first offered any objection to our exposition. Then they said, as the Baptists do now, viz:

2. "You forget to remark," they say, "the previous words of Peter, who said, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' Here he requires repentance before baptism, and as a pre-requisite to an admission to that ordinance. He must therefore have meant *adult* children, for *infant* children could not be qualified by repentance, for baptism." On this oft-refuted objection, we remark:

(1.) The covenant of circumcision required obedience to all God's will; and after the law was given by Moses, it required the observance of the whole ceremonial law. These requisitions were made of adults. Were children, therefore, excluded from the covenant and from circumcision? No. God said to Abraham, "Walk before me;" and did he deny circumcision to infants, because *they* could not walk before him? No: when the Father of the Faithful received God's word, and was received into covenant, the promise and its visible seal were extended to his children. So here, the apostle requires *repentance* of parents who are not in the visible Christian Church, in order to their baptism, and tells them that the promise extended beyond them to their children.

(2.) Let us suppose that an ancient prophet had addressed Gentiles, and called them to repentance, would he not have said, Repent, and you shall be received into God's Church and covenant of circumcision; and then the promise will be to you and to your infant children? Now, this is exactly what Peter said to the Jews who were in that covenant. And would the ancient prophet have said, that the promise cannot be to your children, ye penitent and circumcised Gentiles, because your children cannot repent? I trow not.

But let us next inquire what we are to understand by the "*promise*" in Acts ii., which the apostle said belonged to the Jews and their infant children? To understand what is intended to be expressed by "the promise" here, we must observe,

1. That a *particular blessing*, formerly given by God, is here and in several other passages of the New Testament Scriptures, so dominated by way of distinction and preëminence; and not all the promises which Jehovah gave to Abraham and his descendants,

either as a nation or as a visible Church. They had many "promises," as well as "covenants," given them, together with the "oracles of God and the law." But this is a special and great mercy, which is spoken of as being emphatically "THE PROMISE." This fact will be clearly perceived by a little consideration of those places of Scripture where that promise is mentioned or referred to. Thus in Acts xiii. 32: "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that *the promise* which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." From this passage, it appears that the "promise," whatever it comprehended, had relation to the Saviour promised of old, and to the New Testament dispensation of grace introduced by that Saviour: for the apostle declares Christ's coming, dying, rising again from the dead, and introducing that dispensation under which Peter acted, to be a fulfilment in part, of that promise. Hence it cannot surprise us to hear him say to the Jews in the visible Church, *the promise*, God has executed, in sending the Saviour, and this promise, as it is fulfilled in this glorious dispensation, is to you and to your children.

IV. Again, Rom. iv. 13, 14: "For *the promise*, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith: for, if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect, because the law worketh wrath. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the *promise* might be sure to all the *seed*: not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all; as it is written, I have made thee a *father* of many nations." On these passages, we remark:

1. Here is a "*promise*" spoken of, made first to Abraham, and through him, to his SEED.

2. As if this were not sufficiently definite in marking *its origin and time*, the apostle tells us it was not a promise connected with and hanging from the law or Sinaitic covenant, for Abraham lived before the giving of the law; and if, as the Jews thought, the mere observance of the Mosaic ritual could give righteousness and pardon; if by personal obedience to the *law* any could become "heirs of eternal life;" then *faith*, or the gospel plan of justification by faith, would be rendered *void*, and *the promise* which spoke of

a Saviour, and exhibited and secured *salvation* by faith in this Saviour, would “*be made of none effect.*” But “the promise was not to Abraham and to his seed *through the law*, but through the righteousness of faith.” The apostle also reminds the *Jews* who were of the party that contended for salvation by the law of Moses, that this law given by Moses comprehended also the *moral law*, with its precepts and penalty: therefore righteousness could not be by the *law*, for they were transgressors of it; and “the law worketh wrath and destruction to the sinner.”

Such is Paul’s doctrine; and we clearly perceive that he connects both the *Saviour* and the gospel *scheme of justification by faith* without works, with the promise given to Abraham and to his seed: and hence it appears, that the *particular promise* about which we are inquiring, was not any promise which God gave to the Church either by *Moses* or by any of the *prophets* after him, nor any promise given before Abraham’s time; but the promise given to this patriarch and afterwards repeated to Isaac and to Jacob, lying at the very foundation of the whole ceremonial law, confirmed by the Sinaitic covenant, and forming the *ground of hope* to all the Old Testament saints. Hence Paul in his defense used this language, (Acts xxvi. :) “And now I stand and am judged for the hope of *the promise*, made of God unto our fathers.” But mark the text before us further.

3. The apostle furthermore tells us, in Rom. iv., that the promise of which he speaks, was one which not merely gave Abraham *the land of Canaan*, as the inheritance of his natural descendants, and engaged that those descendants should increase into a great nation, (for promises of this import, the patriarch had before,) but which made him “the heir of the world,” and engaged that he should be “the father of many nations.” Now this fact plainly shows the particular grand promise that is meant: the promise of the Abrahamic covenant—a covenant which therefore had “circumcision” as the visible “seal of the righteousness of faith.”

And how could Abraham be “the heir of the world,” when he was soon to be removed from this world, and when while he lived, he occupied but a few fields, even of the land of Canaan?

How could his natural descendants (even allowing that they grew into several tribes and nations) be the “heir of the world,” without dispossessing all other nations, or exercising dominion

over them, as their tributaries and servants? But we know, that all Abraham's natural children and their posterity, were not included in the promise: "for in Isaac shall thy seed be called." But supposing that they were, we well know, that at *no* time hitherto, neither when Peter preached nor in any age since, have Abraham's descendants inherited the world, nor shall they ever possess it: the Jews have not even held the land of Canaan, but have wandered among the nations, "a hiss, a by-word, and a proverb;" and that the descendants by Keturah, and others, were long since excluded from the Church, and are now, as Mahometans, her greatest enemies.

4. We ask then again, What did Jehovah mean, when he gave his promise to Abraham, that he should be "the heir of the world"?—and how is this promise fulfilled? The Spirit of inspiration, speaking by the apostle Paul, tells us.

(1.) Abraham was to be the heir of the world, not through his natural descendants as such, but *through Christ*, who, according to the flesh, was to descend from Abraham in the line of Isaac, of Judah, and of David. By this Saviour, and in him, should this promise be fulfilled. All nations, in process of time and by an extended dispensation of grace, should be blessed in him, and all people and languages should serve him, and "the whole earth be filled with his glory."

(2.) Abraham was to be the "father of many nations" by the same grand means. Christ should come; the promise or dispensation of grace should extend unto the Gentile nations, as well as to the Jews. People of every nation and country should be called; the gospel of salvation should be preached; many should *believe*, and become "that seed" which is of "the faith of Abraham, and not of the law," and thus Abraham should be "the father of them all; as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."

We therefore perceive, that the promise of which Paul speaks in Rom. iv. has, through Abraham, a direct reference to and accomplishment in Christ, and in the New Testament dispensation, under which alone Abraham could be the heir of the world, and the father of many nations. Accordingly, after Christ came, and when that dispensation was opening, Peter preached that the promise which God made to Abraham and to his seed, "not through

the law, but through the righteousness of faith," (not that they should possess the land of Canaan and become a mighty nation and empire, but that they should be blessed with a spiritual deliverer, and a glorious dispensation of grace,) was "to them, Jews, and to their children," and also to Gentiles who were then to be called, and to be made fellow-heirs with them of the same covenant, and its rich privileges and blessings.

But we have not done with the words of Paul in Rom. iv.; for he places the promise made to Abraham under the gospel dispensation or New Testament, in contrast with the same promise under the restricted dispensation of the Mosaic economy. Under this economy, with its laws, it was impossible that the promise could be fulfilled, that Abraham should be the "heir of the world and the father of many nations:" for had the word of the Lord gone abroad, say in the prosperous reign of David, to all nations, and had thousands in every country received it in love, yet the nations could not have gone up to Jerusalem and done there what the ceremonial law required. But Abraham received the promise, not through "the law," or in a Sinaitic covenant, but "through the righteousness of faith;" the promise therefore did not depend upon the Mosaic economy: so far from this, that economy, when Christ came, must be done away, as an obstacle to the fulfilment of the promise that "Abraham should be the heir of the world," "to the end," says the apostle, "that the promise might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law, or under the Mosaic economy, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all; as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations."

The promise could not have been "sure to all the seed," had it been inseparably connected with the Mosaic economy, for many of the seed would have been unable to keep the laws of God. But the promise is carried out under a better covenant than the *Sinaitic*; under a dispensation which abrogates the tabernacle laws and institutions, so that believers of the Gentiles, who cannot observe the ceremonial laws of Moses, can in every part of the world believe with the faith of Abraham, and obtain like him the righteousness of faith, through our Lord Jesus Christ. But this would have been impossible, had the promise been made to Abraham and to his seed through the law, whereas it was through the

righteousness of faith, to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed.

One word more on Rom. iv.: The apostle, in speaking of this "*promise*" as extending to the New Testament times, and to the partakers of it both among Jews and Gentiles, describes those partakers by the very *term* which Jehovah made use of in establishing his covenant with Abraham, viz: "seed;" "for the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was to Abraham and to his *seed*, not through the law." Then, when he comes down to the New Testament times, he says, "that the promise might be sure to all the seed," etc.

Now, we know that by the "seed," God meant (Gen. xvii.) parents and their infant children of eight days old. And when Paul speaks of the promise of the Abrahamic covenant, and uses the very word which Jehovah used to express those to whom the promise extended, has not that word the same meaning? Does the apostle qualify it, by telling us that the word *seed* did no longer include the *infant offspring* of believing parents in the covenant? No such thing. He speaks of the "seed" in the very sense of the Abrahamic covenant, and his words illustrate those of Peter, who says, "The promise is to you, parents, and to your children." The other says, "that the promise might be sure to all the seed." And Jehovah says, Gen. xvii., "that *all the seed*" comprehends infant children with their parents.

We have now considered the words of Paul in Rom. iv., and from what they express, we learn,

(1.) That the great promise of which Peter speaks (Acts ii.) is that of the Abrahamic covenant.

(2.) That this promise related to Christ, the seed of Abraham, who should come into the world to atone for sin, and should place his visible Church under a very gracious dispensation, called "the kingdom of heaven;" under which dispensation the tabernacle priesthood and laws should no longer restrict and burden the Church, but mercy on gospel terms be extended to all nations, that Abraham through Christ might be the heir of the world, and the father of many nations. Now, *this dispensation* of the Abrahamic covenant is called, by a familiar figure of speech, "the *promise*," because, first, it was a principal blessing contained in the promise; and second, because it would operate in process

of time to show in this world *the glorious fulfilment of the promise itself.*

If then, by "the promise" in Acts ii. we are to understand *the New Testament dispensation of the grace promised in the Abrahamic covenant*, we must be careful not to misinterpret the word "*promise*" in that and other passages of Scripture, where that promise is spoken of, by making it to mean, first, either the promise of actual pardon, or, second, the promise of everlasting salvation. All the blessings of grace and of eternal glory are, in truth, contained in the promises of the Abrahamic covenant; they are all exhibited to sinners of every nation under the present glorious dispensation, (which the apostle Paul, in Hebrews, calls "the new covenant," to distinguish it from the *Sinaitic covenant*;) but neither the dispensation itself, nor its word, its worship, and its sacraments, convey pardon, peace and eternal life, to all who enjoy them in the visible Church. A proper temper of mind is required to partake of the higher blessings which the dispensation, its word and ordinances, carry with them. Hence there are *those* in the Abrahamic covenant and in the visible Church, whose sins are not pardoned, who have no peace with God, because they are impenitent and unbelieving; as the Saviour and his apostle Peter called such, "children of the covenant, and children of the kingdom," who were not "children by adoption," because they believed not.

V. There are numerous other passages of Scripture in which "the promise" about which we are now inquiring is spoken of, and it would require much time to consider each passage particularly. I shall therefore direct your attention to but one passage more, Gal. iii. 14: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." Here you observe, that the Lord Jesus Christ is made to be the great means of conveying the blessing promised to Abraham to the Gentiles, which could be under no other dispensation than the present one. "That we Gentiles might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Here the gift of the Spirit, to accompany the gospel and to convert the Gentiles, is said to be one of the blessings of Abraham contained in "*the promise.*" "And this I say, that the covenant (viz: the Abrahamic covenant) that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. And if

ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."

The Gentiles, until they were called, Paul tells us, (Ephes. ii.,) "were aliens of the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant (that is, the Abrahamic covenant renewed to Isaac and Jacob) of promise." But what were they after their call? Members of the Church, and partakers of the "covenant of promise." And as partakers of its privileges and blessings, without any restriction, (for God has made none,) "the promise was to them and to their children."

Let this suffice here. We were employed in proving, that on the *subject of infant church-membership* the New Testament writers *are not silent*. The Saviour recognized and confirmed the *law of infant church-membership*; his apostles taught and acted upon it. Other testimonies to prove this it would be easy to exhibit; but this must be left to the professor who teaches the doctrines of Holy Baptism.

At present, we conclude with a recapitulation.

1. We have proved, that God enacted in his visible Church the law of infant church-membership, and that this law of the Abrahamic covenant has never been repealed.

2. We have proved, that the *introduction* of the New Testament dispensation *did not* repeal it; for this dispensation was designed to carry the Abrahamic into more general effect, "that the promise might be sure to all the seed."

3. We have proved, that the abrogation of circumcision *did not* repeal the law of infant church-membership; for the law did not depend upon that rite, but upon the covenant and its perpetuity.

4. We have proved, that the New Testament writers *are not silent* in relation to this law, but speak of it as still in force.

Admitting now that we have correctly stated the doctrine of the apostles in relation to the Abrahamic covenant, its perpetuity, and the law of infant church-membership under it; admitting that these doctrines were known and believed in the apostolic times, in what manner should we expect to hear the apostles speak about infant church-membership? Exactly as they do speak: stating the perpetuity of the covenant which gives existence to the law; stating the law to extend to parents and their children

in the covenant; and then incidentally mentioning "*the baptism of households,*" just as a Jewish priest would speak of the circumcision of a household the parent of which, had been converted from paganism and received into the covenant.

## LECTURE XIX.

### THE PASSOVER.

THE second sacrament of the Old Testament dispensation, and connected by the law of God with the other, viz: circumcision, is,

#### SECOND, THE PASSOVER.

As there are comparatively few controversies in relation to this *ancient sacrament*, our statements of its doctrine will of course be short.

##### I. The *name*.\*

The name of this holy ordinance is derived immediately from the circumstances attending its institution and celebration in Egypt, and correctly rendered in English the *passover*; "because when God slew the first-born of the Egyptians, he passed over the doors of the Israelites, on seeing the posts thereof sprinkled with the blood of the lamb." (Exod. xii.)

The term "*pascha*" is one drawn from the Chaldee language.

The passover is called by the Hebrews, פסח, *pesach*; by the ancients, "*phasec*," from a root which signifies "to pass over," פסח, *pasach*, to pass or leap over.

Josephus denominates the passover in Greek, "ὑπερβάσια." Philo calls it, "διαβατήρια."

It is here to be carefully noted, that the term "*pascha*" is

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\* *Pesah*, Heb., which signifies to pass over; Chaldee, *Pascha*. Augustine, Gregory Nazianzen, and other fathers, erroneously drew the name from the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. Still more, Tertullian, Lactantius, Ambrose, Irenaeus, and others, through ignorance of the Hebrew language, thought that the name was derived from the Greek word πασχειν, to suffer.

applied in the Scriptures, not always to denote the ordinance in its actual and ritual celebration, but also to signify many other things connected with it. Thus it is used to express—

1. The passing over of the angel of the Lord, whose mercy was extended, in Egypt, to the *families* of the Hebrews who there kept the passover.

2. It is applied also to the *lamb* of the passover. Exod. xii. 21: "Kill the passover."

3. It is also made to include those *sacrifices* under the Mosaic economy which were usually offered up to God along with the lamb. (Deut. xvi. 2.)

4. It also denotes the *festival days* on which these things were solemnized. (Luke xxii.)

The peace-offerings are called passover-offerings, (2 Chron. xxxv. 9,) because they were offered at the time that the passover was kept. Those peace-offerings are called the passover. (John xviii. 28.) The Jews had certainly eaten of the paschal lamb at that time.

II. The passover *was instituted by Jehovah*. Its institution is particularly recorded in Exod. xii.

1. The time of *institution*.

The time when God instituted the passover was just before he fulfilled his promise in delivering his Church from her afflictive state in Egypt, and on the eve of the departure of the Israelites.

(1.) This sacrament then was instituted, as you perceive, B. C. 1491, and about four hundred years after the institution of circumcision. Hence it follows, that the existence and perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant could not be suspended upon the passover and its observance in Israel. Through religious declension and violent persecution, and also in consequence of war and captivity, the Hebrews might not keep the passover; yet the ecclesiastical or Abrahamic covenant was not thereby disannulled. It still continued in force while circumcision, which was the sign of that covenant, was observed. The God of Abraham was still the God of Israel, and during the whole period of the ancient dispensation did not cast away his people, but preserved his Church.

(2.) You also perceive, that the passover was instituted *before* the giving of the law and the existence of the Sinaitic covenant. It was not therefore an appendage to that covenant, nor a part of

the ceremonial law, so far as that law enacted mere shadows of good things; but the passover was something more: *it was a sacrament of the Abrahamic covenant added to circumcision.* Accordingly, to teach those facts, we observe that infinite wisdom was displayed in selecting the *proper time* for the institution of the *Passover*.

2. The time of *celebration*.

The time when the passover should be kept was the subject of very particular appointment by the Supreme Being; for not only the *month* of the year, and the *day* of that month, but the *time* of the day, was particularly mentioned in the precept of the institution.

(1.) The month of the year was *Abib*. (Exod. xii., xiii.)

i. Among the Hebrews, the year was divided into twelve lunar months, though they were acquainted with a *solar* year, to which lunar time was to be accommodated by intercalation.

ii. This people, at the time of the institution of the passover, were ordered (Exod. xii. 1) to form and observe an *ecclesiastical* year, in addition to their civil year: of course, these two years must of necessity have different beginnings and endings, to be kept distinct.

The *civil* year commenced with the seventh month (or *Tishri*) of the ecclesiastical year, at the first new moon in *October*.

The *sacred* year had its beginning fixed at the month *Nisan*, first called *ABIB*, at the first new moon in our *April*. *Abib*, that is, "the month of the young ears of corn," (Exod. xiii. 4, xxiii. 15,) was the first month of the *sacred* year, which was instituted to commemorate the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, an event which fell on the fifteenth day of that month. *Abib* was at first the only month which had a particular name; the other months were called after it, the second, third, etc. In their captive state in Chaldea, the Jews adopted the Chaldean names of the months. Hence *Abib* came to be called *Nisan*; and from what has been said, you perceive that it was the *seventh month* ("Nissan," Josephus) of the civil year.\*

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\* Josephus (Antiq. l. 3) says, Moses has appointed *Nisan*, which is Zanthicus, in respect of the feast days, the *first month*, because in the same month he led the Hebrews out of Egypt. Here he has made a beginning of honoring God; but with regard to buying and selling, he has observed the previous reckoning of time.

(2.) The *day* of the month Abib, or Nisan, set apart for the passover, was the fourteenth day, reckoning from the new moon. Some of the Jews did no servile work during the whole of the fourteen days; others commenced their rest from the beginning of the first evening.

(3.) 'The *time* of the day is expressly mentioned: the passover lamb must be killed between the "two evenings of that day."

The Hebrews had their mean solar day, and this was divided into day and night. The portion denominated the *day*—that is to say, the *artificial day* in chronology—extending from sunrise to sunset, was distributed into four parts: 1. Morning, (which again, in imitation of the Persians, was divided into two parts, viz: dawn, or break of day—the *λίαν πρωι* in the New Testament, Mark xvi.—when the east was illuminated; and also, when the western horizon was illuminated.) 2. Noon, or mid-day. 3. First evening. 4. Second evening. The Greeks had also two evenings in their artificial day.

(4.) With respect to the TWO EVENINGS of the day among the Hebrews, it is to be observed, that their beginnings and endings were not accurately defined. The first evening began some time after high noon. The second evening was towards sunset, and terminated when the twilight had vanished.\*

\* Hebrew doctors do not agree as to the exact time.

1. Aben Ezra says that the *first evening* began when the sun had descended below the horizon, and the *second evening* from that time until the rays of light could no longer be perceived in the clouds of heaven. The time then between those two evenings, they reckon to be about three quarters of an hour. In proof of this opinion they adduce certain passages, as Exod. xvi. 12, compared with eighth verse; Exod. xxx. 8, with xxvii. 21; to prove that the *evening* and the time between the two evenings is one and the same. (Deut. xvi. 6.)

2. But when we consider what was required to be done between the two evenings, we shall certainly require more time than is here allotted; for the evening sacrifice must be slain, the lamps lighted up, the incense burned before the Lord.

3. Besides, at sunset began the fifteenth day, which is therefore expressly called the day after the passover. (Numb. xxxiii. 3.)

4. Other Jewish writers therefore begin the first evening immediately after *noon-day*, as Kimchi, and make the second evening to terminate with sunset. This is an ancient opinion.

The Greeks also made a distinction between an early and a late evening. The first began immediately after noon-day. The proverb is well known: "Nescis quid serus vesper vchat"—Thou knowest not what the late evening shall bear.

On occasion of festivals, the time between the two evenings was lengthened.

The Karaites and Samaritans, we are told, placed the first evening at *sunset*, and the second, when it began to grow dark. It is evident that this could not have been the ancient Hebrew division in the time of Moses and subsequently, for it did not leave time sufficient for slaying the paschal lambs. We therefore say that the two evenings comprehended the time of the day between three o'clock P. M. and settled darkness. Josephus says, that the paschal lambs were killed and prepared from our three in the afternoon till five; and this is "between the two evenings." Every one will perceive that, from the very nature of the required religious service in the passover, the *exact time* of the two evenings was wisely left undefined.

### 3. The *places* of celebration.

(1.) The place where the passover was kept after its Divine in-

5. We think the first evening began with the ninth hour of the day, which corresponds with our three P. M.; and the second evening with the twelfth hour or sunset.

6. The Jews divided the twelve hours of the day into four parts, the last of which made out the *evening*, commencing with the ninth hour.

7. That there was considerable time between the two evenings, we learn from Matt. xiv. 15: "And when it was *evening*, his disciples came unto him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past. Send the multitude away, that they may go," etc. After this Jesus commanded the multitude to sit down, (vs. 19;) distributed bread; they ate and were filled; the fragments were gathered of five thousand men, besides women and children.

Then Jesus constrained the disciples to go away, (vs. 22.) He then sent the multitude away, went up into a mountain apart, and when the *evening* was come, he was there alone. (Compare Mark vi. 35, Luke ix. 12.)

8. The ninth hour was the hour of prayer at the Temple, the time of the evening sacrifice. (Acts iii. 1.)

The traditions of the Jews (see Maimonides,) "that the daily sacrifice was slain at the eighth hour and a half, and at the paschal evening at the seventh hour and a half; for the passover must be killed *after* the evening sacrifice, and the incense burning."

Josephus says that from the ninth to the eleventh hour at the passover they killed the sacrifices.

The Karaites begin the first evening with sunset. They say the whole afternoon cannot be understood by the *evening*, for the leper was inspected neither at dawn, nor between the two evenings, nor at mid-day. When then? At the fourth, fifth, eighth and ninth hour. Hence they do not comprehend the eighth and ninth hour between the two evenings.

9. The paschal lamb, slain, as Josephus says, between the ninth and eleventh hour, no one must eat, according to the traditions of the Jews, from the time of the evening sacrifice until night commenced.

stitution, was the land of Egypt, and that part of it in which the Israelites dwelt. (Exod. xii.) The place of its *second* observance, was "the wilderness of Sin," (Numb. ix. ;) for God had removed his visible Church out of the land of Egypt. Again Israel advanced on their journeys, and after passing the Jordan, kept the passover at *Gilgal*, in the land of Canaan.

(2.) But after the visible Church should acquire the whole of the promised land, the Divine law contemplated *one particular place* in that land, where the passover should be solemnized. Deut. xvi. 6: "At the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there shalt thou sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt."

But this place God did not appoint until the reign of David, when the symbols of the Divine Presence were, by special direction, *located at Jerusalem*. Nor was Jerusalem so much the place, as the *court*, of that temple which Jehovah commanded Solomon to build to his name at Jerusalem.

#### 4. The *visible sign* of the passover.

The visible sign in the passover consisted, first, of the lamb or *small beast* used in a household; and, second, of the actions or ceremonies which God required in preparing that lamb after killing it, and in partaking of it.

(1.) The lamb or beast. One part of the visible sign in the sacrament of the passover, was a small beast, שֶׁה—of sheep or of goats—of course a *lamb* or a *kid*. (Exod. xii. 3; Deut. xiv. 4.) "Ye shall eat a small beast of sheep and of goats." (Exod. xii. 5.) Seldom, however, was a kid used: it seemed to be the result of poverty, not choice, when a kid was sacrificed. Hence Theodoret observes: "He who has a sheep should offer it, but he who has none, should offer a kid."

(2.) But here it may be asked, Do we not read of *oxen* used in the passover sacrifice, as 2 Chron. xxxv. 9: "They gave unto the Levites for passover-offerings, five thousand small cattle and five hundred oxen"? We reply, that oxen were used for the peace-offerings which were killed at the passover festival, and the whole, in consequence of being kept at the same time, were called the "passover-offerings." But lambs were ordinarily used in the passover; not, however, every lamb of the flock. The divine law

required that the lamb should be, first, sound or without blemish ;\* second, a male of the first year, that is, from eight days old till one year old ; third, it must be kept up four days. This requisition seems to have been limited to the celebration in Egypt, as afterwards, when the Israelites were settled in Canaan, there was no necessity to observe it: all the lambs afterwards at Jerusalem would be more than four days separated.

i. *The lamb killed.*

Another part of the visible sign was, the killing or slaying of the lamb. Every one might kill his own lamb for the passover. Exod. xii. 6: "And the whole assembly of the congregation shall kill it." In Egypt, every one killed the passover in his own house. Indeed, the slaying of the beast in any sacrifice by a priest, was not essential to an expiatory offering. Every offerer, provided he were *not ceremonially unclean*, might kill the beast: if he were unclean, then the priests or Levites must act. (2 Chron. xxx. 17; Ezra vi. 20.) We therefore add, that the priests and Levites might and did kill the passover.

ii. *The sprinkling of the blood.*

We now come to a requisition in constituting the visible sign in the passover, of great moment.

*First.* In Egypt, where the visible Church had as yet no established priesthood—no altars and tabernacles in form—the heads of families on killing the paschal lambs, carefully received the blood into a basin, dipped, according to the command of God, a bunch of hyssop into it, and then sprinkled the blood upon the lintel and the two side-posts of the door of their houses. (Exod. xii.) But some of these rites were obviously peculiar to this first celebration in Egypt: for,

*Second.* When the priesthood was instituted, and the tabernacle and its altar erected, then those who killed the lambs were required to receive the blood into a basin and hand it to a priest; and the priest was required to sprinkle the blood received from the common people on the altar, or to pour it out at the bottom of the altar.

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\* The Rabbins, we are told, count seventy-three blemishes which may exist in the beast. This may have rendered it difficult for the people to select a proper victim, and may have given rise to the practice of buying proper animals in the market, and selling them in the courts of the Temple with profit.

*Third.* The fat, they must burn on the altar—which they might do the whole night, until the morning dawn.

iii. *Roasting the flesh.*

Another required act in the passover, related to the “roasting with fire,” of the flesh of the lamb. Exod. xii: “Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire.”

iv. *Eating.*

All previous acts were in preparation for the actual participation of the paschal lamb, *by eating*. This act was essential to the observance of the passover; it rendered that sacrament a “feast,” and the sign of the spiritual enjoyment of the grace of Christ.

1. In Egypt, the Hebrews were required to eat of the paschal lamb with loins girded, shoes on their feet, and staves in their hands; but when their journey through the wilderness resulted in their settlement in Canaan, they did not observe the habit of pilgrims any longer in the passover feast.

2. But the command to eat the passover with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, was connected with the perpetual observance of the ordinance: to which let me add here, that the Israelites were also commanded to abstain *from leaven seven days*, at the time of the passover; this gave rise to “the feast of unleavened bread,” of which we shall speak presently. (Exod. xii. 15.)

3. Again: The Israelites were forbidden, in eating the passover, to break a bone of the paschal lamb: they were also forbidden to leave any of the flesh till morning; if any of it remained unconsumed, they were required to burn it: besides, none of the flesh must be carried out of the house. There was also a command given that no Israelite should go out of the house during the passover night; but as this law referred more particularly to the situation of that people in Egypt, it was not considered binding on them after the exodus. Hence our Lord Jesus Christ went out with his disciples after eating the passover. So that among the acts peculiar to the first celebration of the passover in Egypt, we have, first, the keeping up the lambs four days; second, striking the lintel and side-posts with the blood of the lambs; third, eating with loins girded, shoes and staves; and fourth, not stirring abroad till morning. Who were permitted to eat the passover, we shall presently state. Let us proceed to the consideration next,

5. *Of the thing signified.*

The passover was a mixed ordinance. It was a *feast*, commemorative of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage; it was an expiatory sacrifice, and it was a sacrament of the covenant. This must be proved.

(1.) *A memorial feast.*

It is not necessary here to prove by many passages that the passover was designed to commemorate the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage; one place will be sufficient. Exod. xii. 26, 27: "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses." Now, as a memorial feast, the children in every family were permitted to eat the passover. Hence, no argument can be founded upon this circumstance, to justify the administration of the Lord's Supper, which is a pure sacrament, to children of a tender age.

(2.) *An expiatory sacrifice.*

The passover was also a sacrifice. This has been denied by the Socinians, who find our Lord Jesus Christ, with a view to exhibit him as the great sacrifice for sin, called "the passover" of Christian believers. 1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." We prove the passover to have been an expiatory sacrifice by the following arguments, viz:

*First.* It has all the attributes of such a sacrifice: a victim, a corban, priest and altar, sprinkling of the blood, the burning of the fat and entrails upon the altar.

1. The lamb or kid slain was the victim.

2. It was a "corban," an offering brought to the tabernacle or temple.

3. A priest was employed and an altar made use of, as in other sacrifices.

4. As the sprinkling of the blood of the victim was of the very essence of a sacrifice, so the blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled or poured out by the priest at the altar, as the blood of victims usually was, slain in sacrifice. (Exod. xxiii. 18; xxxiv. 25; 2 Chron. xxx. 15, 16.) And,

5. In the passover the fat and entrails were burned upon the altar—see Cudworth.

*Second.* The Sacred Scriptures call the passover, a *Sevach*, sacrifice. (Exod. xii. 27; xxxiv. 25; Deut. xvi. 2.)

*Third.* Persons celebrating the passover are said “to offer the offering to Jehovah.” (Numb. ix. 7, 13.)

*Fourth.* To which we add, on this subject, the testimony of Josephus and the Jewish Doctors and Talmudists,\* so far as they go.

As a propitiatory sacrifice, I need not say, the passover signified, in common with all the propitiatory sacrifices of the old economy, the great sacrifice which Christ was to make of himself for sin.

(3.) Of the *sacramental character of the passover.*

But the passover was moreover a sacrament of the covenant, and as a sacrament, it signified redemption by the blood of Christ, and sealed the blessings of the covenant to believers.

i. That redemption by Christ was signified, is evident from the fact, that there is nothing in the deliverance from Egypt, of which the lamb slain and eaten could be consistent signs; for the Hebrews were not slain, but emancipated.

ii. We argue from the relation which the law of God established between circumcision, which we have proved to be a sacrament or ordinance of a high religious character, and the passover; for no uncircumcised person was permitted to eat the passover, etc.

iii. Another proof is also to be found in 1 Cor. v. 7, where the Lord's Supper, from the *similar relation* which both it and the passover sustained to the Saviour, is spoken of as being a paschal feast.

iv. The manner in which the Spirit of God exhibits the fact, that the soldiers did not break the legs of Christ when on the cross, as being signified in the circumstance, that no bone of the passover lamb was broken.

As a sacrament, the visible sign in the passover signified the Saviour: first, in his person; second, in his sufferings; third, in the effects of his sufferings as an expiatory sacrifice; fourth, in the manner in which we partake of Christ: he is said to be the Lamb of God slain, and we eat of his flesh and drink of his blood.

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\* R. Bachai says that the paschal sacrifice was instituted to *expiate* the guilt contracted by the idolatrous practices of the Israelites in Egypt. So also Maimonides.

6. *Agreement between sign and thing signified.*

In relation to the agreement between the sign and the thing signified in the passover as a sacrament, you may infer enough in the writers who speak of this ancient ordinance. The facts in this case are beautiful and striking. I shall therefore just observe here,

(1.) That our Lord Jesus Christ came to Jerusalem *on the very day* that the lamb was commanded to be kept up in Egypt, the 10th of Nisan. *Six days* before the passover, he came to Bethany, (John xii. ;) that is, the 9th of Nisan: the day after he went to Jerusalem, (verse 11.)

(2.) The passover was killed in the middle of the month "Nisan," between the two evenings, from the ninth to the eleventh hour. Now, on that very month, day and hour, Christ was crucified. (Matt. xxvii. 46.)

7. *Of those who were partakers of the passover.*

*First.* It remains here that we inquire, who were permitted to partake of the passover as a sacrament?

The Scriptures teach that God required his people to eat the passover in their families, consisting of men, women and children. On what grounds the admissibility of the children of a tender age to the paschal feast rested, we have before stated. But from what is said in relation to the whole congregation of Israel, and to whole families, it has been affirmed by Erastus, Prynne and others, that with the exception of those persons who were uncircumcised, or ceremonially unclean, or excommunicated, all the Israelites might eat of the passover. In support of this doctrine, they have brought several passages, (Exod. xii. 3; Numb. ix. 1; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 6, 7, etc.,) where they say we read, that all the people and all the males that were present, though some of them might have been scandalous persons, or in life morally unclean, received the passover, not one of them being excluded from eating it: it being understood that the law of the passover did not bind those to keep it in its season who were prevented by their remoteness from Jerusalem, and natural impediments, such as sickness, etc. Hence they argue, that the Lord's Supper is not to be administered only to the credibly pious, but to all who profess to believe the Christian religion, and that it is a converting ordinance.

This, you will perceive, is a doctrine which calls for our attention. We shall therefore proceed to examine it.

1. It is, then, acknowledged on all sides, that the uncircumcised and the excommunicated could not eat the passover.

2. It is also acknowledged, that ceremonial uncleanness constituted a disqualification. It was a cause of exclusion from the sanctuary and from holy things, or in other words, from the "castra Dei," or the tabernacle, though the ceremonially unclean might remain in the camp of Israel, if they were not lepers.

3. But did *moral uncleanness*, in that measure which renders the life scandalous in the Church, exclude from the passover? This is the question to be answered. We answer, it did; and this fact appears,

i. In the case of those who were excommunicated or cut off from the communion of the Church. A man who was circumcised, and not ceremonially unclean, must be cut off for his presumptuous sins. Numb. xv. 30, 31: "But the soul that doth aught presumptuously, whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off: his iniquity shall be upon him." Now, whatever acts may be denoted by sins of presumption, we know that a denial of the being of God and rejection of his written Word, were such. These sins constituted a moral uncleanness, were followed by excommunication, and by exclusion of course from the passover. Hence the Chaldee paraphrase says, upon Exod. xii., "Every son of Israel, who is an apostate, shall not eat of the passover." But,

ii. Another argument may be drawn from the fact, that the ceremonially unclean were to be excluded from the passover. This restraint doubtless had a moral and religious import; for it will not be denied, that every word in the Bible exhibits *moral uncleanness* to be inexpressibly a greater evil in the sight of God, and in itself, than *legal uncleanness*, and therefore that when it did appear in open profanity, it must have been a bar to the partaking of the passover. Was it not scandalous livers to whom God said, "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts"?

iii. One argument more: For various transgressions of the moral law, God required sinners openly to make confession, and

to profess repentance, and then to bring their trespass-offerings: till confession was made, and repentance professed, their trespass-offering could not be accepted. And could scandalous sinners be admitted to the passover, which was itself a sacrifice, without confession and atonement? No, indeed. It was the Lord's sacrifice, a holy service, and hence in preparation for it the Israelites, as we read, (Ezra vi.,) "separated themselves from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, and sought the Lord God of Israel."

Further remarks will be made to set aside the argument of the Erastians from the passover to the Lord's Supper, in our lectures on the latter sacrament.

At present we must shut this lecture, and begin the next with stating on what grounds women were authorized to eat the passover; and then proceed to the consideration of the Christian sacraments, as it is in relation to these alone that the Evangelical Pastor has now important duties to perform.

## LECTURE XX.

THE PASSOVER—WOMEN—FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD.

### BAPTISM.

WE have seen that to the ancient sacrament of the passover were admitted all the Israelites who were circumcised, and not ceremonially unclean, nor guilty of presumptuous sins, nor excommunicated. To these we must now add,

*Second.* That the *women* of Israel were permitted to eat the passover, though not circumcised; provided they were not excluded by the other restrictions of the law just mentioned.

It may be asked, how could women be circumcised, as they were physically incapable of receiving the rite? and how could they eat the passover, being uncircumcised? We answer:

i. That the women of Israel were in the covenant, and counted as *the circumcised*. This we have proved, when treating of circumcision. The difficulty then is hereby immediately resolved. But to give other additional reasons, we observe,

ii. That all the congregation of Israel were commanded to celebrate the passover. Now, the women made a part of this congregation. (Deut. xxix. 11.)

iii. Again, women celebrated the solemn festivals. (1 Sam. i. 34; Luke ii. 41.)

iv. In other eucharistical sacrifices and peace-offerings, *women* also had their portion. (1 Sam. i. 4, 5; 2 Sam. vi. 18.)

v. According to this divine constitution, the *daughters* of the priests ate of the sacred food. (Numb. xviii. 11–19.)

vi. Maimonides says, "that women were not only admitted to the paschal feasts, but also formed sometimes the *whole number* of guests in a family celebrating the passover."

*Third.* Here let me take the occasion to state, that the *number* in a family keeping the passover was from ten to twenty persons. If a family was small, it united in this solemn service with another family, so that the flesh of the paschal lamb might be eaten among them.

Let me also observe here, that Divine mercy provided by law for those Israelites who were prevented by sickness, unavoidable uncleanness, distance, or any untoward accident, from keeping the passover at the appointed time.

A *second passover* was instituted for such, to be observed in the second month. (Numb. ix. 10, 11.)

*Fourth. Proselytes.* The religion inculcated in the Bible gained in every age some proselytes from the heathen and idolatrous world; and I need not observe that the dispensation reached such proselytes, and that when they embraced the truth and were circumcised, they were admitted to a participation of the passover, and to the enjoyment of all the privileges of the people of God. The following passage contains the law, (Exod. xii. 48:) "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to Jehovah, let all his males be circumcised; then let him come near and keep it, and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."

#### *The Feast of Unleavened Bread.*

I shall add here, to prevent mistakes, that the feast of unleavened bread was not the passover, but a distinct ordinance. It was appended to the passover, and immediately succeeded it. It was instituted to commemorate the hasty departure of the Hebrews from Egypt, before their dough was leavened. It continued seven days; and during these days no leavened bread was used, but unleavened.

Of those seven days of unleavened bread, the first day and the last day were days of *holy convocation*. The *first* commemorated the commencement of the march of the Hebrews towards the Holy Land; the *last*, their passage through the Red Sea. On both days no servile work was done.

We have now dismissed the sacraments of the Old Testament, Circumcision and the Passover, and must proceed to the consideration of the sacraments of the covenant under the present dis-

pensation. In relation to these sacraments, there are important duties to be performed by the Evangelical Pastor.

We have before proved that the sacraments of the new dispensation are *two only*, viz: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Let us direct our attention,

#### FIRST, TO HOLY BAPTISM.

The term "baptism" is Scriptural, and Anglicized from the Greek, "*βαπτισμα*." (Matt. iii. 7, xxi. 15; Rom. vi. 4.) Respecting this word, and those from which it is derived, we shall have occasion to speak presently. Just now it will be useful to direct your attention, first, to the baptism of the ancient Jews; second, to the baptism of John; and third, to Christian baptism, or the sacrament of initiation into the visible Church, under the present dispensation.

##### I. *The Baptism of the Hebrews.*

It is an acknowledged fact, that the Jews administered "a baptism" by water to those proselytes from the nations, both male and female, whom they received into the visible Church of God.

1. In conforming to the requirements of the ceremonial law "*divers baptisms*," of which the apostle Paul speaks, (Heb. ix. 10,) were practised by the ancient Jews, "*διαφοροις βαπτισμοις*." These various washings or baptisms were clearly distinguished from that baptism among the Jews to which we now refer. This baptism was administered *but once* to a person, and that on occasion of his embracing the true religion, and after he had been circumcised. But those "*divers baptisms*" were often repeated in the same person upon new occasions of uncleanness. Those baptisms were prescribed by divine law. This "*baptism for proselytism*," as Lightfoot justly denominates it, was not an ordinance of Divine institution, but adopted from choice; and what the Jews would call, an imitation of what their fathers did at Sinai.

(1.) Maimonides says, "In all ages, when an Ethnic or Gentile is willing to enter into the covenant and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of God, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he *must be circumcised* and baptized, and bring a sacrifice; as it is written, (Numb. xv. 15,) 'As you are, so shall the stranger be.' How are you? By *circumcision and baptism*, and bringing of a

sacrifice. And what is the stranger's sacrifice? A burnt-offering of a beast, or two turtle doves, or two young pigeons—both of them for a burnt-offering."

Other testimonies to the same effect you will find exhibited in "Wall's History of Baptism," *from the Jewish Talmuds*.

(2.) The Hebrew people themselves do not trace this baptism of proselytism to any express command of God, but profess to derive it as *a duty*, by way of inference, from Numb. xv. 15, where it is enacted that "one ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you; an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you." In attempting to execute this law, the Jews thought that they were bound to require of proselytes that they should submit not only to circumcision, but also to *baptism*; for they said that their fathers were not only circumcised, but that when they were brought into the *Sinaitic covenant*, they were baptized. This fact they profess to ascertain from Exod. xix.: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto all the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes." Now, this act of "washing their clothes" the Jews interpreted to mean, *washing their whole bodies*, or baptizing themselves; and that, by this baptism, Moses "sanctified the people, and made them ready against the third day." "Wheresoever," says Maimonides, "in the law the washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means still the washing of the whole body." The same we are told in the Gemara of Babylon.

Agreably to these interpretations, the Jews, long before the coming of Christ, baptized proselytes, and have all along continued to do this down to the present time.

(3.) The proselytes received this baptism *by immersion*. Hence, when the wound created by circumcision was healed, they were taken, as the Jewish customs required, "*to a confluence of waters*." They say that baptism was intended, by the command of God "to wash their clothes at Sinai;" but it is difficult to find at that mountain in Arabia, a *sufficiency* of water for the immersion of all the people.

(4.) But this baptism of proselytism does not appear to have been administered by any officers of the Church to *adult proselytes*.

Leo Modena, speaking of the modern practice of the Jews, says: "They take and circumcise the proselyte; and as soon as he is well of his sore, he is to wash himself all over in water; and this is to be done in the presence of three rabbins." The adults it would seem *immersed or washed* themselves.

2. But our principal concern here, is with *the young children* of such baptized proselytes. How were they treated in the Jewish Church?

We reply, that it was always a fixed custom among the Jews, both to circumcise and to baptize such children of the proselytes received into the Church. "They are wont," says the Gemara, "to baptize such a proselyte in infancy upon the profession of the house of judgment, (or court,) for this is for his good." [The house of judgment was composed of three men who received the profession of the adult proselyte.] Maimonides testifies to the same fact. They baptized as infants, the males under thirteen, the females under twelve years.

Children that were born after their parents had been received into covenant, were *not baptized*; the males were only circumcised.

Dr. Lightfoot therefore observes, that "the baptizing of infants was a thing as well known in the Church of the Jews as ever it hath been in the Christian Church."

I have directed your attention to this baptism long in practice among the Jews, as the facts connected with it serve to show clearly,

(1.) How the Jews had all along understood the meaning of the commands and promises of the Abrahamic covenant. Their practice in this respect proves that they considered *infant church-membership as an established law in the Church*.

(2.) Why the Jews did not express any alarm, that John the Baptist introduced by his ministry the rite of water baptism as introductory to the "kingdom of heaven which was at hand." For, as the Jews always baptized proselytes who joined themselves to the Lord under the *first covenant*, it could not surprise that people, that as a new covenant or dispensation was about to be introduced, John should require the Jews themselves to be baptized with water, in evidence that they believed in a spiritual Messiah and were desirous to be brought into that new covenant.

(3.) We are also instructed by that long-continued practice of

the "baptism of proselytism" among the Jews, that in reference to the New Covenant, our Lord Jesus Christ could say, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." For, while the "yoke of bondage" was to be removed under the New Testament dispensation, the sacrament of baptism was externally to be *no new burden*: the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was also conformed in a great measure to existing observances, as we shall hereafter show; and the ordinances of public worship were drawn in all their simplicity and majesty, immediately, from those of the synagogue.

But let us proceed to the consideration of what is more important, viz:

## II. The *Baptism of John*.

In speaking of this baptism, we shall come into controversy with the Baptists on many points.

*First.* They consider the law of Christian baptism to have been promulgated by John as a minister of God, which we deny; and consequently,

*Second.* They represent John and his disciples as having administered *one* of the sacraments of the Christian Church, before that Church had an existence, and before the new dispensation was introduced; and this we also deny. Yet upon those *two false facts*, they have raised several arguments in favor of their own system, the force of which must expire, when the facts are disproved.

It is then of moment, that we examine every doctrine connected with the baptism of John, before we exhibit the truths which the Scriptures teach, in relation to Christian baptism.

And here, let us first present acknowledged facts:

1. It is acknowledged that John came from God, that he was a prophet of the Lord—the Elias that should come; and of course, that he had a divine commission to preach and to baptize.

2. It is acknowledged that John did baptize with water, and by immersion or washing.

3. And thirdly, it is acknowledged, that the whole ministry of John had its commencement *after* the Son of God was in the flesh. Christ Jesus the promised Saviour was in this world, when John was baptizing at Jordan; yet no one has undertaken to say, that John had intercourse with the incarnate Son of God before he began to baptize, or that he received any authority to baptize with water from the Redeemer in person: for the testimony of Scrip-

ture is most full and particular, to the contrary. For, John himself, at the very time he was baptizing, said, "And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Every part of the history proves this fact, that so far from the incarnate Redeemer instituting baptism *at that time*, and directing John to baptize, the latter did not know who among the Jews the Christ was, and therefore could not have conversed with him.

John therefore must have received his command from God the Father, to baptize, before Jesus of Nazareth showed himself to Israel in the discharge of his prophetic office. All this, we say, is acknowledged to be true; and we shall presently use the important fact, as the basis of an argument.

4. But again: It is acknowledged, that the *whole* mission and ministry of John was *preparative* for the manifestation of the Saviour to Israel, and for the introduction of the kingdom of heaven or new dispensation. While this fact is acknowledged by all, it is very much overlooked and slighted by many who speak of John's office, ministry and baptism: whereas in truth, it is the *pivot* on which the whole mission, preaching, and acts of that forerunner of the Saviour turn. Let us then look carefully at what is recorded in the Scriptures concerning John the Baptist, and exhibit his ministry in preparation for Christ, in its proper and true light.

(1.) Speaking of this extraordinary messenger, the prophet Isaiah was directed to say, chap. xl. 3: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." This prophecy is directly applied to John in Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3; Luke iii. 4. There can be no dispute on this point: but I would wish you to remark that, in connection with the office of John, "a way of the Lord," or Messiah to come, is spoken of in the prophecy and cited passages, and again when Paul meets with disciples of John in his travels; and that this "way of the Lord," whatever it may mean, John the Baptist was sent not to lay out or establish, but merely to *prepare*.

(2.) Again, in Malachi iii. 1, we have another undisputed

prophecy concerning John's office and ministry: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." In this prediction, John is described as a messenger going before his King and Master, to proclaim that he is coming to exhibit his majesty, to enact his laws and assert his dominion. How different from this image in this relation to the Lord Christ, is that false one which would exhibit John as acting in a superior capacity, and introducing a law and establishing an ordinance of the highest character—nothing less than a sacrament of the New Covenant—and that too, at the very time that the Lord and Master himself was present in this world. But waving this just now, let us proceed to inquire, what the prophets, the evangelists, and the apostle Paul mean by "the way of the Messiah or Redeemer," and in what respects John the Baptist could and did operate to prepare that way? We are to inquire,

*First.* What is to be understood by "*the way of the Messiah, or incarnate Redeemer,*" in the connection which these words bear to John the Baptist?

The "way" of the Lord Christ evidently signifies, *his coming into this world to save sinners*, as a way is a means by which we come to a place; and those works, doctrines and laws, by which he should manifest himself after he came in his gospel Church and kingdom, as a way is the course by which one appears in public, and a king advances in royal state or conquest. This sense of the words will not be disputed; for "the way" of the Lord Redeemer, in those prophecies and in the Gospels, means exactly what is meant by "*την οδον του Κυριου,*" in Acts xviii. 25, 26: "This man, viz. Apollos, was instructed by John the Baptist or one of his disciples, *in the way of the Lord*; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently *the things of the Lord*, knowing only the baptism of John; and began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom, when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." Here we find it stated, that the "way of the Lord" comprehended those "things" or truths concerning the Saviour to come or to appear, which John the Baptist had taught to his disciples and required them to believe; and that "these things of the Lord" must have consisted of the following truths at least: first, that all men were lost and undone sinners in themselves, and those whose good works

could not save them ; second, that they all needed a spiritual Saviour, who by his sufferings and death should make atonement for sin and redeem the guilty by his blood ; third, that this Saviour was come into this world, and would soon show himself ; fourth, that he should introduce a new dispensation, setting aside the temple worship, bring salvation to the Gentiles, and baptize with the Holy Ghost. We say, that these great truths at least concerning the Saviour, were included in that "way of the Lord" about which John the Baptist preached and instructed his disciples ; for we are told, *that Apollos, John's disciple*, knew much concerning the gospel way and the things of Christ, and that he only needed to have that way *expounded to him* more perfectly ; that is to say, to be told that Jesus Christ had appeared, suffered, died, rose again, ascended into heaven, poured out his Spirit, and commanded his gospel of salvation to be preached among all nations, accompanying that gospel with divers signs and wonders.

*Second.* We know then, that "by the way of the Lord," the Holy Spirit meant the great truths relating to Christ as a Saviour, and the work of redemption which he wrought ; and must now proceed to answer the second question proposed, viz : How did John the Baptist's ministry among the Jews operate to prepare the way of the Lord before him, or prepare the minds of men for such a Saviour and such a salvation ?

To answer this important question correctly, we must observe, that the work of preparing "the way of the Lord" Messiah implies, what is most true in fact, that *many obstacles* and impediments existed in that way, which the ministry of John tended to remove : hence the prophets speak in connection with John, "of mountains which were to be brought low," and "of crooked paths, and those too" in the desert, "which were to be made straight."

Now these obstacles and impediments arose from the proper character and work of the Saviour, and from a variety of circumstances in which he should be placed among the Jews, when he manifested himself in the flesh ; nor can we understand well the design and bearing of John's ministry and baptism, and answer the question before us, unless we keep that character and work in view, and take under our consideration all those circumstances. Let us attempt to do this here.

1. The *character* of the Saviour, was that of a *substitute* in the

court of Divine justice, and under the moral and holy government of God; and his proper work was to make *atonement for sin*, by suffering the penalty of the law, in deep humiliation; pain and death; and to render that perfect obedience to the law, which man was from the beginning bound to render. All this will not be denied by the Baptists.

2. But the Jews, with the exception of a few, had before the Son of God was manifest in the flesh, formed wrong notions respecting the proper character and work of the Messiah. They believed that the Messiah would be a profound teacher and supporter of the laws and institutions given by Moses; giving light on religious subjects as a prophet of God full of divine inspirations, and standing at the head of the Scribes and Pharisees: but they did not believe that he would be GOD IN OUR NATURE, nor that he would come to suffer, bleed and die, and procure redemption by his own blood for sinners. For they were ignorant of the extent and spirituality and penalty of the moral law; they had no thought that sin was such a great evil as to require a sacrifice, other than the legal sacrifices of the temple, to make an atonement for it: hence, in contemplating the character and work of the promised Messiah, they saw it in every other light than the true one—that of a sufferer for the sins of others, that “of the Lamb which should take away the sin of the world.” Now, how remote from the truth were all those ideas! How exceedingly gross were those errors prevalent among the Jews! What obstacles did they throw in the way of the Lord! And obstacles, which the ministry of John the Baptist was designed to operate against, and to diminish!

Again: The Jews, with a view to carry out their wrong notions of the Messiah, and the high state of religious feeling and splendor in their temple worship, which he should be instrumental in establishing, (for every thought of the Messiah’s reign stood associated with the reigns of David and Solomon,) found it necessary to make him a *temporal prince*, distinguished by every religious and political virtue, and able not only to repel the heathen powers that sought to oppress and persecute them, but to conquer them, and make them to add to the magnificence of his throne and the glory of the Jewish Zion! Here, then, we discover prevailing errors to be corrected, and to administer some correction

of it, was the design of the extraordinary mission and ministry of John the Baptist. Again:

3. The tabernacle and temple worship having been prescribed by Jehovah himself, who enacted the ceremonial law, and gave the patterns by Moses and David, the Jews not only considered it their duty to observe this worship, but felt the strongest attachment to it at the time of Christ's appearance in this world. They believed that the Mosaic law would never be repealed, and that the Messiah would build up and glorify their divine and peculiar institutions, instead of setting them aside or superseding them. But the Saviour would and must, when he came, remove the shadows of himself. The perpetuity of the Jewish worship and Mosaic observances was altogether inconsistent with what the Messiah in person should do in redemption, and with what he should introduce and establish in the Church. Here, then, was to be a great change, for which the Jews were unprepared; and to prepare them gradually for it, *John* was sent to preach and to baptize with water. Lastly:

4. Another covenant, with other sacraments, was to be made, after the Saviour came. The Sinaitic covenant must give place to a second and a better, a covenant subservient to the Abrahamic covenant, and operating to fulfil its great promises. Hence salvation in the name of Christ must be extended to all nations, and the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles must be broken down. Now, to prepare for this great change, so contrary to every expectation and doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees, *John* was sent to preach and to baptize.

We now perceive what obstacles, and rough places, and mountains, lay "in the way of the Lord;" and that in the view of these, and their subsequent removal, *John's* ministry was preparative, and nothing more.

Let us now examine into the ministry of the Baptist.

(1.) If *John's* ministry were *merely preparative* of Christ's coming into the world and manifestation to Israel, then *the time* of that ministry must be towards the end of the ancient dispensation or first covenant, and the beginning of the new covenant or dispensation. Now, every one who reads the Gospels, as they are called, knows that such was the fact. *John* did come and minister

at the end of the old dispensation, to which he properly belonged, and before the commencement of the new covenant. But say, as several Baptist writers would insinuate, by the use which they make of John's baptism, that he did not—say that he belonged to the new dispensation, and what will follow? It will follow,

i. That as John baptized immense multitudes of people, the New Testament Church was not only in existence, but in the most flourishing condition: "all went to his baptism;" the Jews made no opposition. But what became of this New Testament Church when Christ began to preach—when he actually showed himself—when he was arraigned and crucified? Where were the thousands who had received baptism? They seem to have vanished, and the new dispensation seems to have suddenly expired with them.

But place John under the old dispensation still, and make his ministry and baptism, as the Scriptures do, merely *preparative* of a new dispensation, and every event on record is easily accounted for. John baptized those who professed that they needed a Saviour; he told them that the Saviour, the promised Messiah, was ready to appear, and that they should receive him. But when Jesus came, they received him not; he was too poor in appearance, too unostentatious, and too remote in his habits and doctrines from the Pharisees and rulers of their nation; they therefore, though baptized with John's baptism, rejected Christ, and in rejecting him they were not excommunicated from the Christian Church, for no such Church existed then.

ii. Again, it will follow, that if John's ministry was coeval with the new covenant, that covenant, which is the "last testament" of our Lord and Saviour, was in force before the death of the Testator. This is sufficiently absurd, especially as the Redeemer, when he was about to die, said, in the institution of the Supper, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Much confusion in all our ideas must result from connecting John the Baptist, and his ministry and baptism, with the new dispensation. We should have a great change introduced in the divine dispensation, without a word announcing it—without a single miracle to show that it was the will of God. This is not analogous to God's past dealings. John came proclaiming "that the kingdom of heaven was at hand." If he

had been sent to introduce that kingdom, he would have wrought miracles like our Saviour and his apostles did, in attestation of that important fact. But he wrought no miracle!

But John came *before* the opening of the new dispensation. His ministry was a peculiar one; it was merely preparative. In the next lecture, I shall pursue this subject, and offer other evidences to prove that John's mission and ministry were merely preparative, and then give a series of arguments to establish the fact, that John's baptism was not Christian baptism.

## LECTURE XXI.

### HOLY BAPTISM, CONTINUED.

#### JOHN'S MINISTRY AND BAPTISM PREPARATIVE—JOHN'S BAPTISM NOT A SACRAMENT—NOT CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

IN the preceding lecture, we concluded with stating that John's ministry was fixed in time before the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, as a ministry merely preparative of that dispensation would be. We now proceed to observe further,

I. That if John's ministry and baptism belonged to the new dispensation, then John's baptism would be a *sacrament* to be perpetuated in the Church, and consequently it would hold in the sacred history of that Church a place corresponding with the nature and the importance of such an institute. But such a place it does not hold, for it was no sacrament of the covenant. Let us see.

1. No *provision was made* for the perpetual observance in the Church, of John's baptism as a standing sacrament.

(1.) We read that John, with the aid of his disciples, baptized a vast number of people among the Jews who flocked to his baptism; but if his baptism was a sacrament of the New Covenant, it must be perpetuated in the Church, and means must be provided for its perpetual observance. But where is there a hint given, that suitable means to that end were provided? Where were the officers to take this business in charge? What charge did John give to any in relation to this institute? None at all. John baptized for a few years, and when he was removed by death, the observance of his baptism expired with him. The apostles did not meet with any baptizing, as a duty imposed by John; nor do

they seem to have considered the many whom he had baptized (some of whom no doubt afterwards embraced the Christian faith) as those who had received Christian baptism.

(2.) It will not do to say that John's baptism as a sacrament was perpetuated through the command of the Saviour; for it is obvious that our Lord in this matter acted wholly independent and irrespective of John and his baptism. The Saviour had no intercourse with John while he lived; their family of disciples acted apart. No regulation was made for carrying forward between them *John's baptism*; and our Lord, who spoke of John as a prophet, never referred to his baptism as an institute to be maintained: but when the proper time came, after his resurrection, he instituted the sacrament of Holy Baptism.

2. Still further to show that John's whole ministry was *merely preparative*, let us consider it in its principal parts.

(1.) As the prophet had foretold, he was a voice crying in the wilderness of Judea, that is to say, in the rough and rocky parts of the hill-country, not remote from Jordan, (where however there were towns and their inhabitants,) to whom he cried or preached, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Allusion is here evidently had, either,

i. To the custom of the Jews in preparing great roads from every part of their land leading to the sanctuary of God, for easy and expeditious travelling. This they did with much care, when the times of their great festivals drew nigh. Out of these roads they removed obstructions, they filled up holes in them, and otherwise improved them. Maimonides tells us, that annually, upon the fifteenth day of the month Adar, certain persons were sent out to prepare the ways. To this, allusion is made in many passages of Scripture. Or,

ii. The phraseology in relation to John the Baptist may be borrowed from the ancient custom of preparing the ways or roads along which a king should advance in state, or with his army. Xenophon, I think, calls those who were thus employed in clearing the way *ὄδοποδοί*. And Josephus is particular in his account of the manner in which the way was prepared for Titus, on his advance towards Jerusalem. Such a way-preparer for the Redeemer was John the Baptist; and it is most remote from his

office and conduct to convert him into an enactor of laws—an institutor, like Moses, of any permanent and most important ordinance in the Church.

(2.) But we must come nearer to facts in the ministry of John.

In a former lecture we said, that in “preparing the way of such a Saviour as the Lord Jesus Christ is, and removing existing obstructions in that way, John the Baptist must have proclaimed that all men were lost and undone sinners in themselves; sinners who were exposed to the wrath to come, whose civil and religious privileges and whose good works could not save them, and who all needed a spiritual Saviour, who by his sufferings and death should make atonement for sin and redeem the guilty by his own blood. For what did the Jews, who were unprepared for the Lord, think and believe?

i. They believed that they were sinners, to be sure, but not lost and undone *in themselves*; not exposed to the damnation of hell, but in special favor with God, as the natural descendants of Abraham, and on the way to heaven.

ii. They believed that they could save themselves by offering sacrifices, attending to ritual and traditional laws, observing the solemn feasts, and performing good works. Hence salvation was in their own hands: they could obtain it by their own righteousness. Accordingly, they did not believe that they needed a spiritual Saviour, who should be set forth a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; and of course,

iii. They looked to find in the Messiah, when he came, a kind of mixed high priest of the temple, of an elevated religious character, with a civil prince of great wisdom, ardent in the work of promoting their religious institutions, active and victorious over the surrounding heathen nations.

Look at all these notions: how unprepared did they render the Jews for the coming of our Lord to magnify the moral law, and to give his own life a ransom for sinners!

3. And now, look at the *preachings* of John, and see how his doctrines and warnings militated against those notions.

He came among the Jews armed with *the terrors of the Lord*, proclaiming that all were lost and wretched sinners, and exposed to “the wrath of God, revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.”

(1.) His call was, "Repent ye, repent ye." (Matt. iii. 3.)

(2.) He said, not only to the Sadducees, but also to the Pharisees who came to his baptism, "O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" From this representation of the exposure of the Pharisees, who were the religious among the Jews, "to the wrath to come," we may easily know what he must have said to others. His words tell them that their sacrifices, altars, gifts, attention to rites and traditions, and other doings, could not save them. In evidence of their insufficiency for salvation, John himself had in his ministry no connection with the temple service, and disregarded all traditionary observances. He described the best among them as lost, required them to abandon their self-righteous notions, and told them that they had not yet brought forth "fruits meet for repentance." (Matt. iii. 7, 8.) He bade them look to the promised Messiah, now ready to appear, saying, "for the kingdom is at hand."

(3.) He broke in upon their foolish conceit that they were the special favorites of Heaven, because of their relation to Abraham. "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (Matt. iii. 9.)

(4.) John described the Messiah just about to show himself in his gloriously divine character, as one elevated high above all the princes of the earth and exalted in majesty and greatness. Did this prophet of the Lord pay any court to Herod? He cared for none of the potentates of the earth. He regarded all their transient grandeur and power with contempt, and was himself employed in a nobler service. But when he speaks of the Saviour, mark his words: "He that cometh after me is mightier than I," for he can communicate to man the Holy Spirit, acting with an influence like fire. "His shoes I am not worthy to bear." I am not worthy to be a menial servant of this Saviour.

Who is then this Saviour to come? Not a temporal prince, but "the Word that was in the beginning with God and was God," and "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." How opposite to all the thoughts and sentiments of the Jews were the preachings of John! How strange must his doctrines have been to the ears of that people!

But further, it has also been said, that the attachment of the Jews to the temple worship and the Mosaic institutions was so strong, when the Saviour was about to appear and change that worship and those institutions into that which was better, as that it formed an obstacle "in the way of the Lord," and that with a view to *this obstacle*, John's mission and ministry was wholly preparative of that way. And do not recorded facts prove this very clearly? Did John, who was of the priestly order, attach himself to the temple service? Did he offer sacrifices in the sacred court, and employ himself in the ceremonies of the law and in ritual observances? No; though under the Mosaic economy, he was sent to prepare the Jews for the removal by the coming of the Messiah of the temple and its worship, of the ceremonial law and all its typical observances. He therefore kept himself entirely abstracted from the temple and its courts; he was not seen there. In his early life he was in the wilderness; in his ministry he remained near Jordan, and every part of that life and ministry served to proclaim aloud to the Jews, that temple worship and ritual observances were not essential to salvation, and that the Mosaic institutions must be removed and give place to him who should offer the great sacrifice for sin and fulfil all the types; to him who should introduce a new and better covenant. You perceive then how John's ministry was hereunto preparative.

Lastly: We have said that the Messiah was to introduce another dispensation and establish a better covenant than the Sinaitic covenant, and founded upon better promises. But the Jews were set upon the law of Moses; they believed that the first or Sinaitic covenant would remain in force for ever, and its obligations be perpetual.

(5.) Now, for this approaching change, John was sent to prepare the way; and *in this very work*, he did faithfully labor.

i. He proclaimed that another dispensation, called emphatically "the kingdom of heaven," was at hand.

ii. He employed himself in preaching, not in sacrificing, etc.; in preparation for the dispensation of the gospel, by preaching.

iii. He engaged in the administration of no Mosaic ordinance; but in baptizing with water, to prepare them for the abrogation

of circumcision, and the disannulling of the ceremonial law, and the Divine institution of the sacrament of Holy Baptism; of which we say, that his baptism at Jordan *was merely preparative*.

Let this fact in relation to John's baptism be carefully noted. We say, that John's baptism was not a sacrament, but a temporary institution, to live and die with John, and designed to prepare for the introduction of the second covenant and its initiating sacrament, Holy Christian Baptism. It would be impossible to administer baptism by water in a religious manner and in preparation for the way of the Lord Messiah, as John was directed to do, without comprehending in such an institution several points of coincidence with the Christian institute. But though similarities are to be found between them, yet John's baptism was not the baptism of Christ, nor was it a sacrament of the covenant.

## II. John's baptism *not Christian baptism.*

The general character which has just been given to John's mission and ministry, as being *merely preparative*, must of course belong to the baptism which he administered at Jordan; and if so, this fact ought to be a conclusive argument to prove that his baptism was an institution distinct in its circumstances and in its end, from the baptism instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let me here briefly exhibit the various arguments which establish our doctrine. Many of these arguments you will find clearly stated in a masterly manner, by Robert Hall, whose piece you will read at your leisure. I shall therefore just detail in their order the propositions which contain Hall's arguments, adding my remarks wherever they shall be required, and additional arguments.

1. "The commission to baptize all nations, originated in the express command of our Lord Jesus Christ; but John's baptism, it is evident, had no such origin." John was baptizing "before our Saviour assumed the prophetic office and legislative function; hence it is in no respect entitled to be considered as a Christian institute."

2. It is acknowledged that our baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament dispensation and Church: but John's baptism was administered, as we have shown, before the new dispensation opened. He preached therefore "that the kingdom of heaven

*was at hand,*" not that it was already come with its peculiar laws and institutions; that the Messiah was about to appear openly, not that he was known in person or acting in his great official capacity.

3. Christian baptism, it is acknowledged, is a sacrament of visible initiation into the Christian Church, as distinguished from the ancient Jewish Church. But the baptism of John did not and could not initiate into any visible Church. It did not initiate into the Jewish Church, for that was done by the sacrament of circumcision. John's ministry and baptism were confined to the Jews, and they had all been circumcised.

And, John's baptism could not initiate into the Christian Church, for that Church was not gathered until after John's death and our Lord's crucifixion and resurrection.

(1.) If John's baptism was initiatory into the Christian Church, then that Church must have comprehended thousands and tens of thousands as its members, before our Lord himself began to preach. For all went to John's baptism, etc.

(2.) If John's baptism was initiatory into the Christian Church, then Peter could not have said to the Jews at Jerusalem, "Repent, be converted, every one of you, and submit to baptism." Then Paul would not have re-baptized (which he actually did) John's disciples. But more of this anon.

4. Another argument of Hall, whom see: "The baptism of John was a baptism of repentance and reformation, as a preparation for the approaching kingdom of God; but the institution of Christ included an explicit profession of faith in a particular person as the Lord of that kingdom."

To make this argument of Hall more forcible, we must here observe,

(1.) That John found the Jews expecting a Messiah, not suited to the wants of sinners as condemned, lost, and helpless. In order therefore to prepare the way of the Lord, he came preaching that all men were undone in themselves and needed a Saviour to atone for their sins—"a Lamb of God to take away their sins by offering himself up a sacrifice unto God;" he exhibited the requirements of the law and the terrors of the Lord, and sought thereby to alarm the consciences of his hearers, to drive them out of their false refuges, to humble them under a sense of their great sinful-

ness, and to convince them that they needed a Saviour other than a temporal prince—a Saviour from sin.

(2.) Now, what John's preaching aimed at was secured. Thousands heard him—were awakened, humbled, and brought to confess that they required a spiritual Saviour; and these feelings and convictions which were avowed (and this avowal is expressed in Scripture, by "the people's confessing their sins,") were the qualifications for John's baptism, which, as it signified that they were humbled, and anxious to obtain forgiveness through a spiritual Saviour, is called the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."

(3.) John baptized every one who confessed that he was *such* a sinner, and so unable to save himself by any thing that he could do, as to need a Saviour to atone for him. This confession, indicating a change in sentiment in relation to the condition of the sinner, and the character and office of the Saviour to come, was *all* that John's baptism required, and all that it signified in respect of the persons baptized. We therefore perceive its design and end, which was to prepare the minds of men to believe in the Saviour, whenever he should come. It had a very limited sphere, and could continue but a little while; for it was not a sacrament, and it did not signify and seal any covenant relations and blessings. Now look at the baptism of Christ.

i. Christian baptism stands connected with the very form of the Christian Church, and recognizes all those grand truths developed by the life, preaching, death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Hence it is called "a baptism into Christ," and not merely "a baptism unto repentance."

ii. When adults are qualified for Christian baptism, it is necessary that they have higher qualifications than the multitudes who went to John's baptism. It is not sufficient that they so confess their sins as to avow their need of a Saviour, without knowing who that Saviour is. No: they must have sorrow of heart, believe in Christ as their Saviour, and engage to follow him as such, "who was delivered up for our offenses, and raised again for our justification."

"The spiritual import," says Hall, "of Christian baptism, as asserted by Paul, transcends incomparably the measure of religious knowledge possessed during the ministry of John. (See Rom. vi. 3. 4.)

“Of the sublime mysteries of the Christian sacraments, connected as they were with events that followed John’s death, his disciples were ignorant; truths were veiled from their eyes, so that they could not be baptized into Christ’s death.”

“The disciples of John did not know more than their master; yet we are told that the least in the kingdom is greater than he. Greater in what? not in piety, zeal, and labor; but in a knowledge of the facts attested after the day of Pentecost, and a knowledge of the mysteries with which they are allied inseparably. These, however, form the very core and substance of the apostolic testimony, the unshaken profession of which was the indispensable condition of baptism.”

5. Another argument which Hall offers is this: “Christian baptism was invariably administered in the name of Jesus; while there is sufficient evidence that John’s was not performed in that name.

“To ‘baptize in the name of Jesus, expresses that the subjects of baptism do publicly confess that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah. This, at John’s baptism, was not and could not be done. Indeed, afterwards, thousands of those who had acknowledged that they needed a Saviour actually rejected the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to the Messiahship.

“If we examine the matter more closely, we shall perceive that that ceremony imports much more; that it includes an act of worship and avowal of subjection and obedience to him in whose name we are baptized. Therefore, to baptize in the name of Jesus, which John did not, (much less in the name of the Trinity,) is that which is essential to the validity of Christian baptism.”

6. Mr. Hall argues further not only that John distinguished his baptism from that of the Saviour which was to follow his, but that the baptism of Christ is actually distinguished in Scripture from John’s baptism by its more important character and superior effects. The words of John to this effect are plain. He attaches an inferiority to his baptism, a great efficacy to the other baptism, and shows that his did not, but that Christ’s baptism properly belonged to, “the dispensation of the Spirit.”

And the recorded facts in relation to the two institutions prove it. What became, as the Saviour more and more clearly exhibited himself by his words and deeds, of the multitudes baptized

by John? They are unseen—unknown—lost among the enemies of the incarnate Son of God!

But not so those whom the apostles baptized. They were brought into an intimate relation to the Saviour; were of one accord, animated by faith and love, and prepared to meet trials.

“There was no collation of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit attending the baptism of John. But in the primitive Church Christian baptism was usually honored by such communications of the Holy Ghost. Hence John himself drew this line of marked distinction: ‘I indeed baptize with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.’ Hence the rite introduced by John has, for distinction’s sake, some explanatory phrase or epithet added to it in the New Testament.”

7. Among these arguments let those which we have before introduced be placed, that no provision was made for perpetuating the baptism of John; which would have been done, surely, had it been a standing ordinance or sacrament of the New Covenant. John’s baptism ceased with his death, though his doctrine did not. Who baptized after John was beheaded? No one. Of the temporary baptizing of our Lord’s disciples, I shall speak hereafter. Again:

8. The apostles *rebaptized* at Jerusalem and in Judea, those who had been baptized by John, when, after and on the day of Pentecost, any of them embraced by faith Christ crucified as their Saviour.

How many had John baptized? An innumerable multitude of the Jews. Mark the words: “Then went out to him, Jerusalem,” that is, the greater number of the inhabitants of that city, “and *all Judea*, and all the coast round about Jordan, and were baptized in Jordan, confessing their sins.” It was quite fashionable to receive John’s baptism. Every body was delighted to hear that the Messiah was to appear; all were ready to profess that they had need of him, and accordingly offered themselves for this baptism, without knowing the particular character and circumstances under which that Messiah should appear, and not expecting to find him in the humble form of a servant, prepared to die on the cross. For, “when he came to his own,” (and among the Jews the baptized by John might, as a people prepared for the Lord, be emphatically called his own,) “his own received him not.”

Admitting now that vast multitudes of the Jews were baptized by John, when the Spirit under the ministry of the apostles was poured out and thousands were converted, did these thousands comprehend none of the former? This will not be believed: many whom John baptized were now converted, yet not one of them was excluded from Christian baptism by the consideration that they had already been baptized. They were all baptized: if they were not, exceptions would have been recorded in favor of John's baptism, but that baptism is not once mentioned.

But we have proof of the *re-baptism* of those who had been baptized by John, and this proof is decisive. It is recorded in Acts xix., in these words: "And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus: and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."

Our argument from this record is simply this:

(1.) That the narrative throughout uses the words "baptism and baptized" *in one sense*, to signify certain rites performed; and that to understand those words to mean, in one verse, "actual immersion into water," or the actual administration of the sacrament of baptism, and in another, to signify, not actual baptism, but a *baptism by construction*, is to put a forced and unnatural sense upon the words, especially when the numerous arguments which we have stated clearly show, that the baptism of John was an institute distinct from the baptism administered by the apostles in the name of the Lord Jesus.

(2.) Again, that the whole narrative shows, that Paul considers John's baptism as being defective under the gospel dispensation, and that he contrasts it with another baptism. If John's baptism

was the same as Christian baptism, Paul would have asked, Have ye been baptized? but, he knew that there had been a baptism administered which was not Christian baptism, and not accompanied with the same effects.

(3.) Once again: The narrative says, "When they heard this." What did they hear? That John's baptism was that which was merely preparative, and not attended with the communications of the Holy Spirit. Then they were "baptized." How? If not with water in the name of the Lord Jesus, it must follow of course, that they still received no other water baptism than John's baptism. And if the question had been proposed to them again, "Unto what then were ye baptized with water?" they would be obliged to answer as truth required, "Unto John's baptism;" for in such case they never had received any other water baptism than John's. But this is contradicted by the whole tenor of the history.

This sense, which is the obvious one and corresponding with all that transpired after the day of Pentecost, certain Baptist writers violently oppose. To exhibit all the facts in this controversy, let us read deliberately from the 23d verse of the 18th chapter of Acts.

Before this history begins, you will find that the apostle Paul had performed two journeys in the gospel service, wherein he had been blessed with much fruit of his ministry.

His *first* journey, undertaken with Barnabas, (Acts xiii. 14,) was over Seleucia to Cyprus, in Pamphilia, in Pisidia, Iconia to Lystra and Derbe, whence he returned through Attalia to Antioch.

His *second* journey, accompanied by Silas, was through Syria and Cilicia, (Acts xv.,) to Derbe and Lystra, into Phrygia, Galatia; then loosing from Troas, (Acts xvi.,) he travelled into Macedonia and Greece, to Antioch again.

At Antioch, where the Christian Church was large, Paul remained a little less than a year. He then leaves this city and enters upon his

*Third* gospel missionary tour. Of this journey, the account begins, Acts xviii. 23. Paul passed through Syria and Cilicia, Cappadocia, Lycaonia, to Derbe and Lystra in Galatia, and thence into Phrygia. While the apostle was thus employed in parts of Asia, an occurrence took place at Ephesus and Corinth, which Luke particularly narrates:

Acts xviii. 24: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at

Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus."

The name of this Jew was "Apollos." Leusden thinks this name is of Greek origin, and signifies a destroyer. It is more probably of Hebrew derivation, אפלה, rendered perhaps by Horace "apella," which signifies darkness, adversity or sorrow. He was however not the "Apollos" spoken of in Rom. xvi. 10.

This Apollos was born at Alexandria in Egypt, a city built by Alexander the Great, and to the site of which he is said to have been directed by a dream; a city of great trade, and distinguished by its schools and by the institution alled *Μουσείον*, Strabo, l. 18. Strabo also testifies, that Rome was full of Alexandrians and Tarsians, who were teachers and promoted learning.

Alexandria contained a great number of Jews. Philo the Jew was an Alexandrian. And in consequence of the great multitude of Jews residing in that emporium of Egypt, we cannot be surprised to find that it was the birthplace of Apollos.

This man, born at Alexandria, was, eloquent in speech, "*ανδρα λογιον*:" not merely a man full of words and capable of arranging them in utterance, but one well instructed and who could speak well on various subjects, from a mind well stored with knowledge. The Ethiopian version says, "a wise and prudent man." Hesi-chius says, "*λογις*" is as much as "*ὁ της ιστοριας εμπειρος πε παιδευμενος*," skilled in history, learned. The Lexicon of Constantine translates the word by "eloquens, prudens, doctus, verbosus." "*Λογιος*" is also used by the Greeks to signify a "prophet," an experienced expounder of divine oracles; in which sense that word might here be understood, for it is added that Apollos was also "*mighty in the Scriptures.*" The Old Testament writings are called, *the Scriptures*. (2 Tim. iii. 15; Acts xvii. 2, 11.) Apollos had read them much; he understood them, could expound them well, and instruct others. For this work, Apollos was qualified by his education, reading, and the instructions given to his sanctified mind by the disciples of John.

Now this pious and eloquent man "came to Ephesus," at the time the apostle Paul was travelling "in Galatia and Phrygia." He came to Ephesus, to instruct the Jews in divine things, while perhaps he had friends there whom he desired to visit, or some business which he was called to transact, but principally to teach

correct doctrine respecting the coming Messiah. Certain it is, between the cities of Alexandria and Ephesus there was much commerce and friendship. Gordian Imp. has inscribed upon a coin, “*Εφεσιων καὶ Ἀλεξανδρεων ὁμογοία*,” the concord of the Ephesians and Alexandrians; and in the middle of it, there is a representation of the heads of Serapis and Diana united. Serapis, or Osiris, had a splendid temple at Alexandria. Diana was a goddess of Egyptian origin, (the many-breasted Diana,) and the protectress of Ephesus.

Acts xviii. 25: “This man was instructed in the way of the Lord: and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.”

Apollós, we are here told, “was instructed in the way of the Lord.” “The way of the Lord:” in some MSS. the proper sense is given, viz: “the way of Christ;” in others, “the word of the Lord,” that is, the gospel doctrine which teaches the way of salvation, as Moses and the prophets had revealed it, and as John the Baptist in particular had more clearly taught it. (Ps. xviii. 31; lxxxvi. 11; Isa. xl. 3; Mal. ii. 8.)

In this way or doctrine, or revelation of the Saviour, Apollós “was well instructed” by the disciples of John, who were numerous, (Mark i. 4, 5;) and who, moving in various countries in Judea, Egypt, etc., sought to instruct others. These disciples did not know Jesus of Nazareth to be the Christ; they had not heard him preach, nor seen the miracles he wrought; they had not heard of his death, resurrection and ascension, nor of the outpourings of his Spirit on the day of Pentecost. But what they knew of a *Saviour at hand, and one who should redeem sinners by his blood*, they taught to others; so that by their means “the way of the Lord” was somewhat prepared among distant nations.

It was probably in Egypt, and by some of the first disciples of John, that Apollós was instructed in the “way of the Lord,” of which he became a preacher.

Dorotheus, Bishop of Tyre, errs, who counts Apollós one of the seventy disciples; and others, equally without authority, say that he was a disciple of the evangelist Mark. In trying to disseminate that portion of divine truth with which he was acquainted, Apollós was “fervent in spirit,” zealous and laborious; acting

under the impression that no event was so important as that of the coming of the Saviour, and that it concerned the Jews especially to lay aside their wrong notions of the Messiah, and to prepare as lost sinners, to receive One who should come to seek and to save that which was lost. He therefore "spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord." The fire of the Holy Spirit burned in his soul; his tongue was employed on no common subjects; for he taught the things of the Lord: truths relating to the Saviour, as coming and about to appear; his exalted office, the end of his coming into this world, and the spiritual kingdom that he should set up. On these subjects, he spoke from the ancient prophecies eloquently, and "taught, *ακριβῶς*," diligently and thoroughly, (Matt. xi. 3; Luke i. 3,) so that he entered into the marrow of his subject, and communicated instruction with ability. But yet he knew little of what had transpired in Judea and at Jerusalem within a few years past, and of the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth: for,

Apollos "knew only *the baptism of John*." The baptism of John is here put for that doctrine concerning the Saviour which John taught, and which he required those to receive whom he baptized. Now, that very doctrine shows that John's ministry and baptism were merely preparative. Apollos knew what John had testified concerning the Saviour about to manifest himself. But while he knew that John's testimony accorded with the prophecies, and taught what he knew, he was a man who beheld but the first dawn of the morning; he had not seen the sun rising above the horizon, for "he knew only the baptism of John."

The subject will be pursued in the next succeeding lecture.

## LECTURE XXII.

### HOLY BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### JOHN'S BAPTISM, AND THE BAPTISM ADMINISTERED BY CHRIST'S DISCIPLES, TEMPORARY.

WE have said, that "Apollos knew only the baptism of John;" and we are expressly told by the sacred historian, that this baptism and the doctrine connected with it, left this man and his associate disciples ignorant that "Jesus of Nazareth was Christ," and of course ignorant that the Lord Jesus had suffered, died, rose again and ascended into heaven, and sent forth his apostles to erect among the nations the kingdom of his grace.

And let me ask, can that ordinance be the baptism of Christ, which leaves the baptized entirely ignorant that God was "manifest in the flesh" in the person of Jesus, the son of Mary; entirely ignorant of what he did to procure our redemption, and of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven in this world? No; the baptism of John may be the institute of some other dispensation, but it cannot be a *sacrament* of the New Covenant.

While in this state of ignorance of the most important facts, Apollos was still looking for "the coming of the Messiah:" nor will it appear strange to us, that he was thus unacquainted with events calculated to awaken the deepest interest in the hearts of all who waited for the consolation of Israel, when we reflect that if he had heard John himself, and received his baptism at Jordan he must have removed from Judea before John saw Jesus coming to him, as we read, John i. 29; or that if it was at Alexandria that Apollos was instructed by some of John's disciples, which is more probable, those disciples must have left Judea before the Lord Jesus manifested himself openly to the house of Israel.

There were, no doubt, already at Alexandria, at the time that the apostle Paul was preaching, those persons who knew more than the baptism of John, and who could have taught the way of the Lord perfectly; and it is also true, that at that time no one religiously inquisitive could have travelled from Alexandria through the Holy Land to Asia Minor, without hearing some important gospel truths, and acquiring more knowledge than that of John's baptism. But we do not know that Apollos remained at Alexandria, or that he came by land to Ephesus: hence he did not hear those additional truths; and there were others in a similar state of ignorance, as appears from Acts xix., who had not been favored with opportunities of hearing the gospel fully. Certain it is, Apollos "knew only the baptism of John," and what he knew he preached to the Jews at Ephesus in the synagogue, with zeal and eloquence. It was in the synagogue, while employed in teaching the doctrine of John, that Apollos was heard by Aquila and Priscilla.

Acts xviii. 26: "And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom, when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

Hearing Apollos in the synagogue, Aquila and Priscilla soon ascertained, that though acquainted with the *gospel in prophecy*, he was ignorant of the *gospel in its fulfilment*. But they did not correct his mistakes as to facts openly in the synagogue. They "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God," which he already knew in part, "more perfectly:" that is to say, they told him that the Saviour had come, and that Jesus of Nazareth, as John had declared, was the Christ; that he had exhibited his wisdom in teaching, his power in working miracles; that he had suffered and died according to the Scriptures, risen again, ascended into heaven; that he had poured out his Spirit, commanded his gospel to be preached among the nations; that he had instituted the sacrament of baptism, and ordered it to be administered in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; that thousands (comprehending many of the disciples of John) were converted and so baptized by the apostles.

This was an hour rich in blessing to Apollos; a meeting most happy to his soul with well-informed Christians. He heard their

discourse with delighted attention, learned much in a short time, and put his improvement in the knowledge of the mysteries of the glorious gospel now unfolded, to immediate public use.

We are not told that Apollos was baptized, or that he preached at Ephesus, for the sacred historian studies brevity. Much is left to be inferred from what the apostles did at Jerusalem, from that fervency of spirit which marked the character of this eloquent man, and from what is recorded in the succeeding chapter.

We know that Apollos soon set out with Aquila and Priscilla for Corinth, to strengthen the disciples there, as Paul was now daily expected to arrive at Ephesus. Aquila and Priscilla no doubt told him with what success Paul had preached at Corinth, told him that he might be more useful in that city than elsewhere, and persuaded him to go.

27th verse: "And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, (of which Corinth was the chief city,) the brethren wrote, (for the primitive churches were vigilant, and regulated their proceedings in relation to foreigners, in the absence of the apostles, by written testimonials or certificates,) exhorting the disciples to receive Apollos." They did receive him; for, "When he was come, he helped them much who had believed through grace." But he did more than instruct and animate believers; for, (Acts xviii. 28,) "He mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, (in their synagogues,) showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." Apollos at Corinth exerted his superior talents in the great cause in which he was now enlisted. Wherever an opportunity was afforded, he publicly addressed the Jews, calling them to consider the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah, and to behold their accomplishment in Jesus of Nazareth. Nor were his labors expended in vain, for "he mightily convinced the Jews," so that no doubt was left upon their minds: "διακατελεγχεσθαι"—he exhibited unanswerable arguments; confuted them when they attempted to reply, such was their conviction. The subject was, that *Jesus was Christ*; Jesus, who was crucified at Jerusalem, and preached by his apostles. He proved that this Jesus was the long-expected Messiah, from the fulfilment of the ancient prophecies in the time of his coming, birth, descent, person, life, works, sufferings and glory.

Many were convinced. This fact we learn from the reproving

language of Paul: for, among the numerous converts, some said, "I am of Paul," others, "I am of Apollos." (1 Cor. iii. 4-9.) From Corinth the eloquent Apollos travelled to other places. (1 Cor. xvi. 12.) From Titus iii. 13, we learn that he went to Crete; whence, Jerome thinks, he afterwards returned with Titus to Corinth. But one writer makes him the bishop of Corinth, and another the bishop of Cæsarea—altogether uncertain. We know that he was an eminent man and faithful minister of Christ: where he ended his days we know not.

#### EXPOSITION OF ACTS, CHAPTER XIX.

We now open the nineteenth chapter, in which the acts of the apostle Paul while at Ephesus are recorded. Verse 1: "And it came to pass, that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus." Paul had visited and strengthened the disciples in Galatia and Phrygia, and now passes through the northern or upper coasts, "*τα ανωτερα μέρη*," of Asia Minor along the Ægean sea, as Bithynia, Mysia, Phrygia, and Lydia, (see 1 Macc. iii. 37; vi. 1; 2 Macc. i. 23-25,) called the upper lands and provinces. From these provinces, Paul "came to Ephesus," as he had promised, to the joy of the brethren. In Ephesus, he determined to stay a longer time to advance the cause of gospel truth, by preaching to the Gentiles, whom he had not yet addressed, and who were usually in great numbers congregated at *Ephesus*, a commercial and literary city, from every part of the world.

Now at Ephesus, where Christians existed, the apostle found "certain disciples." They were, as we shall presently see, by the usual profession of faith, the disciples of Christ, but disciples in a certain degree. This Paul ascertained, as we shall see from

Verse 2: "He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" These disciples "believed:" what did they believe? We answer, the word of the Lord communicated by the ancient prophets, and the testimony of John the Baptist. All this received with the heart, constituted them pardoned sinners; but as it was true that new revelations had been made since John preached, revelations of vast moment, so *the belief of these important truths* was required to an admission to Christian baptism.

What doctrine John the Baptist taught, how much his disciples knew, we have before stated. Now, as those who knew, like Apollos, John's baptism, these twelve disciples were known to the Christians at Ephesus, who, telling the apostle Paul that they were in a state to hear and believe the gospel, he addressed them for the purpose of leading them to the knowledge of the "truth as it is in Jesus," and to the enjoyment of the consolations of the gospel and of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. He therefore asked them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost? "And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." These words require some explanation. We remark:

The Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is the third Person in the Godhead. His existence and operations were early revealed. The ancient Scriptures speak much of the Holy Spirit. The ancient saints sang of his power in the Church. All the disciples of John knew that there was a Holy Ghost. He told them that the Messiah "should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

But let it be observed, that the name of Holy Ghost is in many passages used for his operations and gifts, both ordinary and extraordinary. Thus, John vii. 39: "The Holy Ghost was not yet given." Surely the Holy Ghost in his ordinary operations had long been given to all the renewed, and also sometimes in his extraordinary gifts to the prophets of old, to Bezaleel and Aholiab, etc.; but there was to be an *extraordinary communication* of the Holy Ghost after Christ rose from the dead, as an illustrious evidence of his Messiahship, and extraordinary gifts were to be imparted. Now these gifts and operations, which in John vii. are called "the Holy Ghost," were not yet given, "because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

Now, when the apostle Paul asked those disciples of John, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" and they replied, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," it is obvious that the words "Holy Ghost" have *the same meaning* as in John vii.—referring, not to the *person* of the Holy Spirit, nor to his *ordinary operations* in grace and redemption, but to his miraculous gifts and extraordinary operations. The sense of Paul's question is, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary communications or gifts, since ye believed?" For, it is well known that such communications were made after the

day of Pentecost, and usually after the converts had just received Christian baptism.

The answer of those disciples corresponded with the *sense* of the question: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any extraordinary and miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit, or whether the Holy Ghost be given in any extraordinary communications." That such is the only sense which the words in their connection admit of, is evident, first, from the fact that these twelve persons were regarded as pious, by the brethren. Second, from the fact that the apostle Paul accounted them sincere believers so far as they had heard the Word of God. Had the apostle considered them to be impenitent, unconverted and unbelieving sinners, he would have called them to repentance and to faith; he would have instructed them in the doctrine of the Holy Ghost in his ordinary operations to produce faith and repentance, and not have spoken to them of John's baptism. Third, from the fact that when they heard that Jesus was the Christ, he was instantly embraced as their Saviour, and they were immediately baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Understanding then that these disciples had been baptized before, but had not received any of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, the apostle asked,

Verse 3: "And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized?" Unto what profession of faith then were ye baptized? "And they said, Unto John's baptism." This answer instantly explained the whole matter; for the apostle knew that no extraordinary communications of the Holy Ghost attended John's baptism, as it did not belong to the new dispensation. The narrative proceeds,

Verse 4: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people," not that they now believed in the Lord Jesus, for they *did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and therefore could not be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*; but, "that they should believe in him who should come after him, that is," says Paul, "on Christ Jesus," who did come after him: for John himself had long been baptizing before *he himself knew* that Jesus was the Christ, and therefore he could not call on the people whom he baptized, "*to believe on Christ Jesus*;" and many baptized by John had returned home, some to distant countries,

and were *not present* at Jordan, when John by special revelation from God pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold the Lamb of God" etc.; and consequently, like Apollos and these twelve disciples at Ephesus, they did not know that Jesus was the Christ, and could not believe on Christ Jesus, any more than the heathen can who never heard of his name.

But now through the preaching of Paul, these twelve heard that "Christ Jesus," that crucified one, that risen one, who had "finished the work which the Father had given him to do, and been received up into glory, until the times of the restitution of all things," was that Saviour who came after John, and on whom John exhorted them to believe.

Verse 5: And through grace given, these twelve persons, "when they heard this" gospel preached by Paul, of which instructive preaching but a little is here recorded, as the substance might be easily gathered from the context—I say, when those disciples heard this, "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

The historian does not say that these persons were baptized by Paul, for this apostle tells us that he seldom administered the ordinance of baptism. But whether baptism on this occasion was administered by Paul, or by some of his fellow-laborers, certain it is, those twelve disciples who had been baptized by John, were now baptized with water in the name of the Lord Jesus. Nor was this a *rebaptism*, for the ordinances were distinct: though water was used, yet these believers were now for the first time "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," and united to the visible Church of Christ.

It is then denied that these persons were, at the time Paul conferred with them, *baptized at all*. And how is the plain historical fact attempted to be set aside, by those who wish to make out John's baptism *to be the same* with the New Testament baptism? In this strange way: They say that the fifth verse does not belong to the history of the twelve disciples, and are not the words of Luke, but the words of the apostle Paul, and designed by him to describe what occurred at John's baptism; and therefore to be understood as if it were said, "John said unto the people, that they should believe in him who should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus;" and when they, the people collected at Jordan

several years before, heard this preaching of John, they the people were baptized by John in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Against this hard-sought construction many arguments may be brought, but I shall content myself with a few; premising,

*First.* That the misinterpretation originates in representing the concluding part of the fourth verse, containing these words, "that is, on Christ Jesus," to be the language of John the Baptist; whereas they are evidently the words of the apostle Paul, designating who he was who came after John, namely, Christ Jesus; for John baptized many thousands, before he knew, as we have before observed, that *Jesus was the Christ*: hence he could not have exhorted the people "to believe on Christ Jesus;" and hence we find also that Apollos and other disciples of John did not know that Jesus was Christ. But,

*Secondly.* That exposition rests upon two false facts:

1. That John said unto the people at Jordan, that they should believe on Christ Jesus; which he did not and could not do. He said no more on this point, than that the people should "believe on him who should come after him."

2. That he baptized the people in the name of the Lord Jesus. This he never did, and, for the reasons above given, *he could not do*. The disciples of John were not baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. It is absurd to think so for a moment; and such an idea is contradicted by all the facts recorded respecting the ministry and baptism of John.

It will not be denied by any, that by "Christ Jesus," no other is meant than *Jesus* the son of Mary, according to the flesh. Now let us imagine for a moment that John baptized in the name of this person, this Jesus of Nazareth; what would have been the result? We answer:

(1.) That Christ would have been known, and there could have been no inquiry who he was, nor any question proposed to John whether he himself was the Christ.

(2.) It would have been foolish in the Lord Jesus to conceal that he was the Messiah; foolish to say to his disciples, "Tell no man of it," when John the Baptist was proclaiming abroad, every time he baptized, that Jesus of Nazareth was the great Messiah; when every body must have known it. But every body (not even

John's intimate disciples) neither knew nor believed it; which is a conclusive proof that John did not say to the people, that "they should believe on Christ Jesus," nor baptize in the name of Jesus.

(3.) If John had baptized in the name of Jesus, so many thousands would not have come to his baptism. This is evident from all the gospel histories, and from the temper of the Jewish people when they were told that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah.

(4.) Add to which, if John, baptizing, told the people to believe on Christ Jesus, he could not say that they should believe *on him who should come after him*, for then Christ was already come. But on whom did Paul lay his hands? on the people of Judea? No, but on the very persons who had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. This is the natural construction; every other is forced and contradictory of well-known facts.

We conclude then, that the twelve disciples at Ephesus were (and this was the sentiment of all the Christian fathers) baptized with Christian baptism after they had received the baptism of John; and hence it is plain that there could have been no identity between the one institute and the other.

But we shall here subjoin two additional arguments in support of our doctrine, viz:

9. John's ministry and baptism *were limited to the Jews, and to the land of their fathers*: for the Gentiles were not called. Hence his baptism could not have been a sacrament of the New Testament Church, etc.

10. The Abrahamic covenant, of which the new economy is a more full dispensation, *included infants*. But John did not baptize infants. And would their baptism have been strange to the Jews? By no means. This people circumcised every day male infants; they baptized the infants of proselytes. Why then did not John baptize them? Because his ministry and baptism had a special object in view. They were merely preparative; and as such, infants could not receive them. Adults alone could, by John's ministry, be prepared for the coming of Christ, who was ready to be revealed.

I have done with the arguments which prove that the baptism of John was not the baptism of Christ. If now this doctrine be established, that there is no identity existing between the baptism of John and the baptism commanded to be administered by the

Saviour, although in all *water baptisms* of a religious character there must be many points of similarity, then we are led to infer two things of moment, viz:

(1.) That the baptism of John was not a sacrament, and especially that it was not a sacrament of the New Testament dispensation and Church.

(2.) That no argument can be drawn from John's baptism to determine any fact in relation to Christian baptism; and that the *practice* of John in baptizing, whether as to place, subject, mode, or obligation, can be *no authoritative example* to the Church of Christ in administering that baptism which was instituted by the Saviour for the benefit of the whole Church, as a visible sign and seal of the everlasting covenant.

Much of what has been contended for by the enemies of infant church-membership, is drawn immediately from the ministry and baptism of John. But these deductions are unwarrantable. The Lord Christ himself was present in his Church, and it belonged to him as King in Zion to institute in person the *sacraments* of the New Covenant, which, though positive institutes, are by his will to be standing ordinances of grace, and binding laws of his kingdom.

I shall close this lecture with a few remarks on *the baptism which our Lord's disciples*, by his order, administered before his resurrection from the dead.

The record of this fact, that our Lord during his public ministry ordered his disciples to baptize, we find in John iii. 22, etc.: "*After these things* came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them, and *baptized.*" Verse 23: "And John also was baptizing in Enon," etc. Verse 25: "Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." Verse 26: "And they came unto John and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come unto him." Also in John iv. 1, 2: "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and *baptized* more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea and departed again into Galilee." Let us examine these records.

1. "After these things," says the evangelist—that is to say, after

what had transpired at Jerusalem at the passover, (which was the *first* kept by the Saviour after his baptism and public manifestation of himself in his prophetic office,) he determined to let his light shine upon the three parts of the Holy Land, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. We therefore read of his acts in Judea in John iii; of those in Samaria, iv. 42; of those in Galilee, iv. 43-54. At the city, therefore, Jesus did not remain long after the passover; but "came with his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized."

Here let me remark, that "Judea" at this day comprehended the lands of Judah, Benjamin, Dan, and Simeon, and also Philistia and Idumea, all the country south of Samaria and Arabia Petræa, and extended in some directions beyond Jordan. (See Matt. xix. 1.)

2. In Judea, and not far from Jordan, our Lord "tarried with his disciples" a considerable time, until John was cast into prison, preaching the Word with much effect: this is proved by the confluence of people to his baptism, a confluence so great that it excited the envy of the disciples of John. And there he "baptized," not administering the ordinance to any himself, but acting by his disciples. John iv. 2: "For Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples."

3. Now *this baptism*, administered there by the disciples of our Lord, we contend, was not the sacrament of Holy Baptism afterwards instituted by the risen Saviour as a standing ordinance of the New Testament Church, but a baptism like that of John, *merely preparative*, administered for a short time, and to those who confessed their sins and professed to look for the Messiah as a spiritual Saviour. Our arguments are the following:

(1.) It appears that the faith required in John's baptism had not Jesus of Nazareth for *its object*, and that it *was not administered in the name* of the Lord Jesus; for if it had been, John's disciples would have regarded Jesus as the Saviour, would have felt themselves bound to acknowledge him as the Messiah, and could not have spoken and acted as they are stated to have done in John iii., and could not have been surprised "that all men came to him."

Equally obvious is it, that in their baptizing, our Lord's disciples did not require that men should believe that *he* was the Messiah: for this requirement would have been the most formal and sacred

proclamation of that fact; would have settled the whole matter at once; would have made a great noise and serious commotion among the Jews. But this supposition is contradicted by all that the evangelists write in relation to the people knowing, believing, and confessing that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. Our Lord's own words and conduct contradict it.

(2.) *So many* would not have been baptized by the disciples in Judea, if at *their baptism*, they had known and acknowledged (as is required of adults in Christian baptism) that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. No, multitudes would have hesitated; "for Jesus was despised and rejected by the Jews, they hid their faces from him." The Pharisees and rulers would have made great opposition. The history of our Lord's life would have been very different from what it is.

(3.) This baptism by the disciples, like that of John, was only a temporary observance; it soon ceased to be observed; it was discontinued with that of John, whereas, had it been a sacrament of the covenant, the disciples would have continued to baptize wherever their Master went. His baptism, from their increasing number in various places, would have been often mentioned; but no reference whatever is had to our Saviour's baptizing after John's death.

(4.) That baptism by our Lord's disciples could not belong to the New Testament dispensation and Church, for these were not yet in being. Our Lord said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven *is at hand*."

(5.) I shall but add that our Lord, for a short time, directed his disciples to baptize—

- i. To aid John in the work of preparation;
- ii. To prepare the minds of the disciples for their future apostolic duties, among which is the administration of Holy Baptism, in his gospel kingdom.

## LECTURE XXIII.

### HOLY BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

HAVING disposed, first, of the baptism of the Jewish proselytes; second, of the baptism of John; and third, of the baptism which our Lord Jesus Christ administered for a short time by the hands of his disciples, we are now prepared to inquire concerning that Holy Baptism which our Saviour instituted after his resurrection, which has come in the place of circumcision, and which is one of the two sacraments of the New Testament Church, viz:

#### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

To this important ordinance and holy sacrament of the Christian religion and worship, belong three things, viz:

- I. ITS DOCTRINE;
- II. ITS HISTORY; and
- III. ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

The last article, viz: the administration of baptism by the minister of the Word, is that alone which falls under the head of Pastoral Theology: but as the proper administration of the holy sacraments stands inseparably connected with their *doctrine*, I shall in the first place briefly discourse,

#### I. OF THE DOCTRINE OF HOLY BAPTISM.

Many truths belong to the doctrine of Baptism, which may be classed under,

1. Its name;
2. Its Divine institution;
3. Its visible sign;
4. Thing signified;

5. Union or agreement of the two;
  6. Its partakers; and
  7. Its end.
1. The *name*.

The name is derived from the Greek language, and is scriptural, "*βαπτισμα*." (Matt. iii. 7; xxi. 15; Rom. vi. 4.)

The verb "*βαπτίζω*," from "*βαπτω*," is used by the inspired writers in relation to this Christian sacrament, and in relation to various washings with water, both religious and civil. Hence the noun "*βαπτισμα*," as well as the verbs from which it is derived, have been variously applied in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

FIRST. *Literally.*

Some of these various applications of those terms, it will here be proper to notice.

1. Those terms are used to express *literally*, and for civil and ceremonial purposes, the cleansing and purifying of human bodies and articles of domestic use, by washing them with water.

(1.) With respect to human bodies, so far as cleansing them by *dipping* or *immersing* them in water is expressed by those terms, there is no dispute whatever.

(2.) But human bodies may be washed without being *immersed* into the water, and such washing is also called "a baptizing of them." "For the Pharisees, and *all* the Jews, except they wash (*νιψονται*) their hands, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. When they come from the market, except they wash (*βαπτισονται*) they eat not." The hands are washed by affusion of water and rubbing them, as we wash other articles. To suppose that "*all* the Jews" on coming from market *immersed* their bodies, when they washed or baptized, would give much water and a bathing-room in every family and in every city; but water was not plenty in Judea through the year, and the convenience of immersion daily was denied to thousands of families.

(3.) Take the application of the noun *βαπτισμα*, in Mark vii., to articles of domestic use, and washing without immersion must be meant: "And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing (*βαπτισμου*, the baptisms) of cups, pots and brazen vessels, and tables." Now cups may be immersed into water, but *tables* or *couches* never were.

(4.) Nay, those terms are used to express also the application of water by *aspersion or sprinkling*. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Here let me observe, first, that the apostle used a phraseology in the second verse peculiar to the Jews. This people were accustomed to say of proselytes whom they baptized, that "they were baptized unto Moses." So the apostle here says of the Israelites, "that they were all baptized unto Moses;" brought under obligation to keep the laws delivered by Moses. But, secondly, so far as the application of material water is expressed in this case, those fathers were not immersed or dipped either in the cloud or in the sea; for they were "under the cloud," which was elevated high above them, and they were *walking on dry land* on the bottom of the sea, and not touched at all by its waters, excepting that sprays from the cloud and the sea alighted on them, which is *sprinkling*.

We do not therefore regard the Baptist writers as arguing correctly, when they tell us that "*βαπτίζω*," from "*βαπτω*," to dip or immerse, carries in its primary signification the idea of *immersion*: nor do we listen to those who say that "*dyeing or staining*" is the primary sense of those terms; for, admitting all they say to be true, it is still a fact, that under the inspiration of the Spirit the sacred writers have used "*βαπτίζω*" and "*βαπτισμα*" to express other applications of water in baptizing than that which is effected by immersion. If therefore immersion is to be proved *the only scriptural mode* of baptism, it must be done by other arguments than what can be derived from the primary meaning of those terms. But more of this hereafter. We hasten to remark,

2. Once again, that those terms are used to express *the various ablutions and water-cleansings* required by the ceremonial laws of the ancient covenant. Thus (Heb. ix. 10) the apostle Paul tells us, "that the first tabernacle stood only in meats and drinks, and *divers washings, καὶ διαφοροῖς βαπτισμοῖς*, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

In these "baptisms," a word in which the apostle (per metonymiam speciei pro genere) designs to include *all kinds of purifications by water required by the laws of Moses*, we find the application of water, not only by immersing the body, but by washing a

member of it at the laver. To mention one instance here will be sufficient. Deut. xl. 30, 31: "And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there to wash withal: and Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat." Now this washing of hands and feet at the laver, the Spirit of God calls a *baptism* in Heb. vi. 2, where he speaks "of the doctrine of baptisms." The apostle is considered by many to refer to these baptisms of various kinds under the law.

Lastly, it is agreed that those terms are also used to express the sacramental application of water in holy Christian baptism.

SECOND. *Figuratively.*

I now hasten to observe, that those terms are also by a familiar figure of speech employed to signify,

1. The experience of overwhelming affliction and sorrow. Mark x. 38: "But Jesus said unto them, (the sons of Zebedee,) Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" By baptism, here, our Lord means the pressure of great trials and exquisite sufferings; such as the Psalmist compared to the overwhelming waves of the ocean in a storm—"Thy waves and billows have gone over me."

2. Figuratively, also, those terms express the operations of the Holy Spirit, both *extraordinary* and *ordinary*. This is called the "baptism of the Holy Ghost." When the power of this Spirit was displayed in extraordinary communications to the apostles; when, "like a refining fire," he purified the hearts of sinners from the dross and impurities of sin, then did he administer that *spiritual baptism*.

3. There is but one passage more in which the term "*baptized*" is employed, which here may ask for some attention. The place is 1 Cor. xv. 29: "Else what shall they do who are *baptized for the dead*, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?"

This is one of the most difficult passages in Paul's writings, to be explained. Hence it has engaged the attention of the most learned commentators, and their opinions have been almost as various as their names.

Evidently the apostle is maintaining against gainsayers the

doctrine of the resurrection from the dead; and some suppose, that in referring to some practice in support of this doctrine, he brings up the requirements of the Mosaic law in relation to the uncleanness contracted by those who touched a dead body, and to the ceremonies which were demanded for their purification. The law you will find in Numb. xix. 11, 12, 13, 14, etc. These ceremonies have been interpreted to signify spiritual resurrection, and the resurrection from the dead. Be this as it may, "the *sprinkling* of the water of separation" upon one thus unclean, the Jews denominated (mark!) *a baptism*. Hence Jesus Sirach speaks of such a one as "*βαπτίζομενος ὑπὸ νεκρῶν*," which refers to the purification by water after touching a dead body. The apostle now speaks of "*οἱ βαπτίζομενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν*," and his argument is, why those laws and ceremonies, in relation to those who were defiled by reason of touching the dead, were all along observed, which laws and ceremonies pointed to a future resurrection of the dead, "if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?"

This exposition, though it surely merits deep consideration, is not satisfactory to many. You can read another explanation of these words in Scott; and another still in other commentaries, in which the apostle is supposed to refer to the practice of certain heretics who *denied a future resurrection*, and yet baptized some living person in the place of a friend who had died *unbaptized*. Refuting them therefore from their own practice, which he by no means intends to approve, the apostle asks, "Why are they then baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all?"

This exposition is not so well supported as the former.

I shall just add, that,

(1.) By the "dead" in that passage, some learned men understand, either the saints "who died upon their beds in lively hope of a future resurrection," or the Christian martyrs, who made a noble confession of their faith, rejoicing in the assurance of their soul's salvation, and of their future glorious resurrection.

(2.) By the "baptized for the dead," they understand those persons who were brought to receive Christian baptism, when they heard the testimony of dying Christians; and by their *baptism*, to show that they so firmly believed in the promises of glory and a future resurrection, as to expose themselves by their Christian

professions to all the sufferings and dangers which the martyrs had encountered. Hence the apostle asks, "Why are we in jeopardy every hour, if we do not believe that the dead shall rise?"

The passage certainly is beset with difficulties; but as these do not affect the doctrine of Holy Baptism, we shall proceed to the consideration of,

2. *The Divine institution of this sacrament.*

(1.) The Son of God incarnate in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, instituted Holy Baptism to be a sacrament of the Abrahamic covenant, under the New Testament dispensation.

(2.) The time of the institution of this sacrament, was after our Lord had risen from the dead. Then, when the eleven by his command were assembled together, "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

i. Our Lord, in aid of John's preparative ministry, had directed his disciples to preach, "that the kingdom of heaven was at hand," and to baptize with water *for a short season*. But he restricted them to the Jews, and forbade them even to go "unto the cities of the Gentiles;" and he soon recalled them from the work of preaching. Their preachings indeed were as much limited in respect of *truths* to be made known, as their *baptism* was to place and people; neither the one nor the other belonged to the New Testament dispensation.

ii. But now, when the great work of atonement was finished, and the Saviour risen from the dead, he institutes the sacrament of baptism for the use and benefit of the New Testament Church soon to be gathered; a sacrament to be observed by all nations who receive his gospel, and to be observed as long as the New Testament dispensation lasts. He therefore said, in correspondence with those great events which had just transpired, "Go ye and disciple *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

(3.) It is acknowledged that here was the *first institution* of the gospel ministry, though our Lord had before this sent out his disci-

ples to preach. So here was *the first institution of sacramental baptism*, for the use of the Church universal; although our Lord had before directed the same disciples to baptize with water among the Jews only, who still remained members of the ancient Church, for a special purpose, and therefore for a very short time. Although baptism with water had long been in use among the Jews, and although our Lord made no alteration in the external rite of baptism, yet the sacrament of Holy Baptism did not and could not exist before those words were spoken by him. Lightfoot correctly says, "He took into his hands baptism, such as he found it, adding only this, that he exalted it to a higher character, to a nobler or sacramental purpose, and to a larger use." So also he did, as we shall hereafter show, in relation to the Lord's Supper, and to the government of the Christian Church.

We have before observed, that the Word of God must be united to the visible sign, to constitute a sacrament. Now when the disciples of our Lord were baptizing before his death and resurrection, the call to repentance preceded their baptizing; but the *gospel Word did not and could not accompany it*. The disciples themselves did not know at the time that their Master must suffer, bleed, die, and rise again for the salvation of sinners. They were yet too ignorant to be ministers of the gospel Word and stewards of the mysteries of God, unfolded as they are in the ordinance of Christian baptism.

(4.) This baptism then being divinely appointed to be a sacrament of the New Covenant, *it must be observed while that economy continues, to which it belongs*. The New Testament Church, therefore, must administer holy baptism to all in her communion.

This doctrine of the perpetual obligation to baptize with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is rejected by the Socinians and the Quakers.

The Socinians, with a view to keep out of view the divine majesty and power of the Lord Jesus, contend that the descendants of Christians need not be baptized. "Water baptism," they say, "seems unnecessary for those that are born of Christians and imitate their parents in the profession of Christianity. It matters not whether such be baptized or not; and if they be, it is all one whether it be at their adult age or in infancy." We answer:

i. The command of the Saviour is of higher authority than the notions of Socinus.

ii. The primitive Christians and ancient churches regarded the law of baptism as binding on them.

iii. Christian baptism has not come in the place of the Jewish baptism of proselytism, which was not a Divine institute, but in the place of circumcision, which was strictly required of the Jews in their generations. To argue therefore, from the baptism administered to the Hebrews at Sinai, and abstinence of their descendants from a similar rite, to the neglect, or the dispensing of, Christian baptism by the posterity of Christian people, is altogether inconclusive, for the cases are not parallel.

The Quakers also violate the law of God's house, when they teach, that baptism by water is no longer to be observed; and that baptism by the Holy Spirit is all that is necessary. Who told them so? No inspired servant of God: for if George Fox or William Penn were inspired, their inspiration should have been proved by miracles; but they exhibited no miraculous gifts or signs of a Divine commission. We answer further:

(i.) That the command of Christ is unrepealed by the authority that gave it.

(ii.) That it was water baptism that our Lord instituted, is plain from the Gospels and Acts and Epistles, from the constant practice of the apostles and their successors in office, and from the whole history of the primitive and ancient Church.

(iii.) That the baptism of the Holy Ghost is either extraordinary in its operations and gifts; and this the Quakers have not, nor can it now be communicated by the "laying on of the hands of presbyters:" or it is ordinary, consisting in his sanctifying influences. Now *this baptism of the Spirit* cannot be administered by men; but our Lord commanded his apostles to baptize.

(iv.) The internal workings of the Holy Spirit cannot be seen nor ascertained by men, and therefore cannot relate to the laws of the visible Church.

(v.) But there is no opposition between *water baptism* and the influences of the Holy Ghost; they are consistent.

I shall only add here, (as brevity must be studied on the doctrine, which properly belongs to Didactic Theology,)

(vi.) That the Church, from its first organization, has been a visible society; and as such, those in its communion, whether infants or adults, have always been distinguished by some visible sacramental sign. Such a sign was circumcision under the Old Testament; and now "Christ's kingdom is not of this world," and baptism must be perpetuated as the visible sign of admission and standing in God's covenant. That,

(vii.) Christians as such are denominated "the baptized and the sanctified in Christ Jesus." Their spiritual relations themselves are in Scripture expressed by language which implies the *perpetual administration* of baptism, and which cannot be applied to those who are unbaptized with water. Can the Quakers be described as "those whose bodies have been washed with pure water"? But enough on this branch.

In a former lecture it was said that the *elements* of a sacrament consist, first, of the visible sign or material substance used; and second, of the *actions* prescribed in the Word in relation to that visible sign.

### 3. *The element, or visible sign, in baptism.*

(1.) The visible sign and seal in the sacrament of baptism is *pure natural water* applied to the human body. "Having our bodies," says the apostle Paul, (Heb. x. 22,) "washed with pure water." The water must be in that state, that its natural operation and effect is *cleansing*; or, to use the words of Peter, that it is calculated to remove or put away the filth of the flesh. (1 Pet. iii. 21.)

Hence water so mixed with earth, or any other substance, so that when it is applied to the body it defiles it, cannot be the visible sign in holy baptism.

Amid the corruptions admitted into the visible Church during the third century especially, and drawn from the rites of paganism, was the addition of *other substances* to the water in baptism. Happily, these human inventions are abandoned, with the darkness and the false philosophy that produced them. Yet, in the Roman Catholic churches we still discover unauthorized additions to a very simple ordinance; and in the Church of England the use of the "sign of the cross," in the administration of baptism, a sign with which the primitive Christians were unacquainted. These rites and addenda detract from the simplicity of the gospel, and

are *relics* of the influence of pagan superstitions upon the Church, when she was fast declining from her original purity.

In Christian baptism there can be no material substituted for pure water. Among the Mahometans, in the deserts of Arabia and Africa, where water cannot be obtained for washing their bodies, *sand*, with which they rub themselves, is substituted. But the Christian religion attaches no such importance to external rites as to make baptism essential to salvation, in circumstances where water cannot be easily procured. From the sign we pass,

(2.) To the *prescribed actions* in baptism.

First. The water must be applied to the *bodies* of the recipients of baptism. This is usually called the *mode of baptism*. The application may be made by immersion, by affusion, and by sprinkling.

The Baptists contend, that in baptism the whole body of the recipient must be immersed in water, and that this is the *only* prescribed mode of baptism.

We grant that, according to the testimony of the Jewish writers, baptism was administered to the proselytes by immersion. We doubt, however, whether any minister of religion *dipped* them: they put their own bodies under water, if they were grown up; and parents dipped their children. Certain elders, called the House of Judgment, stood by, and only received the answers of the proselytes, and heard their confessions; and as witnesses for the Church, they are said "to have baptized" such proselytes.

The practice of receiving proselytes by baptism, the Jews profess to derive from the command of God in Exod. xix. 10: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes;" that is, say the Jewish expositors, let them dip their bodies in water, *for this is baptism*. The people obeyed. Verse 14: "And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and they (the people) washed their clothes," or dipped or washed themselves in water; that is, *baptized themselves*. Indeed, it would have been hardly possible for any number of officers to have in *two days* baptized or dipped such an immense multitude; besides, Moses alone is mentioned as having officiated on the occasion and sanctified the people.

We also grant that John the Baptist baptized by immersion;

but we doubt again whether he or his disciples immersed any. The people *immersed themselves in water*, after confessing their sins before John or any of his disciples, as the Hebrew fathers baptized themselves at Sinai. But it is objected, "that John is said to have baptized the people with water." We answer, that he baptized them as Moses at Sinai "sanctified the people," by receiving their confessions and their vows or answers. Be this however as it may, we observe, that neither the Jews' baptism of proselytes, nor John's baptism of the Jews, were *divinely instituted sacraments*. But the Saviour died and rose again, and water baptism, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be administered by the stewards of the mysteries of God, was constituted a *sacrament* of the new dispensation of the Abrahamic covenant.

Admitting then that the proselytes to Judaism were immersed; admitting that John baptized by immersion; yet these practices do not form a *rule* for the administration of *Christian baptism*. No solid argument can be founded on the former to regulate the latter. This fact should be kept in view.

We grant, however, that the apostles and ministers of the gospel usually, and wherever it was convenient, conformed to the ordinary mode of administering baptism by immersion; for in Judea and countries adjacent where the gospel was first preached, and in the circumstances in which the first preachers were placed, immersion was the easiest mode. But we deny that immersion was *the only mode*, or that the Christian religion, which in every case looks more at the *spirit and end* of external ordinances, and which is prepared to accommodate its rites to climate and circumstances, provided the meaning and obligations of its positive institutions be retained, forbade, or does now forbid, baptism to be administered in any mode than by immersion. We believe that baptism from the beginning, was *sometimes* administered by *the affusion* and *sprinkling* of water.

Here let me remind you, that the Baptists themselves would soon relinquish their position with respect to the *mode* of baptism, did they obey the laws of God, and conform to the practice of the apostles and the primitive churches, in relation to the *subjects* of baptism. Let them acknowledge the *law of infant church-membership*, let them receive the children or seed of believers into the covenant, and the whole spirit and letter of the gospel will make them

indifferent with regard to the *mode* of baptism. The real point of contention relates to the *subjects* of baptism.

Before we exhibit an argument or two in favor of the application of water by affusion or sprinkling in baptism, let it be carefully observed,

*First.* That the ancient washings and sprinklings under the law are called by the Spirit of God, "baptisms." There is therefore nothing in "sprinkling," that is inconsistent with the name, or the word, provided the thing signified can be expressed.

*Second.* The application of water to a part of the body, God has declared in his Word to be a ceremonial cleansing or washing or baptism of the whole, as in the instance of the sprinkling of the water of separation on the unclean.

*Third.* It is not the *quantity* of the material substance in a sacrament that makes it a visible sign. In the Holy Supper but small portions of the bread and wine are dispensed; yet these are signs of a feast: so a sprinkling of water can be a significant sign of the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

We now proceed to say,

i. That the baptism on one half of a day of three thousand persons at Jerusalem by the twelve apostles, proves that their baptism *could not have been administered by immersion*. See the particular facts in the writings of those who have defended infant baptism. To have this number baptized by immersion in such a short time, at such a place as Jerusalem, amid enemies on every side, and by the apostles, it is necessary to leap over the bounds of probability, and to permit the fancy to indulge in the most extravagant creations of its own. The ministers of the Word must be, without any authority, made fifty or a hundred in number. *Water* which did not exist at Jerusalem must be imagined to be in sufficient quantity to let all those ministers work all at the same time in baptizing, with other absurdities invented to carry a point; and this too, by those who cry out, "Adhere to the letter, reason not by inference."

Admitting the baptized were sprinkled with water, every one knows that the Jewish religion constituted the act of *sprinkling* every day at the temple, one of the most solemn and significant acts of worship.

ii. Let it be granted that Philip baptized the eunuch by immer-

sion, (which however cannot be proved, as it was probably a baptism by affusion,) the cases of Paul, of the Philippian jailer and others, in relation to their baptism, seem by their circumstances to forbid immersion. It must be surprising to find that in these and other cases recorded, not a word is dropped by the sacred historian which brings up any convenience to have been sought for, suited to immersion; but the narratives indicate that baptism was administered off-hand, in the very situation and circumstances in which faith was professed. But to be brief:

iii. *Sprinkling of blood and of water*, as an act authorized by God and acknowledged to be of great significancy in religion, was very familiar to the Jews; and in the case of Christian baptism, its proper significancy could not be mistaken, inasmuch as the thing signified by it, to wit, redemption by Jesus Christ, is expressly called in Scripture, “a sprinkling of many nations,” “a sprinkling of the blood of Jesus,” etc.

iv. “The yoke of Christ is *easy*.” Christianity is a religion designed for men in all places of the earth, and in all the external circumstances of their various habitations. Now in the deserts of Arabia, where water cannot be obtained sufficient for immersion, in cold climates where immersion would be attended with great inconvenience and danger, the whole spirit of the gospel dispensation declares, “sprinkling in baptism is lawful baptism;” and to deny this, originates in that Pharisaical temper which said, “Let thy disciples starve and die, rather than pluck an ear of corn on the Sabbath day.”

I shall not enlarge, but conclude with observing, that whether the water in baptizing be applied *once or thrice*, is a matter of little moment. There is no Scripture directory on this subject. Trine immersion and sprinkling were early in the Church. The Church of Geneva under Calvin and Beza sprinkled once, other churches thrice. Some ancient documents of the Church insist strongly upon the application of water three times.

## LECTURE XXIV.

### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

WE are employed, first, with those prescribed actions which, together with the visible sign, constitute the elements of the sacrament of Christian Baptism.

We have said that the ministers of the Word must apply pure water, by immersion, affusion, or sprinkling. We now proceed to observe,

Second. That *the Word of God must be united with that application of the water in baptism, to constitute that ordinance a sacrament.*

1. The Word of God in baptizing, must be proclaimed in the *form* which the Lord Christ prescribed. Whatever explanations ministers may choose to make on occasion of administering baptism, from the Holy Scriptures, yet they must publish that they do baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

With a view to explain the import of these words, and to secure in the Church the preaching of those truths which are immediately connected with baptism and its administration, what are called "forms of baptism" were drawn up and approved, and are now required to be read, when infants or adults are to be baptized. Of these forms, (one of which is the composition of the very learned and celebrated Polish reformer, John a Lasco,) I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. But independent of these forms, let the administration of baptism be a part of the worship of God, and be accompanied with the promulgation of divine truths.

2. The *publication of the name* of the individual receiving baptism by the pastor, is in no respect an act that is sacramental. No injury is done by it, and therefore it is generally used in the churches.

(1.) Here let me observe, that some have objected to the administration of baptism being called a "christening," that is to say, making the subject of it a *Christian*. But, before we dispute about the use of terms, it would be proper to fix their meaning:

If by "christening" be meant, making a person by baptism a real convert or true Christian in the sight of God, the application of the term is highly improper, as it serves to convey false doctrine; for water baptism is not regeneration by the Spirit of God, and cannot effect a renewing of the heart.

(2.) Many of the ancient Fathers, it is true, call baptism "regeneration," and denominate the baptized, "the regenerated;" but then they use the terms "regeneration" and "regenerated," to express, as both the Jews and heathen philosophers did in a loose sense, *a change in one's relative state*: to convey the same idea, they call the baptized also "the enlightened," as those who now sustained a new relation; a relation to those who, in opposition to the heathens, were the "children of light," and who themselves were professedly "light in the Lord."

Now, in such a sense, if by the term "christening" be understood to signify, that the person baptized is either received into the great Christian community called the visible Church, or publicly recognized, if an infant, to be a member of that Church, there can be no injury in the use of that term. But the sense in which words are used does not always go along with them; hence arises their abuse in the application.

(3.) Accordingly, some writers among the ancients, in consequence of the use of the term "regeneration" to signify baptism, and of "illumination" to express the same thing, did come to believe and say, that water baptism did operate to remove original sin from infants and to sanctify their hearts: and from the use of the word "enlightened," to describe the baptized, arose a general misunderstanding of certain passages of Scripture, especially Heb. vi. 4, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," etc.; and then a disposition to defer their baptism, by persons who professed their faith, until just before their death.

The word "christening," therefore, ought in its application to baptism to be discountenanced. This sacrament ought to be called by its proper name, and those who partake of it should be denominated, the "baptized."

(4.) But many in the Church of England, and also among the Lutherans and Methodists, adhering to the loose phraseology of the ancient Fathers, do teach that "baptism effects an inward change," and is accompanied with regenerating grace in the soul, so that infants are, in a certain sense, *inwardly sanctified*. The Church of Rome is more bold, and proclaims aloud, "that both baptism and the mass do communicate pardon and sanctification '*ex opere operato*.'" This is one of the corrupt doctrines of the Council of Trent. I here add the following, on the subject of

#### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

I shall not detain you long, after what has been said in relation to the sacraments in general, in proving that baptism is not regeneration, and cannot effect it; understanding here by regeneration, a radical change of the heart.

I. The material substance used in baptism *cannot reach the mind*, and therefore cannot operate a moral change. Water, as it is applied in baptism, cannot even remove the filth of the body; it is only *a sign* of cleansing, and therefore not the cleansing itself: much less can it purify the heart, which is beyond its influence.

We know this, say our opponents, but baptismal water is a sacrament: as such, the Spirit and grace of God coöperate with it to regenerate the mind. It is not the water, but Divine power and blessing that, *in baptism*, produces the change. We reply:

Then God must have determined to connect his efficacious grace invariably and inseparably with the sacraments. But we deny that God hath so determined. We affirm that his renewing and sanctifying grace is no more connected with the sacraments than it is with the ministration of the Word; and if there be a blessing in the sacraments, that blessing is given according to the promises of the Word. There is a promise of God that the recipients of the sacraments shall stand in a covenant with him, but no promise that they shall be converted and sanctified in heart. We therefore argue,

II. That all who partook of the sacraments in the ages past, would have been *real converts*. But the Israelites were not; some of them were Jews outwardly only, some Jews inwardly. Hundreds who were circumcised, and who ate the passover, lived and died in their sins. Simon Magus was baptized; yet he remained

“in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity.” Every one knows that many, both adults and infants, are now baptized, who continue unconverted, etc.

III. Of adults, *faith and repentance*, graces which are expressive of an inward change of heart, are required before baptism; and therefore baptism cannot be regeneration.

IV. Regeneration, or the *renewal* of the mind, is *necessary* to salvation; but baptism *is not*, etc.

V. It is left to the discretion of ministers to administer the sacraments; but the HOLY SPIRIT, who alone can create a clean heart in a sinner, *is not at their disposal*. “The wind bloweth where it listeth,” etc., etc.

The next subject in relation to Christian Baptism, is,

4. The *thing signified* therein.

We now proceed to the consideration of what is signified and sealed by water baptism in the Christian Church.

Baptism signifies and seals the *various grace of the covenant*, more or less, according to the revelations and promises of the Word, or according to the moral or spiritual state and temper of the baptized.

(1.) The grace of that everlasting covenant which God hath given to his Church is various grace, as the apostle teaches in Romans, comprehending various inestimable external relations and privileges, and all the blessings of salvation here begun, and consummated in glory. As, (to enumerate some of those various relations, privileges and mercies,) relation to God in covenant; relation to his visible Church, in which the Spirit by means works salvation; relation to families in which religious instruction is communicated and prayer is made; the enjoyment of the Word and ordinances of worship, and of all the light which is thereby afforded and the motives thereby propounded; then actual pardon, peace with God, sanctification, consolation and hope in Christ, and eternal life in heaven.

(2.) Now this various grace of the covenant is not so united and compacted together, as that the whole is communicated to all in the covenant. No: the connection of the blessings is not natural and indissoluble, but moral, and regulated by the terms and laws of the Divine Word and of the covenant. Hence *portions* of that grace may be enjoyed by some, because of their temper towards God, which are not communicated to others of a different temper.

One in covenant may have all, another only in part. Some of the children are heirs, while other children of the same kingdom shall ultimately be "cast out."

Now, the grace of the covenant is made *various*, first, because the covenant itself comprehends a *two-fold seed*: a seed according to the flesh, and a seed according to the Spirit; and second, because the sacraments, which are visible signs and seals of that covenant, must signify and seal mercies of some kind as covenant mercies *to all* who are permitted to enjoy them.

If all the grace of the covenant were certainly and infallibly communicated to those who are visibly and professedly in the covenant; and if the sacraments signified and sealed to all the whole measure of that grace, then it would follow among other results,

i. That all in the covenant would be true converts.

ii. That the Church would infallibly know all who are the Lord's in heart. But now, "God alone knoweth them that are his."

iii. That the Church would be incessantly persecuted; and that an interminable series of miracles would be necessary to preserve her in this world.

I have been more particular in my remarks here, as they will apply to the Lord's Supper as well as to baptism. But let us apply them to baptism.

*First.* INFANTS are baptized; but in respect of several privileges and benefits of the covenant, infants, by their natural incapacity, are placed in a state of privation. They cannot hear the Word, etc. While this fact is kept in view, we proceed to observe,

*Second.* That infants may be in a various moral state, and no doubt are, when they receive baptism.

1. One infant may be truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit, as there is nothing in infant depravity which can obstruct the operations of Divine power: if that depravity is a *seed*, which is yet to vegetate and unfold in time its poisonous qualities, it may be removed by Him who created the soul and has access to it; and the seed of holiness can be implanted. The Scriptures exhibit instances of such infant conversion.

Now in such case, baptism signifies and seals to the infant all

that it can signify and seal, except *the actual enjoyment* of those mercies, for which such infant is yet naturally incapacitated, though it be morally qualified for such enjoyment by inward sanctification. In this way, God prepares infants born in the covenant for the heavenly state, when it is his purpose to save them.

2. But another infant may receive baptism, and not be inwardly renewed. Does the sacrament of baptism, in relation to such a subject, signify and seal nothing? Far from it. The sacrament sustains its character: it does signify important things, and does seal according to the *moral state* of its recipient. It signifies that the infant is a polluted creature, and that it can be cleansed and fitted for heaven only by the blood of Jesus Christ, "which cleanseth from all sin," and by the operations of his Holy Spirit. It signifies that the purpose of grace extends to infants also, and that of such is the kingdom of heaven. It signifies that the infant born in the covenant sustains a visible and most important relation to the Church, and is a plant in that garden where labor is bestowed by the servants of Christ, where rain falls, and where "the brier is changed into the myrtle-tree." And baptism seals that the infant is externally and solemnly "sanctified in Christ Jesus;" set apart for the use and service of his Saviour; and, as a member of his Church is a "*child federally holy*," as the apostle Paul teaches; and as such, to be cared for by the Church, to be watched over by the minister of the Word, and to "be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

From the infant, let us proceed,

*Second.* To the ADULT.

(1.) The moral states and tempers of different adults are different.

(2.) An adult is baptized, like Simon, on the profession of his faith, and, as is the fact with not a few, may be impenitent and unrenewed in heart, and perhaps hypocritical. In this case, does baptism lose its sacramental character? Does God set his sacramental seal to a blank? No.

(3.) Baptism, when administered to an impenitent and unrenewed adult, does *signify* that he is "a branch in the vine," a branch of the olive-tree, though a barren one; that he does sustain a relation

to the Lord Jesus and his visible Church. And it seals to him as a member, the right to enjoy the external privileges and blessings of the covenant; those mercies which Paul considered to pertain (as advantages) to the Jews, (see Rom. iii. 1, 2, 3, compared with Rom. ix. 4,) who were "children of the covenant," now enlarged under the present glorious dispensation, and pertaining to all the children of the same covenant, though some of them may be impenitent and unrenewed.

So well is it understood, that baptism, when administered to an unrenewed adult, still retains its sacramental character, that if at any time he be suspended, and is again restored on his repentance to the communion of the Church, *he is never rebaptized*, not even among the Baptists.

(4.) But supposing an adult subject of baptism is a "new creature in Christ Jesus:" in this case, what does baptism *signify and seal*? We answer:

It signifies and seals all that it can signify and seal: precious relations to Christ and his Church, pardon of sin, peace with God, sanctification by the Spirit, a right to the promises, and the heirship of an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

The principal things therefore signified and sealed by baptism, are, first, relation to Abraham's God in covenant; and second, the blessings of justification and sanctification. Hence, in stating the design of baptism, *this fact* must be promulgated in relation to the character of that sacrament, without regard to the true state of its recipients. We cannot as men determine their state, but in the spirit of Christian benevolence we consider it as one of grace, and speak accordingly. So must we exhibit the Lord's Supper as signifying and sealing important things, whether a Judas be seated among the guests or not.

No arrangement which men can make in the supposed improvement of the visible Church, will remove from her bosom those who have "only a name to live." The Abrahamic covenant is designed to comprehend *two seeds*, and the sacraments, when applied to both, express facts.

5. *The agreement of the sign with the thing signified* in Christian baptism.

The agreement between the sign and the thing signified, is so obvious as to require here no remarks. I shall therefore proceed immediately to inquire respecting,

6. *The lawful partakers* of baptism. These are usually denominated the subjects of baptism. The subjects are, adults unbaptized when they profess repentance and faith, and the children of parents in the covenant of God.

(1.) *Adults.* Respecting the baptism of adults who profess faith and repentance, there is no dispute among those who consider the ordinance of baptism to be a standing sacrament in the visible Church.

(2.) *Infants.* But besides adults, the Scriptures teach that the infant children of those parents who are baptized, and not excommunicated, are entitled to baptism. This doctrine of infant baptism is rejected by those who are denominated Baptists. To discuss the subject fully would require many lectures; yet here it will be proper to state, in as few words as possible, the arguments which support the covenant right of the children of believers to baptism. The arguments are drawn, first, from the perpetuity of the covenant of circumcision; second, the institution of baptism to supply the place of circumcision; third, the relation which God declares in his Word that the children of his people sustain to him, and to his Church; fourth, the examples of the apostles; and fifth, the history of baptism.

I. We argue from the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, which secures the right of infant church-membership, and the identity of what are usually called the Jewish and Christian Churches.

This source of argument has purposely been opened in former lectures. We have proved that God did enact the law of infant church-membership; that this law did continue in force from the establishment of the covenant of circumcision down to the commencement of the New Testament dispensation; that neither the abrogation of the rite of circumcision, nor the introduction of a new dispensation, could operate *to set aside that law*, provided that the covenant of which that law was a special privilege, remained in full force. We proved that the covenant continues, and that its continuance is acknowledged by the apostles, and therefore that any partial silence about the baptism of infants can be no

argument against the law of infant church-membership, when Christians were brought into the same covenant, and rejoiced that the promise was to them and to their children.

(i.) The law of infant church-membership, then, is unrepealed.

(ii.) Or, the repeal, if there was one, must be in express terms. Nothing of this sort is to be found in the Sacred Scriptures, otherwise the Baptists would have adduced it long since. If the Abrahamic covenant stands, so that "the blessings do come to the Gentiles through faith," then we require some passage in which Jehovah hath said, *that the seed of believers shall not be baptized, nor stand in his covenant any more.* But no such passage exists; but the contrary can be shown.

We remarked, that the existence of the Abrahamic covenant secures the *identity* of the Jewish and Christian Churches. These were one society, placed at different times under those various divine rules, all subservient to the great scheme of redemption. In proof of this, we might adduce many passages; but it will be sufficient to mention Matt. xxi. 43; Rom. xi. 17-24; vii. 2; Gal. iv.; Eph. ii.

To which add, that the Church, being a society composed of those whom God calls by his Word, and governs by his laws, and ever sustaining the same great relations to the Saviour, she must be *one* under both dispensations.

II. We argue, secondly, that baptism is instituted to occupy the place of circumcision, which was abrogated under the new dispensation. This is denied by the Baptists. Let us here make a supposition. It is this: If on the institution of baptism and the abrogation of circumcision, the Saviour had said that infants should not be baptized, would any have denied that baptism came in the place of circumcision? Not one. It then appears that this is now denied, because the Redeemer did not in so many words exclude infants; and because, if the truth be affirmed on this subject, an argument will be drawn from the circumcision of infants to the baptism of infants.

And is baptism less fit to come in the place of circumcision, because it is applied to infants? No: it possesses a greater fitness and similarity on this very account; especially when the promise is, to believers and their "seed."

On a former occasion we proved from Col. ii. 4, that un-

less baptism occupied the place of circumcision, believers could not be called the "circumcised," because they had been "buried with Christ in baptism;" nor could baptism be called "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision. We now observe,

(i.) That the very nature and end of *baptism*, as it is distinct from the Lord's Supper, proves that it came in the place of circumcision, etc.

(ii.) So well was this understood in the primitive Church, that some at length formally inquired of a council of ministers, amounting to sixty-six, among whom was Cyprian, assembled at Carthage, A. D. 253, or a century after the apostles, "whether an infant might be baptized before it was eight days old?" This question would never have arisen, had they not understood that baptism had come in the place of circumcision. Therefore,

(iii.) Admitting now, that baptism came in the place of circumcision, we are to conclude that, without some express limitation, it must, with regard to *its subjects*, have the same extent. Objection: "But there is," say the Baptists, "an express limitation here: for the Redeemer said, 'He that believeth, or exercises that faith which is accompanied with repentance, shall be saved.' Here then baptism is restricted to those who repent and believe." This objection is easily answered: for, first, God required Abraham, and adults in his family, to walk before him. Infants could not so walk: were they therefore excluded from circumcision? No. Second, the apostle Paul tells us that the circumcised were bound "to keep the whole law." Infants could not do this: were they left uncircumcised on this account? No. Third, the obligations of the moral law rest upon an intelligent creature so soon as he comes into existence, and he is considered to be responsible whenever his natural capacities are unfolded. The same principle enters into the constitution of civil society. Fourth, we remark, then, that infants are bound to repent, to believe, and to love God, so soon as they have the natural capacity. But the *obligations* of religion can be imposed before that period. Hence God required the mothers in Israel to appear with the sucklings at their breast, to enter into covenant with him.

III. We argue, thirdly, from the relations which God declares in his Word, that the children of his people sustain to him and to his Church.

(i.) Under the ancient economy, and by virtue of the Abrahamic covenant, the *children* of those in covenant, as we have before proved, sustained a relation to God which no other children in the world did. Hence Jehovah calls himself "their God," in that very relation in which he was Abraham's God, and claims them as his property. Nor can it be said that this relation was founded upon the national covenant of Horeb and the Theocracy, for it existed before Moses lived.

(ii.) The Jews and their offspring were the children of the kingdom, and our Lord said of infants, "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

(iii.) But to exhibit this fact clearly, we offer 1 Cor. vii. 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing" or Christian "wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean, but *now are they holy.*"

This is a passage which, because it speaks the language of the Abrahamic covenant long understood in the visible Church, every attempt has been made to explain away; but those attempts, from the false facts and absurdities which they comprehend, serve, to the reflecting mind, to exhibit the true sense. In what sense do the adversaries say that the apostle here describes *children*, when one of the parents, already married according to civil usage and law, is a Christian, and the other a pagan, to be *holy*? Why, said the Mennonist writers, it signifies that those children are legitimate, not bastards! Here then, for the first time in Scripture, "holy" signifies, not bastard. Here, for the first time, the apostle is made to declare that the *faith* of one parent in Christianity makes marriage lawful which was unlawful *ab initio*, and children legitimate, which were before bastards. Here, for the first time, and contrary to all history, the apostle is made to deny the validity of marriages according to law, among the heathen. But I shall not add a word more, as you will find the subject ably discussed by Dr. Mason on the Church.

The apostle evidently uses the word "holy," to signify *ecclesiastical* relations; and that the children of one believing parent sustained covenant relations to God and his Church. Now this doctrine was old doctrine among the Jews, well understood when married proselytes were received, etc.

IV. I pass on to the fourth source of evidence, viz: apostolic example.

Here it must be observed,

(i.) That the Spirit of God has not seen fit to detail to us the history of the primitive Church. After the ascension of our Lord, the events recorded are few in number, principally in the "Acts of the Apostles," and, as they are recorded in this book, relate either to what transpired under the ministry of the apostles in the Holy Land and among the Jews, or to what occurred in the course of Paul's ministry among his countrymen and among the Gentiles.

(ii.) That to expect accounts of infant baptisms in the history of the apostles' ministry *among the Jews*, is to require what is not necessary. The Jews were in the daily practice of admitting their own children and the children of proselytes into the covenant of circumcision—the latter, *by baptism*. We cannot therefore be surprised, *that no infant baptisms* are recorded among them under the new dispensation of the Abrahamic covenant; but if infants among the Hebrew Christians were not received, we should express our unfeigned surprise that this important circumstance is *no where in Scripture stated* to have attracted the attention, nor to have excited one objection, among the Jewish believers. Let us now turn to the Gentiles, and to the ministry of the man who was "the apostle of the Gentiles." A few chapters in the Acts of the Apostles, (and *very few* indeed, if we exclude the accounts of his conversion, his trial, voyage, and shipwreck,) are occupied with the direct ministry of Paul. What then is said about his baptisms among the Gentiles? He tells us himself all the facts on this subject. 1 Cor. i. 14: "I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius;" and, "I baptized all the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other."

Under his eye, we are told that the disciples of John were re-baptized, and also "that Lydia was baptized, and her household."

Now review these facts. Crispus had a family, but we have no evidence that when he received baptism, his conversion brought his wife to embrace the Christian faith; and Gaius, for aught we know to the contrary, may have been a single or unmarried person. Then we have "Stephanas and his household." This Stephanas is supposed by some to have been the jailer at Philippi; if not, then we have besides Stephanas and his household, the jailer and his household, and Lydia and her household, baptized in immediate connection with Paul's ministry: so that there will be

*three households and two individuals* included in these accounts. This is very expressive of such facts as we wish to establish : for in these narratives, short as they are, we find households and baptisms associated—an association formed by the Abrahamic covenant *alone*—an association, too, in cases where only the heads of the families are said to have believed—an association which, in the accounts of the ministry of Baptist preachers, is never formed. I shall not enlarge here, but conclude with observing that the fifth source of evidence, viz: the history of baptism, will be opened in the next lecture.

## LECTURE XXV.

### CHRISTIAN BAPTISM—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### HISTORY OF BAPTISM—ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

I SHALL be obliged here to study brevity, and comprehend all my remarks on the history of baptism and the pastoral administration of this sacrament, within the limits of this lecture.

#### I. HISTORY OF BAPTISM.

The subject is here treated simply as it is a source of evidence, that the law of infant church-membership was acknowledged to be in force in the Christian Church, by the administration of baptism to infants.

In giving the history of baptism, so far as it is necessary to establish our doctrine of the unrepealed law of infant church-membership, it will be necessary neither to refer to adult baptism, nor to detail the corruptions which soon infected the ordinance. Let it suffice to remark, that the primitive Christians had not meeting-houses and other conveniences for the observance of the laws of their religion: hence they would, in administering baptism, very naturally seek some stream or pool of water, and *there*, before witnesses, hear the confession of faith which the adults made, and then baptize them by a trine immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This was the usual practice. But our business just now is with the baptism of *infants*.

In taking up the historical testimonies in favor of the practice in the ancient Church, of infant baptism, it will not be necessary to advance beyond the age of Father Augustine; for it is acknowledged, that during the centuries subsequent to that age, the baptizing of infants was the universal practice of the visible Church. If

the Baptists plead an exception by the Waldenses, we shall attend to the faith and practice of that people, in its proper place.

1. The teachers and pastors who acted with the apostles, and under their inspection, were men distinguished, not by their learning, but by their fervent piety and zeal. They were employed in preaching, not in writing. Few of them wrote any thing; and those who did write, were intent upon stating some well-known truths in opposition to the enemies of Christianity, and exhorting to holy practice, and not in describing the baptisms in the Church, nor mentioning any circumstance in relation to this ordinance except incidentally. In this manner,

2. Hermes, an apostolic Father, tells us that "infants are valued by the Lord."

3. Justin Martyr says in his Apology, "Several persons among us of sixty and seventy years old, of both sexes, who were made disciples (*εμαθητευθησαν*, the very word that we find in the commission, Matt. xxviii.) to Christ in or from their childhood, do continue uncorrupted," (or virgins.) On these words we remark:

(1.) Justin Martyr had no Jewish prejudices, operating in favor of the doctrine of infant church-membership.

(2.) He wrote about one hundred and five years after the Redeemer's ascension.

(3.) Those persons who were made disciples to Christ sixty or seventy years before this, must have been born about thirty-six or forty-six years after the Saviour was received up into glory, and consequently must have existed in the days of the apostles; and I need not observe, that by baptism alone can infants be made disciples to Christ.

4. Irenæus—A. D. 150. About thirty or forty years after Justin Martyr, Irenæus, speaking of the Saviour, says, "He came to save all persons by himself; all I mean who by him are regenerated (or baptized) unto God—*infants* and little ones and children, and youths, and elder persons." On these words I remark,

(1.) That no man could know that infants were changed in their hearts; of this inward change, the ancient father does not and cannot speak: but,

(2.) Their baptism could be known; and in the language of the early writers, the term "regeneration," denoting a change of relative state, was commonly used to express baptism.

5. Tertullian, A. D. 200, down to the age of Athanasius, A. D. 320. Tertullian, by dissuading parents from exhibiting such haste to have their infants baptized, (whatever may have been his own errors,) plainly proves that infant baptism was the prevailing practice.

6. Origen says, "Hear David speaking: 'I was,' says he, 'conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother bring me forth;'" showing that every soul that is born in the flesh is polluted with the filth of sin and iniquity. Besides all this, let it be considered what is the reason, that whereas the baptism of the Church is given for forgiveness of sins, *infants* also are by the usage of the Church baptized; when, if there were nothing in infants that wanted forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be needless to them."

7. We should now direct your attention to the testimony of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage; but we have stronger testimony on this subject, arising from the resolves of upwards of sixty bishops together with Cyprian, met in council A. D. 253, that is, a century and a half after the apostles. Before this council, a question was brought by Fidus, a country pastor, "Whether an infant might be baptized before it was eight days old?" A synodical epistle was written in answer to this question: you can read the epistle in Wall's History. In it are these sentiments: "If the greatest offenders have, when they come to believe, forgiveness of sins, and no person is kept off from baptism, how much less reason is there to refuse an infant newly born." Our business is not with their reasons, but with the broad fact which this synod establishes, that infant baptism was the universal practice of that age.

A Baptist writer says, "that infant baptism had its origin in this council." But this is evidently absurd; for the very question proposed for discussion, and the manner of deciding it, suppose infant baptism to have been of long and uniform practice in the Church.

We are willing that all the proceedings of this council shall decide this matter; and if infant baptism had its origin before this council, then we are confident that origin will be found in the apostolic age.

8. Again, take the words of Optatus, A. D. 360: "As many of you as have been baptized in the name of Christ, have put on

Christ. Oh! what a garment is this, that is always one and never renewed; that decently fits all ages and all shapes: *it is neither too big for infants, nor too little for men, and without any alteration fits women.*"

Here let me remark, that this was the period after A.D. 200, when some disputes arose about the quantity of water to be used in baptism, but not about the lawfulness of infant baptism. Some heretics rejected baptism altogether, as they rejected portions of the Sacred Scriptures; and others opposed in various degrees infant baptism: but the Catholic Church considered the children of believers to be comprehended in the covenant, and baptized them in their infancy. Yet while this was the practice, it was contended by some, that the mode of immersion should never be departed from; and this very dispute shows, that immersion was not and had not been the invariable mode. Christian pastors had administered baptism to those who were confined to their beds, and to many in prison. Eusebius tells us, that one Basileides, having heard the Word, and witnessed the martyrdom of a Christian lady, Poramiana, at Alexandria, became a convert to the Christian faith; whereupon he was thrown into prison, and there having made confession of his faith, he was baptized by some presbyters who were his fellow-prisoners.

Cyprian therefore wrote in opposition to the opinion, that immersion was indispensably necessary to baptism. "It is a lawful baptism," he taught, (l. iv. chap. 7,) "whether the subject have water poured upon him, or be immersed." Again he says, (Epis. 66:) "Does any one think that they obtain nothing, who have the water poured upon them? In fact, those who are sprinkled with water are baptized." Take, in connection with this, the words of Tertullian: "We are three times immersed," he says, "speaking no otherwise than what Christ commanded in the gospel; and we are not once but thrice sprinkled, according to the three Divine Persons." (De Coron: vol. 5, ad Prax.)

9. Gregory Nazianzen testifies, that Basil, bishop of Cæsarea, was baptized in his infancy; which baptism must have occurred about two hundred and thirty years after the death of John, or A.D. 330. This father says, "Let the child be dedicated from his cradle. Thou, as a faint-hearted mother, (persecutions still on foot,) art afraid of giving him the seal, because of the weakness

of nature. Give to him the Trinity, that great and excellent preservative."

Gregory Nazianzen believed, "that infants dying unbaptized, were in a middle state between happiness and torment. If an infant therefore were likely to die, he would have baptism immediately administered to it. Otherwise its baptism might be deferred till it was three years old." We let his curious notions alone, and rest upon the fact, that in his age infants in certain circumstances were considered to be the proper subjects of baptism.

10. Ambrose, indeed, finds a *type* in the miracle of the waters of Jordan returning backward, where none exists; but in making out the antitype, he refers to the practice of infant baptism, by which, he says, "those infants that are baptized are reformed back again, from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature."

Take some of the writers from A. D. 380, to Augustine, A. D. 400.

11. Chrysostom says, "that one may receive baptism in the very beginning of his age or infancy." In another place he says, "those that are baptized, some of them, forasmuch as they were children when they received it." This father had very imperfect knowledge of the Abrahamic covenant; he understood the rules of oratory better than he did Paul's epistles: yet he affords abundant proof, even in assigning a wrong reason for the baptizing of infants, that infant baptism was the common practice of the Church.

12. Athanasius said, "We immerse children thrice in the water, and thrice we take them out."

But as there had been no doctrine which stood immediately connected with the sacrament of baptism *denied* by those who had any reputation in the Church, little comparatively had been said in relation to infant baptism. Now, however, Pelagius began to propagate his errors. He taught that children were not polluted with sin; and though he did not teach that infant baptism was unlawful and should be discontinued, yet his doctrine gave occasion in the Church to the orthodox divines to preach and write much in relation to the baptism of infants. Accordingly, we find the testimonies far more numerous in support of infant baptism, after the rise of Pelagianism.

13. Jerome, or Hieronymus, in his dialogue between Critobulus

and Atticus, has these sentiments: "CRIT. Tell me though, and resolve all my difficulty: Why are children baptized? ATTICUS. Do you ask me? Paul will answer you: 'Death has reigned from Adam to Moses over those who have not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression. All men are guilty, either by reason of Adam's sin or their own sins.'" "

14. To adduce all that Augustine has written in evidence that the Church practised infant baptism, would require much writing. A few extracts here will be sufficient. Commenting on 1 Cor. vii., "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy," he says, "for there were then (when Paul wrote) Christian infants that were sanctified, some by the authority of one of their parents, some by the consent of both."

(1.) Now, by the authority of one of the parents, a child could not be rendered legitimate; nor,

(2.) Could it be inwardly sanctified by either or both parents.

(3.) This sanctification is external in the Church, and in St. Austin's writings it signifies baptism.

You may read in Wall's History very many extracts to the same purpose. And let me observe, that Pelagius and his associates found *infant baptism* to stand much in the way of their favorite doctrine, that our nature is not originally corrupt. But if infant baptism had been an innovation upon the apostolic practice; if it belonged to the corruptions of the Church, the Pelagians who were men of reading and talents, could not have been troubled by any argument which the orthodox drew from the long undisputed observance of infant baptism.

There is no necessity of carrying down our history of infant baptism below the age of Augustine, as the Baptists acknowledge that the administration of this sacrament to infants subsequently, was general in the visible Church: but they say that the visible Church herein departed from Christ's institution and apostolic practice; and that the Waldenses, who preserved the pure faith and practice, were opposed to the baptism of infants. We reply,

i. That if there was a departure from gospel law, it was so early as to have been under the eye of the apostles themselves; yet we find no record in their writings against this supposed departure, though the abuse of the Lord's Supper is apostolically noticed.

ii. The Waldenses, A. D. 1164, in their confession, have these words: "Let every adult, who has obtained faith by the hearing of the Word, by which he is regenerated and enlightened, be baptized in the name, etc., in evidence of his inward purification, received through faith. This our confession is also extended to children, who by the decree of the apostles must be baptized, and afterwards by their sponsors must be instructed in the law of Christ," etc. That people who dissented from Rome were, as they increased, distributed into various communities, and distinguished by various names. Nor is it denied that some of those societies may have withheld baptism from infants; but the main body of the Waldenses in every age maintained that infants born of Christian parents, were proper subjects of baptism. We may say hereafter more on this subject. The remainder of this lecture must be occupied with remarks on the,

## II. ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM BY THE PASTOR.

In administering baptism, the Evangelical Pastor should be studious to preserve the sanctity, and promote the end, for which this sacrament was instituted.

We have said that the proper subjects of baptism are, first, unbaptized adults, when they profess faith and repentance; and second, the children of parents baptized, and not excommunicated or suspended. In relation to each of these subjects, the pastor must observe a conduct somewhat different; taking care always, both in his public discourses and private conference, to give correct views of the sacrament of baptism, and to explain particularly the obligations which it imposes.

### 1. The baptism of *infants*.

(1.) Parents who have *themselves been baptized*, and are neither suspended nor excommunicated, sustain a relation to the visible Church of God; they are the children of the covenant, the "people of God," and a part of "the holy nation;" and though not truly regenerated by the Spirit of God, may, in the benevolent spirit and language which the social relations of the covenant give rise to, be called "*ἄγιοι*," believers, beloved in the Lord Christ.

Such parents may apply to have baptism administered *to their*

*children.* But all the parents may not have entered into the full communion of the Church. Shall those parents who have not fulfilled their baptismal vows, and become open communicants, be considered as *ipso facto* suspended or excommunicated; or shall they still hold (if not guilty of presumptuous sins) a place in God's covenant with his visible Church, and be permitted to present their children to baptism? This question has been variously answered. There is no dispute that parents, before they become such, and while they were young, ought to have repented and given themselves to the Lord. All agree that such was their duty; but they did not perform it, and the Church did not suspend them; she tolerated them in her bosom, and waited for their conversion. Is there a divine law which requires that they shall not be tolerated in that state after they shall become parents? This will hardly be said; but admitting that there is such a law, were not their children born in the covenant? and how shall those infant children be regarded by the Church? These are questions of serious import, but we recur somewhat back.

(2.) What *means* should be employed to bring those who are born members of the Church and baptized, to take upon themselves publicly their baptismal vows, by uniting with the Church in full communion; *when*, as they arrive at years of knowledge, they should be required to do this; *how long* they are to be dealt with by admonition and reproof, before they shall be deprived of their covenant relations and be cut off from the congregation of the Lord; *what discipline* is to be exercised by the Church on baptized members, who live prayerless and contract immoral habits; whether such discipline is to be suspended until they become parents, or to be exercised immediately on the development of an irreligious temper in life, (together with other questions which might be asked here,) are matters which have given rise to much discussion and various opinions among learned and good men, in the Protestant churches.

Our Church in this country, till within a score of years, acted in relation to baptized parents with great forbearance and patience, employing towards them much doctrine, with reproof and admonition, while they exhibited no evidence of real piety; but permitting them to remain in the covenant that comprehended

Abraham's descendants, and in this relation to have their children baptized. This is much of the policy pursued at present in the Church of England, and in the Lutheran and Methodist Churches.

(3.) But our General Synod have lately resolved, that the children of parents "whose habits are such that they would be suspended from full communion, if they were members in full, shall not be admitted to baptism." This is the law that now regulates the conduct of pastors: how far it is modified by the practice of ministers—some considering it to require a credible profession of religion, whilst others construe it according to the forbearance which they exercise towards members in full communion—I shall not here inquire.

Certain it is, baptismal vows comprehend *perfect obligations*, otherwise they would not be obligations of true religion! We are bound as intelligent creatures and as members of the Christian Church, to do all God's will, expressed in his written Word, and to follow the Lamb fully: *parents* are bound "to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," without the least failure; and *baptized children* are bound, so soon as they understand the calls of the gospel, to render an immediate, unlimited, and holy obedience. This is law: every failure is sin and disobedience.

(4.) Yet it is acknowledged by all Christians, that *our standing* in God's visible church covenant cannot and does not depend upon discharging perfectly the obligations under which we are brought. If then *imperfections* in our obedience be consistent with our standing as parents and children in the Abrahamic covenant, the question naturally arises, by what *degrees* of imperfection are our relations to the visible Church to be determined? At what points can we stand in that covenant, in which the mass of the Jewish nation, through all the ages of the ancient economy, stood? And at what points do the laws of God eject us? Is this a matter to be determined by the various and discordant opinions of the different ministers of the gospel, when they propose to describe what is called "a credible profession of religion," which has also its degrees? or is there a general law of God, or an undoubted practice of the apostles in the primitive Church, by which we are to be governed?

These are questions which enter deeply into the merits of the

subject; and they are thrown out for your serious consideration. For I cannot here extend my remarks; but shall just add, that one of the earliest facts which Church history exhibits, is the existence of degrees in the communion of the Church. Infant church-membership had existed by a divine constitution since the days of Abraham. Catechumens who were members to a certain degree existed among the primitive Christians, and afterwards became the "competentes;" and how long they might remain catechumens before they were abandoned by their pastors, and either actually or virtually excommunicated, we are not particularly told. And then followed members in full communion. But we must stop, and pursue the application made by parents for infants.

(5.) The parents who apply for the baptism of their children, should be required to make the application *so early*, as to enable the pastors to give them instruction and admonition, and to allow the elders time sufficient to confer on the case. For in some instances it is important, that *facts* in relation to the parents should be disclosed, of which the pastor has no knowledge; as for example, that *one* of the parents is a disbeliever in the Sacred Scriptures or a heretic; or, that *both* the parents have been guilty of the sin of antenuptial fornication. In such cases, the pastor is required to exercise the authority with which he is invested. Rejection of the Scriptures is "a presumptuous sin," and excludes from the covenant. The vows of an infidel, heretic, or idolater, cannot be taken in the Church of God.

Parents, who lie under the guilt of antenuptial fornication, are to be charged with this sin, and to be required to profess, not sorrow that they have a child or that they are united in wedlock, but repentance for having done what Jehovah has expressly forbidden in his law.

(6.) But parents who are not chargeable with this particular sin, must nevertheless be instructed in the doctrine of baptism and its obligations. Little need be said by the pastor to parents who give undoubted evidences of piety; but some professors of religion, in common with other parents, need to have the Word of God preached to them in private very *faithfully*. In such conference, usually had before the elders, the pastor may pursue various modes of instruction. The best mode which experience taught me in this personal address to parents, was to begin with a brief exhibi-

tion of the Abrahamic covenant and the proofs of infant baptism; then, to remind parents of their own baptismal vows; their neglect in fulfilling them, if such neglect exists; then to press the obligations of repentance and faith, of domestic worship, pious example, instruction in divine truth; urging parents to train up their children for the service of that Saviour whose atoning blood cleanseth from all sin. This address, with questions, usually occupied about fifteen minutes, and preceded the exercise of social prayer, in the consistory-room, before the morning service on the Sabbath.

## 2. *Adult baptisms.*

(1.) When adults offer for baptism, more time is necessary for the due administration of the ordinance. In the ancient Christian Church, about six weeks usually intervened between the application and the baptism of adults. The pastor must certainly have *more time* for examination and instruction, explaining the nature and design of baptism, so that it be not considered to be that regeneration which leads to life, nor the infallible sign of pardon; explaining the duty of the baptized, which consists in a solemn dedication of himself to the service of God and the obedience of faith, and explaining the relations which baptism signifies to the Lord Jesus Christ, and how it seals to him pardon and peace with God if he believes with the heart.

The pastor, after administering the sacrament to an adult, may follow up his private instructions by a suitable exhortation in public to the baptized.

(2.) Baptism must be administered *in public assemblies* of Christian worshippers. This was the primitive practice. The faithful ministers of the three first centuries adhered to it, and condemned private baptisms. We are told that private baptisms were first introduced in compliment to the Christian emperors; afterwards the nobles requested it; others wished to be honored in like manner; ministers were indulgent, and private baptism became the general practice.

i. But baptism is a sacrament that signifies the visible initiation of the baptized into the Church; it indicates a relation, not to a family, not to a pastor, or the eldership merely, but to the whole Christian Church. Its administration therefore should be public,

and in the presence of as great a portion of the Church as can conveniently meet in one place.

ii. And the form of baptism supposes that baptism is administered in the assembly of the faithful.

iii. The elders of the Church can watch over the administration of this sacrament, if it be public ; but not, if it be private.

iv. Again : Private baptism has a direct tendency to lower the sacraments in the regards of the people.

v. To which add : Infant baptism recognizes that infant church-membership, which is a great privilege ; its public administration, which connects with it the prayers of the Church for parents and their children, shows that it is an invaluable privilege. It is not, however, intended to be said that baptism should in no case be administered in a chamber, where two or three meet together in the name of the Lord Jesus. No : sickness may confine the parent or the child. The pastor may lawfully baptize more privately, when afflictions seem to call for it ; so did the primitive teachers : but then he should be accompanied by an elder or elders, and engage with them in prayer.

What we more particularly condemn is, the practice of inviting a pastor to a house, because fashion and wealth are either ashamed to appear in a public religious service, or wish to be accommodated at home, and there engaging him to baptize a child amid much hilarity and good cheer. All this is wrong, as well as the custom in some places of the pastor being paid for administering baptism.

(3.) Baptism should be administered by the pastor *on the Sabbath*, so soon as it is convenient. It is Sabbath work, and does not belong to festival days in the Church. Much superstition infected the administration of this sacrament at an early day. The Jews had been accustomed to collect their proselytes, and baptize them at the Easter passover and at Pentecost. Christian ministers, unhappily, imitated that people herein, and deferred baptism until certain festival days arrived. This was not the apostolic practice ; and, several of the Christian Fathers remonstrated against it.

(4.) It remains to be observed, that the pastor *should read the form established by the Church*, to which, he may add such an address as he shall deem suitable, without rendering the public service

tedious. Some pastors read the form in a hurried and slovenly manner, as if in reading it they were not preaching divine truth, or as if divine truth could not be contained any where save in their own notes and lips; and others drop the prayer, and substitute one of their own. And we are sometimes pained with the result; for we notice various expressions arising from respect of persons in such prayers. If a poor man's child has been baptized, the prayer will indeed be appropriate; but if baptism be administered to the child of a dear friend of the pastor, or of a rich and influential person, the prayer will be richer and longer; but the form obliges ministers to offer the same prayer alike for the children of poor and rich.

(5.) The pastor *should keep a record of baptisms.* Such a record is a valuable document in the Church, especially in the case of children who are left in an orphan state, etc.

## LECTURE XXVI.

PASTORAL DUTIES—ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS, CONTINUED.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

ONE of the most solemn pastoral duties is, the administration of the *Holy Supper*, which is the other sacrament of the New Covenant, or the new dispensation of the Abrahamic covenant, founded upon better promises than the old or Sinaitic covenant.

It is remarkable that corruptions, soon after the death of the apostles, attached to this solemn ordinance, and that those corruptions grew apace until the Lord's Supper was converted into the Popish Mass.

With many of the ancient corruptions of Christianity, Evangelical Pastors have, happily, at this day no concern. But this is not true in respect to the *abuses* of the Lord's Supper, for these abuses are still perpetuated, so that we cannot hold "the faith once delivered to the saints," and commune at *every table* that is denominated "the Lord's table."

1. The Lord's Supper is awfully corrupted in the Roman Catholic Church; so as to become an ordinance, as we shall presently see, subversive of the whole plan of redemption, and subservient to idolatry. *Bread is worshipped*, while the "one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who dieth no more," is declared to be insufficient for salvation, and must be daily renewed in the Mass! This is a horrid profanation of the sacrament.

2. The Lord's Supper is corrupted by the Unitarians, who merge in their heresy its proper character and end, and consider it to be commemorative, not of the atoning sufferings and death of

Christ, but of the dying of Jesus of Nazareth, as far as his death served to confirm the truth of his doctrine and illustrate his many virtues, which we must copy after; such as his meekness, patience, fortitude, and innocency.

3. But, leaving the camp of heretics, we find the ordinance of the Supper perverted among some Protestant denominations from its original design. The Lutheran Church clothe it with a *consubstantiation*, which neither Luther nor his immediate disciples could define, and which serves to give unscriptural and irrational views of the human nature of our Lord. Other Protestants there are, who give a wrong character to this sacrament by teaching that it is a *converting ordinance*. They affirm that, like the ordinance of preaching the Word, the Holy Supper is appointed to be a means of awakening sinners, and of converting souls. Hence they freely admit to the Lord's table all who have been baptized and confirmed, without any examination into their temper and deportment; for if they are irreligious and unconverted, they may at the Lord's table be awakened and converted. This is the doctrine of the Church of England, of the Lutheran churches in this country and elsewhere, and of many corrupted Reformed churches in Europe. It was formerly the doctrine of several Presbyterian and Congregational ministers among us. Mr. Stoddard, of New-England, wrote and published in defense of it. He was answered with much force of argument by his son-in-law, President Edwards.

In the view of all these facts, how careful should the Evangelical Pastor be, in preaching the *pure doctrine* of the Lord's Supper, and in administering this ordinance, in that scriptural manner that shall render it subservient to those important ends for which it was instituted!

I shall not enter into the didactic field, nor inquire what are all the particular doctrines in relation to the Holy Supper, which should be taught, but merely give a summary of the doctrines; then detail briefly the history; and lastly attend to the pastoral administration of this sacrament.

### I. The DOCTRINE of the Holy Supper.

The doctrine of the Supper comprehends the name, the Divine institution, the visible sign, the thing signified, the partakers, and the design or end of this sacrament.

1. Its *Name*.

(1.) This sacrament is called in Scripture, (1 Cor. xi. 20,) “Κυριακὸν δεῖπνον,” “the Lord’s Supper.”

i. It is called “a supper,” not because it must be celebrated in the evening of the day, but because it was instituted in the evening. For its institution followed immediately after eating the Jewish passover, which was always solemnized in the evening. It is also well known that the ancients, and especially the Jews, kept their richest entertainments, and especially their marriage feasts, in the evening or night; and in consequence of this circumstance they were called “suppers.” (Matt. xxv.)

It was therefore proper that this ordinance, which presents to spiritual desire the choicest food, and which is a pledge to believers of the “marriage supper of the Lamb,” (Rev. xix. 9,) should be called a “supper.”

ii. In allusion also to those entertainments among men which were spread on *tables* set on purpose, this sacrament is called “τραπέζα του Κυριου,” the table of the Lord. (1 Cor. x. 21.)

iii. And also, in reference to the passover, which it succeeded in the Church, it is called “έορτη,” “ώστε εορτα ζώμεν,” “let us keep the feast.” (1 Cor. v. 9.)

iv. It is very significantly called “the Lord’s Supper:” for, first, it was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ; second, he is the chief end of it; third, as *Lord* over his own family and kingdom, he commanded his subjects to observe and keep it, in all ages and places, and thereby to show forth his death until he come; and fourth, it must be administered agreeably to his will.

It appears then, that the name of “mass,” or “missa,” does not belong to the Holy Supper. But other names are given to it, from the relations which it sustains: thus, first, from the visible signs, it is called “αρτος,” bread, and “το οτηριον Κυριου,” the cup of the Lord; and “το ποτήριον τής εύλογίας,” the cup of blessing. Second, from one of the duties which it involves, “ευχαριστία,” thanksgiving; and, third, and from one of its ceremonies, “the breaking of bread.”

The ancient Fathers often call it “*sacrificium*,” a sacrifice; not expiatory, as the Romanists wish, but *eucharistic*.

We condemn the naming of this ordinance, “the sacrament of the altar.” This is not a Scriptural denomination. Some of the

Fathers have used this appellation; but then "by the altar" they understand merely the "table" or elevated place, where the bread and wine were placed and administered. We have under the New Testament dispensation no visible altar in the Church. Christ himself is our *only altar*, on and by whom we offer up spiritual sacrifices, Heb. xiii. 15. Hence the phrase "family altar," for the place where we pray in families, is not language which Christian doctrine would approve.

The elements of the Supper we shall speak of, after dropping a word concerning,

2. *Its Divine Institution.*

(1.) Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Supper at Jerusalem, on the very night he was betrayed. He had been eating the paschal lamb with his disciples, and at the close of this feast, he proceeded with the deepest solemnity of manner to do what is recorded in Matt. xxvi.; Mark xiv.; Luke xxii. There is no dispute about the institution, nor the time and place of the institution, that need claim our attention.

(2.) But here I would remind you, that 'as our Redeemer took into his hands baptism as he found it, and appointed it to be a sacrament, so in instituting the sacramental supper, he took most of the rites and phrases used by the Jews at the passover. At this feast, the head of the family,

i. Took bread, blessed it, broke it, and distributed the pieces around, placing each piece before a guest. Our Saviour, it is probable, put the piece of bread into the hand of every guest.

ii. The master of the passover table took a cup of wine in both his hands, pronounced a blessing over it, or gave thanks, and then presented it to the guests, to drink of the cup in succession: so also did the Lord Jesus at the institution of the Supper.

(3.) In thus using materials and ceremonies of the passover feast in this institution, our Saviour would teach that,

i. The passover had a relation to himself as the "Lamb of God" to be offered up in sacrifice for sinners.

ii. That the Lord's Supper should be an ordinance not strange nor burdensome, but distinguished by its simplicity.

iii. And that it should succeed the passover, *out of which* it seemed to drop only the slain lamb and its sprinkled blood,

which after the atonement could have no place in any Christian ordinance.

(4.) But though our Lord in wisdom used rites and substances which had long been used at the passover, yet in using them, he showed by the words of the institution, that those materials and rites were now to be employed to a special end, such as they never had among the Jews, and that they should now constitute the *elements of a new sacrament*. The bread and wine at the passover had been used as *mere articles* of refreshment, and possessing no sacramental character. But now, after breaking the bread, he said, "Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you," which the apostle explains by these words, "which is broken for you." In like manner he devoted the cup of wine to a new and sacramental use, saying of it, "This is my blood of the New Testament, (the ceremonies used with the bread and wine at the passover had belonged to the Old Testament,) which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

(5.) He then added the command, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." His words evidently teach, that this ordinance was to be a standing one in his kingdom; that it was to be kept "*often*," and not as the passover, but once a year; and that it was to be a memorial of his death, from which salvation should flow out, not to the eleven disciples, not to one generation only, but to believers of various lands, and of every succeeding generation. If millions yet unborn should partake of that salvation, millions must keep this feast in remembrance of their Saviour.

The Quakers, however, deny that the command of Christ is still binding upon Christians, or that the breaking of bread is still to be observed. They say that this ordinance was to continue for a short time; that the Church was soon to be brought under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit; that this dispensation was actually introduced; and that "the law of touch not, taste not," was abolished, to give place to internal enjoyments of the spiritual blessings, without the outward ceremonies of water baptism, and the carnal eating of bread and wine. We answer,

(1.) That it is strange this should never have been known, even when the Spirit was poured out, and while the apostles lived; and

that it should have been first discovered by George Fox, under the reign of the Stuarts in England. This however is merely a presumptive argument. Let us strike the spirit of infidelity among the Quakers with irresistible proofs, if facts which cannot be denied constitute such proofs. We remark then,

(2.) That after "the dispensation of the Spirit" commenced, believers, led on by the apostles, observed the Lord's Supper with the strictest regard to the command of the Saviour, and with a clear understanding of their obligations in this respect. After the institution of the Supper, the apostles and disciples did not celebrate this ordinance until after the day of Pentecost, and the abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit: then they were particularly instructed with respect to their duty in relation to the Supper of the Lord; then they continued steadfastly "in prayer, in the apostles' doctrine, and in the breaking of bread;" then they celebrated the Supper at least on every first day of the week, which day came to be called from this very circumstance "*dies panis.*" So that it is most true, *that the communications of the Holy Spirit*, so far from teaching Christians no longer to observe the sacrament of the Supper, led them to understand the *meaning and design* of that ordinance, and to keep it very often. It received a commanding attention from Christians, both before the death of the apostles and during the purest days of Christianity. This fact is so plain from history, that it cannot be concealed from the eyes of those who read the records of the Church. But further:

(3.) The apostle Paul was converted, and called to serve God in the gospel of his Son, under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit; and did he teach that "the Lord's Supper" need not be observed, and that it was one of those carnal ordinances which were to be set aside? So far from this, the importance of this sacrament among Christian institutions, and the duty of observing it frequently in the most holy manner, was made to him the subject of an extraordinary revelation by the Holy Spirit. Hear his words, 1 Cor. xi. 23: "For I have received of the Lord (by special revelation) that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had

supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye, eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." These words we shall have occasion to refer to hereafter. Here we use them to prove that the Lord's Supper, first, is an important institution; for it is made, after the Church had extended among the Gentiles, the subject of an extraordinary revelation; and therefore the revelation was delivered by an apostle (Paul) among the laws of the gospel. Second, that it is connected in its visible sign with the New Testament; for "the cup is the New Testament in the Saviour's blood:" while that Testament therefore lasts, the Supper must be observed. Third, that Christians are required to show their Lord's death, in this ordinance, through all succeeding years, and "until he come." Here, then, the observance of the Supper is required as a duty always incumbent upon believers, and resting upon the relation which they sustain to their Redeemer: "For as oft as ye eat this bread (implying that they shall do it often) and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

"Ah! but," say the Quakers, "the words '*till he come,*' refer to Christ's coming at the destruction of Jerusalem; and therefore after that city was destroyed, Christians were not bound to observe the Supper." We answer,

i. That there is no connection whatever which in reality existed, nor the least intimation of such connection given in Scripture, between the Lord's Supper and the destruction of Jerusalem.

ii. The Gentiles had *no immediate concern* in the destruction of Jerusalem, but they had *as deep interest* as the Jews in the death of Christ. It was a common salvation, and believers among the Gentiles had as much reason to remember the Saviour's death as believing Hebrews could have: nor is it seen how the destruction could in the least impair their obligations to show forth the death of the Lord Jesus in all future times. But,

iii. The apostle Paul wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians A. D. 56 or 57, and Jerusalem was destroyed A. D. 70. Now it appears strange that the apostle should have delivered the revelations concerning the Lord's Supper to Corinthians with so much particularity, formality and solemnity, when the observance of that ordinance was to continue only twelve years longer.

iv. Add, that the Christian Church from the beginning never understood the Saviour and his apostle Paul as the Quakers do; but considered the perpetual observance of the Supper to be enjoined. Hence the whole Church observed it as religiously *after* as before the destruction of Jerusalem; and does the apostle John, who lived after Jerusalem was burned, any where correct that error, if it was one? No. We argue further,

(4.) That there is no incompatibility between the Holy Supper, and spiritual enjoyments. The Holy Spirit operates by his Word and ordinances. The Holy Supper was instituted to help and increase faith; to invigorate the graces, and thereby to render our communion with God more intimate, and our spiritual enjoyments richer. Hence the apostle calls that Supper "a feast." And lastly we observe,

(5.) That the Holy Supper is not among the carnal ordinances of the Mosaic law, but an institution of the gospel dispensation; and that it was not at all and could not be in the view of the apostle when he said, Col. ii. 21, "Touch not, taste not, handle not:" for the apostle Paul here speaks, first, either of the law of ceremonies under the Mosaic economy, which law God had abrogated: or second, of human institutions of religion, whether drawn from Jewish traditions, or from the schools of philosophy or pagan superstitions. But the *Lord's Supper* is neither *the one nor the other*. The Quakers therefore are chargeable with rendering void the commandment of God. But it is most true, that the spirit of infidelity animates their whole system.

### 3. *The Visible Sign* of the sacrament.

The elements of the Holy Supper consist, first, of the symbols themselves; and second, of the actions of the administrator and of the recipients, in relation to those symbols.

FIRST. The *symbols* are, "bread and wine;" materials which are simple and easily prepared, suited to the dispensation. (Read Witsius.)

1. *Bread*.—The bread to be used in the Supper, must be the common and nourishing bread of the country. Our Lord used unleavened bread. He would have excited the resentment of the Jews around him, had he used leavened bread; for it was the passover season. But whether we use leavened or unleavened bread, is a matter of no importance.

But the Popish priests use *wafers* instead of bread. This innovation is reprehensible, as it corrupts the ordinance. A little paste manufactured into *wafers*, would in no family be denominated *bread*, for the nourishment of the body. Much less can we approve, that this wafer should be put by the finger of the priest into the mouth of the recipient, there to dissolve without being chewed: but after the Romanists have, according to their imagination, converted the wafer in the Host into *the real body of Christ*, it is reasonable they should swallow their Saviour without putting him to the pain of mastication. Cicero said, that the utmost stretch of idolatry would be, for idolaters to convert their god into bread, and then eat him up.

But wafers, apart from the doctrine of the *real presence*, are to be rejected, for the following reasons:

(1.) Because the wafer is foreign to the institution and example of our Saviour, who took the bread that was provided for the passover, and such was known to be nourishing food.

(2.) Because there is little or no analogy between the wafer and the thing signified: the wafer is no food, nor grateful to the taste.

(3.) Because the wafer was the contrivance of the corrupters of the gospel in the dark ages; being unknown in the Church until the tenth and eleventh centuries.

2. *Wine*.—Wine is the other symbol: it is the juice of the vine. Whether the wine which our Saviour used was *red* or *white*, is uncertain. Probably it was *red wine*. It is also uncertain whether water was mixed with the wine at the first Supper. The Jews did often at the passover mix their wine with water. This also the primitive Christians did; because, as they celebrated their “*agapæ*” or love feasts immediately after the Supper, they chose to cut off all occasion of slander by the Gentiles.

Those who require that the wine should be mixed with water, talk of rendering the sign more significant, by the discovery of certain analogies. This however is evidently poor reasoning. Better is it to leave the churches here to do as their wisdom suggests.

It has been asked, whether, if there was a society of Christians in any part of the earth, where there were no wheat bread nor any juice of the vine to be had, the Lord’s people would be authorized to use in the Supper those substances which, in ordinary use

among them, administered nourishment and promoted cheerfulness? We answer in the affirmative: for such articles would be *as bread and wine* to that people.

SECOND. The *actions* of the administrator, etc.

The actions respecting the bread and wine must now be briefly stated. These actions are, first, either such as were performed by our Lord Jesus Christ when he himself administered the Supper, and which must be done in imitation of his example by his ministers at the Communion table; or, second, such as his disciples did, in a situation in which communicants in every age are placed.

*First.* The actions of CHRIST may be distributed into his words; comprehending, first, what he said in relation to the bread and wine, and what he commanded his disciples to do; and second,

His actions, or what he did, when distributing the symbols. \*

1. The *actions* of the Saviour in relation to the *bread* were these:

(1.) He "took" the bread in his hands.

(2.) He "blessed the bread." This act is called "blessing:" Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22; and also "giving thanks:" Luke xxii. 19. In this solemn manner, he consecrated the bread to the sacramental service, for which he designed it.

(3.) "He broke the bread." It is therefore called in the Supper, "the bread which we break." (1 Cor. x. 16.)

(4.) He gave the pieces thus broken to the disciples.

The *actions* of Christ in relation to the *wine* were these three, viz:

i. "He took the cup after supper," or after the feast of the passover was finished; so as to show, that this new institution was not a mere appendage to the passover.

ii. "He gave thanks." In reference to this act, the cup in the Holy Supper is called by the apostle Paul, "the cup of blessing." (1 Cor. x. 16.) This name, the cup had also borne in the passover, after a blessing had been asked upon it.

iii. "He gave it to his disciples." It is probable that our Lord first drank of the cup himself. Matt. xxvi. 29: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine," etc.

There is no mention made, that our Saviour poured out the wine. This was done at the passover, by the servants in attendance. So in the Christian Church, that service is with propriety rendered by the deacons.

Having considered what our Lord did in relation to the administration of the bread and wine, let us now attend,

2. To his *words*, which were either preceptive or explanatory.

(1.) The *preceptive* words are such as simply enjoin the action to be performed by the communicant, or direct the end for which it is to be done. The precepts respecting the action are these :

i. "Take," that is, receive in your hands the bread which I give you; not open your mouth, as is done in the Popish Mass, and let me put this morsel into it.

ii. "Eat"—chew the bread, and use it as food is used for the nourishment of your body, according to its physical constitution.

Hence you observe, that if the bread were converted into the real body of Christ, that body would be masticated by believers. Even to think of such an act, creates a shudder in the mind of the Christian.

iii. The precept relating to the *end* is, "This do in remembrance of me." Now, "do this" cannot mean, as Papists contend, to make the body of the Saviour an expiatory sacrifice: for what did he command them to do? either to do as he did, when they should act as his ministers in the Church, or to do as they were then doing as communicants at his table.

If he meant that they, as ministers of his Word, should afterwards do as he then did, then they could not make his body a sacrifice; for he did not himself do it. The Saviour did not destroy himself, when he administered the Supper; he was not crucified—he did not pour out his soul unto death: he continued to speak and act before their eyes, in the body, and afterwards to sing a hymn with them, and go out into the garden of Gethsemane.

But his ministers, after his ascension, cannot make his body a sacrifice. It is not in their power. If they did it, they would be the murderers of the Lord of glory: "Ye killed the Prince of life," said Peter to the Jews. Shall the sworn servants of Christ do the same thing?"

If he meant that his disciples "should do this" as communicants, it may be asked what they did? Nothing more did they than to "take the bread and eat it." In these acts, surely they did not make the body of Christ a *sacrifice*!

Obvious is it, then, that the precept, "Do this," means that

his disciples should consider it their solemn duty, as ministers of his Word, to dispense in his Church the sacrament which their Lord had just instituted, as he himself was then doing; and that, as disciples and communicants, they should keep the feast, and require it to be kept by all such of every age, receiving and using the symbols by the acts of eating and drinking in faith, for this express purpose, namely, the remembrance of their crucified Lord and Redeemer!

(2.) The *explanatory* words in relation to the *bread* are,

“This is my body given for you.” (Matt. xxvi.; Mark xiv.)  
 “This is my body broken for you.” (1 Cor. x. 24.) This phraseology our Lord adopted in relation to himself, as the great sacrifice for sin represented in the Supper, from the Jews, who were wont to say in keeping the passover, “This is the bread of affliction, which our fathers ate in Egypt.” They called the *lamb*, the *body* of the passover.

Now, the bread in the Supper is just as much the real body of Christ, as the lamb on the table of the paschal feast was the real bread of affliction which the Israelites ate in Egypt. In both cases, those articles, the broken bread and the lamb roasted, *were merely sacramental signs.*

#### TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Against this doctrine, which, one would say, could require no proof but the plain narrative of facts, the whole host of Popery raise their loudest voice—a voice, too, that in some countries is armed with all the terrors of the Inquisition; a voice that may yet doom to death thousands of Christians in the United States of America.

The Roman Catholics, directed by the decrees of the Council of Trent, maintain, as a most important article of their faith, that the words of the Lord Jesus in relation to the broken bread, viz: “This is my body,” must be understood *literally*; and that, as soon as ever they are pronounced by the priest, with a proper intention, a physical and substantial change is made of the bread into the natural body of Christ: that is to say, that the bread ceases to be bread, and is then that very body which was born of the Virgin Mary and was extended upon the cross; that a like change is made of the wine in the cup, after the priest has said, “This cup

is my blood," into the very blood that circulated in the veins of the body of the Redeemer. This change is called "*transubstantiation*," or a physical change of substance, and constitutes a grand property of the Popish Mass.

As this doctrine of transubstantiation is still avowed, and as the Papists still continue to urge that Christ said of the bread, "This is my body," I shall here detail the arguments by which the doctrine of transubstantiation is overthrown.

I. The transubstantiation of the bread into the real body of Christ, and of the wine into his blood, *is contradicted by the whole history of the institution and first celebration of the Supper at Jerusalem.*

1. If, when Christ had said, "This is my body," the bread became his body, then the body of the Saviour must have ceased to exist in its natural form; it must have been contained under *the form of bread* in the hands and in the mouths of the disciples; the person of Christ could no longer have been "like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted;" it must have become invisible; it must have been unable to speak words, even to change the wine "into his blood," and also unable any longer to move about. Now, what are the facts in the history? The evangelists tell us that the natural body of Christ was at the table, *without exhibiting the least change*; (and its transformation into bread would have exceeded any thing in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and startled the disciples beyond measure;) that it was visible, tangible; that it spake and moved in their society, and that it rose and walked out, and was suspended upon the cross afterwards. But all this history would be false, if his body had been changed into bread: and then what evidence should we have that Christ ever said, "This is my body"? for a history is not credible in any part, that contains so many lies as appear in this.

2. Did the bread speak—or what? Is it the natural body of Christ that continued to speak so many interesting words?

II. The doctrine of transubstantiation *is destructive of the human nature, and consequently of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1. We premise that the human nature of our Saviour consisted of a body organized in every respect like ours, united to an intelligent soul, and that his person is composed of the divine nature united to this human nature.

2. We then affirm that transubstantiation would be destructive

of the human nature and person of our Saviour; for if the bread were changed into the body, and the wine into the blood of Christ, it follows that his human nature must have been disorganized and separated into dead and lifeless parts. The bread and the wine, after consecration, are not *in the same place*; they are *not united*; they have little or no magnitude. Here then is the real body of Christ in one place, separated from its blood, (which is the life of it,) in another place; and therefore it is not a human nature and body. Here then is the real body of Christ separated into more parts than the body of the Levite's concubine; and this separation destroys it. Here is a human body, losing its figure and extension, into a little wafer; of course it ceases to be a human body. And here, again, is this little thing, called a wafer, conferring an omnipresence and immensity on the body of Christ, from the widely-extended celebration of the Lord's Supper; and that immensity and omnipresence, attached to the human nature, equally destroys it as an organized human body.

And if the human nature and body of Christ be destroyed, his personal constitution of God-man is instantly destroyed. I shall not enlarge here, but proceed to state,

III. A third argument, which is this: that the doctrine of transubstantiation *is contradicted by the testimony of our external senses.*

1. To the senses of the disciples, the bread and wine appeared to be natural bread and wine, etc.

2. At this day, in the Mass, after consecration, there is no perceptible change in the wafer, or in the wine. In figure, extension, taste, and other qualities, the eye, touch, and taste can perceive no change. There is no visible human body; there is no sense in the mouth of either flesh or blood; no one believes, not even a priest, that he eats a human body, or drinks human blood, any thing in the doctrine of transubstantiation notwithstanding.

"Ah! but," say the Papists, "you must not give credit to your senses, but *believe* the words of Christ, who said, 'This is my body.'" We answer:

(1.) That we do believe the Saviour's words, rightly interpreted: if we were to believe that the bread became his body, then we could not believe that he is our Saviour, as we shall presently see.

(2.) But why should we distrust the evidence of the eye, taste,

and touch, here, and not distrust the sense of hearing? We know that Jesus said, "This is my body," only by the ear. Might not this single sense have deceived the disciples more readily than all their other senses combined? Do we not often correct both the eye and the ear by the touch?

(3.) Add to which, if the external senses were not to be credited, how could the apostles be certain that Jesus wrought those miracles of which they were eye-witnesses? that he rose again from the dead? Did not Christ bid them rely upon their external senses, when he said, "Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke xxiv.) How could the deceived Romanist know that the priest and the altar were before him, and that he had eaten of the sacrifice of the Mass, if he did not credit the sense of sight, and touch, and taste? But why not understand Christ literally, when he said, "I am the door; I am the vine"?

So forcible is the evidence of sense here, that we do not believe that any Roman priest thinks it to be a reality that he is drinking blood out of the cup, or eating flesh, when he has paste in his mouth. Yet have those priests shed the blood of thousands of God's saints, because they would not profess to believe *a lie!*—as the priests do.

Other arguments will be given in our next lecture.

## LECTURE XXVII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION—THE CUP—THE THING SIGNIFIED.

I SHALL in this lecture offer the arguments that remain to be presented, in proof that the doctrine of transubstantiation is a grand heresy, and fatal to the hopes of sinners.

IV. If, when our Lord said, "This is my body," the bread was changed into his real body, then it follows, *that the Saviour did not die as the prophets had predicted*; that his body was not suspended on the accursed tree, and consequently that no atonement was made for sin. For it is acknowledged, that that bread, which in the passover chamber was changed into his body, was not crucified, and could not be crucified: it was eaten and thrown into the stomach of the disciples.

Ah! but, say the Papists, we offer up in the Mass, the body of the Saviour in sacrifice, before we distribute it to the communicants. We reply: What they do in the Mass we care not; but affirm, what cannot be denied, that if the doctrine of transubstantiation be true, the body of Christ did not suffer under Pontius Pilate; it was not crucified without the gates of Jerusalem.

This fact the Papists are obliged to acknowledge, for they call the sacrifice in the Mass "a bloodless sacrifice." Now a bloodless sacrifice cannot be an atoning sacrifice, for "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins."

V. The doctrine of transubstantiation *is contradicted by all the facts relating to the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the ascension into heaven, of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

His body suffered on the cross, rose again, and was received up

into glory; but if it had been converted into the material substance which he distributed in the Holy Supper, then his crucifixion, resurrection, and bodily existence in heaven, would have been impossible.

“But the Romish priests say, Christ is almighty; he can do whatever he pleases. We reply: He is omnipotent; but his omnipotence is, first, neither exercised to do what Popish priests please; nor, second, is it ever displayed in opposition to his own Word and work of redemption, and in maintaining evident absurdities and the grossest errors.

VI. The doctrine of transubstantiation *is contradicted by passages of Scripture.* Among these, let me direct your attention to one—Acts iii. 21. The apostle had been speaking of Jesus Christ, whom he had seen alive after his resurrection in the body, (for Peter could not see his Divine nature,) and going up bodily into heaven. Of this Saviour he says, “whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things.” Accordingly, he told his disciples that he must go away, and that “they should see him no more” (not in spirit and in power, for in this respect he promised to “abide in them,” but) *in body.*

Now, if the bread be changed into the real body of Christ in the Holy Supper, then that body cannot remain in heaven: nay, it cannot be in heaven at all; for in the world so many Masses are said as to occupy all the hours of every day, and all the days of every year. Mark, then, the awful result of that disgusting doctrine: the Lord Jesus Christ is bodily not in heaven, but on the earth, existing in the pix, and in Roman cathedrals and chapels. But we proceed to state another argument.

VII. The doctrine of transubstantiation *destroys the whole character of the Lord's Supper as a sacrament,* and makes the Saviour, not an object of faith, but an article of carnal enjoyment.

1. A sacrament has *a visible sign*; remove the visible sign, and the sacrament ceases to exist. Now the doctrine of transubstantiation would take away the visible signs of bread and wine, and render the thing signified alone visible.

2. “Christ,” says the apostle Paul, “lives in the hearts of believers by *faith* ;” but transubstantiation renders him *visible to sense,* and “faith is the evidence of things *not seen.*” It makes the Saviour to exist in the mouths and bellies of Christians

by carnal enjoyment. This is worse than Mahomet's sensual paradise.

VIII. If the bread and wine be changed into the body and blood of Christ, *then is there a miracle wrought*; and the frequent observance of the Mass produces a series of astonishing miracles. Yet these miracles excite no astonishment among the Romanists: they create no talk, and have no special effect. Why is this? Because they are miracles of the priests' making, not the works of Omnipotence. The priests profess to make "the body of Christ in the Mass," and their manufacture is very much like themselves, good only to deceive poor souls.

Other arguments might be here adduced, but I shall add this only:

IX. That *the history of the Lord's Supper, and the sentiments of the primitive and ancient Fathers in the Church*, are opposed to the doctrine of transubstantiation.

1. The history we shall give hereafter.

2. The sentiments of the Fathers cannot be detailed here. Let it suffice to say,

(1.) That Irenæus (lib. iv., c. 34) says, "The Supper, called the Eucharist, is composed of two things, an earthly and a heavenly bread.

(2.) Tertullian says, (lib. iv., *Contra Marc.*): "He made the bread which he distributed to his disciples his body, saying, This is my body; that is, a figure of my body."

(3.) One of the canons of the Council of Nice (not to call up the sentiments of Clemens, Cyprian, Augustine) says: "Let us not rest at the divine table as children, on what is set before us, bread and wine, but lifting up our souls on high by faith," &c. If, now, the bread and wine were changed into the real body and blood of Christ, these objects should arrest our chief attention, and no bread and wine could be before us.

We shall dismiss the doctrine of transubstantiation with this remark: that when the words of our Lord, "This is my body," are considered in connection with the subject, we are those who understand them *literally*: while, to give them the meaning of transubstantiation or consubstantiation, words must be added. What was our Saviour doing when he said, "This is my body"? Was he crucifying himself, or dying as a sacrifice? No; he was insti-

tuting and administering a sacrament. Thus employed, he said: "This is my body," *in the sacrament, or sacramentally*. My body, exhibited not in its flesh and bones, and mangled members; but by the broken bread, as a visible sign of it.

But the Papists, to make out transubstantiation, must add: "This bread is no longer bread, but my body." And the ubiquitists must add: "This is my body, in and under the bread."

Let us now direct our attention to the *words* of our Lord,

(4.) Respecting the *cup*. These are, again, either preceptive or explanatory.

First. The *preceptive* words are, "Drink ye all of it:" emphatically, all must drink of it.

The *end* for which this must be done is expressed: "This do, as often as ye drink of it, in remembrance of me." (1 Cor. xi. 25.)

The command could not be misunderstood; and, as we shall see, it was neither misunderstood nor disobeyed.

But I must now call your attention to the Romish *prohibition of the cup to the laity*.

With this express injunction of the Redeemer before us, we cannot but condemn the robbery of Popery in taking away the cup from the lay believers, and despise the deceit with which the priests attempt to cover that robbery, by saying that "the blood, under the figure of the bread, is associated with the body," which they call "concomitantia."

But the principal reason which the Romanists offer, to justify their disregard of the command of the Redeemer, is, "that this command was given to the disciples who were present, and *who were all priests, and not laity*." We answer,

1. That the disciples were as yet neither priests nor ministers of the New Testament, but ordinary believers.

2. That if the disciples were clergy, and not lay believers, then, as every command which the Saviour gave in the institution of the Supper was addressed to them alone, it follows, that the Supper was appointed for the clergy alone, and that the Romanists abuse this ordinance by permitting the laity to commune in eating the bread.

But the very defense which the Romanists make of their wicked prohibition of the cup, shows that they violate a law of God.

Bellarmino (de Euch. l. iv.) says: "We need not follow all that

Jesus did: in the first Supper he did many things which do not reach us." We answer,

1. This is discovering at once the true spirit of the Roman Church—that mystical Babylon and mother of harlots. The laws of the Pope must be obeyed, but the commands of Christ may be departed from. The Pope is exalted above God.

2. But the institution of Christ is a law to us. His command is binding; it cannot be violated by his Church; he said, "Drink ye all of it;" and knowing that the "Man of Sin" would arise at a future day and corrupt this ordinance, he reiterated this law of communion in both kinds, by special revelation through the apostle Paul. "He took the cup, saying, This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Did Paul restrict the cup to the clergy? No: addressing himself to all the members of the Christian Church, he says: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and *drink of that cup.*" (1 Cor. xi.)

"But the Church," says another Roman Catholic writer, "has the power to make any change. Has she not baptized in the name of Christ alone, when Christ commanded that baptism should be administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? Has she not changed the Sabbath day? Has she not abolished the law respecting 'the eating of blood and of things strangled?'" We answer,

1. It is then confessed, that the original law respecting communion in both kinds has been changed in the Church, after the days of the apostles.

2. But the change of the Sabbath day was made by the inspired apostles.

3. If it is recorded that the apostles and other ministers baptized in the name of Christ, in order to distinguish his baptism from the baptism of John; yet in applying the water, they all performed the act "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;" if they baptized in the name of Christ, they then baptized as Christ commanded them to baptize.

4. "The prohibition of blood and things strangled," related to a Jewish law, and had in view the prejudices of the Jews. See 1 Cor. x. 25. But any Christian may observe this law: the gospel will not restrain him. But will the Romanists permit any layman

in their communion who wishes so to do, to partake of the cup? No.

5. But we deny that the Church has power to repeal the laws of God, and change the institutions of Christ: if she can take away the cup, she can take away the bread, and can then abolish the institution of the Supper and also of baptism; and where shall her power terminate?

We treat with contempt the exposition of Bellarmine, who says that by the words, "drink ye all of it," Christ meant that the first disciple should not drink the cup out; but so drink of it, that every one should have a portion of it. We shall not pursue the Catholic writers further; but proceed to state the arguments which evince the existence of the law requiring communion in both kinds.

(1.) The command of the Saviour *is express*; it is incorporated with and inseparable from the whole institution, and that institution a sacrament of the everlasting covenant. To say, as the Romanists do, that in partaking of the *bread*, the communicants do partake of the cup, and thus drink of the blood, is not true; for the bread was not made a sacramental sign of the blood of Christ: the *cup* was appointed to be the visible sign and seal of the new covenant in the blood of the Lord Jesus, and *not the bread*: these signs have their appropriate meaning, and must not be confounded, though they relate to the same grand object. If the laity do partake of the cup under the bread, why should the cup itself be withheld from them?

(2.) The disciples did *all drink of the cup*. The primitive Christians did the same; the prohibition of the cup is a daring innovation, unknown to the Fathers.

(3.) We argue, from *the relation* which all believers sustain to Christ, if they repent and believe the gospel, that *lay* Christians have as much an interest in the Saviour as the clergy: and they obtain by the blood of the Lamb as full remission of sins as ministers of the Word do. There is nothing in the whole institution of the Supper, excepting the administration of it, that pertains to the clergy exclusively.

(4.) In 1 Cor. x., xi., Paul declares that *all believers, as such*, have a right to the cup: for is not the cup of blessing a sign of communion in the blood of Christ?

(5.) It is difficult to conceive how the Corinthians *could have abused* the Supper by excess in drinking, unless they had by law access to the cup.

Second. Let us now attend to the *explanatory words* of our Saviour, in relation to the cup; they are these: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you: for many, for the remission of sins."

1. Here let me remark, that if the Romanists insist upon the literal sense of our Lord's words, what will they do with the word *cup*, in the text? A cup is a material vessel; it is not *wine*: must we then say, that the *cup itself* is changed into the blood of Christ? No, say the Romanists; there is a *metonymy* in the words: the cup is used for that which it contains. This is true; but, if the language be figurative in one sentence, why may not a figure exist in another, relating to the same object?

2. Admitting, however, that by the cup *the wine* is meant, how can this wine be *the new covenant*? and yet our Lord as plainly declares, "This cup *is* the new testament," as he does, "This bread *is* my body."

Here then, again, the adversaries are obliged to come to our interpretation of our Lord's explanatory words, and to say "that the cup, that is to say, the wine in the cup, is the sign and seal of the privileges and blessings of the new covenant, procured by the atoning blood of the Lord Jesus.

But say that the wine (dreadful thought!) is converted into the blood of Christ; what then? the result is nonsense: for the blood of Christ is not the new covenant, nor is it the mere sign of it; but can only be the procuring cause of its blessing.

After what has been said, a few remarks on the words of the Saviour will exhibit their true sense.

(1.) "This cup is the new testament." The Jews in the pass-over had been used to call the *wine which they drank* the cup; this phraseology our Lord adopts: it was well understood.

(2.) The wine then is the symbol of the New Testament, better translated here "the new covenant," in contradistinction to the old or Sinaitic covenant, of which Moses was the mediator, which was ratified by the sprinkling of the blood of beasts, and which had appended to it, for gospel purposes, the sacraments of circumcision and the passover.

But this old covenant must be set aside; a new one must be introduced, of which the incarnate Son of God should be the Mediator; which should be ratified and sealed by his own precious blood, and the blessings of which should be many and rich, corresponding with its better promises; not of an angel going before, but of the Spirit of God dwelling in the hearts of his people; not of rest in Canaan, but of heavenly rest and glory: promises which speak plainly and openly of salvation, of pardon, of eternal life.

Now the wine in the Lord's Supper is the *symbol* of the new covenant in the blood of Jesus; for that new covenant derived its existence, according to the purpose of God, from the manifestation of the sufferings and death on the cross, attended with the shedding of blood, of the Saviour. Hence,

(3.) Our Lord said, "in my blood, which is shed for you and for many." His blood was shed, he tells them, not for them alone, but for many others: for Gentiles as well as Jews, even for all who should believe in his name: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; he therefore adds, "for the remission of sins." Accordingly, the *cup* as well as the *bread* are signs of Christ crucified, and to all who believe, *seals* of pardoning mercy and eternal salvation. This will be brought up again when we speak of the thing signified in the Lord's Supper.

Just now we must attend,

*Second*, to the *actions of the disciples*, who were the first communicants at the Lord's table. These actions were three, viz:

(1.) "They took the bread and the cup as their Lord commanded, for the union of both these gives the idea of a full feast: the Supper having both meat and drink, is *symbolical* of that spiritual feast which the Lord Jesus has provided for his people, and in which his crucified body is "meat indeed, and his atoning blood is drink indeed."

(2.) The disciples "ate the bread;" they did not keep any part of it in reserve for superstitious uses. We are told indeed that, under heavy persecutions, the early Christians reserved pieces of the bread to give to their brethren, who could not, in consequence of their imprisonment, be present at the celebration of the Supper. But we have no direction for this practice, whatever pious affection it may discover, and no intimations of such a custom in the Scriptures of the New Testament.

(3.) The disciples "drank of the wine." Mark xiv. 23: "they all drank of it." A record which intimates to us, that the Omniscient Spirit foresaw the deeds of Antichrist in forbidding the cup to the laity: for the *taking of the bread has not this record of it* in the writings of the Evangelists.

It is to be noted, then, that in all the actions of the disciples at the first Supper, (which actions we are now to imitate,) we discover no opening of the mouth to have the bread inserted; no kneeling and worshipping of the symbols; no abstaining from the cup.

We must now direct our attention,

4. *To the things signified and sealed* by the visible signs in the Supper. These have, in the statements just made to refute serious errors, been anticipated in a great measure; so that our remarks on this branch need not be many.

*First.* The *signs*, in general, signify,

1. The one sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered up on the cross for sinners.

2. The blessings procured by this all-sufficient sacrifice.

3. Our participation of those blessings by faith.

4. Our union to the Saviour, and our communion with one another in love.

In particular, the *bread broken* signifies,

(1.) The suffering Saviour, his body broken and crucified, etc.

(2.) The broken bread taken, signifies Christ received by faith.

(3.) The bread *eaten* nourishes and feeds the body; this signifies the nourishment and strength derived from Christ, received into the heart by faith, or from the spiritual eating of the "true bread which came down from heaven."

(4.) The bread eaten together, the communion of saints in the enjoyment of the common salvation.

The *wine* signifies in particular, the blood of Christ shed for us.

(1.) Wine refreshes the animal spirits, satiates thirst, and renews the strength of the body; so the *grace*, or Spirit of grace procured by the blood of Christ, revives, strengthens and satisfies the soul of the believer. See the effects of this grace expressed in these terms, John vi. 14; Ps. xxxvi. 9; Isa. xxv. 6.

(2.) As wine is pressed with violence from the wine-press, so our Lord was pressed down in soul, until the blood flowed from the pores of his body, etc.

It appears, then, that both the bread and the wine signify the same thing, holding up to view, symbolically, Christ crucified for us; and that they are both given to strengthen our faith, in looking unto Jesus, as the source of pardon and salvation. Why then, it may be asked, should the symbols in the Supper be doubled? We answer:

- i. To exhibit the semblance of a feast.
- ii. To show the importance of the institution, the richness of the new covenant; and,
- iii. To speak longer and more forcibly to the external senses, with a view to aid the mind, and to give the stronger assurance of the Saviour's love, and the certainty of the promised blessings.

*Second.* The visible signs in the Lord's Supper are also *seals of the covenant*.

(1.) They seal and confirm the grand revelation of the gospel, that there is salvation through a crucified Jesus; that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved.

(2.) They seal to all communicants the enjoyment of the inestimable privileges to be found in the visible Church, etc.

(3.) But many communicants eat unworthily, and are condemned. Many commune with impenitent and unbelieving hearts; not being willing "to submit to the righteousness of God our Saviour." Yet their unregeneracy cannot destroy the proper character of the sacrament, though they only eat the bread of earth and drink the wine of earth.

(4.) The Lord's Supper was instituted for true believers, and to them it seals the right to all the blessings procured by the Saviour, and dispensed under the new covenant, and exhibited in its promises, viz: The Holy Spirit, remission of sins, sufficient grace, peace and communion with God, adoption, heirship and glory.

The deed of gift is the written Word; the Spirit of sanctification enables us to find and to read our names in that deed; the Lord's Supper is a visible seal to that deed, with all its bequests.

5. The *agreement* between the sign and the thing signified, is sufficiently plain from what has been said. We shall therefore proceed to inquire respecting,

6. The *lawful partakers* of the Holy Supper.

We are not inquiring who, in the sight of God, partake ac-

ceptably of the Lord's Supper, and derive from it spiritual benefit; for it is well known that in this ordinance God accepts only the penitent, the truly humble, who believe with the heart unto righteousness, and take up their crosses respectively to follow Christ. For his promises are made to such alone. "If any man love me, him will my Father love, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

But here we are inquiring who are, in the judgment of the Church—governing herself by the laws of her King, but unable to read the hearts of men rightly—to be admitted to the table of the Lord?

Here the Erastians are ready to answer, that *all the baptized* are lawful partakers. Here churches of various names tell us that the Lord's Supper, like the Word preached, is a *converting ordinance*, and therefore that none who belong to the Christian community ought to be excluded; that if they are unconverted, they may, in the participation of this affecting ordinance, be converted; that if they are wicked, they may be renewed and sanctified in eating the bread and drinking the wine; and that all that is required of partakers is, baptism, a discerning of the Lord's body in the Supper, and devout observance of it. If one is unbaptized—if another does not perceive the relation which the Supper sustains to Christ crucified—if a third will not use this sacrament religiously, but convert it into a carnal feast for the gratification of the lusts of the flesh, *let such be excluded, but no other.*

But against this doctrine, viz: that the Lord's Supper is a *converting ordinance*, we set ourselves, and contend that the Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance, and therefore not to be administered to all who profess to belong to the Christian Church; we mean, not to be dispensed to those who give no evidences, in their affections and lives, of faith and godliness. Our arguments are these:

1. The institution of the Lord's Supper shows that it was designed for confirming faith, eliciting love, and promoting intimate communion with the Saviour, and communion in love among believers.

(1.) Our Saviour did not invite all the Jews who believed the Scriptures and attended public worship, to eat this Supper, in the hope that *they might be converted*; no, he administered this ordi-

nance to his disciples, who by the mouth of Peter had before said, "We believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

(2.) In stating the design of this sacrament, he declared that an affectionate remembrance of his death, as the atoning sacrifice for sinners, was the grand object in his view. But can one who does not embrace this Saviour by faith, who gives no satisfactory evidence that he loves him, affectionately remember his death? Can the habitually irreligious show forth his death? No. But it is objected, "Did not the Saviour administer the bread and the wine to Judas Iscariot? Who is a greater sinner than he was?"

We answer, first, there is no proof that Judas Iscariot ate the Supper. But admitting he did, we observe, second, that he was secret in his iniquity and treachery; he had maintained a respectable profession hitherto, and committed no overt act till that night, after eating the passover and discovering that the Lord Jesus knew his inward vileness. But, third, though he was known to be a bad man by the omniscient Saviour, yet that omniscience could not be acted upon here, inasmuch as a *rule* was to be prescribed for the administration of the Supper to his ministers; and his ministers could inspect only the external conduct of professors.

2. The apostle Paul states that law, by which the visibly impenitent and habitually irreligious *are excluded*. He describes those who lawfully partake (2 Cor. vi.) as being professedly "the temple of the living God." He states that the Lord's Supper requires spiritual union, in order to that spiritual communion for which that sacred ordinance was instituted. 1 Cor. x.: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Hence he enacts that "a man shall examine himself, whether he be in the faith; and so, when he hath faithfully examined himself, let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." These passages speak plainly, and forbid us to admit to the Lord's Table not only hypocrites and secret sinners, but also those who by their temper and conduct show that they are not "the temple of the living God," that their souls desire no communion with true believers in the body and blood of Christ, and that they do not examine themselves whether they be in the faith; for their unbelief is manifest.

3. The symbols of the Lord's Supper show that it is "a feast," and so the apostle Paul calls it; and that it is designed to administer spiritual nourishment and growth. But shall we put the *known dead* to feast at this table? Can there be growth where there is obviously no seed of grace, and no principle of life? Do we feed the corpse, to make it grow and to nourish it? Finally, we ask:

4. Who were the primitive partakers? They were those only who *continued* in the apostles' doctrine, and who were "of one heart and of one soul" with those who openly professed to believe in Christ, and to love him in sincerity. And shall those now be admitted who give every evidence that, instead of gathering with Christ, they are scattering abroad?

5. "*Holiness* becometh thine house, O Lord!" The whole system of the Christian religion has this in view. But the table of the Lord is one of the mysteries of that religion; and if a promiscuous multitude be admitted, the mystery must be profaned, the character of the religion be lost, the Church injured, and discipline subverted. This is enough: you can see our doctrine well stated in the eighty-first Lord's Day of the Heidelberg Catechism, where, against Lutheran laxity, it is denied that the Lord's Supper is a converting ordinance; and also in the Westminster Catechism, against the practice of the Church of England.

Objection. But did not all the Israelites eat the passover?

Answer. This argument we set aside, in stating the doctrine of the passover.

It has been asked, whether the Lord's Supper cannot be lawfully administered to *children*, as the children of believers are in the covenant, and as they were, under the ancient dispensation, permitted to eat the passover? We answer:

(1.) Children are subjects of baptism, but cannot partake of the Holy Supper; because, in relation to this sacrament, there is an express law which, in its enactments, excludes them. This law requires those who sit at the Lord's table to "*discern* the Lord's body, and to examine themselves." Now, children are physically incapable of these acts.

(2.) The passover, we have said before, was a *memorial feast*, as well as a sacrament. Hence the children of the Israelites could eat of it.

We conclude, then, with observing, that *baptized adults*, who

give credible evidences of Christian piety, and are not under suspension, *are alone the lawful partakers of the Holy Supper*. But we do not hereby design to exclude young persons, say of seven or nine years and more, who show that God has effectually called them by his grace. Yet those of this tender age ought not to be hastily admitted, especially as the sacraments are not absolutely necessary to salvation. It remains that we state,

7. The *end* for which the Holy Supper was instituted, as from the end we may ascertain the *obligations* which it imposes.

(1.) The great end is, the glory of God.

(2.) Immediately in connection with this is the glory of Jesus Christ, as the procurer of the redemption of his people by the sacrifice of himself on the tree of the cross. Hence this sacrament proclaims with a loud voice, that the incarnate Son of God came to save sinners; and that he died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God: ye who believe in his name are bought with a price. Hence the observance of this sacrament has in all its rites a direct reference to the *death of Christ*, as the procuring and meritorious cause of salvation; it exhibits the Lamb that was slain; it holds up the grand doctrine of Christianity, that Jesus gave his life a ransom for many, and that through his blood also there is remission of sins. It shows who is Lord of the redeemed, while it engages them to avow all their indebtedness to him; to commemorate the wonders of his love, and to say, as John did, "Unto him that loved us, etc., unto him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Amen.

Such being the end of this institution, those, as the Unitarians, who deny the divinity of the Saviour, and salvation by his blood as the ransom price, may, as they do, attach no importance to the observance of this sacrament; and those who, like the Roman Catholics, seek to make good works, or obedience to the priests or the Church, the condition of pardon, may well hide the strong features of this great institution under the mummery of the Mass; for they know, that while this ordinance is kept with the words of Christ annexed to it, it will and must speak *truths* of vital importance to sinners. If the preacher teaches another gospel, this sacrament will contradict him when he stands at the communion table.

(3.) Another end of this institution is, to confirm our faith, by

giving to his promises of pardon and eternal life, visible signs and seals that he did die for us, that he does love us, that he will save us, and that the promises shall be fulfilled.

(4.) Another end is to promote our communion with him, by calling us to remember him in his death and blood-shedding for our redemption, and to know again the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. In this ordinance we stand removed from a busy and deceitful world, and very near his cross, and hear him say, "This is my body, which is broken for you; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for the remission of your sins."

(5.) Another end is to promote the communion of believers with one another in love. It is a social ordinance. We drink of the same cup and eat of the same bread; believe in the same Saviour, and partake of one Spirit, and are therefore called to be of one heart and of one soul; forbearing, forgiving, comforting one another, and uniting our efforts to do honor to our Redeemer.

(6.) Another end is to afford additional external means by which the Holy Spirit can consistently operate as a Comforter, sealing us unto the day of redemption.

(7.) Another end is to bind us ever and anon to obedience; for the Holy Supper is a sacrament of the everlasting covenant—a covenant in which we engage to serve the Lord Christ, to follow him through good report and evil report, and to maintain a conversation as becometh his gospel. I study to be brief here, and therefore hasten to observe,

That, from one of the ends aimed at, in the institution of the Holy Supper—viz: communion with one another—we must pronounce *all private and individual observance* of the Supper to be wrong: for, *first*, it is not communion; *second*, there is no showing forth the death of Christ; there is no public Eucharistia or thanksgiving by the Church. It is contrary to the practice of the primitive Christians.

It is easy, after what has been said, to perceive the *obligations* which this sacrament imposes on believers.

i. It binds them to make Christ crucified the object of their faith, his sufferings and death to be the subject of their meditations.

ii. It binds them to show forth the death of Christ and the con-

straining influence of his love, by living in the cultivation of the graces of the divine life, and in the practice of godliness.

iii. It binds them to cherish that brotherly love which shall indicate that they belong to one divine family, and to exhibit those sacraments of the Divine Image which shall manifest a family resemblance.

iv. It binds them to do all things and suffer all things for Christ's sake.

Other truths in relation to the Lord's Supper will be presented in speaking of its history and pastoral administration.

## LECTURE XXVIII.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### HISTORY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

SOME facts may be obtained from the history of the Lord's Supper: and therefore we now call your attention,

II. To that HISTORY. We shall leave what relates to that late corruption, the Popish Mass, to form the subject of a separate lecture.

A Popish writer tells us, without sufficient authority, that our Lord supped three times on the eventful night in which he was betrayed: first, he ate the passover; secondly, an ordinary supper, at which he presented Judas with a sop; and he instituted and solemnized the Holy Supper.

It is to be observed in reading the history of the Supper, that the ancients did not sit at table as we do; but in eating at meals, reclined on couches, or on the floor with a pillow under the elbow. Hence John could lie upon the bosom of the Saviour, and the woman could wash and anoint his feet as he sat at meat: for the feet were not under the table, but, in the reclining posture of the body, extended backwards.

The Popish writers further attempt to sport with the credulity of the ignorant, by fabling that it was a square table at which our Lord administered the Supper; and that this very table is in preservation at Rome. So also they say that the cup of blessing was a *silver one*; and they say further, that the silver cup shown at Jerusalem, at two places in Italy, and at Douay, is the original one. Their fables and superstitions with respect to other articles are innumerable.

To detail all the fabulous stories which the adherents of Rome

have invented about Peter celebrating mass at Antioch, and other apostles at other cities; and about the forms composed by the apostle James and his associates for the saying of mass, would be a waste of time. Let us occupy our attention with facts.

It was not to be expected that the apostles would keep the Lord's Supper, until after they received their commission to act, and received the Holy Spirit as their Master promised, in especial communications. Nor did they. For what is recorded, Luke xxiv. 30, was not an administration by the Saviour of the Holy Supper, but an ordinary supper, at which he made himself known to his disciples after his resurrection.

But immediately after the day of Pentecost, the apostles, now enlightened in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, set themselves immediately to observe, among other ordinances of the Christian religion, the Holy Supper. After the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of the Saviour, they understood the full meaning and the gracious design of this sacrament: accordingly we read, Acts ii. 42: "They [the converts] continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

In pursuing the history before us, let us attend,

FIRST, To the *apostolic age*.

In examining, then, into the history of the Holy Supper during the lives of the apostles, we find the following facts:

1. The administration of the Supper *was frequent*: on every Lord's day, which on this account was called "the day of the breaking of bread;" and on other days of the week, so often as Christians came together. This frequent observance of the Supper arose,

(1.) From the copious effusions of the Spirit, and the power of the Word, producing strong faith and fervent holy affections; so that believers were in a state of mind qualifying them to show forth the death of the Lord Jesus as the price of their salvation.

(2.) From the rapid increase of converts, who after baptism were successively brought to enjoy the communion of the Lord's table, and to testify that they were of one heart and of one soul.

(3.) From the persecutions to which Christians were exposed; for the endurance of which, the Lord's Supper was an external means of grace well adapted to qualify them.

(4.) And also, from the circumstance that the Jews and Gentiles were daily in the observance of some of the mysteries of their religion. Highly expedient in such circumstances was it, that the Lord's Supper should be often celebrated, in order to wean the converts from their former observances, and engage them in an important and deeply affecting service.

2. There was also in the breaking of bread, *a publication and avowal* of the most interesting doctrines of the gospel; doctrines relating to the character, love, and death of Christ, and to the blessedness of an interest in him. To these doctrines, Christians would give their practical testimony. But it is to be observed, that we are not bound to do in this respect, exactly as the primitive churches did: for the circumstances in which we are placed are different; and there is no divine law, prescribing the particular times and number of times that, in a given period, we are to eat the Lord's Supper. This matter is left to the discretion of the Church, and belongs to the rules of order.

3. The administration of the Supper in the primitive Church was *very simple* in its rites. Agreeably to the original institution, the apostles and ministers took bread and wine in ordinary use, (and if the wine was strong, they mixed water with it;) they consecrated these material substances, brake the bread, and distributed portions of it; took the cup and presented it, with thanksgiving and prayer; instructing those around the table in the design of this sacred ordinance, and encouraging their hearts to believe in and follow their Lord and Saviour! Nothing could be more remote from carnal exhibition and pompous display, than this sacrament was. Hence its frequent observance was easy, while the blessing attending its administration was rich!

When the Supper was ended, the Christians, without any special direction from God, observed a feast of charity or love. These "agapæ" consisted of bread and water distributed around, and were held often at night in Christian assemblies, and sometimes on occasions when it was not convenient to administer the Lord's Supper.

Connected with the Lord's Supper, as well as with the ordinary worship of God by Christians, was the "holy kiss, or kiss of charity," by which they expressed their mutual and pure affection for one another. *Kissing* was much in use among the ancients, as

a token of esteem; and when in our times it is laid aside, this affords no evidence that vicious lusts are more repressed. The nominally refined manners of fashionable society cover very slightly gross impurities.

Let us however proceed with our history. The numerous converts to Christianity included many who were struck by the force of the extraordinary testimony given from heaven to that religion, without being truly humbled and renewed in the temper of their minds. The natural consequence of this unregeneracy of heart would be, as it actually was, gradual attempts by such persons (some of whom were Jews, and others Gentiles) to *corrupt* the doctrines of the gospel, by their favorite tenets of Eastern philosophy and of pharisaical Judaism, and to modify or alter the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper by their innovations.

*First.* Accordingly, we find that as early as A. D. 94, (Epiphan. Hæres. 30,) the heretic Ebion, who was a Samaritan, and rejected important parts of the New Testament Scriptures, taught in relation to the Holy Supper, these erroneous sentiments:

1. That unleavened bread alone must be used in the Holy Supper;

2. That wine must be dispensed with, and water alone be used;

3. And that the Lord's Supper must be solemnized but once in the year, as the passover could be kept but once in a year. The *Ebionites*, however, were insignificant in number and influence, and, on account of their various heresies, were not considered to be Christians by any but themselves.

*Second.* But in the Christian Church at Corinth, abuses were connected in practice with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, which obtained the special notice of the apostle Paul, and led him, under the inspirations of the Holy Spirit, to administer that reproof and that doctrine to which we must now direct our attention.

In adverting to these early abuses and corruptions of the Holy Supper, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle says, chap. xi. 20: "When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." Verse 21st: "For in eating, every one taketh before the other his own supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken." Verse 22d: "What! have ye not

houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."

1. The apostle here states, that *some* among the Corinthians, when they came together in one place to celebrate the Lord's Supper, disregarded the *end* for which this ordinance was instituted; treated it as a common meal; ate it without holy preparation and examination: consequently, this corruption was to destroy the sacrament, and bring iniquity and condemnation upon their own souls. This, he says, "is not to eat the Lord's Supper" to any spiritual benefit, but to eat and drink judgment unto themselves: "for in eating, some took before their own supper;" and became, at this preceding entertainment, "drunken." Others, who had no previous feasting, came "hungry" to the Lord's table, and sought to satisfy their carnal appetite. "The one," he says, "is hungry, and another is drunken."

In exhibiting the sense of these words, we must observe,

(1.) That the word "other," in our English version, has not any corresponding word in the Greek, and ought not to have been inserted. The original reads thus: "for in eating," or in celebrating the Holy Supper, "every one taketh before his own supper, and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

(2.) That in keeping the passover among the Jews, it was customary among that people to eat a *hearty* meal, and thereby remove all hunger just *before they ate the passover*. "Canon paschalis hic est," says one, "pascha sive agnus paschalis non comeditur nisi post saturitatem, hoc est, in ipso fine cœnæ. (Maharil in suo rituali. Vide Talmud Pesachim, fol. 70.) As the carnal appetite was satisfied by that previous meal, the paschal lamb was eaten in a religious manner, and each one took but a small quantity of it.

(3.) Now, as the first converts at Corinth were principally Jews, they introduced a similar custom in observing the Lord's Supper. They had a feast prepared in the place where they assembled, *to go before the celebration of the Supper*. Of this meal, furnished by the rich, and sometimes quite sumptuous, all who were invited partook; and in partaking of it freely, one became drunken, while another communicant at the Lord's table, who had not eaten of that previous feast, (probably because they were either poor persons or Gentile converts,) came hungry, or without being filled, to the

Supper. This explains the apostle's words: "for in eating" the Holy Supper, "every one taketh before his own supper, and one is hungry," who has not eaten this previous supper, "and another," who has had that entertainment, "is drunken." "*Judaica pars ecclesiæ nullo modo voluit, ad eucharistiam accedere absque cœna, atque convivatione procedanea atque paschativa, ubi laute et affluenter excipiebantur, et ederunt et biberunt καὶ ἐμέθνον, atque ad saturitatem et hilaritatem sunt provecti: cum Gentilitia pars è contra istam Judaizationem horrens, et procœnia talia refugiens, πεινῶ adhuc, et jejuna ad sacramentum accedit, hoc est, non cœnata.*" (Lightfoot.)

Well then might the apostle say, "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."

These words reprehend those who connected with the Holy Supper convivial entertainments, which, from the manner in which they were conducted, cast reproach upon the Church of God, and contempt upon its poor members.

To maintain therefore the holy character and important design of the Holy Supper, the apostle then proceeds to state,

2. What had been made matter of special revelation to him, in relation to this sacrament, verse 23d: "For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and (verse 24th) when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said: Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

Some have thought that this revelation was made to Paul when he was caught up into the third heaven in vision, 2 Cor. xii.; and that he had this vision at Damascus, when "he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." (Acts ix.)

Be this however as it may, what was revealed to him he faithfully delivered to the churches, and had in the course of preaching the Word delivered to the church at Corinth.

In addition to what we have before said, respecting the institution of the Holy Supper on that night in which our Lord was betrayed, we would here observe,

(1.) That between the eating of the passover and the institution

of the Supper, our Lord washed the feet of his disciples. See John xiii. 4: "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments," etc.

(2.) That after this act of washing his disciples' feet, and after "he had taken his garments, and was set down again at the same table," (see John xiii. 12,) he proceeded to institute the Supper;

(3.) And that in this institution he took bread, which had not before been broken, but *a new and whole loaf*; and when he had given thanks, brake it. To which the apostle refers (1 Cor. x. 17) in saying, "for we, being many, are *one* bread and one body."

3. The apostle proceeds with his account of the institution, verse 25: "After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." Verse 26: "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

(1.) These words express clearly the *design* of the Lord's Supper, viz: the remembrance of the Saviour's death, until he shall come again in the day of judgment: but at Corinth, many regarded this Supper as an ordinary thanksgiving feast, and thought only of their ancient deliverance as Jews, while they were solicitous to excite in their minds cheerfulness and mirth. But "this," says the apostle, "is not to eat the Lord's Supper."

(2.) Paul's words also imply, that the Church shall continue to exist, and by her, that the Lord's Supper must be observed till the Saviour come.

The Holy Supper is then a most sacred and important ordinance, intimately connected with the Lord Jesus, and the sublime doctrines of redemption by his blood, and with that holiness of heart and life which alone can fit Christians for a joyful meeting with their Saviour as judge of quick and dead. Hence the apostle proceeds,

4. To fence the "table of the Lord," by affixing heavy guilt *on unworthy partakers*. Verse 27: "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." It is of moment to determine the subject to which the word "*αυαξίως*" particularly applies. For there is a sinful participation of the Supper, which is either before God and his Church, or before the Supreme Being alone.

(1.) We partake of the Supper *unworthily* when, with a profession of faith before men which is unexceptionable, we *have not in our hearts* a holy principle or holy affections. But this defect is known to God alone; the Church cannot perceive it, and therefore it is "not that eating and drinking unworthily" of which the apostle here speaks.

(2.) Again: Those partake of the Holy Supper "unworthily," who, while they understand the doctrine of the sacrament, and discern in it the Lord's body, do not live up to their recorded vows, but lead ungodly lives; such persons are the proper subjects of Christian discipline, yet *they* are not so immediately before the eye of the apostle in this passage. We therefore remark,

(3.) Again, that the apostle has here more particularly in view, not the unregenerate state of the hearts of the communicants, but *the open profanation of the Holy Supper itself*. This profanation is committed, first, by destroying the holy character of the sacrament, and converting it *into a kind of religious feast*, at which, by eating and drinking the bread and wine as common food, we are to make ourselves merry with thanksgiving; and second, by perverting its end, not regarding its visible signs as referring directly to a crucified Jesus; not using them in a holy manner, as visible tokens of his death, as the substitute of his people in law; but considering it as an institution designed to distinguish Christians from idolaters, and to unite them in a kind of visibly affectionate and joyful communion at a common table.

Now this profanation of the Holy Supper is that "eating of the bread and drinking of the cup of the Lord unworthily," of which the apostle here speaks, and of which some at Corinth were justly charged. It is an awful profanation: and while it implies in those who commit it, no renewed mind, no living faith in Christ, no discerning of the proper character and work of the Saviour, it expresses a wilful contempt of the authority of him who instituted the Supper; an abuse of its rites and perversion of its end: accordingly, the apostle declares that such persons are "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord!" These words are designed to say, that as the Jews from wicked motives rejected Christ, killed and crucified his body and shed his blood; so those who in that manner "eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily," do virtually commit the sin of rejecting Christ as an aton-

ing sacrifice, and crucify him afresh. "They tread under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant, wherewith they professed to be sanctified or set apart as a redeemed people, an unholy or a common thing, and do despite unto the Spirit of grace." (Heb. x. 19.)

We might now proceed to the duty which the very character and end of the Holy Supper render incumbent on those who partake of it, were our course not arrested here by the abuse which Bellarmine and some of the Lutheran doctors have made of the words in this 27th verse.

Bellarmino says, "The body of Christ is in reality present in the Mass, and is received into and eaten by the mouth; for in any spiritual eating the very body of Christ is not eaten unworthily: besides, in eating mere bread we cannot eat judgment to ourselves: yet it is plainly said that we are guilty of the *body* of the Lord himself." We answer,

i. The bread and wine are not in the Supper *common* bread and wine, though they remain the material substances which they were before their consecration; but these substances in the sacrament acquire a new character and new relations; they are made, by Divine appointment, to be visible signs and seals of the body and blood of Christ, and to sustain to the Word, honor, and glory of this Saviour, an intimate and special relation; even as the wood of the ark of the covenant in ancient times was connected with the worship, name, and glory of God. If this be so, then it is easy to perceive, that contempt of Christ may be shown by a contempt of the Holy Supper; and that we can render ourselves guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, by profaning the ordinance, or by eating the bread and drinking the wine unworthily. But,

ii. Again, if the bread and wine be the real body and blood of Christ, then, by eating and drinking, we cannot be guilty of that sin; on the contrary, we do the very act that is required.

iii. The ungodly, then, in the Holy Supper, must have *life*: for they actually eat the flesh and drink (if the priest will let them) the blood of the Son of man. (John vi. 54.)

iv. Lastly, let it be observed that the apostle says, that men are guilty of the body and blood of Christ, not by any improper eat-

ing of the one and drinking of the other, but by eating the bread and drinking the wine *unworthily*.

But the doctrine of the apostle is sufficiently plain : let us then,

5. Attend to the *duty* which he enjoins, as standing in opposition to the sin of profaning the Holy Supper : verse 28 :

“ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.”

(1.) Here is a special law enacted in relation to the Holy Supper. This sacrament must not be administered, save to those who are physically or mentally capable of self-examination ; and it must not be partaken of, but by those who have examined themselves in the required manner.

(2.) But what is included in this self-examination ? The apostle here speaks of self-examination, as a duty which is calculated to keep those who are professors of the Christian religion from an open profanation of the Holy Supper. In this relation, the duty of self-examination comprehends the following things, viz :

i. An inquiry, whether we are so far advanced in the knowledge of what God reveals in his Word, as to be persuaded that we are lost and undone sinners in ourselves ; sinners who need a Saviour who hath given his life a ransom for many, who hath died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

ii. An inquiry whether we seek and desire salvation through Christ, and rely by faith upon his sufferings and death, as the meritorious cause of the remission of our sins.

iii. An inquiry whether we understand the holy nature and design of the sacrament of the Supper. That it is an ordinance, not instituted to gratify any carnal appetite, but to feed the soul by satisfying its holy desires, and strengthening its graces : not intended to commemorate any temporal deliverance, like the pass-over was, nor merely to constitute any badge of distinction ; but especially to commemorate the death of Christ, and redemption by his blood.

If self-examination on these points shall lead to satisfactory results, there *will be no open profanation* of the Holy Supper.

But considering the design of this sacrament, we should aim at something higher, viz : acceptance with God, and spiritual benefit ; so that the visible signs and seals shall signify and seal to

our souls all that they can signify and seal. With this object in view, the duty of self-examination is to extend farther and embrace additional points. On this subject you can read Henry's Communicants' Companion. Certain it is, we should examine, first, whether we have truly repented of our sins; second, whether we are in the faith, cordially believing the gospel; third, whether we act living faith, receiving Christ in all his offices; fourth, whether we are resolved to follow, serve, and honor God our Saviour; fifth, and if we have professed religion some time before, whether we have exhibited evidences of conversion in our lives, and grown in grace; sixth, whether we do now hunger and thirst after righteousness.

6. So important is this duty of self-examination, that the apostle is careful to add, verse 29 :

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.”

(1.) The sin of eating and drinking unworthily, as it violates gospel obligations to the Redeemer, and sets mercy at naught, is one of a deep dye, and excites, in a higher degree, the Divine displeasure! Those who commit it, eat and drink judgment (*κριμα*) unto themselves. Their deed is condemned by the Most High; they sin grievously, and render their condemnation the heavier; but it is not meant, as some suppose, from the word “damnation” in the English version, that sinners are irrevocably damned, and that the door is henceforth closed against them. This error, as it troubles many, both among the awakened and among timid Christians, the pastor should be careful to correct. Such, if they understand the design of the Lord's Supper, and are disposed to partake of it agreeably to the *end* of its institution, cannot eat and drink unworthily, in the sense of the apostle's words. In England and other countries, where a participation of the Holy Supper is required to qualify men for civil offices, there are, no doubt, thousands who do not discern the Lord's body; and those ministers of the Word are treacherous to their Divine Lord, who administer the Supper to such. For it is to be inculcated, that such profanation of the Supper is the greatest pardonable sin that can be committed.

What renders that sin peculiarly great, is, that those who commit it do not in the Supper “discern the Lord's body.”

i. They *do not believe* that the bread and the wine are visible signs of the Saviour's body broken for sin: but common bread and wine, used in a religious feast of thanksgiving and praise.

ii. And consequently they do not believe that Christ suffered and died *to satisfy* Divine justice, as the substitute for sinners. Hence they are enemies of the cross of Christ, and reject the salvation procured by his blood.

With sentiments resembling these, the Unitarians partake of the Lord's Supper, and are those who do "not discern the Lord's body."

7. Let me add, that in the apostolic day, this sin, in certain places, was followed by *extraordinary judgments*: at the introduction of the new dispensation, miracles of mercy and of justice were wrought, in confirmation of Divine truth; and it was seen fit, in evidence of the holy nature and design of the Lord's Supper, to afflict many among the Christian professors at Corinth who profaned that ordinance, with sickness and death, in a way which indicated that they had, in this matter, incurred the Divine displeasure. The apostle therefore says, without describing particularly the sickness or plague in its name and course, verse 30:

"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" in death.

I have now done with the times of the apostles. We have seen that Christians then observed the Lord's Supper by assembling in one place, sometimes in the day, and sometimes, or often, in consequence of persecution and the pressure of worldly occupations, *at night*; that on such occasions the Word was preached, and bread and wine (without a thought that these material substances were changed into real flesh and blood) were both dispensed, with prayer and thanksgiving, in remembrance of the Saviour's death, and in evidence of their deliverance by it. Most simple was the administration of the Supper. This, Cardinal Bessario is obliged to confess. "Paul," he says, "delivered to the churches what he had received, (de Euch. t. 6, Bibl. Patr. ;) but while he delivered that alone which is recorded in the Epistle to the Corinthians, it is certain that he received no more, and that he saw the apostles in the administration of the Supper do no other things; for if he had seen them do other things, he would have delivered that also. Afterwards Clemens, or James, or somebody else, added prayers,

psalms, and thanksgivings, for the sake of ornament, not from any divine law."

Let us now detail the history of the Lord's Supper in the days,

SECOND, Of the *Apostolic Fathers.*

The Apostolic Fathers, who wrote, and who are so denominated because they lived while the apostles were yet alive, are five, viz: Hermas, Polycarp, Ignatius, Clemens, and Barnabas. Their writings are few in number, being principally epistles to Christians, and the writings of some of these Fathers contain no remarks that relate to the subject of our present inquiry. But the ancient Fathers, Irenæus and Justin Martyr, immediately follow them, and these furnish us with several important facts.

During their lives, the Holy Supper, in its doctrine and administration, was still pure. They have left us a few records on this subject.

1. Justin says, (in his 2d Apology :) "We take this not as common bread and as common wine; but as holy food, through the word of prayer and thanksgiving." In his dialogue with Tryphon, he says: "So has Christ instituted it, and so have the apostles delivered it unto us. The bread is given to us, to remember the body which our Saviour took up, and his sufferings; and the cup in remembrance of his blood, which must be received with thanksgiving." In another place he says: "Christ gave it in remembrance of his sufferings, which purify the souls of men from all sins; and we give thanks to God not only for creating the world for the benefit of man, but for redemption, by which we are delivered from sins."

2. Irenæus says: "When the cup is mixed, and the holy bread receives the Word of God, then it is the eucharist of Christ's body and blood."

3. Ignatius says: "As there is one flesh of Christ, and one blood which is shed for us, so there is one bread broken for all, and there is one cup for the whole congregation."

Here you observe that the primitive Fathers knew nothing of withholding the cup from the *lay* believers. This daring innovation upon the sacred institution belongs to a later and corrupt age.

“We break the bread [A. D. 110; Epist. ad Ephes.] which is the medicine of immortality, and a means of escaping death, and of living to God, through Jesus Christ.”

4. Irenæus says: “God requires that we offer the gift upon the altar; but the altar is in heaven. Thither we direct our prayers and offerings.”

5. Clemens says of the effect of the Supper, arising from the divine promise of blessing: “The Eucharist is a good grace, of which those who partake by faith are sanctified in soul and body.”

Certain it is, the primitive Church held the ordinance of the Supper in high estimation, and were zealous in the observance of it, having no thought of any transformation of the bread and wine; though they often spoke of the spiritualities of the ordinance in language which seems to us unguarded, and this they did because no one entertained the idea of transubstantiation.

Of the *manner* in which the Supper was observed among them, Justin says, (A. D. 136; Dial. with Tryphon:) “Coming together, we pray that we may be found, by pure doctrine and good works, observers of the commands, and obtain everlasting salvation. After prayer, we greet one another with a holy kiss: then to the chief brother (or minister) is brought bread and wine mixed with water; which, having received, he blesses, and thanks the Father of all, in the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit, exercising himself some time in thanksgiving. After prayer and thanksgiving is done, the whole assembly says, ‘Amen,’ which word, in the Hebrew language, signifies, ‘So be it.’ The thanksgiving being ended by the preacher, and the benediction given, the deacons then give to each one a morsel of bread and the common cup which has been blessed; and it is allowed to carry the bread and wine to those members who are not present. That nourishment we call the *Eucharist*, of which no one is permitted to partake but those who receive our doctrine as the truth.” In another place this Father gives other circumstances which are omitted in this account. “On Sunday,” he says, “we meet. The Scriptures of the apostles are first read; after the reading, the minister delivers an exhortation, stirring up believers to practise those worthy things of which they heard in the reading; then we all stand up and pray; then the bread and wine are brought, as has been said.”

These brief notices of Justin express many important facts.

(1.) They show us that the Lord's Supper was observed by Christians in a very simple and holy manner, without those ceremonies and superstitions which afterwards corrupted this ordinance.

(2.) They exhibit the fact that the primitive Christians believed in the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; and when Justin speaks of giving thanks to the Father in the name of the Son and Holy Ghost, he means for the merits' sake of the Son our Saviour, and under the influences of the Holy Spirit; for no primitive Christian believed that the Holy Spirit had died for him, or that he was pardoned for the Holy Ghost's sake.

(3.) The extracts also show in what light they regarded the writings of the apostles, which they possessed, for these were read as being part of the Word of God.

(4.) They state that the holy kiss was given in their assemblies; but then it is observed, that in their assemblies males and females sat apart, and that the males kissed the males, and the females kissed the females. It was afterwards that this primitive usage was corrupted by promiscuous kissing, and therefore soon discontinued in the Church, (A. D. 155.)

With the age of the apostolic Fathers I shall here terminate the history of the Lord's Supper. Other interesting facts will be presented in the next lecture, on the Popish Mass. Here it will be sufficient to observe,

First, That the words, "offering," "sacrifice," and "altar," as they were terms which the Jewish and Pagan systems of religion had brought into ordinary use, were frequently employed in some relation to the Holy Supper. This use of those terms in this service arose from the circumstance that, on occasion of keeping the Supper, which was almost every Lord's day, and when religious societies had no funds, every believer brought with him to the place of meeting, bread and wine: this was called the *offering* or *sacrifice*; it was received by the deacons and placed upon the table, which was called the *altar*; of these provisions, a portion was taken for the use of the Supper; the rest formed the feast of charity, or parts sent to needy Christians.

Now of the innocent use of those terms, the Roman Catholic writers take advantage, to maintain their superstitions of the Mass. But the doctrine and doings of the Christians are clearly exhibited by the Pagan writer Cæcilius, in Minutius Felix, who

thus reproaches them: "Ye have no altars, no temples, no images!"

Second. Again, corrupt additions and imprudent expressions were soon after begun to be connected with the Supper. Thus: Christians did not believe that the bread and wine were changed into the real body and blood; yet to express the *reality* of their Redeemer's spiritual presence, they often expressed themselves in incautious terms, as if he were bodily present. Tertullian and Origen were very imprudent in this respect; though they at some times explain their own language, so as to make it accord with the form of sound doctrine. Many ceremonies were added; a ritual was composed for the administration of the Supper. Pope Gregory was famous for adding new ceremonials to this holy ordinance.

## LECTURE XXIX.

### THE POPISH MASS.

I NEED not observe to you, that in the Roman Catholic Church there is an ordinance designed to hold the place of the sacrament of the Holy Supper, and that the observance of this ordinance is now considered in that Church to be a mark of membership in it, and of course to operate upon the well-being of souls hereafter. This ordinance is called *the Mass*, in English. It is celebrated in the Popish churches, to procure pardon for the living, and especially to deliver souls out of purgatory; and no person is accounted a Christian, by the Romish priests, who does not partake of the Mass at least once in the year, and does not believe the doctrines inseparably connected with this abominable corruption of Christianity.

This general description of the Popish Mass will easily account for the following well-known facts:

1. That every thing in the Roman Catholic Church is considered (with the exception perhaps of the supremacy of the Pope at Rome) to be of *inferior moment* to the observance of the Mass.

2. That great visible *solemnity and pomp* are thrown around the Mass, where it can be celebrated in due order. At Rome it forms a gorgeous spectacle. The Pope and his cardinals in their splendid habiliments, keep or say *High Mass* on festivals, in circumstances of great apparent devotion and magnificence; and in the chambers of the sick, *private Masses* follow the confession and absolution, and are made to be a kind of certificate to the dying sinner, that it shall be comparatively well with him in the invisible world; *not* that he shall go immediately into the "third heaven,"

(for this would deprive the priests of much gain, in saying Masses for the souls of the dead,) but, that his pains in purgatory will not be so severe and so long as they might otherwise be.

3. That the observance and the doctrine of the Mass form one of those grand characteristics, by which the Roman Catholic Church is distinguished from the true Church of Christ, existing among the various denominations of Protestants. The Popes will tolerate (as they have done) most of the doctrines of grace as taught by Augustine, however disagreeable some of those doctrines may be, provided the Masses be observed. But the *rejection* of the Mass is viewed by them as being a *sin* and *heresy* of the deepest dye, and leading to speedy excommunication. If, therefore, Popery shall expire, the celebration of the Mass must first decline and die.

Every Christian, therefore, should have some knowledge of the Popish Mass. Especially every theological student should inform himself on this subject. With a view to the communication of such knowledge as may be useful to the Church, the Popish Mass is made one of the particular subjects of discussion in our Heidelberg Catechism; and with a view to state some facts that may aid you in explaining that section of the Catechism, I have written this lecture, in which I shall speak,

I. OF THE MASS IN GENERAL, and,

1. The *name* by which this ordinance of Catholic worship is known and distinguished.

The proper name of the Mass is the Latin "*Missa*," corrupted into *Mass*.

(1.) The *Origin* of the name of this rite.

With regard to the *origin* of the Latin name "*Missa*," we must here observe, that some Popish writers have sought to derive it from the Hebrew word "*Missah*," which signifies a free-will offering. This word is to be read in Deut. xvi. 16: "*Missah nidbat jadecha*;" "*Thou shalt keep the Feast of Weeks unto the Lord thy God, with a tribute of a free-will offering of thine hand.*" Instead of a "*free-will offering*," some render the word, "*a sufficiency*;" that is to say, that the Israelites should give so much as *would be sufficient*: then they say, that the "*Mass*, or *Missa*," is so denominated, because it is a free-will offering, offered up to God by the Church, sufficient every way *for the living and the dead*.

But it is absurd to think of this Hebrew original of the Latin word "Missa." It is true that the Christian Church has borrowed some words from the Hebrew Scriptures, as "Satan," "Osiana," "Sabaoth," "Halleluja," "pascha." But these words came to the Latin Church through the Greek language, and are to be found in the Greek New Testament Scriptures: whereas, if we search the Greek ancient Fathers carefully, we shall no where find that they used the word "Missa."

The origin and first use of the word "Missa," we trace to the *Latin Fathers and the Latin language*. These were accustomed to call the forgiveness of sins, "remissa peccatorum:" so Tertullian, in his 4th Lib. against Marcion, says, "We have spoken of the Remissa," that is, the forgiveness of sins. So *Cyprian*, "De bona Patient;" and in his 14th Epistle: "He who blasphemes the Holy Spirit has 'no remissa,'" no forgiveness of sins. Now as, instead of "remissio," they used "remissa," so, instead of "missio"—sending—they used "missa."

Certain it is, the "ἀφεσις," by which Christians were dismissed from social worship, was called in Latin "missio," or "missa." This dismissal was twofold, viz: The *first*, that which was made after reading, singing, praying, etc., and before the Supper was administered, when the catechumens and strangers were sent away;

The *second*, that by which, after the whole worship was finished, the congregation was dismissed. When the rites and prayers were ended, the deacon cried out: "Ite, missa est;" Go, the assembly is sent away. As the Lord's Supper was frequently celebrated, and as the word of dismissal, "missa," was used just before, and in preparation for that ordinance, so the illiterate began to apply it as *the name* of the ordinance itself.

Some are of opinion that the name "missa" is derived from the *alms* collected at the administration of the Supper, and sent to the poor of the Church. This opinion has little to support it: it would be probable, had the word "missa" been applied to the alms and collections, as things sent.

But what shall we say of the foolish sentiment of Lombard, lib. iv. dist. 13: "The missa," he says, "has its name from the circumstance that a heavenly messenger comes to consecrate the life-giving body, according to the priest's words, 'Almighty God,

command that this be borne by the hands of thy holy angel on thy high altar.' Therefore it is called 'Missa;' either because the sacrifice is sent away, the remembrance of which is preserved in this ordinance, as it is said, 'Ite, missa est,' follow this sacrifice, which is sent to the heavenly places, or because one is sent from heaven to consecrate the body of Christ."

This savors sufficiently of those dark ages in which the Scriptures were not read by the priests, and not seen by the people.

(2.) But let me hasten to remark, that it is an historical fact of moment that the very name "missa," as applied to the Holy Supper, *was not known in the apostolic age*: nay, for the space of three hundred years after Christ, this name of the Supper was not heard of. Baronius disgraces his learning as much as his integrity, by saying that this naming of the Supper "missa" has, among the Hebrew Christians, the apostle James for its author; and among the Gentiles, the apostles Paul and Peter. This ridiculous assertion drew down upon Baronius the severe animadversions of Casaubon, and very deservedly too. Who must not smile with contempt, of a writer who tells us that a Hebrew or Syriac Jew employed a Latin name, and that one, too, altogether insignificant to distinguish the Lord's Supper!

But Baronius appeals, as proof of his assertion, to the "liturgy of James:" and as that liturgy is at this day to be read both in the Latin and Greek languages, he would make us believe that the Latin is the work of James; the Greek, that of some translator. It is sufficient to observe here, that this "liturgy of James," and the "liturgies of Matthew and Mark," are contemptible forgeries. Mornæus and A. Rivetus have exhibited this fact in a strong light.

Having now shown that the name of the "Mass" is probably derived from the Latin word "*missa*" used in the Latin churches, when Christian congregations were dismissed from the places of public worship; let me next direct your attention to the *Mass itself*, as a religious ordinance in its materials, and in its administration.

## 2. The *visible signs and ceremonies* of the Mass.

The Lord's Supper, we know from the Scriptures of the New Testament, where its divine institution and first administration are recorded, is an ordinance of great simplicity, and adapted to the spirit and glory of the new and present dispensation.

(1.) The common table, on which the passover was eaten, was used by the Saviour, when he instituted and first dispensed "the Holy Supper:" nor does he give the least intimation to his disciples that other furniture should be provided for the celebration of this ordinance. Accordingly, no other than a *common family table* was ever used by the primitive Christians. Hence the Supper itself came to be called "the table of the Lord."

But, for the saying of Mass, an *altar* must be erected in the churches; and it must be richly ornamented, so that in this appurtenance of ancient sacrifices, under the Old Testament, truth might be obscured under the New, and the priesthood at the altar sustain in the view of the common people a richer dress, and an office resembling that of Jewish and pagan priests in their temples. Do the New Testament Scriptures intimate that Peter and Paul ever administered the Lord's Supper at an altar? Far from it.

(2.) In the Lord's Supper, the external and visible signs are *bread and wine*, of ordinary use; but in the Popish Mass there is no bread, but *wafers*, (an article unknown and unused as a means of human sustenance;) usually a little flat, round cake, bearing an image of the Saviour: a wafer, not even broken by the minister, but given as it is manufactured and prepared elsewhere; not placed on the table, as bread in a common supper, but concealed from view, and deposited in a richly ornamented box or chest, called the *pix*; not received by the hands of the communicants, but put into their mouths by the finger of the priest. Also in the Mass, there is no wine for the use of communicants: they do not see or perceive it by any sense, as a visible sign. What there is in the cup (and, for aught the church knows to the contrary, there may be none at all) is reserved for the use of the priests alone, in opposition to the very design of the institution. But on this flagrant violation of the Divine law, we cannot here dwell.

(3.) The *prescribed actions* of the minister, in dispensing the Lord's Supper, are few, though solemn. He takes the bread and breaks it, and distributes it, giving thanks: he takes the cup, gives thanks, and presents it to the communicants, explaining the *meaning* of the visible signs; the *nature* and *end* of the ordinance; and speaking of the relation of Christians to their Saviour, their duties, the sources of their consolation amid the trials of this world, and their authorized hopes of a better state of existence.

But who can describe the acts of a Romish priest, in celebrating the Mass, without astonishment at the daring spirit of unhallowed innovation? There, he inclines his body on one side; then he bows; then he turns himself around; then he advances; then he stands still; then, with his hand, he makes the sign of the cross; then he raises his arms on high; then he imitates one who sleeps; then he seems to wake up; then he breathes upon the bread and cup; then he mumbles certain Latin words in a low voice; then he speaks and sings aloud; then he elevates the bread and host, as they call it; (but, according to their doctrine, he has lifted up, with no effort, the real body of Christ above his head;) on which act, the congregation idolatrously prostrate themselves, in adoration of a little paste-bread; then he lays the host down; then he kisses the cup, with other superstitious rites, entirely foreign to the sacrament of the Holy Supper. (See an account of the whole in Sleydan's Hist. lib. xxi.)

To which let me add, that the Mass is usually enjoyed by the priest alone; while the people look on, and fall on their knees and worship the bread-god. Certain laymen are favored with the wafer-communion at special times; but the multitude partake usually once a year, and always on their knees, with their eyes closed, in evidence of their adoration.

Sufficient has now been said to give a correct idea of the Popish Mass in its pompous and idolatrous celebration; that Mass, in which Pagan idolatry still continues to triumph over Christianity, from the light of which it once fled, like darkness before the rising sun.

Let me next direct your attention to,

3. *The doctrine* of the Popish Mass, from a statement of which you will more clearly perceive how far the Mass is removed from the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Council of Trent has settled the doctrine of the Romish Church concerning the sacrifice of the Mass. It is this:

(1.) The Fathers of that Council teach, "that our Lord Jesus Christ has once offered up himself upon the altar of the cross, a sacrifice in his death unto God the Father, that he might thereby procure eternal redemption; yet that,"

(2.) "Because, by his death, his priesthood was not to cease, he has left to his Church, in the Supper instituted in the night in which he was betrayed, a visible sacrifice, by which that bloody

one of the cross might be represented, and its memory preserved down to the end of the world, and its saving virtue be applied for the remission of sins which we daily commit."

(3.) "That by this very institution he declared that he was constituted a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek; and that he offered up to God the Father his own body and blood, under the forms of bread and wine."

We remark here, that the Saviour never did offer up to God his own body and blood *under the forms of bread and wine*; the Scriptures teach no such absurd doctrine: the real sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ is symbolically exhibited under the forms of broken bread and wine, but was really exhibited on the accursed tree. But let us proceed with this cunningly devised fable of the Man of Sin.

(4.) "That under the symbols of the same things, he delivered to his apostles, whom he constituted priests of the New Testament, [this, by the by, he never did, but made all his people, clerical or lay, kings and priests unto God,] and to their successors in office, himself as a sacrifice, and commanded them to take and offer him in these words, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' as the Catholic Church hath always understood and taught."

Here we remark again, that our Saviour never did deliver himself as a sacrifice to be offered up by his ministers: he could not do it; and there is nothing of the kind expressed in the words, "Do this in remembrance of me;" and we shall prove presently, that it is false, that "the Catholic Church has always understood and taught" that such doctrine was contained in the words, "Do this in remembrance of me." To go on with the Fathers of Trent: that it might be known what kind of sacrifice these blind leaders understood that to be which is offered up in the Supper, they explain themselves more clearly by affirming that,

(5.) "As in this divine sacrifice of the Mass, that same Christ is contained and bloodlessly sacrificed, who once offered up himself by a bloody death on the altar of the cross; so that sacrifice in the Mass *is truly a propitiatory sacrifice*, and that by it it is effected, that if, with sincerity, faith, and repentance, we draw near to God, we shall obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." For by this oblation God is propitiated, so as to give the grace and gift of penitence, and to pardon the greatest sins. "The victim," they

say, "is one and the same, and he is now the same offering, by the ministry of the priests, who once offered himself upon the cross."

Let me just remark here, that the Scripture terms "sincerity, faith, and repentance," sound well, and are excellent qualifications in those who draw near to God in worship; but what the Roman Catholic priests understand by those terms, may be learned from their admission in their churches to the Mass, of multitudes of ignorant, unsanctified, and ungodly men.

Such is the doctrine of the Romish Church concerning the Mass. It is not our design here to enter into a full examination of this doctrine, with a view to refute it. The refutation of it may be found in systems of didactic theology. We shall just remind you here,

i. That the whole doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass, is founded upon the monstrous doctrine of *transubstantiation*. For if the bread and wine remain, after consecration, the material substances which they were before, then it is obvious that there is nothing to form a propitiatory sacrifice of: there is no suitable victim to be offered up in sacrifice to divine justice. You must therefore change, in fancy, the bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ, as the Romanists teach is actually done in the Mass, before you can get a proper subject for a propitiatory sacrifice! Accordingly, the doctrine of the Mass followed upon the introduction and the reception of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The Mass and its doctrine, we say, came into a corrupt Christian Church at a late day, after the opening of the new dispensation: for transubstantiation was not the received doctrine till centuries after the death of the apostles had elapsed. The proof of this fact, is what we shall exhibit in this lecture; for it is one that belongs to the history of the Church in her declensions from original purity. Meantime we remark,

ii. That the doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass, amounts to a *denial* of the full atonement for sin, made by our Lord Jesus Christ when he was visibly upon earth, and stands in direct opposition to the doctrines of the inspired writers on this subject.

Christ once suffered and was obedient unto death. This sacrifice of himself on the tree of the cross, was a sufficient atonement, or it was not. If it were a sufficient sacrifice, there is no need of

any other expiatory sacrifice. If it were not, then a sufficient atonement has not and cannot be made, until *the last Popish Mass* shall have been said! How remote is all such stuff from the doctrines of the divine Word! Paul tells us, that the offering or sacrifice of Christ on the cross, was to God of a "sweet-smelling savor;" that is to say, according to the well-known idiom of the Hebrews, that it was accepted as sufficient. (Eph. v. 2.) In evidence of which, God raised him from the dead, and gave him power, etc.

Also, Heb. vii. 27: "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for *this he did once*, when he offered up himself." Heb. ix. 12: "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Verse 26: "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. x.: "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Christ *once for all*." Verse 12: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God. The heavens must therefore receive him, until the times of the restitution of all things; he is to appear a second time: but it is without sin, unto salvation; for by *one offering* he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." How thick must have been the darkness that enveloped the Christian world, how great the corruptions that infected the visible Church, when a doctrine contradicting the plainest truths and passages of the Bible could be received! But at that period, unhappily, the Bible was not read nor understood.

iii. The doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass is opposed *by every fact* the Scriptures express, in relation to the present state of the Redeemer. Where is he in body, who once died on earth, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God? The Scriptures tells us, "He is risen in body; received in his bodily presence up into glory; seated in body on the right hand of Power;" a condition, the very reverse of that which would leave him to be broken, mangled, and eaten every where, in the Mass; sitting on the throne of supreme majesty; exercising unlimited dominion; invested with all glory. But this could not be true, if

the same Jesus is daily offered up a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass. The two states are inconsistent. Besides, there are short intervals of time, a moment now and a moment then, when the Romanists nowhere celebrate Mass. In those moments, where is the body of the Saviour, and what is its condition? He can hardly be glorified in heaven at one moment, and the next be a propitiatory sacrifice on earth, and the next again be glorified in heaven.

The fact is, if the wafers in the Mass be the real body and blood of Christ, we must conclude, from the frequency of saying Mass in all hours of every day, that the state of the Redeemer is now one, not of exaltation, but of the deepest humiliation.

iv. If Christ be a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass, who break his real body? *who "crucify him afresh?"* Why, the Romish priests; they are the executioners, and no other: therefore, they are worse than the Jews; for the latter killed the Lord of glory *but once*; whereas, the priests do it often, and glory in it. This we believe is a true charge in one sense, but a charge at which every true minister of Christ would startle!

v. But the fathers of Trent tell us, "that the offering up of the real body and blood of Christ in sacrifice" in the Mass, is designed "*to represent* the bloody sacrifice of the Saviour's body on the cross at Jerusalem." But wherein can such a "representation" exist, when it is the real body of Christ that is offered up in the Mass, and when in all the visible circumstances, the one is so unlike the other; the one bloody, and the other unbloody, etc., etc.?

vi. Finally, we observe, that the apostles and primitive Christians considered the Lord's Supper to be a *eucharistical sacrifice*, not a propitiatory one; and that the mass and its imaginary propitiatory sacrifice of the body of Christ, were things unknown among Christians for many centuries after the ascension of our Lord. This is the fact which we are solicitous now to establish, and shall therefore proceed to inquire into,

#### 4. The *History* of the Mass.

During the short time of our Lord's continuance here on earth, after the institution of the Holy Supper, and in the age of his apostles, no vestige is to be found of the Popish Mass: and as we have before observed, the name of "missa," as applied to any

ordinance of the Christian religion, was unknown even among the Latin Christians.

The Saviour appointed the Holy Supper to be, not a propitiatory sacrifice, for that he could not do; but a memorial of his death; (“*εις αναμνησιν*,” in recordationem;) and Paul afterwards taught that such was the design of the institution: to preserve the religious remembrance of our crucified Saviour.

Now, the Romanists offer no direct proof from Scripture, that the Lord’s Supper was intended to be an expiatory sacrifice of the body of Christ. Surely, the words, “This is my body,” cannot constitute the Supper an expiatory sacrifice; for,

*First*, The Saviour was then in circumstances not immediately of suffering, as a victim: but of worshipping in peace with his disciples in the passover chamber. He was not then crucified, nor dying, nor dead; all which is necessary in an expiatory sacrifice: there was no blood of his body shed; and if he *had not yet died*, it was impossible that an expiatory sacrifice could exist in the Supper; for the Council of Trent expressly declare, that the Supper was designed “to represent that bloody one on the cross.” And if there was no expiatory sacrifice in the first Supper, there could be none afterwards; for the command given is what is binding on the ministers: “Do this in remembrance of me.” Not do more, or something else; but “do this!” and if the Saviour did nothing more than what represented “his bloody sacrifice of himself on the cross,” his ministers can do nothing more than by the same means represent the same bloody sacrifice.

Admitting, then, that the miserable Romish priests had the power of “making the real body of Christ,” as they say, out of a wafer, yet they have no authority to do it. “Do this in remembrance of me,” does not require them to make an expiatory sacrifice in the Supper, for the Saviour did it not!

But the Romanists try to sustain themselves principally by Scripture types and allegories: to this course of argument, we must say, with the Lutheran Fathers, in their apology for the Augsburg Confession: “Quod, allegoriæ non pariant firmas probationes.”

*Second*. Again, we observe in pursuing the history, that from the death of the apostles to Gregory I.—that is, from A. D. 100 to A. D. 600—we shall find no traces of the Popish Mass.

(1.) Justin Martyr, who lived in the second century, affords in his writings no evidence whatever that the Eucharist was considered to be a propitiatory sacrifice!

In his first apology for Christians, he says: "After we have baptized him who professes his faith in Christ, we conduct him to the brethren assembled together, in order to offer up common supplications, etc. Prayers being ended, we salute one another with a kiss. Then to him who presides over the brethren bread is brought, and a cup of water and wine; having received these, he offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, in the name of the Son and Spirit, and gives large thanksgivings for this, that we are favored with these his gifts. When prayer and thanksgiving are ended, all the congregation who are present say, Amen—a Hebrew word, which signifies, May it be so. After this, those whom we call deacons [it appears there were deacons in the churches] distribute to every one bread, wine, and water, [the cup, it appears, was not withheld,] and carry these to absent members; and this aliment is called among us, 'Eucharistia.' It is permitted to no other to partake of it than he who believes our doctrine to be true, and is baptized, and as Christ hath delivered, is alive. Nor do we take that as common bread and drink; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour by the Word of God was made flesh, and shed his blood for the sake of our salvation, so we are taught that the bread and wine, for which thanks are given, and by which our flesh and blood are nourished, [here is no transubstantiation,] are the flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus. For the apostles in their writings, which we call the Gospels, declare that Jesus so commanded them; that having taken bread, he gave thanks and said, 'Do this in remembrance,' etc."

Now in this minute description of the Holy Supper, there is not a syllable about that ordinance being a *propitiatory sacrifice*. A picture is drawn of that sacrament very different from the Roman Mass.

i. But it is said, that Justin speaks of *oblations*, in connection with the Holy Supper: and we know that Romish writers have snatched at the word "oblations," and, in the absence of proof, have attempted to twist this word into the shape of an *argument* for their propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass. But to explain what the Fathers mean by these oblations, it will be sufficient to observe,

first, that Christians were generally, in the first age of the Church, persons in very moderate circumstances: "not many wise, not many noble are called," but the poor, etc. Second, that they were persecuted, and had to observe the ordinances of their religion as opportunities offered. Third, that bread and wine, materials for light, alms for the poor, gifts in support of those preaching the gospel, were to be collected when Christians held their religious assemblies. Hence it became a custom in the ancient Church, that on holy days believers should bring with them to the place of worship, their oblations. These oblations were not all of the same kind; but were made up of bread, wine, new ears of corn, grapes, oil for lights, garments, money, etc. Of these oblations, Irenæus, Cyprian, Augustine, and others speak; for it was a custom that continued in the Church during many centuries. Now these offerings (*Gab. albas pinaus*) were used, partly for the immediate service of the assembly in worship, and partly for the use of ministers of the Word and of the poor. Sometimes certain gifts were distributed to believers assembled, *viritim*, to signify their union to one head, and their being members of one body. Cyprian and Augustine testify to these facts.

We are now prepared to observe, that these oblations were offerings to God, though destined for the use of man. Hence they were called *sacrifices*, and under this familiar name spoken of as connected with the Holy Supper; but they did not mean the Eucharist itself, and had no essential connection with it. What, then, has all this to do with the awful doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Holy Supper?

ii. But the Romanists say that Justin, in his dialogue with Trypho, affords some proof of the Eucharist being a propitiatory sacrifice. We answer:

It is true that Justin in that dialogue, using the language of the age in his writing to an unbeliever, calls the Eucharist, *a sacrifice*, and Christians, *priests*. But what kind of sacrifices he means, he himself tells us: "ὅτι μὲν καὶ οὐν εὐχαὶ, καὶ εὐχαρίστιαὶ ὑπο τῶν ἀζῶν γινόμενοι τελεῖαι μόναι καὶ εὐαρεστοὶ εἰσι, τῷ θεῷ θύσται, καὶ αὐτοῦ φημι." "And this I affirm, that prayers and thanksgivings offered by the worthy are the only perfect victims dear to God." His sacrifices, therefore, in the Eucharist are *prayers and thanksgivings*,

which we believe, with all the ancient Fathers, render the Holy Supper a eucharistical sacrifice.

iii. But it is said that Clemens Romanus, in his writings, furnishes us with such proof. Let then the proof be exhibited. Where is it?

“It is to be found,” say the Romanists, in the “Apostolical Constitutions,” of which they say that Clemens is the author, and in which he teaches us to offer up *sacrifices for the dead*, in these words: “*ετι προσφερομεν σοι και υπερ παντων των απαιωνος ευαρεστησαντων σοι αγιων πατριαρχων—προφητων—αποστηλων*,” etc.: “as yet we offer to thee for all the saints who have pleased thee, a seculo, for the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, righteous men, martyrs, confessors, bishops, presbyters, and deacons.” In reply to this wretched argument, we observe, that those “apostolical constitutions” which bear the name of Clemens, are not his writings. Even Bellarmine acknowledges that they have no name in the Latin Church. Petavius, Baronius, and others, say they are *forgeries*. Blondel the Protestant thinks that they were composed in the third, Coringius in the fifth, Archbishop Usher in the sixth, century. Jortin, whom you can consult, says, “They are forgeries which came into existence after the days of Constantine; for they are old treatises jumbled together and corrupted without judgment.”

But admitting those “constitutions” to be the work of Clemens, they prove nothing against us; for the very words show that “*προσφερομεν*” is to be translated, “we pray.” In the same chapter the writer uses promiscuously “*προσφερομεν*” and “*προσκαλουμεν*,” in the same sense.

Nor can we be at a loss to understand in what sense they “*prayed for the dead*.” *not, indeed*, as if they thought that their prayers could profit the dead; but with a view to recall their virtues to memory, and to thank God for raising up such eminent men in the Church; praying that they themselves might be endowed with the same spirit, and follow the example of those holy men. Evident is it, that those prayers were not offered *for the dead*, in order to deliver them, as the Romanists would say, from *purgatory*; inasmuch as they were offered up for the patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs *who*, it is acknowledged by themselves, never were in purgatory.

iv. But the Romanists have brought another passage of Clemens

Romanus to prove the *propitiatory sacrifice* in the Mass. The proof is drawn from the first epistle of Clemens to the Corinthians, in these words: “*παντα ταξει ποιειν οφειλομεν, οσα ο δεσποτης επιτελειν,*” etc. “We ought,” he says, “to do in order all things which the Lord has commanded us to do at stated times, to perform duties and oblations; nor has he commanded them to be performed hastily and disorderly, but at set times and hours.” And again: “Those therefore who make their oblations at appointed times, are accepted and blessed; for they obey the laws,” etc. Now, because Clemens here speaks of *oblations*, “*προσφορας,*” therefore he means, say the Popish doctors, *the Eucharist*; therefore the Eucharist is a sacrifice; and therefore, as a sacrifice, it is properly called propitiatory. Such reasoning merits contempt; for it should be proved that by *oblations* is meant, *the Eucharist*; it should be proved that as these oblations were offered by the people, and not by the priests, the people could thereby make the Eucharist a propitiatory sacrifice; for this the Romanists themselves will strenuously deny. But the learned well know that the word “*προσφορα*” is used by the Fathers to signify gifts to the poor, offerings at the communion table, etc.

Tertullian, in like manner, employs “*δωρα*” to signify prayers and thanksgivings offered up by Christians.

v. But our adversaries say that Irenæus bears them out in their monstrous doctrine. We might here content ourselves with observing, that this Christian Father most plainly teaches, first, that God does not require expiatory sacrifices from us; second, that the exercises of the graces are the spiritual sacrifices which God requires; and third, that the Eucharist is, as it were, a spiritual sacrifice. Hence he calls the Holy Supper “an oblation and a sacrifice”—words of every-day use in his times—because, in that ordinance, we offer up to God the affections of grateful hearts, in praise and thanksgivings; but not a hint does he give of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Supper.

What further does Irenæus do? Why, say the Massmen, he applies the prophecy of Malachi (Mal. i. 10, 11) to the Eucharist: for, “From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering,” etc.

We answer :

*First.* If Irenæus does, he does not therefore exhibit the Eucharist as a *propitiatory sacrifice*, but a spiritual sacrifice of holy affections in worship. In the same sense, the words of that prophecy are now often applied by Protestant ministers and people.

*Second.* We understand the prophecy as well as Irenæus, and there *is not a word* in it about the Eucharist. But, in the prophecy, the word מִנְחָה, *Minchah*, oblation, occurs ; and this term, say à Lapeire and Castro, denotes “a meat-offering,” which has a type of the Eucharist.

This is bad reasoning ; but it serves to show that the writings of the early Fathers would afford them no better argument in support of their idolatrous Mass. We remark, however, first, that it cannot be proved that the “Minchah” was a type of the Eucharist. Second. Oil, frankincense, etc., made the “Minchah ;” but of what, in the Eucharist, could all this be a *type* ? for the “Minchah” was not a propitiatory sacrifice ; it was an offering of various inanimate things. (See Spanheim.) Third. We have no proof that the sacrifice of the Mass was in the eye of the prophet. Eusebius (Demon. Evang.) explains Malachi’s words to mean prayer, thanksgiving, and other spiritual offerings.

i. It appears, then, that during the second century we can find no evidence that the Fathers believed the Eucharist to be a propitiatory sacrifice. With heretics, in this inquiry, we have nothing to do ; nor is it the place to state the various usages in relation to the bread and wine, so long as they were viewed as symbols of the body and blood of Christ ; for some mixed cold and others warm water with the wine ; others used wine unmixed. Nor is it necessary to state here that some celebrated the Supper more frequently than others ; while we know that, ordinarily, in the churches the Lord’s Supper was observed on Sunday.

ii. But let us proceed to *the third century*, in which, if we should find any departure from the doctrine and practice of the apostles and primitive Church, in relation to the Holy Supper, it would only be a proof that corruptions and errors were growing up, from the throng of Gentiles that were pressing into the visible Church, and from the disposition of ministers to speak and act in this matter with a view to gain proselytes.

For it is not to be denied that, between A. D. 200 and 300, cer-

tain rites and customs obtained an entrance into parts of the Christian Church, which, however harmless in themselves, and remote from the subsequent corruptions of the Romish Church, did give occasion for the introduction of the Romish Mass. Such, let me remark, was the practice of making "oblations for the dead."

We cannot here explain this practice in full. Let it suffice just to state, that it began to be a custom when one died of whom Christians had hope, for the parents, or children, or friends of the deceased to bring gifts in his name, as well as in their own; and when the gifts so brought in the name of the deceased were accepted by the pastor and elders of the Church, the acceptance of them was considered to be an evidence that the deceased had died in peace and communion with the Church, and served to give comfort to his or her surviving friends. Now, those gifts so made and accepted were called "offerings for the dead." But what had they to do with the bread and wine converted into a propitiatory sacrifice in the Supper? Just nothing at all. Especially, when they had not any immediate respect to God; when they were not designed to procure his mercy for any departed into an eternal state, but principally to elicit the sentiment of the Church in relation to a deceased brother or sister.

But in the fourth century some began to think and say that these gifts did procure benefits for the dead; and as the gifts were made on occasion of the celebration of the Supper, the Supper, in process of time, as the general darkness increased, was made the means of delivering souls from purgatory; and for that purpose it was at length made to contain a propitiatory sacrifice. This is the true history of the abuses springing from that custom. But to return to the third century:

It is certain that Cyprian, particularly, and others, did use language in relation to the Lord's Supper in its visible signs, which was much too strong, and which afterwards gave support to those who introduced the doctrine of transubstantiation; though that Father would, at times, explain his true sentiments and speak soberly. But, *in this century, the existence of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass was not taught.*

iii. The readers of ecclesiastical history need not be told, that in *the fourth century* there was, in respect of the sacraments and their administration, no disposition to return to primitive purity and

simplicity. The ministers drank deep into the Platonic philosophy, and were anxious to put the sacraments in the place of the Pagan mysteries: they introduced purgatory among the realities of a future world; they connected the Supper in its observance very closely with future happiness. Hence an undue veneration began to be entertained by the Christian populace for the symbols and rites of the Supper; but, as Basnage says, (dans l'Histoire de l'Eglise, lib. vii.,) Christians did not worship the symbols; still, that excessive veneration gave rise to those errors which afterwards infected the Church. People began to think that the symbols and rites of the Eucharist *did possess an efficacy* (such as had been formerly ascribed to their sacrifices under Paganism) in appeasing the wrath of God and procuring the pardon of sin. Many now ascribe such virtue to the alms which they give, without supposing that those alms are a propitiatory sacrifice. For it is very natural for those who do not sincerely repent and believe with the heart, and who are still anxious to be saved, to seek in external rites for an efficacy that will quiet their consciences. This is delightful doctrine. Let us then observe, that in the fifth and sixth centuries, the rhetorical exaggeration of the Fathers in speaking of the Supper, did much evil. They apostrophize the Eucharist, and use very improper language; as for instance, Ambrose thus speaks: "Adorate hic, scabellum pedum ejus;" not meaning, however, that the symbols were to be worshipped, but Christ, represented by them. Yet such expressions wrought deep injury as the darkness thickened.

iv. We hasten therefore to observe, that down to the beginning of *the seventh century*, no satisfactory evidence can be produced that the well-informed Christian teachers and churches believed that a *propitiatory* sacrifice existed in the Lord's Supper. P. Molinaeus has proved this in his "Novitate Papismi."

v. From A.D. 600 to 850, or from Gregory I. to Leo IV., *was a period of great darkness*. The voice of the divine Word waxed feeble. Its sacred pages were not opened to Christian congregations. Thousands in every place were unable to read. The priesthood were no longer either the "light of the world" or the "salt of the earth." Ignorant and immoral, they converted the multitude into abject slaves of superstition, with a view to increase their gains and to augment their power. Yet amid this thickening darkness, the Eucharist, with numerous corruptions hanging all

around it, was not considered to be a *sacrifice*, properly so called. Fools, to be sure, talked foolishly ; but such men as Damascenus, Alcuin, Isidore, Beda, and Rabanus, did not believe the Eucharist to be a propitiatory sacrifice ; yet these eminent men were not charged with heresy. Private Masses, in which the priest alone partakes, began to be said ; but some Councils and eminent men opposed this wicked innovation ; yet Charlemagne used his power to introduce the superstitions of Rome into foreign countries.

vi. We now come to the period from Leo IV., A.D. 850, to the Council of Lateran, under Innocent III., A.D. 1215. This was a period of awful darkness and declension. The priests were as licentious as they were ignorant ; the people immoral and superstitious, prepared to receive the doctrine of transubstantiation, which was now publicly taught. But in opposition to this absurd doctrine, which disgraces Christianity, Berengarius, Scotus, and especially Bertram, raised their voices and employed their pens. But the torrent of error rushed on with an overpowering force. Accordingly, the Council of Lateran, A.D. 1215, supported the doctrine of transubstantiation, and thereby laid a solid foundation on which the imaginary propitiatory sacrifice could rest. Still Lombard and Gratian dared to dissent, and to teach the true doctrine respecting the Holy Supper.

vii. At length the day dawned when the sun of truth arose above the dark clouds of a protracted night. Luther and his associate Reformers began to preach the Word successfully ; in opposition to their efforts, the Council of Trent was convened, A.D. 1539–40.

This Council established the Romish Church immovably in the doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice in the Mass, as an article of faith never to be changed while Rome lasts.

## LECTURE XXX.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER—THE SUBJECT RESUMED.

#### ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

HAVING spoken, first, of the doctrine, and, second, detailed the history of the Lord's Supper, we come now to inquire respecting

#### III. ITS PASTORAL ADMINISTRATION.

By this act is to be understood *the duties* incumbent on the pastor, in administering the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. Consider this duty,

1. *In general.* In this sense, it is the duty of the evangelical pastor,

(1.) To teach *sound doctrine* on this subject, and to preserve this holy ordinance in its original simplicity and holy beauty.

i. The Supper, from its immediate connection with the cross of Christ, has most important doctrine attached to it. It was designed to be a *memorial* of the great atoning sacrifice which our Saviour, the incarnate Son of God, made of himself on the tree of the cross; a sacrifice which alone hath pardoning and saving efficacy. This relation which the Supper sustains to "the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth from all sin," should by the pastor be clearly and frequently exhibited as an article of Christian doctrine; and he should state that the belief of this doctrine God requires in those who partake of the Supper acceptably.

This pastoral duty is made the more important in its faithful performance, because some teach that the Supper is merely a memorial of Christ's death, in so far only as his death was a *confirmation* of his doctrine, and a beautiful *example* of patient meek-

ness and virtuous suffering. This is the Socinian heresy; while others teach, as we have seen, that the Supper is itself a propitiatory sacrifice, and that it possesses an inherent efficacy in the pardon of sin. This is Papal abomination; and some of the Lutherans ascribe an efficacy to the Lord's Supper (*opere operato*) which is both erroneous and delusive.

ii. The Lord's Supper stands also connected with *the simplicity and spiritual beauty* of Christian worship. This doctrine the pastor should carefully teach, and carefully guard by his pastoral administration. As the Christian Church arose amid nations who had invested their various worship with pompous ceremonies, there was an immediate attempt made by the multitudes who believed the gospel, to put the Supper of the Lord into some similar dress; but such dress corrupts its beauty, and degrades its holy character: and the Evangelical Pastor must, especially after the sad experience which the Church has had of the *effects* of human additions to divine ordinances, strenuously insist upon it that this sacred ordinance always appear in its original and simple attire. No embellished altar, no repetitions of prayers, no kneeling, were seen in the passover chamber when the Supper was first instituted.

iii. The Lord's Supper requires, in those who are qualified to partake of it, the *exercises of the graces of the Spirit*: it calls for knowledge, repentance, faith, love to God and man, love to Christ and the brethren; in a word, holy dispositions and affections. This doctrine the pastor must faithfully teach; for it is most important in its place. It supports the character and the design of this sacrament; it fences the table; it prevents the impenitent and self-righteous from deceiving themselves, and it preserves the character, while it promotes the peace of the Church. Lastly,

iv. The Lord's Supper stands connected with *the obligations and duties* of the Christian religion.

It has been denied that "the Lord's Supper can be called the *renewal* of the New Covenant, on our part; and in support of this denial, it has been said that its grand object is simply to keep alive the memory of our suffering and dying Saviour."

We acknowledge, indeed, that when the Lord's Supper is viewed in no other light than that of a religious institute, designed to hold up to the believer's view the cross of Christ, it

does not include the renewal of the covenant. But we deny that its character is that of a *mere institute* for preserving religiously the memory of the Saviour's death, in itself considered. We affirm, that the Holy Supper was designed to be a *sacrament* of the new dispensation of the "everlasting covenant;" which dispensation, with a view to distinguish it from that introduced "by the giving of the law," is called the "New Covenant," or the "New Testament." Sustaining this character and special relations to "the Mediator of the New Covenant," the Supper, in its celebration, may with propriety be said to involve the renewal of the covenant on our part. Let me dwell a little on this point.

*First.* The present dispensation of grace is in the Sacred Scriptures exhibited *in the form of a covenant*: for, in the first place, the incarnate Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, is expressly said to be the "Mediator of the New Covenant," even as Moses is said to be in an inferior sense the "Mediator of the first covenant." And as the Sinaitic covenant was ratified by the blood of clean beasts slain in sacrifice, and sprinkled on the people of Israel, so the New Covenant is ratified by the blood of the Mediator himself, when he "gave his life a ransom for many," and offered up himself a real propitiatory sacrifice for sin.

*Second.* In the second place, this present dispensation of grace is further exhibited under the form of a covenant, inasmuch as it proclaims what God requires from sinners to be at peace with them, and states the *conditions* on which he will pardon them and be their God; conditions which must be complied with on our part, before we can be saved. God as plainly says, now, to men, "Do certain things and ye shall be saved," as he ever did in the covenant of works; and these things are *faith* and *repentance*.

But here it may be said, "We dislike the term 'conditions,' for it seems to oppose the doctrine of salvation by free grace." We observe on this, first, that what men like or dislike, is not the question; but what God does and speaks: and *he does*, as all the Scriptures of the New Testament bear witness, exhibit the present dispensation under the form of a covenant, and he declares that faith and repentance are the *conditions* of the spiritual and saving enjoyment of his covenant mercies. But, second, the word "condition" conveys, it is true, the idea of something done at the requisition of another; but it does not convey the idea that the some-

thing rendered has not been received. The word condition has no *retrospective* meaning: it has respect only to something done, as faith and repentance are exercises of our hearts; but the term condition does not signify that we ourselves are the "authors and finishers" of what we do and render: it does not prohibit that the grace to believe and to repent should come from God, and on this account exclude "boasting and merit." The alarm, therefore, at the use of the term "conditions," is wholly false. But, to return from this digression:

Having proved that the present dispensation bears the form of a covenant, with its appropriate conditions, (for both faith and repentance look to the cross of Christ,) we observe, that the Lord's Supper presupposes that we stand, in consequence of repenting and believing, "accepted in the Beloved;" and according to its design, *signifies and seals* to us the blessings of that covenant. Hence, when the Saviour instituted the Supper, he expressly said of that part of the visible sign which was the symbol of his blood, (for by blood alone could the covenant be ratified,) "This is the cup of the New Testament, or covenant, in my blood." What then do we, in partaking of the Holy Supper? We actually renew our covenant engagements, and again are the promises and blessings of the covenant renewed to us. This the Evangelical Pastor must teach, exhibiting the fact that the Lord's Supper calls for a life of repentance, a life of faith, and binds to the duties of the covenant, which may be summed up in one passage: "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God with your bodies and your spirits, which are his." This branch of the subject we shall have occasion to touch again, before we close this lecture.

Such is that first duty which, as a minister of the Word and a steward of the mysteries of the kingdom, the pastor owes to his divine Lord and Master. We now proceed to observe,

2. That there are *other pastoral duties* connected with the administration of the Holy Supper; and those duties relate both to the pastor himself, in his preparations, and to the professing Christians in full communion, and under his pastoral care.

(1.) To speak of the duties which relate to *the pastor* himself, in his preparations for administering the Supper:

*First.* Before the communion Sabbath, let the pastor, by the

subject-matter of one or more discourses, *invite sinners* to come to the Saviour, and press the duties of immediate repentance, of faith, and of the open profession of religion; let him insist upon the obligations springing directly from the possession by men of rational souls, and from the relation which they sustain to an infinitely great and glorious God, who speaks to them by his Word, of obeying the known commands of the gospel, of which the religious observance of the Supper of our Lord, is one. Discourses of this kind will fall in happily with the coming celebration of that ordinance, and with his parochial visitations, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

*Second.* Before the communion week, let the pastor do his utmost to arrange his worldly business in such a manner that he shall, during the week, have *few interruptions* from this source. Communion week has extraordinary duties always connected with it; and when, in addition to these, other concerns engage the attention, the mind of the pastor becomes oppressed with anxieties, and unqualified for the happy discharge of his ministerial functions.

*Third.* Early in the communion week, let the pastor begin to make his preparations for the pulpit with prayer, and keep in his thoughts the particular nature and design of that holy ordinance which he is called to administer; an ordinance so intimately connected with the Cross of Christ, and so important in its relations, that, after its institution at Jerusalem, it was made the subject of special divine revelation, to the apostle Paul. "I received of the Lord," said he, "that which I also delivered unto you," etc.

When preparations are made, not in the hurry of a moment, but in due season, the pastor will have time for conversation with those who may be in trouble of mind, and may solicit his advice and instruction. And he will keep his own mind undisturbed; for the pastor may easily render the sacramental occasion one of torturing solicitude to himself, instead of a season of holy solemnity, tender religious feeling and comfort, by an improper disposition of his time and labor.

(2.) But the pastoral duties connected with the administration of the Supper, relate more particularly *to the people* under a pastor's care. In relation then to these, let me observe:

*First.* That it is useful, during the early part of communion week, to call the church to a *special prayer-meeting*. Some of the

Presbyterian churches keep a day of fasting, just before the Lord's Supper. There appears to be no scriptural or providential call for this. *Fasting* has respect to extraordinary circumstances in which the individual, or the church, or the nation is placed. It may therefore be connected with the Supper, in a time of great declension and persecution. But the Lord's Supper does not of itself create such circumstances: it is an established ordinance of the New Testament, adapted to all times and circumstances; and therefore the Church is not called regularly to fast before its celebration.

But a meeting for *social prayer* is strongly recommended before the observance of this sacrament. It is a very proper means for preparing the minds of Christians to keep the feast in mutual love; and it awakens that self-communion and self-examination which such a feast calls for. The pastor, if his other duties permit, may be present in the prayer-meeting; and before he calls another to offer prayer, let him speak a "word to him that is weary;" but if he be dutifully absent, let the church pray.

Here let me observe by the way, that when the whole church assemble as in this instance to pray, let the pastor keep the direction of the whole exercise in his own hands; let him call upon those members only to pray, whom he knows to possess a gift that will edify, united with the greatest weight of religious character in his church; (for all who can pray well do not act well;) and let him not invite more than two or three to pray in succession at one prayer-meeting.

*Second.* Another most important pastoral duty of the communion week, is the *examination* of those persons who desire to enjoy the full communion of the church. This is a great and a delicate duty. Much care and wisdom are required to do it well; for the pastor, by forgetting that there are babes in Christ, may exclude those who ought to be received; and by unfaithfulness to his God, he may muster into anxious-seats many, and fill his church with those who are not abased enough to know and receive the Saviour in his proper offices, or with those who neither love the truth, nor make religion their chief concern.

In order, therefore, to be well informed with respect to those who shall present themselves for examination, let the pastor give notice a week or two before the administration of the Supper, that

he would be pleased to converse privately with any who desire to be instructed in religion, and to unite fully with the Church. If, however, he visit about the same time the families in his congregation, such notice will not be necessary, as he will in his visitation course be able to converse with such individuals at their respective dwellings.

Further: On some day of the communion week, let the pastor and his consistory or session meet, after public notice duly given; let him open the meeting with prayer; let him keep a record of those who apply, and then let him examine them affectionately and faithfully.

It may be, that some one offering himself or herself on such an occasion, may not be known either by the pastor or his elders to have been the subject of religious awakening and exercise. In relation to such an one, they may be surprised to find him or her among the applicants. In such case, let the pastor proceed with caution; for, to authorize the reception of such person, there should appear something extraordinary in his or her experience; either long-continued and close attendance upon the public ordinances of religion, accompanied with that self-diffidence which conceals religious feelings, or very strong convictions of sin just felt, and for the disclosure of which before there was hardly time and opportunity. Otherwise, it is better to leave such a person a little longer, to examine himself or herself, and to be inquired after by the pastor and the pious.

Hasty admissions into the Church of those whose first impressions are very recent, is what every faithful pastor will carefully guard against. An abstinence from the Lord's table by a sinner on trial for a few months, does not endanger his salvation, if he be a true believer; for the sacraments are not absolutely necessary to salvation.

Besides, God's operations in grace are in correspondence with the faculties, both intellectual and moral, of men. In enlightening and teaching, there is a process; so also in bringing the renewed mind into exercise, there are objects to be presented—temptations to be met from remaining sin—conflicts to be endured; all which require time for the development of the real principles that actuate the man, whether he is born again or not. But as every one who is religiously impressed is not converted, this fact affords an addi-

tional reason why the anxious should not be hastily taken into full communion. Our Lord said of the seed that soon perished, that it "*quickly sprang up*;" while of the seed sown in good ground no such record is made of quick vegetation, but of fruit-yielding; while in another parable he illustrates the process of growth in the seed of grace—first the blade, then the ear, and afterwards the full corn in the ear. But here it may be asked,

1. Were not the thousands awakened and anxious on the day of Pentecost received *immediately* into full communion? We answer,

(1.) If God gives another such Pentecost season by his miraculous operations, let the same thing be done. To reason from extraordinary dispensations to ordinary operations in the Church, which is a common mode of reasoning with the Shakers, Anabaptists, and other fanatics, is sufficient to excite suspicion that a doctrine wants proper support.

(2.) Let *persecution* arise, and union to the Christian Church, as in the days of the apostles, be attended with the danger of losing life and property, and we shall hardly raise the smallest impediment to the reception of any number that may be religiously impressed, and profess to believe.

(3.) Let men exist in the Church who can strike the deceivers and liars dead, as Peter did, through divine agency, in the instance of Ananias and Sapphira; and then set, if you please, the doors of admission wide open, and receive all who apply for entrance. It is remarkable that those miracles were wrought, that the insincere and unsanctified might be checked in their advance towards Christian communion. It is written, (Acts v. 11,) "that great fear came not only upon all the Church, but also upon as many as heard these things." And how did that fear operate? By constraining every one who would make an open profession of the Christian faith, to inquire carefully whether he had not transitory feelings and affections in religion, but the graces of the Spirit, in exercise. *And this very thing is all that we ask for.* We merely request that time be taken for the development of the graces of the Spirit, as distinguished from transient feelings of a religious appearance.

2. Further: It may also be that one may offer himself whose

mind, under deep convictions, is almost ready to sink into despair: how shall the pastor act in this case? We reply,

(1.) That in examples of this kind there are varieties which must be noticed, as they form important differences between persons who are exercised in religion. One may be almost ready to despair under pungent convictions of guilt, and apprehensions of future dreadful misery, who has little or no knowledge of gospel truth, and in consequence of his ignorance of the Saviour, of the ability, the invitations, and compassions of this Saviour, concludes that there can be no mercy for him, and no way by which he can escape the damnation of hell. In this case, let not such a person, who in this heavy trouble of mind applies to be received into the full communion of the Church, be admitted. But let the pastor first preach to him Jesus Christ as a suitable and almighty Saviour; let him first open up to him the scheme of redemption, and affectionately invite him to come to Christ; and then let him wait to see what effect this gospel, through the divine blessing, has upon the sinner's mind, whether it be received or rejected; and let him, in his pastoral ministrations towards him, act accordingly. For the enjoyment of the full communion of the Church can be no remedy for a sinner's cure; no substitute for the Saviour, his righteousness and grace. This is the abominable doctrine of the Papists.

But despair arising from *wrong ideas* of faith, conversion and spiritual light, from desires to have abundant consolation and sensible joys, and from a rush of temptations upon the anxious mind, may be found associated with a competent knowledge of the gospel, a tender conscience, and a looking unto Jesus, the only desired Saviour. In such case, let the pastor not hesitate a moment, but admit freely such a person into the full communion of the Church; administering at the same time words of encouragement and consolation.

(2.) But to enlarge a little here; let the pastor, in the course of his examination of those who offer themselves, direct his inquiries to two points, viz: First, a competent knowledge of divine truth; and second, an experience of its power to awaken, sanctify, and comfort the heart.

i. The pastor must ascertain whether those who desire to be

received into the full communion of the Church, possess a *proper measure of the knowledge* of revealed truth. Men know of the Saviour and his salvation but by the written Word: hence "the Scriptures must be searched." The Spirit of God operates by the truths contained in those Scriptures: hence religion is called "light," "wisdom," "understanding," and "knowledge;" and those who are ignorant of those truths which lie at the foundation of Christian experience, may either blindly believe what the Church believes, or have certain dreams, visions, and raptures, without number; but they cannot be admitted to the Lord's table, for they cannot be believers with the heart, nor belong to that holy nation that keepeth the truth; and therefore the confession of their mouths cannot be received.

In requiring knowledge of divine truth as a qualification for Church communion, the pastor must be careful not to ask too much, nor be satisfied with too little.

ii. Some ministers ask for too much knowledge as a prerequisite. They dislike inquiries about *Christian experience*, and consider religion to be snugly treasured up in a well-stored understanding; whereas, it is principally an affection of the heart: hence their outcries against religious awakenings, revivals, and stories of conversion and Christian experience. They require Christians to be, as they phrase it, "still-born." Accordingly, they insist much upon doctrinal knowledge; and if a person be well versed in the mere science of divine truth, be a regular attendant on worship, leading a moral life, they receive him.

Let the Christian pastor never forget that God requires the heart; let him ask for the knowledge of great truths; but let him make suitable allowance for the want of knowledge of letters in some, the slender education of some, the poor advantages which some have had to improve their minds in irreligious families, the weak understandings of some, and the low circumstances in which others have been placed, provided he shall discover in such persons a strong sense of their sinful and lost condition, a deep conviction of their need of a Saviour, a hearty reliance on the Lord Jesus, and that sincere love of God their Saviour, which leads from grace to gratitude and duty.

The Christian pastor therefore must inquire into the religious experience of those who offer themselves. The experience of

Christians is one in substance, but *very various* in the degrees of conviction, faith, light, comfort, and in the circumstances of time, place, temptations and deliverances. Let, then, the evangelical pastor study to know what measure of knowledge and experience constitutes *a babe in Christ*; and having this knowledge, he will find, that satisfactory answers to the few following questions will comprehend all that is necessary on Christian experience, viz:

(i.) Has God brought you to see that you are a lost and undone sinner by nature and practice?

(ii.) Have you searched the Scriptures, with a desire to know what you should do to be saved?

(iii.) Have you given yourself to prayer, and asked in the name of the Lord Jesus for mercy?

(iv.) Can your prayers and works save you?

(v.) Have you received Christ, who saves sinners by his own merits and power, and according to the riches of his grace?

(vi.) Is this Saviour precious to you, and do you love his people, his Word, his ordinances, and his ways?

(vii.) Do you wish to live in communion and fellowship with God's people?

(viii.) What progress have you made in religion?

*Third.* In a word, let the pastor in this examination *be familiar and tender*, while he is *solemn and faithful*.

But there is one case, in respect of which he may be at a loss how to act. It is the case of a person, serious, attentive to public ordinances; a worshipper of God in his family, godly in his life, and who takes an interest in the promotion of the gospel, but at the same time does not remember to have had that concern of mind which others have had, and has no religious experience to relate. On this case, we remark, *let such a person be admitted*, provided he is alive to the excellency of Christ, and has knowledge of the conflicts created by indwelling sin in his own heart: for,

1. Recording in the memory and relating articles of religious experience, is a talent which some Christians of large experience do not possess: while *this talent* of talking about religious exercises is in the possession of several, who show by their tempers and lives, that they have never been converted. The true convert is often a silent man in relation to his own experience, from an insight into his infirmities and defects, which throws a doubt over

his best religious enjoyments; while the hypocrite converts every change of feeling and every elevation of his animal spirits in worship, into manifestations of the Divine presence and love.

2. But, "by their fruits ye shall know them." Let the pastor look at the *prevailing* dispositions and habits of a man in religion, and attach more importance to these than to *words* of experience. If there be no records of agonizing convictions, these may not have been necessary, from various circumstances, in the minds of some whom God is pleased to draw with "cords of love." The celebrated John Livingston had no such convictions, which once led him to entertain doubts respecting his own conversion, and to ask that he might feel them. His request was granted to his own sorrow. The eminent preacher Daniel Burgess said, "It is no matter whether the plough run deep or undeeep, if the corn do but grow well."

3. But, again, admitting, in the case of the person proposed, that the pastor is somewhat at a loss, yet let him, on what appears to be a sincere profession of faith as far as it goes, admit to full communion, and leave the whole case to God, who has commanded us "not to despise the day of small things." In one word, let the examination conclude with a short prayer and exhortation, and the consistory be dismissed.

Here let me observe, that the practice in some churches of pastors *receiving privately* the confession of individuals, and merely reporting to the session, is irregular, and not to be commended. The church has elders under ordination oaths, to watch expressly over this important matter, namely, the reception of members into full communion; and those elders ought to hear, inquire, and judge for themselves; especially as every pastor is not a faithful watchman at his post.

But it may be said, that this rich gentleman or that great lady in the congregation is not willing to come before the whole consistory to be examined, but prefers a private conference with the minister. We reply, *that confession is to be suspected at its origin, in which pride appears to be stronger than love.* Certain it is, the reception of members, the more it is clothed with solemnity and care, the more it will exalt the character of the Church of Christ.

*Fourth.* But other important duties are connected with the administration of the Holy Supper. The pastor, before con-

munion, must inquire of his elders whether the members in full communion have maintained their holy standing, or whether any one has so acted as to call for suspension from the table, and to act accordingly.

But we must come nearer to the actual observance of the ordinance itself. With a view to prepare for communion in this ordinance, and to guard its purity, it is thought expedient,

1. That during the communion week, what is called a *preparatory discourse* should be delivered. This discourse must have a relation, first, either to the sacrament; or, second, to the duty and advantages of observing it in a holy manner; or, third, to the qualifications of acceptable communicants. Hence texts may be selected, suited to one or other of these subjects; though it is true that the qualifications of acceptable communicants is more appropriate to self-examination. But the field here is large, and discourses which are preparatory may be spoken occasionally, upon the promises of God to his dear people; the duty of making an open profession of our faith, and of giving a practical testimony to the cross of Christ, as the medium of reconciliation, sanctification, strength, and comfort. But let the pastor act faithfully, and forbid those to approach the Lord's table who do not love the Saviour in sincerity, and desire to be found in him, etc.

The preparatory discourse is not to be addressed to the wicked, but to the *professedly pious*. Some preachers forget this. The Preparatory ought to be one of *thought*; and in preparing it, the pastor should remember two things: first, that the perfection of grace is not, in this state of existence, the evidence of Christian character: the law of duty is perfect; the Christian character is imperfect. Some preachers seem to forget that there is a great difference between stating duty and describing character: hence, in doing the latter, they require that every grace of the heart shall appear in its perfection, and thereby afflict the souls of God's people; therefore, second, let the pastor keep in view, that there are *degrees* in grace; and that it is incumbent on him, at all times, to expose the self-deceiver and to "feed the lambs."

*Fifth.* Another duty which the pastor is called to discharge is, the *delivering of an Action Sermon*. This sermon should be short, practical, tender. There are other occasions on which the pastor may labor to alarm the fears of the wicked, to reprove the back-

sliding and lukewarm professor, and set his face like a flint against prevailing errors and vices. But on this solemn occasion, he is to speak more particularly to the hopes and fears of God's dear people, and to lead, in the exercise of stronger faith and love, into green pastures, and to help to bear afflictions with patience, and to rest in God their Saviour.

*Sixth.* The *appropriate subjects* of discourse immediately before actual communion, are, first, the Saviour in his sufferings, extent of his love, and excellency of his knowledge; and, second, the benefits of the covenant; among which is, third, the happiness of the heavenly state.

1. The pastor, after sermon, must read the form, as it serves to explain the ordinance and to fence the table.

2. He must, by prayer, consecrate the bread and wine to the sacramental service.

3. He must, as a minister of the Word, break the bread with his own hands, and distribute both it and the cup.

4. During the participation, the Scriptures may be read, hymns sung, and short addresses may be made. The addresses should not be theological nor rhetorical, but plain and affectionate, stirring up faith and love.

*Seventh.* In the primitive Church, it was an invariable custom for believers to celebrate the Supper *by themselves*, others being removed. This was, a few years back, the practice of all the Protestant Churches; but a new custom has been adopted. Whether it be an improvement, is questionable.

*Eighth.* Let the pastor exhort, that the whole communion Sabbath *be most religiously sanctified*.

## LECTURE XXXI.

### PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT RESUMED.

#### CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION.

WE come now to speak of another great pastoral duty, that of CATECHIZING THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF THE CONGREGATION COMMITTED TO A PASTOR'S INSTRUCTION AND OVERSIGHT.

#### I. The *character* of this duty.

The general character of this duty is that of "preaching the Word," or teaching the doctrines and precepts contained in the Holy Scriptures. The apostle Paul delivers this exhortation to his beloved son in the gospel, the celebrated evangelist, Timothy. 2 Tim. i. 13: "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."

1. By the "sound words," the "*υγιαίνοντον λογα*," the apostle doubtless understands those doctrines of Christianity, or that system of divine truth which he, together with other servants of Christ, were employed, in teaching, and which is "according to godliness." He calls it elsewhere (Titus i. 9) "sound doctrine," "the gospel," and the "faithful Word."

The apostle here uses a phraseology familiar to the Greeks, when they wished to express the good constitution of a thing in itself, and the good effects it was calculated to produce.

That thing, so constituted, they denominated "sound." Thus we find that Herodotus, Lucian, Elian, and other Greek writers, call kingdoms, governments and laws, *sound*; and philosophers applied the same term in describing a doctrine or a system of doctrines of their schools.

The "sound words" of the Christian faith are, then, those doc-

trines of the Bible which originate in divine inspiration; which are not only true, but of high importance to men, as intelligent beings and sinful creatures; and which are calculated to produce the most blessed effects upon their minds, being used by the Holy Spirit to enlighten, and to restore the diseased heart to a state of moral health, beauty and strength, and therefore called “the power of God unto salvation:” “for all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction and correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.” (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.)

2. To these “sound words,” which Timothy as a disciple had heard from his distinguished teacher, is ascribed “a form,” *ὑποτύπωσις*.

The word “form,” according to the acknowledged meaning of the Greek term in this connection, signifies “a sketch,” “a concise representation,” “an epitome” of those doctrines of Christianity which the apostle denominates “sound words.”

Now, teachers of all the useful arts and sciences in all ages, have prepared such sketches, and used them for the better instruction and the quick improvement of their scholars. We have them still in use in all the schools of learning.

3. Whether the apostle Paul had communicated to Timothy such a brief outline of the Christian system *in writing*, other than his inspired epistles, (which, that he did, is the opinion of some learned expositors,) we shall not undertake to determine. We are sure that he often did so *verbally*, when he instructed Timothy: and this mode of instruction, let me observe, is that which is expressed directly by the Greek verb “*κατηχεω*” and “*κατηχιζω*,” I catechize; which are not often used by profane writers, and signify, to communicate instruction or information by sounds through the ear, or by word of mouth, as we say. “*Τιερὶ ὧν κατηχηθης λωγων*,” says the evangelist Luke, Luke i. 4: “that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed by word of mouth or by catechizing.”

4. We also know, that it was the practice of the early ministers of the Word, after the apostles, to prepare and furnish such written forms or sketches of doctrine, for the instruction of their young Christian disciples. Of this fact, we have abundant testi-

monies: these have been collected by Hottinger, L'Enfant, Budæus, and Professor Van Alphen, etc.

These sketches, or forms, received the names of creeds, apologies, and *Catechisms*.

It is with the last of these forms of Christian doctrine, and with the pastoral duty connected with them, that your attention in this lecture is to be occupied.

II. Let me first speak of *Catechisms in general*, and give the *history* of that *Catechism* which is one of the symbolical books of the Reformed Protestant Church in Europe and in America.

1. Such written compilations of divine truth among Christians have, by way of distinction, been called "*Catechisms*;" for they are drawn up by questions and answers, and therefore resemble the mode of instruction pursued when one teaches another by word of mouth.

2. We know not that by *divine direction* any *Catechism* of this kind was composed in the primitive Church for the instruction of the young and ignorant, and therefore no existing *Catechism* has divine authority over our faith, or is to be regarded as a part of the written Word of God, or the directory of our faith and practice.

Yet we do know that the Spirit of inspiration distinguished between "the first principles of the doctrine of Christ"—those truths which were first taught by the ambassadors of the Saviour to the ignorant, and which are naturally comprehended in a short *Catechism*—and other truths resting upon those "first principles," and indicating an advancement in the science of the Christian religion. The apostle Paul says, (Heb. vi. :) "Therefore, leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ," as matters now sufficiently explained and known, "let us go on unto perfection." These words not only show that in the Christian religion, as in every other science, there are *elementary principles*, but also indicate the ordinary course of instruction pursued by the apostles.

All Church history testifies that the primitive Christians did attend to the injunction, "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and that ministers of the Word did take great pains in instructing adult inquirers in the knowledge of divine truth.

Now, whether we instruct young persons or the ignorant adult,

orally or by a written form, it must be done *catechetically*. And if a parent in his house, or a pastor in his congregation, has not a written or printed Catechism, he will soon accommodate himself with one of his own composition; and if it be approved, it will be copied and transmitted among descendants, and friends, and neighbors. All the efforts of ingenious reasoners cannot prevent the use of written Catechisms, for these are the means of instruction recommended by reason and experience.

3. Early therefore were Catechisms composed and used in the Christian Church. Such compositions would naturally result from the duty of instructing children in religion by their parents, and from the religious schools established among Christians. Accordingly, we find such forms and catechetical summaries of Christian doctrine to have been drawn up by Mark, Hermes, Dionysius, etc.

Letting alone, however, historical accounts of this kind which refer to centuries remote, let me direct your attention to that Catechism which is one of the symbolical books of our Church. I mean the Heidelberg Catechism.

### III. HISTORY of Catechisms, and,

#### 1. Of the *Heidelberg* Catechism.

The history of this Catechism is an interesting one. Let me here request you to note that this Catechism is not the work of divines in the Netherlands; nor does it owe its origin to the Synod of Dort. It existed before that Synod met. It was composed at the period of the Reformation, and from its character and relations soon became the Catechism of the great Reformed Church in Germany, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Bohemia, Hungary, Prussia, Poland, and other countries. No Catechism, therefore, in the Protestant Church has had an equal circulation among the nations professing the Christian faith; nor has any that we know of been attended with equal utility. Hence, from the *German* language, in which it was originally composed and published, it was soon translated into all the modern European languages. A Latin version was made of it at an early day after its first publication; and afterwards it was translated into the Greek, the Hebrew, the Ethiopic, and several Asiatic languages.

The Heidelberg Catechism is a choice summary of the great doctrines of the Christian religion. Pareus speaks correctly, when he says: "Quamdiu hæc Catechesis (quæ est vere *ὑποτύπωσις*)

fideliter tenebitur tamdiu extabit in Ecclesia, veræ Theologiæ luculentum κειμηλιον, et non sunt de futuri qui," etc. That is, in English, "So long as this Catechism (which is truly a form of sound words) shall be faithfully kept, so long shall there be, in the Church of God, an excellent pledge of sound theology; nor shall there be wanting men who will rightly defend the foundation of sound doctrine against the sophisms of heretics, and transmit them down to others."

The *occasion* on which this Catechism was composed was this: The Lutherans had drawn up the "Augsburg Confession of Faith," in which the Reformed believed there were several errors; such as the doctrine of the "ubiquity of Christ's human nature," and his bodily presence (unintelligibly expressed) in the Eucharist. Hence those divines and other Christians who thought correctly on these subjects, could not subscribe to the Augsburg Confession. But the Lutherans insisted upon the reception of this Confession, as a preliminary to communion with them. The Reformed in Germany refused; disputes arose; Brentius and other learned men exposed, in their writings, the errors contained in the Augsburg Confession. This defense of divine truth exasperated the Lutherans, who, notwithstanding the judicious advices of Melancthon, were determined to disown the Reformed churches, numerous, respectable, and kindly disposed as they were towards their Lutheran brethren, and break communion with them, which was done.

Things were in this unhappy state among the friends of the Reformation, when Frederic III., surnamed the "Pious," the Elector Palatine, who had before renounced Lutheranism and embraced the Calvinistic doctrines, A. D. 1560, and who had, for the promotion of true religion and science, established at Heidelberg, in the Paltz, a college bearing the name of "Collegium Sapientiæ," ordered the divines of that respectable institution to draw up a Catechism, which should exhibit the faith of the Reformed Church, in affirmation of her belief in the articles of the Apostles' Creed, and of those points of doctrine in which she differed from the Romanists, from the Lutherans, and from the Anabaptists, and which should serve as a form of sound doctrine to be used in her communion.

This college in the city of Heidelberg (which was considered to

be the second mother-city of the Reformed Church, Geneva being the first) was erected for the special purpose of preparing young men for the sacred ministry, and had for its Principal or Chancellor at that time, Dr. Zechariah Ursinus, to whom Caspar Olevianus and other professors were assistants. Now those two distinguished divines, viz: Ursinus and Olevianus, composed the Catechism, which, from the city where it had its origin, where it was published first and explained in regular discourses, was called "the Heidelberg Catechism." After the work was finished, it was submitted to the critical examination of the principal divines in the Palatinate, and then published, A. D. 1563. Such was the work, and such its utility, that Mosheim, though a warm Lutheran and bitter Arminian, is constrained to say, "that this Catechism was a form of instruction almost universally adopted by the Calvinists." This is true. It was the Catechism of the Reformed Protestant Church: not considered to belong to this or that sectional Church; but regarded as the *common property* of the Reformed Churches.

Immediately after the publication of the Heidelberg Catechism, Ursinus undertook to deliver lectures upon its parts in their natural order. These lectures were printed in the Latin language, A. D. 1584, and contributed, as a small system of divinity, to spread the knowledge of the truth through Europe. The celebrated Pareus, the scholar of Ursinus, afterwards, by additions, improved those lectures; and still later, the distinguished theologians, Festus Hommius and Spiljardus, annexed their improvements. The whole was divided into Lord's Days, as it was intended that ministers should expound it in the public worshipping assemblies each Lord's day, and show to the people that the doctrines taught therein were those of the Word of God.

Such is the Catechism of our Church. As you may be called to preach the Scripture doctrines which are contained in it, I have given you this brief history of that useful work. And let me add, that it differs from most other Catechisms in use in this important respect: it is, in its answers, the profession of an adult Christian's faith; for the questions are proposed to one who has learned divine truth from the Bible, and who has believed with the heart; and therefore it commences with facts relating to the believer's union to Christ his Saviour. Then it exhibits the lost condition of men, their depravity and guilt, which required a Sa-

viour to redeem, and a divine power to renew the heart of the sinner, and work in him living faith. After it has arrived at this point, the Catechism, in opposition to the daily calumnies of the Papists in the times of the Reformation, (who were wont to say that the Reformers denied the Christian faith, because they rejected the supremacy of the Pope, and the corruptions of the Church of Rome,) proceeds to adopt the common symbol of the Christian Church in all the ages past, viz: "the Apostles' Creed," and to show that the Christian did believe all the articles of this creed, and was therefore one in doctrine with the primitive and ancient Church of Christ. This is wisely done, and had in the Reformation a very important and blessed effect.

But while the Reformed Church thus agreed in faith with the ancient Church, she could not symbolize with Rome. Hence the Catechism proceeds to exhibit the idolatry of the Romish Mass, while it opposes the errors of the Lutherans in relation to the Lord's Supper. But the Antinomians had arisen in the Protestant Church, against whose doctrines the Catechism protests by exhibiting the moral law of God, *not* as a condition, but as *a rule of life*, agreeably to which the Christian will walk, in expressing his love to God, his Creator and Redeemer, and his gratitude for his deliverance from sin and the curse.

Let me observe, that, in addition to the Heidelberg Catechism, there is another shorter Catechism, usually bound up in our books. This is an *abridgment* of the former, and is designed to show those great leading truths of the gospel, of which it is required that every one who is admitted into the full communion of the Church shall have knowledge.

## 2. *Of the Westminster Catechism.*

I shall now make a few remarks on the Westminster Catechism. This excellent Catechism stands connected with the acts and proceedings of the Assembly of Divines who met in the city of Westminster, in England, A. D. 1643. This Assembly, you will observe, did not consider themselves (for in truth they were not) a *Synod*, or ecclesiastical court regularly called, and delegated: for they were not the representatives of the clergy and the churches, but rather a committee or council of Parliament.

The English Parliament, who were entering into serious conflict with King Charles I. respecting their own powers and the rights

of the Crown, convened this Assembly by their authority. The delegates composing this Assembly were not chosen "by the votes of ministers and elders in the Presbyterian mode of government," but "Parliament chose all the members themselves, merely with a view to have their opinion and advice for settling the government, liturgy, and doctrine of the Church of England. And they were confined in their debates to such things as the Parliament proposed." (See Nonconformist Memorial, Vol. 1.)

In these respects, there was an obvious difference between the Synod of Dort and the Assembly of Divines at Westminster. For, though the States-General in Holland called a National Synod, yet the delegates composing that *Synod* were chosen in the order of the Presbyterian government, and were the representatives of the churches. But let me proceed with the history.

After the Assembly had continued long in session, and "settled pretty well the discipline of the Church," it was moved, A. D. 1646, to finish the Confession of Faith: "And while the confession was carrying through the Assembly, *committees* were appointed to reduce that Confession into the form of Catechisms. They reported two Catechisms: one larger, for the service of a public exposition of divine truths in the pulpit, according to the custom of the continental churches; the other smaller, for the instruction of children. In both, the articles relating to church discipline (an unhappy circumstance) are entirely omitted.

The *Larger Catechism* is a comprehensive system of divinity, and the *Smaller* a very accurate summary. The answers being theological theses, or definitions, have by some been thought, in certain particulars, too abstruse for the capacity of young children. These Catechisms, however, have been very useful in the churches using the English language; and they will continue to be highly prized, so long as the doctrines taught in the Sacred Scriptures are received.

Let me add, that the Westminster Catechism is somewhat differently arranged from the Heidelberg. It begins with the great doctrines of Natural Religion, and passes on to Revealed, according to the method usually pursued in the systems of didactic theology. Hence both those excellent forms may be used in the same religious society, without disturbing each other, and with manifest profit to both preachers and people.

But it has been said, that if the *Heidelberg* Catechism be *Calvinistic* in its doctrine, how are we to understand the words in the Fifteenth Lord's Day, viz: "that Christ, in his sufferings, sustained the wrath of God against the sins of *all mankind?*" We answer:

1. That the doctrine of the Catechism, like that of the Synod of Dort, is *moderate Calvinism*. But,

2. Every person who attends to the phraseology of the sentence here adduced, will instantly perceive that it was not designed to express the doctrine of *universal or unlimited atonement*: for it is not said that the Saviour sustained the wrath of God *for* the sins of all mankind, but "*against*" the sins of all mankind. "*Against*" is the proper translation of the Dutch "*tegen*," and of the Latin "*adversus*," which was originally used with design, and not "*pro*." Why is this remarkable departure from the ordinary terms of the Pelagians made by the compositors of the Catechism here, if they intended to express the very doctrine of that sect? No other reason can be assigned, than that they did not intend to teach that doctrine; nor in this place to mark out, *at all*, the extent of the atonement.

3. But the obvious design of this phraseology was to express, *first*, that Christ endured the wrath of God; excited, not by the sins of the apostate angels, but by the sins of apostate men. The angels were passed by. He suffered for the sins of *men*. *Second*, the *intensity* of that divine wrath which the Saviour sustained. It was wrath awakened, not by the transgressions of Israel and Judah alone, as the Jews once thought, but by the sins of thousands of every nation under heaven, a vast and innumerable multitude of sinners of every country. *Third*, the distinction between this displeasure of God, and that which is excited by the sins of his children, or those who are reconciled to him. God punishes *in love* his backsliding children, because he is displeased with their sins; but the sufferings of Christ were the expression of his wrath against the sins of mankind, or of our apostate race.

Accordingly we find that, agreeably to this sense of those words, the ministers who composed the *Heidelberg* Catechism, and their immediate successors, were all Calvinists, who believed in and taught the doctrine of *limited atonement*.

Let this suffice in relation to Catechisms, which ought to be approved by the Church before they are used by pastors as means of public instruction. Let me direct your attention now,

IV. To the *pastoral duty* of catechetical instruction. Parents are bound to catechize and instruct their children religiously, in their households respectively. But in addition to this, pastors, in their churches, are also bound to instruct in divine truth the young under their pastoral care, catechetically.

Very important, in its place, is this pastoral duty, not merely from its antiquity in the Christian Church; not merely from the high value which Christians have always set upon it; but, especially,

1. *From the relation* which baptized children sustain to the visible Church and her God. In a certain sense, they are the children of the Church; to a certain degree, they are *her members*. Under the ancient economy, Jehovah claimed the children of the Israelites as being his property.

Now, ministers of the Word are his stewards, and by virtue of the Abrahamic covenant, infants born and baptized in his Church stand in the same relation to God which the children of the Jews did; and therefore are, properly, under the stewardship and pastoral care of his gospel servants. As shepherds, they must extend their affectionate labors to the lambs of the flock; as laborers in the "garden of the Lord," they must cultivate the youngest plants. "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs."

It is not sufficient, as we have said, that parents catechize their children; nor that school-teachers aid in communicating to their pupils a portion of religious instruction. These are important helps, but cannot absolve the pastor from the performance of that duty which his office imposes in relation to those children who are members of the Church. There is a *trust* which a Christian minister cannot delegate to others; *he* must see to it, that children dedicated to God be instructed from the Holy Scriptures, and thus be qualified for his service; and he must direct the whole system of early instruction and religious training.

2. The duty of pastoral catechizing is obviously *important*, from the consideration, that in no well-regulated society are children and youth neglected in their early education. Are children in civil society permitted to grow up without that knowledge which is necessary to qualify them for business, and for the promotion of the common weal? No; schools are every where provided: and even among the savages, children are instructed, to the extent of

the attainments of their parents, in the lessons of traditionary science, and of the arts.

Now the Church of Christ is in her nature a *society*, and her existence in this world depends upon a knowledge of divine truth; and that truth, comprehending those doctrines of God and those required affections of the human heart, to which innate depravity and the spirit of the world are opposed, *must be early inculcated*, in order that the mind may "grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," uninfluenced by those errors which have a pernicious effect upon the temper and conduct of the young. Leave children uninstructed by parents and ministers in the first principles of the Christian religion, and they will most certainly acquire those notions which fortify the depraved heart in impenitency, and give security and peace to the wretched sinner in his downward course. What striking evidences of this fact may be collected in those districts of country, or of a large city, where the Word is not preached, and where parents and children are ignorant of divine truth, and like miserable sheep in a desert without a shepherd! Before the Methodists, Calvinistic and Arminian, arose in England, and extended their ministerial labors to the collieries, it is said that the colliers and their children, amounting in the whole to thousands, were but little removed from the state of savages, and as wicked as they were ignorant. Ignorance of divine truth is seen in our cities to be accompanied with the neglect of the worship of God, the profanation of his Sabbath, and the practice of every vice.

3. The duty of catechizing becomes therefore very important, when we duly estimate *the advantages* which the young derive from it. These have been so great, that the habits of a whole people have been formed by such early religious instructions; and the habits were such as to distinguish them from neighboring people as being a moral, intelligent, and religious nation. *Scotland*, under the ministry of her old Presbyterian clergy, who diligently catechized the children of their parishes, while they faithfully preached the Word, exhibited such a picture. What a different character did her population deservedly sustain from that of the people of Ireland not only, but of England also, with her ecclesiastical dignitaries and beneficed clergymen! What a striking dissimilarity was observed between the Presbyterians and Papists of Ireland,

in respect of intelligence and morals; and between the Protestant and Popish cantons of Switzerland!

4. But catechizing is an important duty, for it is *actually preaching* the Word, and preaching it in a *mode* adapted to the capacities of those to be instructed. If, therefore, the Divine Word is fitted to do the heart good; if, through the Divine blessing, it can awaken, convict, convert, and sanctify; then is preaching it, in the way of *catechizing*, a means of salvation, and a means of Divine appointment, and such as God will bless. Hence the advantages arising from it to the young can scarcely be duly estimated. For children may be savingly impressed and converted, so soon as they can be catechized. God has displayed his power in converting children of five, seven, nine, or twelve years of age, of which remarkable instances are upon record. In every Christian congregation, almost, catechizing has been blessed to the souls of the young. Many Christians date their first serious impressions in that instructive exercise; and sometimes awakenings have commenced in the assembly of catechumens, and extended through a congregation.

Certain however it is, while some of the young have been restrained by what they heard in the catechetical exercise, many have acquired thereby that knowledge of divine truth which served to render them, in after life, more intelligent and useful Christians.

What encouragement has, then, the Christian pastor to engage in this good work? By catechizing the young, in connection with his other labors, he is "sowing his seed beside all waters;" he is taking, as it were, the start of worldly influence, to gain over the young to the cause of truth and religion; he is carrying the noble design of the Abrahamic covenant into execution; he is training up the young for the kingdom of heaven here, and for the kingdom of glory hereafter.

But I shall not enlarge further on this branch, but shall proceed to observe, that another consideration powerfully recommends the duty of catechizing.

5. It is a duty productive of benefits to *the pastor himself*. All the benefits cannot be enumerated here: let it suffice to say,

(1.) That by weekly discussions of important doctrines he will better retain the measure of theological science, and will become familiar with the system of divine truth. When ministers are left

to the choice of their subjects of discourse in public service, it so happens that several branches of doctrine and of duty are overlooked; but catechetical instructions oblige them to follow *an order*, which exhibits one important truth after another; serves to bring up to their view subjects of difficulty which require more thought, and ready and practical subjects, to which they had not before directed their particular attention. A growth in intellectual power, as well as an increase of knowledge, naturally results from this course.

(2.) The pastor will also acquire, by the more plain and familiar mode of instruction called catechizing, a talent for *extemporizing*. This talent is of great utility in the gospel service. If every thing which the pastor is to say in publicly preaching the Word must first be written by him, his task will be severe, and his useful labors in many respects will be restricted. Very desirable therefore is it that he should possess the capacity of speaking in an edifying manner without written helps, and be qualified to express himself fluently on a portion of Scripture, or a doctrine merely, on an arrangement formed hastily in his mind.

Now, catechizing is that pastoral service which is well adapted to call forth and to improve the *talent of extemporizing*. For in this service excellency of composition is not looked for; strict order in the arrangement of matter is not required; the field is large; the language may be familiar, without giving offense; incorrect expressions may be recalled and amended; and the pastor, if at a loss at one point, may pass quickly to another; he may intermix explication and application, as he pleases, provided he speaks to edification. And let me add, that the improvement of the talent of extemporizing (a talent which is not the result of mere intellectual attainments) is a matter of moment, when the pastor is considered to be a *ruler* in the house of God, as well as a minister of the Word. As a member of Classis and of Synod, he will find his active usefulness in the Church to be greatly promoted by his ability to discuss a subject well without committing his thoughts to writing.

(3.) The pastor, by catechizing, acquires *a particular knowledge* of the state of his flock, secures to himself the respect and love of the rising generation, and is in a better situation to observe the impressions made by divine truth upon the minds of the young.

For catechizing may be denominated an extended family visitation. In that exercise the parents and children of a neighborhood meet their pastor; he addresses them on subjects deeply interesting to both, and in a manner that can be rendered interesting to both, and can show that he labors to "have Christ formed in them." On such occasions, how many things may be said to little children which are hardly admissible in a regular public discourse to a congregation! How much may be said to parents in relation to their baptismal vows in behalf of their offspring! What ardor may be anxiously displayed to promote the salvation of the young! What concern evinced that they may early "be made partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust"!

The pastor has only to engage and persevere a little while in this duty, and he will perceive the many benefits arising from it. He will (*cæteris paribus*) become endeared to his people; they will grow up in the knowledge of the truth, and "not be carried about with every wind of doctrine." Breaches will not be made in the society by itinerant preachers of another persuasion.

(4.) But let catechetical instructions be withheld or neglected, and the Church will decline first in purity of doctrine, and then invariably in purity of practice. Religious excitements, which are not true revivals, may for a little while conceal the evils of a departure from sound doctrine, but ultimately they will open the door for the admission of various errors, and accelerate the approach of the Church either to Arianism or to Popery. Those who read the history of the Christian Church with attention, know well that the religious excitements produced by the monks, as preachers, led to the structure of mystical Babylon; for extremes will invariably meet. I shall conclude,

V. With a few directions in relation to the pastoral duty of catechizing.

1. Before a young pastor begins to catechize, it may be useful that one or more sermons be preached, exhibiting the importance of that duty; showing the relation which children baptized sustain to the visible Church and her God; the care which the Church is bound to exercise over her children, and her anxiety to have them instructed in the knowledge and fear of God; and manifesting that this solicitude is particularly alive in the breast of the pastor.

A faithful pastor in his ministry will never overlook the young under his special charge. He will, from year to year, deliver sermons addressed particularly to them, and composed with a view to their instruction and benefit.

2. If the pastoral charge be a congregation situated in the country, let it be *distributed*, for the convenience of parents and their children, into districts, as such districts will always secure a larger number of catechumens than if the society be formed to convene in some central place; let the elders, as in duty bound, furnish the pastor with a register containing the names of the children in such a district; and when assembled in the catechetical exercise, let the names of the catechumens be regularly called as questions are proposed; and let efforts be made by the church, that the children of the poorest be enabled to attend.

3. Insist upon the *parents' attendance* upon the catechetical lectures, with their children. Their vows bind them to do this. Pastors are coadjutors with them, in their attempts to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Catechetical lectures comprehend the public worship of God and the preaching of his Word; in addition to Sabbath devotions, they afford an opportunity, during the week, for engaging in the solemn and profitable exercises of religion.

In promoting catechetical societies, and in rendering them subservient to the interests of religion, much will depend on the circumstance of parents assembling with their children. Let then the catechetical lectures be so conducted, that it shall never be thought that children alone are concerned in the prayers offered up and in the instructions given. Let the pastor preserve in this exercise all the solemnities of the public worship of God; let him preach the Word, with prayer and singing; let him throw his soul into his work, and use every effort by himself and by his church officers to render catechizing an important exercise in the view of the young and the old; let him not be satisfied with the ability of the children to repeat "the answers," but preach with all the talent he possesses: let him be regular in his attendance, create no disappointments, but, by his industry and zeal, make it one of the fixed habits of the people of his care, to engage with him in this duty.

Then people of every age will be assured that they will hear

the Word, and be edified; then neighborhoods will attend; then Christians (as I have known them to be) will be delighted to hear the turn for catechizing announced for their neighborhood; and then, as we may hope, sinners will be awakened, and the godly be built up in their most holy faith.

But an unfaithful and slothful pastor is not pleased with an institution which calls him "to labor frequently in Word and doctrine." He neglects regular catechizing; or fritters it away into an insignificant exercise of asking small children a few questions; or finds a substitute in Sunday-schools, in which others are called to labor in his stead. He himself in the meantime is thus relieved from a course of instruction which, next to Sabbath worship, has the most direct bearing upon the prosperity of the church.

4. In examining the catechumens, a *tender manner* should be adopted by the pastor, for the encouragement of little and timid children; and every excitement affectionately administered to all the youth to read and study the Sacred Scriptures. It is easy for a preacher to put on the airs of a master; but it is hard for the pride of our nature, especially when supported by the consciousness of superior intelligence, to be the servant of all.

5. Let the pastor honor his own Church, by *using her Catechisms*. Every denomination, whether orthodox or heterodox, will have their Articles of Faith, and their Confessions, and Catechisms. These will naturally arise from the different views which men have of what they believe to be taught in the Sacred Scriptures. Our Church has her Catechisms: let these be used; and if there be any answer, with its question, which can be amended, let the ministry in Presbytery do it, after mutual consultation. If a minister be responsible to Presbytery for his doctrine, it follows, that he ought not to use a Catechism which has not been examined and approved.

6. Sometimes half an hour will elapse, while the people are collecting, and before the exercise commences: this time some pastors employ in light talk with those around them; but it is time which ought to be profitably expended *in serious conversation*, especially with aged Christians, that others present may hear and be instructed.

After the close of the whole exercise, the pastor should tarry at the place, that he may speak to anxious inquirers, if any such

should wish to converse with him. Never should the minister of Christ, in charge of a congregation, give room for others to think that he regards his proper labor *as a task*, which he performs in the spirit of a hireling; and that he is glad when the work is done, that he may hasten home and engage in more agreeable employments. The words of Paul should be inscribed deeply upon the heart and conduct of the pastor: "Ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."

I shall conclude with observing, that, allowing good talents and exemplary conduct to a Christian pastor, regular and judicious catechizings will be instrumental in a very high degree, in promoting the growth of a congregation and the prosperity of a church. After some years spent in this labor, the pastor himself will be at a loss to determine whether such catechizings have been less beneficial to souls, than the more studied and accurate preaching of the Word in the great congregation. At any rate, "preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season," etc.

Plans have been adopted to make a denomination larger, by running hastily into union with another sister denomination; but scarcely were such unions effected, but they were perceived to be fraught with evils, and mourned over: as the old Presbyterians now mourn over the close connection with the Congregationalists, who, they say, aim to destroy Presbyterianism; and as ministers of the late Associate Reformed Church regret the union of their denomination with the Presbyterians, who, they say, are departing from the faith. Be this as it may, we are not pleased with these contracts. They are not necessary for the preservation of *the union* of the Holy Catholic Church, but often destructive of her peace and purity. The union of Christians consists in their being connected, as members of one body, with Christ the head, and not in having two arms or two legs bound together by ligaments.

Yet we believe that *our Church ought to adopt the Presbyterian Confession as her own*, and place among her symbolical books, THE WESTMINSTER CATECHISMS. Such acts would show to the enemies of Christianity that there was *union* in faith and affection.

## LECTURE XXXII.

### PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### PASTORAL VISITATIONS—PART I.

PASTORAL visitations—under which terms we comprehend all the religious conversation which the pastor in the exercise of his office ought to have with the individuals, as such, who make up his particular charge or congregation—form another branch of ministerial duties; and they are a duty which, while they require much grace and talent to perform them well, operate in no small degree to promote the interests of religion, and secure the end which the institution of the gospel ministry has in view. Mere preaching the Word in public, is but “casting the net out of the ship.” Pastoral visitations, which include the more private dispensations of the Word to families and persons, are a drawing of the net to the shore, to ascertain what it contains fit for our Master’s use.

#### I. OF PASTORAL VISITATIONS, AS A DUTY.

That pastoral visitations is a *duty*, will hardly be denied. Let me, however, exhibit proofs of this fact.

1. The *very nature* of the gospel ministry, and of the pastoral office, implies the faithful discharge of this duty. This office comprehends not only a *promulgation* of the will of God, and the laws of the gospel kingdom; but an oversight of the flock, “*ποιμαίνετε;*” feeding the flock, “*επισκοπούντες;*” taking the oversight thereof; expressing such a movement among, such an inspection of, the sheep, as is considered to characterize good shepherds and careful overseers.

A Christian pastor is properly said, “*επισκοπεῖν:*” First, by watching over his charge; second, by inspecting it. *Inspection*

is a pastoral duty. All the discourses of the ancient prophets, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his apostles, presuppose such inspection; for they relate to the temper and conduct of those to whom the pastor is to minister, and describe their character and state. Jer. xv. 19: "If thou take the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs." Now such knowledge of the people can be acquired only by careful inspection. As one remarks, (Soto, lib. x.): "*Haud officia gregi præstabit pastor, nisi cujusque ovis faciam et balatum noverit, ut, non per relationes, aut per alium: sed, de vultu, gestu et voce, animi morbum deprehendat.*"

Most certainly the work, and therefore the *worth* of the gospel pastor, does not depend upon the mere pouring out his thoughts and sentiments, however correct they may be in themselves; but results from adapting well his discourses to the moral habits and states of those whom he addresses. He must aim to make the Word spoken "a word in season." He must "rightly divide the Word of truth." He must "change his voice," as Paul did (Gal. ii. 20) when, after addressing the spiritual, he proceeds to speak to those who are carnal.

Now, this cannot be done without inspection by the pastor; a duty imposed by the solemn obligations of his office, in connection with the various tempers and characters of the people under his pastoral care.

But the minister of Christ, in the exercise of his pastoral office, must "watch over" as well as inspect those who are under his care. "For they watch for your souls [says Paul, Heb. xii.] as they that must give account."

This watchfulness, which Christian pastors must exercise, consists in a deep solicitude of mind to ward off the dangers, and to promote the spiritual safety and welfare of their respective flocks; but this solicitude could not be an enlightened one without corresponding exertion, and that exertion must be directed to that careful inspection of which we have just spoken.

If, therefore, inspection and watchfulness be duties incumbent upon pastors, it follows that pastoral visitation becomes an important duty; for without such visitation, the pastor can neither inspect properly, nor watch over, with due diligence and care.

2. But *obligations* to pastoral visitations are confirmed and recommended by the examples of our Lord, and of his apostles. Our Saviour, whose pastoral care might be said to have extended over "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," could not, from the extent of his charge, be so particular in his visitations as an ordinary Christian pastor of one congregation; yet we find him going about doing good, visiting in succession the various towns and villages of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee: sometimes entering into the houses of rulers, and sometimes ministering to the poor in their houses; then to multitudes on the highway, on the sea-shore, and in the desert. He is now addressing himself to Zaccheus, and anon he is exposing the motives which actuated the Pharisees and Sadducees; and in *doing so*, he made those observations and discriminations which proved that he closely inspected persons, in their various sentiments, habits, and circumstances.

The apostles were not in their labors restricted to a congregation. The world was their field, and on them devolved the care of all the churches; yet, wherever they were laboring, they discharged the important duty of visitation. The apostle Paul describes their practice in this respect, by what he finds occasion to say to the elders of Ephesus, in relation to his own ministry in that city. Acts xx. 20: "How I kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house."

Gospel ministers, at this day, are not invested with apostolic powers; but, like the apostles, they are "laboring in the same Word and doctrine," and to the same great end; and therefore are bound to imitate, by their pastoral visitations, those noble examples. If it be not given to a pastor to work miracles, and to speak divers tongues, in furtherance of the grand object of his ministry, yet he may so approve himself to God and man in his sacred office, that it shall be said of him:

"A skilful workman he

In God's great moral vineyard: what to prune  
With cautious hand, he knew—what to uproot:  
What were mere weeds, and what celestial plants  
Which had unfading vigor in them, *knew*;  
Nor knew alone, but watched them night and day,  
And reared and nourished them, till fit to be  
Transplanted to the paradise above."

3. But the duty of pastoral visitation also results from *the wants* of those many persons to whom the ministers of the Saviour are sent with his messages.

Much, indeed, can be said, in the public dispensation of the Word, to the whole congregation; but not all that is necessary to be said to *every individual*. The cases of some hearers are peculiar; and the sins of others such as cannot be particularly treated of in public discourses.

Much that relates to the instruction and salvation of souls, must be spoken in private conference, and be the result of private examination. Sometimes even anxious souls are held in bondage to particular temptations of the adversary; and in relation to such trials they keep an injurious silence, which cannot be broken, but in the way of pastoral visitations, and by means of affectionate conversation. Thus I once conversed with a young man who was on the borders of despair: his troubles were created by the knowledge that he had committed the sin of perjury, in swearing that he had not embezzled the goods of his employer, of which sin he was, from a regard to his own character, afraid to speak to others.

But admitting that even more could be said in public preaching, yet no individuals can, in the course of *public* worship, speak of the power of divine truth upon their souls; and consequently, that judgment of those who are exercised in religion cannot be formed by the pastor, but through pastoral visitations and in private conversations. Very important do such visitations become, when it is considered that while mere slight impressions in religion quickly discover themselves, as they did in Jehu, by a proud zeal and high self-conceit, which prompts the hypocrite to stand upon the heads of experienced Christians, and say, "See how zealous and bold I am," a true work of grace in the soul is always attended with a shame-facedness, diffidence, and humility, which call for the particular visits of pastors, to seek such out in their wounded condition; to bind up their wounds after careful examination, and to encourage their hearts by resolving their difficulties, and speaking a word in season to him that is weary.

Very correctly therefore does Calvin say: "Haud excusabilis est eorum negligentia, qui habita una concione, quasi pensum solverint in reliquum tempus, secure degunt ac si in templo vocorum asset inclusa, cum inde egressi prorsus obmutescunt:" "Their

negligence is inexcusable, who, having delivered a sermon, as if their task were finished, spend the rest of their time unengaged in the gospel service, as if their voice were confined to the church building; so that, when they left it, they were rendered dumb."

Bucer, another Reformer, entertained the same correct notions respecting that pastoral duty of which we are speaking. "Non satis est pastori, concionem habuisse: sed, in modum, seduli et fidelis imperatoris, dies noctesque præfectum plebi Dei oportet circumspicere, solícite occasionem captare, nihil intentatum relinquere, quo dolo, quave virtute, captas a Satana mentes Christo asserat, regnique Dei pomæria proferat:" "It is not enough that the pastor has preached a sermon, but as a leader to the people of God, he ought, after the manner of an indefatigable and faithful general, to watch day and night, anxiously to seize upon proper seasons, and to leave nothing untried, that he may, by any guile or by any noble effort, rescue souls taken captive by Satan, and extend the limits of the kingdom of God."

II. Pastoral visitations, let me now observe, are of *two kinds*: first, that which is general and at stated times, and made to the whole congregation committed to his care; second, that which is particular and occasional, paid to individuals or families, to which he is called by special providences, or the particular condition of persons under his spiritual oversight. I shall speak,

1. Of *general and stated visitations* by the pastor.

This is a duty which corresponds well with the relations which the Christian pastor sustains to a particular church and congregation committed to his care. Besides occasional visits to persons and families, it has been customary in the Reformed Dutch churches, both in the Netherlands and in this country, that the pastor should at certain times visit in order, and accompanied by an elder, the families composing his special charge, preaching to them the Word of life, and adapting that Word to the various states in which the individuals addressed should, on familiar conversation with them, be found. This custom, in consequence of the introduction into the Church of ministers from other denominations, and the reluctance of many pastors to engage in such an arduous duty, has fallen in many congregations into disuse. But this circumstance it is evident has inflicted no little injury on the Church. The easiest pastoral duties are seldom the most beneficial.

Yet such general visitation, by reason of the various other duties which the pastor has to perform, *cannot be frequent*. It may be an annual visitation; or, if the pastor be young, the congregation may be divided into two or three portions, and the whole be visited in the space of two or three years. Usually, pastors who have been settled some years can visit one half of a congregation in the spring, and the other half in the autumn of the year.

The *time* best suited to this general family visitation will be found a few weeks before the administration of the Holy Supper. That season of self-examination among professing Christians is also the time generally selected for the admission of members into the full communion of the church. To aid the former in their duty, and to ascertain how those who desire the full communion of the church are furnished with knowledge and exercised in heart, that season must be well adapted.

But it is not necessary that family visitation be *limited* to that season. Hence some pastors engage in this duty immediately after the administration of the Supper.

Let me now remark, that pastoral family visitation has many considerations or arguments to recommend it.

(1.) It directly serves to give the pastor *that knowledge of his flock* which he could not otherwise acquire, and thus qualifies him to preach the Word with a more particular reference to their states, sentiments and trials. Conversation opens the heart. Many persons are unwilling to express their serious thoughts, after living in a careless and sinful manner. Hence they hide from society their first religious impressions. But the pastor draws near to them; he affectionately addresses them at their own dwellings. Will such not be disposed to disclose their concern of mind, if such concern in any measure exists? or will they not unfold their unconcern and dislike of religion—those vain thoughts and carnal affections which lull them into security? Most certain, it will be easy in such pastoral visitations to discern what spirit men and women are of; what are the sentiments which they cherish; what is the disposition which they discover towards God. Especially if they are self-righteous, leaning upon some amiable quality or good deeds of their own, but “not submitting to the righteousness of God,” their state will be easily discerned: for sinners are apt to speak of that of which they are proud.

When the arrows of conviction first reach the hearts of men, they strive to conceal from others their alarm and distress; and so long as they "keep silence," Satan has great advantage over them. Their ignorance of divine truths, and of the methods of divine grace in saving sinners, renders his temptations at some times very strong.

Now, pastoral visitation serves often to break their injurious silence; it engages the awakened to tell to one who will sympathize with him and direct him, how he feels; it calls out a statement of the troubles which the anxious experience, and of the particular difficulties under which they labor; it administers to their special instruction, and affords the servant of Christ an opportunity of speaking to their particular cases.

Many a sinner has been preserved from despair; many tender plants have been discovered to have just vegetated, unfolding the principle of grace "in the blade;" many mourners have been comforted, on occasion of such visitation. For such visitation is a *search* after those who may be religiously impressed, or those who may be cast down in spirit, or of those who have gone out of the way.

If then it be important, in the wise dispensation of the Word, that the pastor should know "the state of his flock," it must be acknowledged that his visitation of families will tend in a direct manner to increase that knowledge.

(2.) Another consideration of moment in this argument is, that family visitation, in a stated and regular manner, affords a pastor *access* to those who cannot, from their youth and situation in life, fall often into his company. The persons I refer to are the young in families, and especially the servants.

The pastor may catechize the youth, and thus give them instruction, warning, and reproof; he may exercise them diligently in Bible classes; but these exercises do not lead to that interchange of thought which serves to unfold what passes in the minds of the young in relation to their own feelings in religion—their actual state before God, either in impenitence or in concern of mind about their lost condition or their future state. But when the pastor comes into families, he can speak freely, not only to parents, but to their children; not only to the masters and mistresses, but to the servants and helps. All are inspected; all are conversed

with. A word in season may be spoken to the youngest who can understand it; and evidences are not wanting of the blessing which has attended the word so spoken.

But the *servants* in a family are excluded from privileges which others enjoy; their labor confines them much to the domestic establishment; their situation in life keeps them out of that ordinary Christian conversation with the pious, who are not of the household to which they belong. Now family visits bring all such serving members in the house into familiar intercourse with the pastor! He can speak to them about their souls' state; he can inquire whether they are under concern and exercised in religion, and he can exhort them affectionately to escape for their lives. It was probably in a private dwelling that *Onesimus* heard Paul, and was converted. Certain it is, family visitation enables the pastor to get into the *corners* of the field which he cultivates, and there also to sow his seed.

(3.) Another argument in favor of the duty of family visitation, is the fact, that it is a duty which, when performed in a judicious manner, *serves to endear a pastor to his people.*

The success of a minister in the gospel service depends, next to the outpouring of the Spirit, upon the congregation; on the regard which the people entertain for him, as one qualified to edify them by his instruction and example; and as one who gives evidence "that he careth for their souls." If they have no esteem for him, they will not attend upon his ministrations of the Word, but go elsewhere to receive benefit. He may be well able to preach; but if he neglects to show concern for their souls' salvation, they will not cherish him with reverence and affection. Even a general awakening (though it may arrest for a time) will not check the expressions of their indifference and displeasure, unless they are set only on the popular forms of Christianity. For, when that religious excitement subsides a little, dissensions will soon arise, and terminate, as we often see, in a separation of the pastor from his flock. Hence the apostle Paul enjoins upon ministers so to act as to gain the affections of their people in the Lord; and upon congregations to "hold such as labor in the Word in reputation, and to esteem them highly for their work's sake."

Now it is well known, that the duty of family visitation, if

well performed, has a direct tendency to gain the affections of a people. It manifests a tender concern for their souls, preaching to them the Word "from house to house;" it promotes intimacy and friendship between the pastor and those of his charge, giving more liberty to some who are diffident to speak to him on matters connected with their present exercises and hopes, and their eternal welfare, and making him personally acquainted with others who would keep themselves away from his society; and it exhibits that engagedness in the cause of his Master, which, when it is seen in a minister of Christ, is no little recommendation of him to those to whom he ministers.

But, it may be asked, may not a pastor manifest very great ardor of mind in the gospel service, by his faithful and pungent discourses on the Sabbath, and in weekly lectures, and in popular and fashionable religious societies?

He may indeed wax very hot in his public discourses in the pulpit, and yet show *very little* of that engagedness of spirit which people are quick-sighted in distinguishing from the animation which oratory, or the mere reputation of a popular preacher requires, and which engagedness we consider to be a high recommendation. It is the touchstone of love to the Saviour.

A preacher may figure in missionary societies, and, by his warm and eloquent addresses, appear to be consumed with ardor in the cause; and yet be seen at home, attending calls till a late hour of the night, to wean his young people, I suppose, from the ensnaring pleasures of this world; and a preacher may be much engaged in the popular addresses of the day, and yet be very negligent about the souls of his people in his own parish, and even about his own soul.

But to be studious and yet faithful in the pulpit; to be persevering in the work of the ministry, without regard to popular applause; to be willing to be unnoticed abroad and in the newspapers, while you are following the poor into their cottages, and the mechanic into his plain dwelling, with the messages of grace, to seek out the "lost sheep in a dark and cloudy day," is to exhibit that engagedness of spirit in the gospel service which the apostle Paul so strongly recommends to Timothy: "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 and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. 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.)

Now, the duty of family visitations is one of those duties which serve to manifest that noble spirit. It is a hard duty; and, while it exposes the pastor to the various trials arising from the various tempers and habits of men, calls for the exercise of all his talents and all his graces; but it puts a seal to his faithful pulpit exertions; it brings a pastor near to the objects of his care, and cannot fail to raise him in their affectionate regards.

(4.) Another weighty consideration is this: Pastoral visitation is in substance "a preaching of the Word of God" to the individuals of a family, in circumstances more private, and after gaining a better knowledge of their respective states. As being a ministration of the Word, it is a means of Divine appointment, and as such, it will be owned and blessed; it is a laboring in the harvest field; and though to one and another the returns may not be plentiful, yet every minister will pick up grains sufficient to make Ruth's share, when she gleaned in the field of Boaz.

How often has good resulted from it to souls! Where is the pastor who, after visiting his congregation, can say, "My time and labor have been misspent!" How often, on such occasions, does he learn that his sermons have impressed the hearers, and receive thereby encouragement to labor on with assiduity; and this too at a time when he thought his ministry was almost fruitless of good.

How often has the seed which dropped in this mode of sowing, vegetated and yielded fruit! The troubled mind has been relieved and unburdened, the careless have been led to reflect seriously, families have been persuaded to worship God daily; the weak in faith have been strengthened, and the mourner comforted; and even the pastor himself has sometimes, in this work,

been instructed by the conversation of aged Christians; "for as face answereth to face in a glass," so the work of God in one mind develops more or less of that work in another.

But enough has been said to show that pastoral visitations have important uses and advantages. Let the pastor then not neglect this duty. I proceed to observe,

(5.) That the benefits resulting from pastoral visitations to the congregation, will depend much *on the manner in which this duty is performed*. A pastor may, through ignorance of human nature and of the Word of God; he may, through ill-temper, or at least imprudence; he may, through want of Christian experience in religion, and through the indulgence of a fanatical spirit, do more injury than good by his pastoral visitations.

It is certainly true, that this duty has its *peculiar difficulties and trials*; and that, to perform it well, much grace and wisdom are required. Various characters exist in a congregation, from the mere youth, through all the gradations of manhood, to advanced and extreme old age; from the mere careless sinner, through all the degrees of impenitency and ungodliness, to the openly profane and reprobate; and from the sound in faith down, through the various grades of error, to the avowed scorner and infidel. And it may be that some persons may conceal from the knowledge of the pastor their errors, whether those of the Arminian, Unitarian, Universalist, and Deist, until they are avowed unexpectedly at a pastoral visitation! Be this however as it may, we discover, from the various characters to be addressed, that every kind of ministerial talent will be brought into requisition! From house to house, as the pastor proceeds in his work, he meets with changes in temper and in state; in excuse for depravity; in argument for wrong notions and for self-righteous propensities! In one family, he must converse with the hardened sinner; in another, with the worldly-minded, and those who are proud of their wealth, proud of their contributions to the Church, and regarding themselves as fashionably great, and entitled to high respect; and in a third, perhaps, he must defend the first principles of the Christian faith, and refute unsound doctrine! In one house he finds those who are at ease, making pillows under every armhole, and in another he must speak to the troubled mind, the lukewarm, the backsliding, and the truly pious! Now, what various

talent, what rich experience, what wisdom are necessary, to do these things well! "Who is sufficient for these things?"

It will not, then, be out of place to consider for a moment *how* the pastor is to proceed in this duty.

i. Let the pastor, before he begins family visitation, aim to acquire as much knowledge as he can obtain *of the sentiments and habits* of the members of the families under his care. The elder in the neighborhood, or any judicious Christian, may give him the desired information. If he cannot procure it, let him feel his way before he advances into the exhibition of facts touching temper and state. Let him not describe an individual as prayerless, and entirely inconsiderate of his soul's state, before he has proper evidence. There were several thousands in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, of whom the prophet had no knowledge. Those who quickly push themselves in religious professions to the notice of every eye, are seldom the most deeply exercised: empty barrels make the greatest sound.

Ministers, as fishers of men, must throw the gospel net. But do fishers cast their nets every where in the waters? No; they first examine the bottom of a river where they wish to fish, in order to ascertain what obstacles lie in the way, and endanger the net. So let ministers act in the gospel service. Let them try to know what men believe, before they address them on their personal views of truth and duty. A neglect of this caution has sometimes involved the young pastor in difficulties. He has found himself unexpectedly engaged in argument with a Deist or a Universalist in his own family, of whose erroneous sentiments he had no knowledge, and consequently could have made no preparation to meet him.

ii. Let the pastor *publish the time* when he will visit a particular neighborhood, that those who desire his visits may be prepared to receive him, and that the careless may have no excuse for their absence.

iii. In his visitations, *let him not pass by the habitations of the poor, nor consider any family too mean and insignificant to be attended to.* The "gospel must be preached to the poor." "Condescend," says Paul, "to men of low estate." The Master regarded the poor in his ministry; their souls are precious. It is certain, that if any gospel minister can fill the place of worship with the poorer class

of people, he will soon find those of a higher class falling into his society; for it is only among the poor that the pride of wealth can be variously displayed. The Methodists now, in most places, begin to afford illustrations of this fact. The rich in society are joining them, and producing a change among them.

iv. It is difficult to direct a pastor how he is to proceed, and what in particular he is to say, in the various families into which he shall enter. Much here must depend upon his good sense and careful observation; but we must say, *first*, let his manner be *gentle and affectionate*; not magisterial and inquisitorial: let him speak and act as the friend of souls; not as one who holds the power of judgment in his own hands. *Second*, let him, in his conversation, endeavor to recommend the Saviour; to exhibit the value of the soul, the necessity of repentance and faith, and the suitableness of God's salvation to the wants of sinners. Let him urge the impenitent to turn, seek, and enter in at the strait gate. Let him inquire whether any are concerned in mind; whether the Word of God has impressed any heart; whether any do pray; and whether the Scriptures be read, and family worship be observed. Whether any have come to Christ, and found the one pearl of great price. And according as these questions are variously answered by various persons, perhaps of the same family, let him adapt his discourse, urging the importance of religion, of immediate repentance, and of embracing the Saviour, whose invitations he brings. *Third*, if the person addressed professes to be a convert, or is actually a member in full communion, let the conversation turn upon the evidences of conversion, upon the deceitfulness of sin, the renunciation of self; upon the trials of faith, preparation for the Lord's Supper, and the obligations to be holy, and to work for God. Let the difficulties of the pious mind be resolved, the weak in faith be encouraged, and the feeble knees be strengthened.

I shall conclude this lecture with a few advices.

1. It may be proper for the pastor to make his visit *short*, if he discover that the circumstances in which a family happen just at that time to be placed, whether arising from external trials or temper, are unfavorable to his design. "There is a time for all things."

2. Let the pastor, if he knows a parent to be unsound in faith,

not attack him on his *heterodoxy*; nor argue, unless he is forced to do it: but speak of repentance, coming to Christ, and the necessity of experiencing the power of religion in our souls. Some people make argument a substitute for true religion in the heart. This is one of the refuges of lies.

3. From the known temper of heads of families towards religion, it may sometimes be wise to begin with *the children*. The hardened heart of a parent is sometimes softened through the exercises of mind in his children.

4. If the person addressed is of a temper to be overcome by fear on occasion of a pastoral visit, let the pastor begin by talking on *common topics*, and after some time take occasion to introduce serious matters.

5. Let the pastor avoid, in his pastoral visits, being *the arbiter in disputes among neighbors*. One may complain to him of another; but let him urge every one to see to it that his heart be right with God.

6. Lastly, let the pastor conclude his visit by *praying affectionately* with each family before he retires. Such prayers, together with the exhortations which he delivers, must of course be short; but short as those services may be, they are important, and therefore should not be performed in a hurried and slovenly manner, as if the work were irksome, and the pastor anxious to get away. There is a wide difference between religious family visitation, and census-taking.

## LECTURE XXXIII.

### PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### PASTORAL VISITATIONS—PART II.

HAVING disposed of that branch of pastoral visitation which is denominated general and stated, we now come to the consideration of that which we call,

#### 2. *Occasional and more particular* pastoral visitation.

Here let me premise that it is the duty of the Evangelical Pastor to be among his people, exhorting and instructing them, as opportunities are afforded, in a social intercourse as well as in particular visits paid to individuals and to families.

But the *nature* of these visits, it will be perceived, excludes them from the direction of any particular rule or law; they must be *occasional*, depending on certain events as they occur in providence, such as sickness and other calamities; such as concern of mind and special duties to be performed; depending, as to their number and frequency, on the leisure and gifts of a pastor, and on the state of religion in his congregation.

For, it is an undoubted fact, that the gifts of the Holy Spirit being diverse to ministers of the Word, one pastor will possess a much superior talent for religious, profitable, and impressive conversation, than another of equal and superior piety and learning. Some men called to the ministry are naturally diffident or habitually reserved in company; their words are comparatively few, but weighty; they do not talk much, but always speak with intelligence and to purpose; but in the composition of discourses, and in preaching from preparations, they exhibit much power and do much good. Now, such ministers are not so well qualified for

those visits which are attended with benefit to souls, as others. Hence they are tempted to confine themselves to close study, and to apply all their energy to those parts of the ministry which suit their taste and talents. Dr. Watts was not active abroad. President Edwards, whose ministry was so remarkably blessed, lived principally in his closet, and seldom visited his parishioners.

But other servants of Christ are endowed with a ready elocution, and exhibit much ease and talent in conversation. With such gifts they may be profitably employed in visiting, and can do more good than the former class; yet, under the consciousness that they are naturally communicative and eloquent in company, they are too apt to neglect reading and study, and to be too much abroad in parochial visits. It is certainly an honor to be called "a good pastor;" but a minister should also desire to be considered a good preacher, and not make his capacity to gain the favor of his people by his familiar visits, an argument for his neglect of study.

In those in whom the gradual improvement of the mind, by reading and composition, is combined with conversational *talents*, provided the gifts are properly exercised, we may look for more extensive and permanent usefulness in the Church of God.

I have directed your attention to the various gifts of ministers, that you may examine into your own, and guard against a mistake in the use of gifts which pastors sometimes, in common with other men, have been known to make. If your conversational talent be small, be cautious in the public and frequent use of it. The greatest success in the ministry does not invariably attend the greatest *talkers*. To which let me add, that he who moves about daily in his congregation, is not always the most industrious laborer in God's vineyard. Was the apostle Paul, when employed in writing an epistle to the Church, not engaged as usefully as when he was preaching at Athens?

Keeping the facts as above stated in view, I proceed to observe now that the *occasional visits* of the pastor to the people of his charge are of three kinds, viz: First. Visits which are *incumbent* at the time. Second. Visits which are designed to promote religion, but are not required by any special providence. Third. Visits which are merely social and familiar.

I shall begin with the most important of these, viz:

I. Visits which are made the present duty of the pastor by the *special providence of God*. These visits are to be paid, first, to the sick; second, to the afflicted; third, to the awakened and troubled in mind; and fourth, to believers under the pressure of sore trials of faith.

1st. The *sick in body*. These specially claim the attention of the pastor. By the sick we do not mean those who are affected with *slight* indispositions of body, but the sickness must be such as to create an occasion on which the world shall be excluded for the time, and in a great measure, from the thoughts of the sick, and serious reflections be invited. It is true that some persons in a congregation, who attach great importance to themselves, choose to be constantly complaining, and are ready to find fault, if the pastor be not as frequent in his visits as the medical attendant, whose numerous calls increase his profits. This unjust requisition is a *trial* which the pastor must endure; he must not expend that time which is to be devoted to the service of all, in waiting upon the hysterical and the courtiers of illness.

But persons may be sick, indeed, of whose illness the pastor has no knowledge, and therefore is excused from visiting; but if he knows the fact, let him *not wait to be sent for*; he is not a physician, but a pastor. Again:

Visits to the sick, whose confinement and exposedness to death open a better field for the reception of the seed of the Word, are important as being a "proper season for sowing." It is therefore an obvious pastoral duty, but one which has its *difficulties*, and which in more than one respect requires care in its performance. Let me then observe,

(1.) That the pastor, before he visits the sick, should try to obtain knowledge (if he does not possess it) of the character and habits of the person to be visited, that he may speak the "Word in wisdom," and make it a "word in season."

(2.) Let the pastor, before he enters the chamber of the sick, consider what ought to be said on such occasions, and look up to God for his blessing.

(3.) Let him, when near the sick, remember that the circumstance of their sickness imposes certain restraints upon his speech, and upon the religious exercises in which he is about to engage. Certain disorders of the body demand much stillness to be ob-

served around the sick; they are unable to endure much noise, and especially much conversation. To their feeble state let the pastor accommodate his discourse and his prayer; making his visit short, unless otherwise requested, and contracting his supplication and remarks within a small circle.

Some ministers forget their duty in this respect. Their visits afflict the sick; they talk so loud and so long; they pray so loud and so long, as if they were employed in the exercises of public worship. This is imprudent: though it may manifest that zeal which fanatics make to be a substitute for all the graces, yet it is a zeal without knowledge.

(4.) The pastor, in his manner towards the sick, should be *tender* and *affectionate*; the occasion calls for sympathy. The gospel messages are sweet tidings: soft and kind feeling should characterize the minister of Jesus near the beds of the sick and dying.

(5.) But, at the same time, let the pastor not be overcome by sympathy, but be faithful in the discharge of his duty. His own compassions must not lead him to *pervert* or *misapply* the Word of God. His respect for an affluent and powerful family must not dispose him "to daub with untempered mortar," or to be treacherous to his divine Master and his truth. The desire to please the family of the sick, and to gain favor, must not lead him to deceive the sick by encouraging unscriptural hopes; by accommodating the laws of the gospel to his wishes. "Be thou faithful unto the death." Some pastors have a good word for every body; all the sick are going to heaven; every little concern of mind they declare to be the *evidence* of conversion, and then deal out the promises with a lavish hand. Now, the Word of God requires the pastor to adapt his discourse and his prayers to the character of the sick, so far as he is able to ascertain it. Now the characters of the sick are of three kinds, viz: the irreligious, the doubtful, and the pious.

*First.* The *irreligious*. Some of the sick have given no evidence of repentance while in health: they have been known to be either ungodly or impenitent and careless, living far from God, without prayer, and slaves to the world: nor do they exhibit in sickness any serious concern, any proof of being impressed by the power of divine truth. What shall the pastor say to such characters? We answer: He must say *all* that God bids him say to the impeni-

tent and the ungodly, in any circumstances, without handling the Word deceitfully.

The *manner* of delivering divine truth in the sick-chamber should be different from that in the pulpit; but the *truth itself* must be faithfully preached with affectionate solemnity! With every expression of deep feeling and anxiety to save a soul, he should speak of the danger to which the impenitent sick are exposed; of the necessity of deep humiliation before God, and of a change of heart, to the enjoyment of heaven; he should preach to the sick the power, compassion, and grace of Christ; give his Master's invitations to all the lost and wretched; urge an immediate reception of this Saviour, and proclaim that the door into the sheepfold is still open, and that mercy still calls.

The Unitarian preacher cannot do this consistently with his doctrine, "that there is no agency of the Holy Spirit employed in conversion, and that the habits of the impenitent cannot be broken immediately." But the gospel preacher can do it consistently with the Word of God, with his commission, and with the experience of the saved. At the eleventh hour of the day—that is to say, just before the sun of human life sets—he has a warrant to go into the market-place and renew the gospel call, and we know that such calls have not been made in vain.

1. It may, however, be found, that the impenitent sick are *very ignorant* of divine truth, and that, in consequence of their irreligious education and habits, they are little removed from the benighted state of the Gentiles. What is to be done in this case? We answer: The pastor must do exactly what is to be done in all similar cases of ignorance. He must take pains in instructing in the first principles of the Christian religion; reading those parts of Scripture which relate to Christ the Saviour; opening up the scheme of salvation. He must explain how sinners are saved by the blood-shedding and intercession of Christ as the meritorious cause of pardon, and by faith as the instrumental cause. He must urge to prayer for mercy in the name of the Lord Jesus, and be particular in explaining what is meant by asking for "Christ's sake."

After all our efforts to instruct by preaching, a surprising degree of ignorance of divine truth will be detected among individuals, and follow some of them to their sick-beds; and while their minds

are held in such ignorance, how can we hope for good things? Can faith be exercised when its objects are unknown? Let then the ignorant be taught. Throw gospel light around the sick-beds of the benighted. If we speak to them of the damnation of hell, let us be sure to tell them who Jesus Christ is, and what he has done to save sinners. Again:

2. It may be that the sick discover *great hardness of heart*, and seem to be without concern of mind. What is to be done in this case? We reply:

The sick, in this unhappy condition, are to be told plainly, "that those who harden their hearts against God shall fall into mischief;" that the impenitent shall perish. But obduracy of heart in sickness springs from either avowed or secret infidelity, and will be found supported by wrong notions concerning the character of God, the great evil of sin, the requirements of the moral law, and the awful realities of a future judgment. To these serious errors the remarks of the pastor must be directed: for hardness of heart is not, in those who have enjoyed means of information, the mere insensibility of ignorance; it is the offspring of those strong lusts of the flesh which have darkened the mind, and led to the belief of dangerous errors.

3. In a few instances, hardness of heart is associated with an *exalted opinion* of one's own goodness and righteousness. "The whole" are not alarmed; the sick in heart fear. Now from this refuge of lies, the impenitent sick must be driven by a faithful exhibition of the requirements of the law, and the most plain declaration that Christ can save only those who feel undone in themselves. I here add, that,

In addressing the impenitent sick, the pastor needs wisdom. He must speak alarming truths: yet he must do it in the spirit of his divine Master, who, while he addressed impenitent Jerusalem, "wept over it."

*Second.* There is, however, another class of the sick who are of *doubtful character*. Under their bodily affliction, such are serious. Their minds are exercised in religion, though not with that power which manifests a change of heart, and shows the pleasing features of the "new man." The pastor is at a loss what to determine on this case. He is not satisfied. He knows that the pressure of sickness awakens fear; and fear of death excites a

seriousness, accompanied with professions of repentance and exhibitions of religious feelings which last no longer than the cause of the alarm exists. Now, in this uncertainty with respect to the proper character and state of the sick, how is the pastor to act? We reply:

1. Let him not call in question the *sincerity* of professions which are marked by humiliation before God, and not obviously the mere offspring of the fear of death and hell. It is better for us who cannot look into the human heart to be deceived by professions, than in any one instance to "break the bruised reed."

2. But the pastor *can so speak* to such, as to take time for the enlightening of his own mind, and for the development of true religious affections in their souls. His discourse therefore should relate to the deceitfulness of the human heart, to the influence of slavish fear in the human mind, and to the distinguishing evidences of repentance, faith, and love. In doubtful cases, he may increase the number of his visits to the sick.

3. But *the smallest evidences* of a change of heart must be carefully and gladly noted; for the promise comprehends "the bruised reed and the smoking flax." And where but "a day of small things" has dawned upon the exercised mind, there the pastor should not hesitate to speak encouragement and comfort.

4. It may be, however, that one weak in faith is *restrained* from expressing his own gracious exercises and hopes in religion during sickness, by the thought "that he has not those deep and awful convictions of sin which converts have had, and which usually create much distress in the soul." If this be perceived by the pastor, it then becomes him to remove the difficulty by teaching, not that the sinner may be a convert, and still be blind to the evil of sin, and the greatness of his own sins; (for we cannot conceive of a sinner becoming a gospel penitent, and a true believer in the Lord Jesus, without seeing "the sinfulness of sin," without a broken heart before God, without such discoveries of his own depravity and guilt as to renounce every self-righteous hope;) but that the Holy Spirit operates variously upon various minds actually renewed by his grace. Hence every convert does not experience those terrifying convictions which seized upon the soul of the Philippian jailer. His convictions may have begun early in life, almost as soon as he could reflect, and been gradually deepened, without creating

those visible distresses which, under the awakening power of divine truth, fill the minds of those who have been habitually thoughtless and wicked. And add to which, that the Holy Spirit may, immediately upon conviction, lead the mind already furnished with doctrinal knowledge, to see "the Saviour in his beauty," and to embrace him by faith; and thus, instead of protracted alarm and distress, create hope and peace.

Deep and terrifying convictions, therefore, although useful in their place, are no evidences of a change of heart. It is remarkable that John Livingstone, whose ministry in Scotland and Ireland was so signally blessed, never experienced such convictions. Humility, faith, and love, are the evidences of divine life in the soul.

*Third.* The last class are *the pious sick*.

But the pastor will find it his duty to visit the truly regenerate and pious on their sick and dying-beds. In such visits there is that delightful thought, that neither sickness nor death can do injury to the soul; "for who can separate us from the love of Christ?" "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

I need not say that the Christian pastor must place himself near the pious sick, with all the promises and consolations of the gospel; and as they are passing over Jordan, bring near the ark of the covenant, assuring them that the waters shall not overwhelm their souls, but that they shall soon and safely enter into the heavenly Canaan.

But the truly pious in sickness may be assaulted by temptations, and be cast down and troubled in spirit; and a godly person may fear that he is unconverted, "because he enjoys so little of the presence of God in his sickness; because he seems to be forsaken and deserted by the Holy Spirit." What in this case shall the pastor say? We submit the following:

1. Let him exhort such person to *review* his past experience in religion. What comforts he has before had! What affections the Spirit of God has implanted in his soul! How near and dear the Saviour has been in times past!

2. Let him remind such that *the Son of God himself was deprived* of the consolations of the Divine presence in his last moments; and that, as a matter of trial, the Holy Spirit sometimes withholds

his more enlivening grace in sickness and in death, that the mind of the believer may exercise a "naked faith" in the divine Word, may lie low again before God, and may wrestle in prayer. The hottest battle is sometimes just before a complete victory is gained.

3. Let the pastor call such to *renewed humility* before God, to a consideration of the infinite love and grace of the Saviour, and to the exercise of that faith in the promises which, in proportion to its strength, will draw more or less water out of the wells of salvation.

4. Let him preach that *sensible* comfort and joy is not Christ; but that God will give comfort to his people, if not in this world, surely in the world to come: "For light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "If he tarry, wait."

5. Let these remarks suffice, in relation to the sick. But whatever be the character of the sick, let the pastor on his visits *engage in prayer*. In some cases the prayer may be short, but let it be pertinent.

But, in these visits, the pastor may be counteracted by the physician of a family, who hates religion and drinks into infidelity; and who, under the pretense of keeping his patient quiet, wishes to exclude the pastor, and send the sick into eternity under the soothing and stupefying influence of opium.

6. In this situation, let the pastor be *discreet*, but *firm*, and very distinctly make known his desire to see the sick; for never does the visit of a prudent pastor injure the sick: it often relieves their minds, and aids in their recovery.

We proceed to observe, next, that the pastor must visit,

2nd. The *afflicted*. Those persons, we mean, who are afflicted in the course of divine providence. These are of various character and state. Some are careless and irreligious, and others are godly persons.

1. With regard to the *irreligious*, whom God has afflicted, the pastor in his visits must say all that should be said to the impenitent; taking occasion to remind them of what sinners deserve at the hand of God, of the emptiness of this world of all substantial happiness, and of the vastly sorer judgments that await the impenitent in the world to come.

But let the pastor not speak of particular afflictions as being

special judgments of God for particular sins; for he is not authorized so to interpret the dispensations of Heaven: but while he leaves the judgments of God, as an "unfathomable deep," let him take broader and surer ground, and call the irreligious under their afflictions to "hear the rod and who hath appointed it."

2. The *afflicted pious*. God afflicts his own dear children. "Whom he loveth he chasteneth." Let the pastor comfort the godly under their afflictions, by teaching them that their afflictions are trials and correctives, yet not peculiar trials, and not indications of Divine indignation excited by the greatest of sins committed, but trials common to the righteous, and actually blessings in disguise; and by exhibiting to them the promises as the words of Jehovah, which not only speak of good to come, but refer directly either to some infirmity in believers, or to some trial and affliction. Hence the very promises show that the godly may be feeble and afflicted in this life, and yet speak patience and consolation to their souls. Let the pastor, however, call the pious under affliction to the exercise of deep humility, faith, hope, and resignation to the Divine will.

Too often are ministers, in addressing the afflicted, led to consider mere submission and silence as constituting that resignation which is one of the graces of the divine life, and consequently a mark of grace. This is an error; for evangelical resignation includes not only submission, but a *holy acquiescence* in the Divine will.

But let me remark here, that while some godly persons are tempted to think that they cannot be the children of God, because they have been so remarkably prosperous, hardly knowing what affliction is, other pious persons have, on the contrary, been cast down, from a view of their multiplied afflictions: every thing has seemed to make against them, and they have been ready to conclude that God did not love them, and that they were still unconverted. Now, it is easy to remove the difficulty which lies in the way of the *prosperous godly*, by requesting them to remember that their course is not finished, and that afflictions will yet come, for which they should gird up their loins like a man, and prepare themselves. But to speak consolation to the hearts of the godly, whose afflictions are *uncommonly great*, is not easy. But the pastor must direct their attention to recorded examples of severe afflictions in the Bible,

to the promises which suppose great and uncommon trials, to the happy influence of time and patience, and to the eternal weight of glory in heaven. He must sympathize with the afflicted, and pray for a large measure of grace to be imparted to them, and speak much of God in his infinite glories, particularly of his wisdom, righteousness, and redeeming mercy; reminding the godly that they have chosen JEHOVAH, and not creature-comforts, as the portion of their souls.

The pastor must visit those persons whom he knows to be, 3rd. *Awakened and troubled in mind.* In this particular duty, the pastor needs much knowledge of the human heart, much wisdom, Christian experience and grace. Some ministers, who, with all their zeal in general action, have never been truly humbled and broken before God, and never converted by his grace, are, through want of experience in the agonies of the new birth, altogether unqualified to deal with deeply awakened sinners and troubled minds. It is easy to hide their ignorance here, by taking up the ordinary religious slang of the day, and saying to those under concern, "You must immediately submit to God, or you will be damned; you must believe in Christ right away: it is easy to believe; all you have to do, is to give your heart to God." By using such language, which the one adopts parrot-wise from another, many preachers show that they have never looked deep into the sinfulness of their own hearts, never felt the burden of their own guiltiness, never entered themselves in by the strait gate; but conceal their want of true repentance and the faith of God's giving, under the appearance of busy action and various self-righteous efforts. "If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch." "Art thou a teacher in Israel, and knowest not these things?" John Berrington of England, who, after he was a settled minister, became through grace a converted man, when souls came to him under concern of mind, did not, before he acquired Christian experience, know what to say to them. There are those in the ministry now, who are in like manner ignorant of the methods of salvation. They sometimes make *zeal* in tract, missionary, and temperance societies, a substitute for a renewed and experienced mind in religion. So did the Pharisees of old. "They compassed sea and land to make one proselyte." They raised money, went out as missionaries, and endured severe trials, and still were unhumbled and self-righteous

Pharisees. There can be no substitute for actual Christian experience of the power of divine grace.

But, admitting a minister is a converted man, he requires, for this duty, careful study of the operations of sin and grace in his own heart. He should be able to discriminate between the operations of the Holy Spirit and the workings of sin under all its disguises.

(1.) The first thing to be noted by the pastor is, that there are *degrees in awakening*.

i. Every *little concern of mind* is not that awakening from the sleep of sin which results in an anxiety to be interested in the salvation which is by Jesus Christ. Thousands are afraid to die; and the fear of death occasionally produces serious thoughts; and such thoughts will induce one "to walk softly." Now such concern of mind in men is generally eased off by offering up a prayer or two in secret, by reforming a little and doing a few good works; without any perception of the evil of sin, of the enmity of the heart against God, and of the ill-desert of the sinner.

Such concern of mind is not uncommon where Christians live and the gospel is preached; and if ministers, anxious to fill their churches with professors, are satisfied with such awakening, if it be followed by a general profession to believe in Christ, the consequence will be most unhappy in the churches. Professors of religion will abound, who have "a name to live, but are dead." Those professors after a little while will show the unregenerate disposition of their hearts, by disliking the doctrines of grace, by siding with ministers who oppose them, and by crying up a system of doing, doing, doing, as soothing to their own self-righteous propensities.

Carefully, therefore, must the faithful pastor teach, that such slight awakening is no sufficient preparation for either an evangelical repentance, or a cordial reception of Christ as "the Lord our righteousness." I say, *with the heart*: for not a few, and among them ministers of the gospel too, doctrinally assent to the article of "justification by faith without works," while practically they reject it, and live after all upon their own religious character and doings.

Very carefully must the pastor open the deceits of sin under such slight concern of mind, and inculcate that the *last thing*

which the sinner forsakes in coming to Christ is, *reformed and religious self*. The pride of the heart never will submit to the righteousness of God. How very much it looks like a dereliction of self, when a sinner in his agony of mind is heard to say, "that he would be willing to give the whole world, if he had it, to obtain an interest in Christ;" yet, after all, this is only the deceitful working of a self-righteous spirit, that is anxious to give something, and to have a *price in its own hand* for salvation, rather than receive that salvation as it is offered, "without money and without price."

But while the pastor is not to attach great importance to slight concern of mind, he must be equally careful not to treat it *as stark naught*; for there may be in it the commencement of a work of the Holy Spirit in awakening. He must rejoice to see any thoughtless sinner beginning to think seriously; and he must endeavor to render such serious thoughts deeper and more enlightened.

ii. But in the souls of some, the pastor will find a *stronger work* of conviction. They are greatly alarmed at their danger; they perceive their sins to be many and great; they are lost and undone in themselves; they acknowledge that their condemnation is just; they fear they may be damned for ever, and in deep anxiety they pray much, read much, and hasten to hear the Word.

Under this degree of conviction and awakening, the pastor will rejoice to discover the manifest working of the Holy Spirit, "in turning up the fallow ground," before he sows the seeds of divine life.

But he must be careful to teach that such awakening and distress *is not conversion*.

*First.* He must now, in a particular manner, expose the workings of *self-righteousness*, lest the awakened should rest on a sandy foundation. For, when sinners are thoroughly awakened without being converted, they are strongly excited to acquire such a degree of personal improvement in goodness as may not altogether purchase pardon, but may in a greater or less degree recommend them to the mercy of God in Christ. They expect to gain this by their frequent and fervent prayers, by their reformation, by their care to avoid sin, by enlisting in the ranks of

those who try to do good in various ways: and in this very course some persevere and are lost.

*Second.* Now the pastor must exert himself in exposing the deceitfulness and self-righteousness of the human heart. He must strip the sinner of his remaining rags. He must break him down, by examining into his views and ends in praying and in doing good, and show that these are defective and insufficient.

*Third.* He must preach Christ in his offices a great deal, and show that there is but one salvation, and that is by grace alone. He must aim to bring the awakened to lie at the mercy-seat, and proclaim that Jesus will surely save such, and such alone. "For he satisfieth the hungry with good things, but sendeth the rich empty away."

iii. But once more; there are instances of awakening power under the gospel Word, that exhibit the distressed mind *sinking into despair!* These call for the special attention of a pastor, and require careful treatment. Such awakened sinners think "there is no mercy for them; that they must be lost for ever; that their damnation is certain," for various reasons. The one so concludes, because he has been uncommonly wicked, and his sins are too great to be pardoned; another, because he has sinned away his choicest opportunities and his former convictions, and it is now too late to seek and hope for pardon; a third, because he has sinned against the Holy Ghost; a fourth, because his seeking has had no happy result; he has grown worse, and heaven is shut against him, and God is more and more hostile to him.

*First.* In cases of this kind, let the pastor be very serious: for the temptations of the adversary in such desponding minds are unusually strong, and lead sometimes to thoughts of self-destruction, and often to an unwillingness to read the Scriptures, to pray any more, or even to listen to religious conversation; and in a few cases, the temptations of Satan are aided by nervous disorders and a morbid imagination.

*Second.* In dealing with such distressed persons, let the pastor bring their case in prayer before God in his closet, and ask Christians to do the same; and,

*Third.* As the despair of the mind in such instances springs from various thoughts, let the pastor reply to each. If it arises from a

sense of great sinfulness, let the infinite value of the atonement be dwelt upon; the power of Jesus to save the chief of sinners be preached; the examples in Scripture of such saved, be called up; and the invitations of the Saviour be opened and renewed. Let the distressed read Bunyan and Newton. If despair is created by the sense of opportunities and convictions misimproved, let the pastor proclaim that the door is not shut; that God is still waiting to be gracious; and that the concern of mind on this subject is of itself an evidence that the Spirit of God is not withdrawn, and that salvation is not denied. If the mind is occupied with the belief "that the sin against the Holy Ghost has been committed," let the pastor, in his visits to such, begin with prayer to God for special aid; then speak of the many godly persons who in seasons of darkness and temptation have judged wrong about their state; and of some who thought they had committed the unpardonable sin, and who afterwards saw they were mistaken, and recovered all their peace and comfort; if the pastor can in these cases mention names, with the histories of the persons, it will be better; (and for such purpose, every Christian pastor should be a reader of the lives and experience of godly persons;) and thence let him conclude, that in a matter involving our eternal hopes and God's mercy in Christ, we should not be hasty in our judgment, but take time and reflect long, with earnest prayer. And,

*Finally.* Let the pastor afterwards proceed to speak of the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost, inquiring whether it is a sin which can be committed at this day. For some think that it was a sin peculiar to the apostolic day, or the age of miracles; for as it formed an extraordinary case under the dispensations of grace, it seemed to require a sinning against the extraordinary light which miracles afforded of the truth of Christianity.

But if the pastor thinks that the sin *can now be committed*, let him open its nature by showing that it is made up of *knowledge* and *enmity* against Christ and his gospel; that those who commit it afterwards *hate* the Lord Jesus and his people with a fierce hatred, *curse* him in the spirit of devils, and *feel no concern of mind* about an interest in him. Then let the pastor show that in the case before him *such malignity does not exist*. To do this, he must, from previous conversation, have ascertained from the distressed himself that he would *desire*, above all things, to be interested in

Christ, and that his agony springs from a belief that he is excluded from such an interest. In most such cases, *love* to the Saviour in the heart will be detected, instead of malignity. Let the pastor also recommend, with the Scriptures, the reading of such books as he judges most useful; but let him do his utmost to keep away from the troubled in mind injudicious talkers, and those who have no Christian experience.

iv. But, lastly, the mind of one may be sinking into despair in consequence of *relief being delayed*, after much seeking and importunate prayers. In such a case what must the pastor say? We reply, First. He must be careful to show the difference between pardon as the act of God, and comfort as the enjoyment of the believer, and also between faith and comfort; inasmuch as there may be great faith where there is little comfort. Second. He must inculcate that the heart of the distressed may yet have a root of bitterness in it, through pride; and therefore more humility may be required, for "God giveth grace to the humble." Third. He must inquire whether in all the previous seeking there has not been too much of a self-righteous spirit and hope. Fourth. He must teach that delays are no denials. Fifth. That delays are for the trial of faith, hope, and patience. Sixth. That some of God's children have waited long before they were relieved. Seventh. That we have no claim upon God; yet, Eighth. That his promises will be fulfilled in due season. Ninth. He must exhort to watchfulness, importunate prayer, and steadfast looking to Christ as our intercessor with the Father.

I have hinted that amid these spiritual troubles of the mind there may be a *diseased nervous system* coöperating to increase dejection, and give force to the fiery darts of the evil one. This fact must be attended to by the pastor. He must recommend remedies for the body, while he labors to remove burdens from the mind.

## LECTURE XXXIV.

PASTORAL VISITATIONS—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

PASTORAL EXERTIONS IN SEASONS OF RELIGIOUS DECLENSION.

WE are still employed with the duty of pastoral visitations. Our last lecture concluded with the manner in which the pastor should minister to awakened minds in his visits.

In relation to this part of the subject we have but to observe, that he preaches the gospel best, who best exhibits the deceits of sin and the various lineaments of the Divine image in the souls of the regenerate; and that the pastor, in his visits to the awakened, should inculcate the following doctrines of the gospel according as they may apply, viz:

That the awakening influence of the Holy Spirit is preparatory to conversion, and therefore, so far, it is a token for good. That convictions, however strong, are no evidence of conversion, and therefore must not be relied upon. That convictions form a season of peculiar temptations, and strong attacks by the adversary of souls. "The strong man armed" is likely to lose his palace, and therefore raves. That the awakened are much tempted to think either that they give themselves undue concern for the present, or that their sins are too many and great to be forgiven. That in the exercise of prayer particularly, their hearts are often sorely tempted. That despair of mercy through Christ is the greatest sin which we can commit. That Christ Jesus is an all-sufficient Saviour, able to save the chief of sinners; willing to receive all who come to him. That the troubled in mind have a divine warrant for coming to Christ; for God has commanded them to believe in his Son,

Jesus Christ, and the Saviour calls them. And that therefore it is the duty of sinners to come to the Saviour immediately, freely, and cordially.

These doctrines should be dwelt upon, as they constitute the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

I proceed now to say that it is the duty of the pastor,  
4th. To visit those whom he knows to *mourn in Zion*.

By the mourners in Zion, I understand the godly persons who, without being sick in body or afflicted in their families, are, through religious declension, weakness of faith, peculiar temptations, and a gloomy habit of mind, brought into spiritual troubles and shaken in their hope of salvation. I need not observe, that there are such in the churches. The regenerate are in a state of conflict with sin and Satan; there is a foe in their own bosoms; and this enemy sometimes prevails to such a degree as to involve them in darkness and fear, and to constrain them to go "mourning under the sun." Indeed, the godly are sometimes in a mental condition which is marked by all the distresses and alarming apprehensions of future damnation which the awakened experience.

Admitting then that the pious may be sorely wounded and cast down in spirit, they are to be the objects of the attention and care of pastors; for the "Great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls" has given to his servants this charge: "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

It would be impossible here to enumerate all the various cases of those who mourn in Zion. Let it suffice to call your attention to a few of the more prominent ones.

(1.) A pious mind may be met with, not a little *agitated* by the reflection, that it has never felt the comforts and joys which others speak of, and may hence conclude that it is still unrenewed and graceless.

i. Let the pastor, in his visit, teach that such a conclusion is not warranted by the divine Word; for comforts and joys are not made to be the evidences of conversion to God; but repentance, faith, love, etc. Then, too, there are degrees in faith: a faith may be so weak as to have little comfort and joy, while many doubts of a personal interest in Christ may stand connected with it. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

ii. Let the pastor urge the acquisition of an abiding peace of

mind, by the exercise of faith in the promises; by living near to God, and being active in his service.

(2.) Another pious mind, that, on being converted, experienced great comfort, transporting joy, and fervent love, may complain that it enjoys those feelings no more; and therefore not only mourns, but fears that it has *lost* the spirit of religion.

i. This, we remark, is no uncommon case in the churches. Hence those who are unrenewed in mind will sometimes adopt the very language of this complaint, in order to be thought Christians. They will speak of comforts and joys which they have never had, or which they have given to themselves, without any agency of the Holy Spirit. The pastor has need, therefore, of discriminating here between persons and characters.

ii. But admitting the person complaining to exhibit satisfactory evidence of true piety, then the pastor may attempt to administer consolation, by teaching the following doctrines, viz :

The degree of comfort and joy which, on conversion, some experience, is rendered greater by the circumstance that they were just before in deep distress, regarding themselves as for ever lost in darkness, not perceiving the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. When therefore the Spirit of God enlightened them to "see the King in his beauty," and made them willing to embrace him, and conscious that they were accepted in the Beloved, the transition was such as, according to the constitution of the human mind, to fill them with wonder, delight, and joy. Now, as such a believer can never place himself again in exactly the same state in which he was "before and when he first believed," so he can never again experience in the same way his first comforts and joys. This ought to be carefully noted, and it ought to be inculcated by the pastor, that the want of those first joys now is no evidence whatever of a loss of religion or of the Divine favor.

iii. But whilst this error of the pious mind is to be corrected, the pastor should exhort that mind to return to its first love by mourning over its past neglects, and its misimprovements of grace received; by realizing the excellences of the Saviour, which are still the same, and by comprehending his love, which is unchangeable.

iv. The pastor should press such a mourning Christian to render his present love more productive of good than even his first love

was: for usually the first love of a convert expends itself in extolling the Saviour, and in talking of the wonders of his love and grace in saving us: but our present love may be rendered much more productive of benefits to the Church and to the souls of men, by active services for God; doing more for the promotion of his glory, by increasing usefulness in his kingdom.

Such a course, it should be preached, would give us more of the presence of heaven, and brighten our evidences of grace; for to him that puts out his talents to usury, more shall be given. "Occupy till I come." "Put off the works of darkness, and put on the whole armor of light."

(3.) But another pious mind may be troubled by the thoughts that all its comforts in religion *are so short-lived*; that its happy seasons last but a little while; and hence may conclude, that it has never been renewed by divine grace.

It is an undoubted fact, that some Christians have short-lived comforts; they scarcely entertain a comfortable hope before it is broken by suspecting that it may not be a right hope, and that all of religion in the soul may be wrong. Under these suspicions, they go mourning and enervated on their pilgrimage. Should such a case present itself to the pastor, he must in express terms, first, condemn that suspicious habit of the mind, as being both sinful and unreasonable; death to all growth in grace: and call to repentance on account of this sin as cherished. Second, he must enjoin a serious review of past experience, to ascertain whether repentance and faith have been exercised; and fervent prayer for more stability of mind and a more dutiful confidence in God. If the mind of the believer chooses to be constantly suspecting its own principles of action, it must be satisfied with short-lived comforts; but it should aim at a better habit of feeling, a nobler walk with God.

(4.) Another pious mind may have *declined in grace*, become first careless, then cold in prayer, then far removed from God, and at length alarmed at its own state, and asking for some consolation. In conversing with such a Christian, the pastor must be faithful to his divine Master; he must attempt to give no comfort to the declining Christian, but explicitly teach that, in a state of religious declension, all past evidences of conversion are to be justly suspected. He must call to repentance for such wander-

ings and backslidings from God. He must exhibit the unhappiness and danger of such a state; but, at the same time, preach that God will be gracious to his penitent and returning people; that he will heal their backslidings and love them freely. The graciousness of the Saviour to Peter after "he had gone out and wept bitterly," is a beautiful illustration of the methods of divine grace towards the pious who return from their declensions.

And it must be preached, too, that concern of mind on finding ourselves in a declining state, is an evidence that the principle of divine life, "the root of the matter," is in us.

(5.) But a godly person may be a mourner in Zion, in consequence of being exposed to *strange and violent temptations* in the thoughts of his mind. He may find his mind disturbed continually, and to his great affliction, by wicked and by atheistical thoughts. In prayer, and whithersoever he goes, such questions as these may press into his meditations: "What if the Scriptures be not true? Perhaps there is no God, no providence, no future state! Perhaps religion is all a delusion!" And though he tries to shake off such thoughts, they will return and harass him. How is the pastor to treat a case of this kind? We answer,

i. This trial may be regarded by the pastor as a peculiar and extraordinary one. How far the agency of the tempter may be concerned in it, it is not for us to say; yet we consider it to be *one* of the "fiery darts of the evil one."

ii. The pastor must delight to show that such thoughts are unwelcome, afflicting, and hateful to the Christian himself, causing him distress and mourning; and therefore that they cannot be an element of character, nor form our state before God. Here then is a source of consolation to the troubled mind.

iii. To be delivered from such thoughts, prayer, reading, and occupying the mind with important subjects of meditation must be recommended; and especially must the afflicted Christian answer the tempter in his own way, by asking as quickly and as often, "What if there be a God, glorious in holiness; a future state and a future judgment? What if the Scriptures be true? 'Where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?'" This is holding up the shield of faith in our defense.

iv. Let the distressed Christian occupy his mind in duty, and

this trial will soon pass away. "If ye will do my will, ye shall know my doctrine," said the Saviour, "whether it be of God."

I shall here stop in the enumeration of those various trials of faith which cause mourning in Zion. Various other cases might be adduced, but those above mentioned will be sufficient for the direction of the pastor, as those do involve the principles which enter into the composition of all the others.

I shall add, that modern sermons and writings are of little use to the afflicted in Zion; and therefore the pastor should furnish himself with better books, and recommend, among others, Sibb's Bruised Reed, Priestley's Looking-Glass, Romeine's Life of Faith, Pike and Hayward's Cases of Conscience, and other valuable works, such as Newton's and Rutherford's Letters.

I have now done with visits rendered incumbent on the pastor by a special providence, and shall proceed in the next place to speak of,

II. Visits by the pastor which are designed to promote religion, but are not required by any special providence, and therefore are *voluntary*, if I may so express it, on his part.

Every faithful pastor will, according to his lesiure, from more direct calls engage in this duty. The young minister will have less, the older will have more leisure for this work. He will visit individuals of various character and sentiments; trying to turn the thoughts of the irreligious to eternal things, and giving aid to those who have believed through grace; stirring up one and another to be more engaged in securing heaven for themselves, and in advancing the cause of truth and righteousness. In these visits, much will depend on address and talent for religious conversation. A pastor may be *very zealous*, and as he moves along, he may call every one to repentance, and boldly tell sinners "that they are going to hell," and yet do very little good. But the pastor who is more intent *on doing good* than on showing himself, and who has knowledge of human nature, will seek to be well informed, to time his observations well, to be prudent and affectionate in his address.

To pass happily from common topics of discourse, to religion, requires a special talent. This talent was displayed by our Lord Jesus Christ during his abode with men, and should be cultivated

by his servants. For the improvement of it, a disposition to turn every thing we see and hear to some spiritual benefit, and the reading of such works as "Flavel's Husbandry and Navigation," will be subsidiary.

It remains that on the branch of pastoral visitations I should speak, in the third place,

III. Of visits which *are purely social and civil*. I remark, that such visits should be paid by pastors as often as they can find leisure: the reasons are numerous.

(1.) Social visits promote intimacy and friendship. People in comfortable circumstances love to entertain their pastor at their own houses. They consider his visits as a mark of respect for them; and in proportion to their esteem for him, will be their readiness to attend upon his ministrations.

(2.) Social visits give to persons more knowledge of their pastor: they come to regard him not only as a religious teacher, but as a friend to their families; they begin to place confidence in him; to speak to him more freely, and to take an interest in his welfare also.

(3.) Social visits afford to the people an opportunity to ascertain that their pastor is a well-informed man. He may be well read in theology, and he may preach instructive sermons; but sermons, the common people say, may be taken out of books, and they know that ministers have studied theology. Still they desire other evidence of a well-furnished mind, and such evidence they can obtain on occasion of social visits. They want to know the temper and turn of their pastor, which is but seldom displayed from the pulpit or in conversation purely religious.

(4.) Social visits afford the pastor an opportunity to give information, such as his better education and more extensive reading enable him to give, on an infinite variety of topics; some of which tend to elevate the common understanding, while others throw some light upon the Bible.

(5.) But social visits are more particularly useful, as administering to the pastor's increase of knowledge. He is called to minister among men, and to live with them. The ravens are not to feed him; and it is necessary for his comfort that he should know something of the world, its passing events and various employments. For the acquisition of such knowledge, social visita-

tion is *the pastor's school*. Letting the private affairs of families alone, and discountenancing all gossiping, he should otherwise be willing to learn something from professional men, from the farmer and from the mechanic. He should tax every person for a contribution to his growing sum of knowledge, and gather good fruit from every tree within his reach.

Most certainly the pastor who will talk only on religious subjects, and concern himself with nothing but what has a direct bearing upon his ministerial work, will find himself less informed, less useful, and less influential than others.

But while social visits are also to be recommended as affording seasons of relaxation to the pastor, and thereby promoting his health and animal spirits, *two evils* in relation to this duty are to be carefully avoided. *First*. These social visits must not be too frequent; they must not interrupt study and other serious employments. Some ministers are too much along the road and too little in their study. They find it most pleasant to pay a social visit, and most irksome to write a sermon; and as social visits serve to render them more popular, they indulge themselves extravagantly in this agreeable employment. And, *Second*. These social visits must not be void of the *salt* of religion. The pastor must still be intent on his Master's business. Whatever be the topics of conversation in the main, he must not conclude such a visit without leading the thoughts of those around him to some profitable religious reflection. If asked to conclude his visit with prayer, he should rejoice to do it. He should, if even unasked, propose prayer, provided circumstances suit. Of this he is to judge.

I have now done with the duty of pastoral visitations, and must next direct your attention to another pastoral duty connected therewith, viz:

THE DUTY OF PASTORAL EXERTION IN A TIME OF RELIGIOUS  
DECLENSION.

I need not observe to you, that religion will sometimes decline in Churches. Such declensions occurred in the ancient Jewish Church; and ecclesiastical histories testify, that every where in the Christian Church, and very early in some of the Seven Churches of Asia, declensions have existed. Indeed, "the Man of Sin," or

the Papal religious structure, is the offspring of such departure from the spirit and the doctrines of true religion! Mark the present state of Germany, the very cradle of the Reformation; “how is the fine gold become dim!”

The causes of such declensions are various, and cannot here be particularly enumerated. Let it suffice to observe, that some declensions are to be traced up to the gospel ministry; for a faithful ministry will excite against the Church the persecutions of the world; but an unfaithful ministry will produce internal declensions in the Church itself.

I. *Ministers* are the causes of declension,

1. When they *depart from sound doctrine* to please the world; yielding up one divine truth after another to gratify the irreligious sentiments of the great and fashionable, and to conform to the revolutionary spirit of the age. In some places, this departure from sound doctrine, as in the ancient Christian Church, will be concealed under the mantle of high religious excitements, creating wonderful zeal, and rushing into fanaticism, as may be seen in the early history of Monachism, with its imposing self-denials and multiplied mortifications of the flesh. In other places truth will be abandoned, to conciliate its enemies, and to form a peace, and greater union of nominal Christians in the visible Church; to acquire more proselytes, and to act in concert with a great multitude; for where is the minister who, like the prophet of old, can bear to stand alone in the defense of the truth?

But, with whatever show of religion the departure from the truth may be attended, *declension* in religion is the natural and inevitable result. Excitements will pass away; but error, when believed, will influence temper and conduct, and lead to greater errors. The Reformed ministry in France began by little departures from sound doctrine; presently a number began to think that they might fraternize with the Papists, the difference in essentials being small; and at length a Reformed Church hardly existed. So it has been and so it will be in every country under heaven. For the Spirit of truth operates by the truth.

2. Again, ministers are the causes of religious declension, by *conforming* too much in their habits of life to the course of this world, living carelessly, exhibiting little seriousness in their tempers, and little piety in their walk; delighting in merry company,

and in dining and other parties, from which religion is excluded, and by which intemperance and dissipation are promoted.

3. Once again, ministers are the causes of declension, by preaching *unfaithfully*, though they preach the truth; "healing, saith God, the daughter of my people slightly; crying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace;" treating the troubles of the heart as signs of a disordered mind; insisting only upon a form of godliness, and disliking its power in the soul; filling their sermons either with arguments in defense of general Christianity, or a morbid sentimentalism, instead of coming home to the hearts and consciences of sinners, and exhibiting Christ as the only means of escaping the damnation of hell.

4. Ministers promote religious declensions by a *treacherous use* of the other key of the kingdom of heaven, viz: Christian discipline; they admit every one who applies into the full communion of the Church, profane the sacraments, and leave careless professors uncorrected by warning and discipline, to disgrace the name of religion. Most declensions begin with ministers.

But ministers may be correct and faithful, and declensions may still occur, through the increasing depravities of the people. Moses was faithful in all God's house, yet religion declined in that generation whom he served. Elijah was preëminent in labor and in zeal, yet depravity like a torrent swept the minds of the Israelites away from God.

II. Here again, when declensions originate with *the people*, the causes are various at various times; and it would require a series of lectures to exhibit them fully. Let me observe, that the people are composed of two classes, viz: communicants and non-communicants.

1. The professors in full communion are those who sometimes administer greatly, *by their sloth, pride, and worldliness*, to declension from God.

(1.) They neglect prayer and watchfulness.

(2.) They become absorbed in their worldly interests; are intent to a sinful degree on money-making, speculation, and the increase of wealth. High markets and prosperous circumstances affect deeply and unhappily their spiritual state, disposing them either to fashionable life or to avarice, rendering them more ambitious to elevate their families than to acquire fresh evidences of their peace

with God. Accordingly, they become careless in their walk, cold in their affections, decline themselves, and help on declension in the churches.

(3.) Professors sometimes yield to the influence of an unconverted aristocracy in the church and congregation. They have not fortitude to withstand the influence of the great in society, who have favors, and offices, and smiles to bestow; and who, while they contribute their moneys to the support of religious institutions, still act agreeably to the spirit of the world, by which they are actuated. These men sometimes bend professors of religion to their authority and wishes, become masters in a congregation, and of course religion declines.

I recollect an instance of this weakness in one who was an elder in my church. No professor was so loud in exclaiming at home against the *use of notes by ministers* as this man. As this was a matter of indifference in practice to myself, who preached without notes, I often defended *notes*, on the ground that some servants of Christ could preach better with notes than without, though I wished the general practice of the Church to be such as it then was.

This elder, as a delegate, went with me to the General Synod; a Synod which happened to comprehend a few great and powerful lay elders in the State of New-York, and in which the practice of using notes was discussed. On taking the question, the elder with me voted in favor of notes; and when we were returning home, I expressed my surprise at his vote, to which he replied, that he did not like to differ from those great men. I observed, that if we should be persecuted on account of our faith, as persecution was usually set on foot by the great men of this world, I hoped he would not bow to their influence. This elder afterwards rather declined than improved in religion.

(4.) Professors also promote religious declensions by becoming warm political partisans, and entering deeply into political conflicts.

(5.) And let me add, that professors may, by the manner in which they engage in the various benevolent operations of the day, also administer to religious declensions. This may seem paradoxical to those who do not reflect deeply. Yet it is a fact, that thousands of professors make the *ardor* in promoting good operations in the Church and in the world, a *substitute* for vital

religion, and roll these things over and over in their thoughts, to the exclusion of that faith in Christ which justifies without works in our personal pardon. Hence there is already in the American churches a complaint that professors are so deficient in deep personal piety and Christian experience. Certain it is, few tell us how they came to Christ; they seem to have had a broad way and easy travelling.

2. But declensions in religion may be produced by a *general corruption of the people*, apart, in the first instance, from professors of religion. There are times when, through the agency of the rich, great, and fashionable, "iniquity abounds;" the young break through the restraints of education, the laws of God are disregarded, godliness is reviled, vicious pleasures are pursued, men live wholly to themselves, and pull sin as with a cart-rope. Amid this abounding iniquity, "the love of many professors of religion waxes cold."

3. I shall only add, that there *are extraordinary events* which operate to produce declensions in religion: such as war in a country, violent disputes among Christian sects, parties in a congregation formed by family feuds, and quarrels with the ministers of the Word; and lastly, fanaticism, and errors which spring from religious excitements, and inflict deep wounds on religion.

III. Admitting, now, one or more of these causes to have produced a lamentable declension in religion, in a congregation under the care of a pastor, the question arises, How is he to act in this sad state of things?

Every one who knows under what solemn responsibilities ministers of Christ act, will immediately reply, that the Christian pastor is bound to use uncommon exertions to check the progress of such religious declension, to counteract it by all means, and to revive truth and godliness. How can he be faithful to his God, and remain inactive in circumstances so injurious to the Divine name and honor? How can he love his Saviour, and be indifferent to the prosperity of his kingdom? How can he pity lost sinners, and yet leave them amid the snares of the destroyer?

It is the obvious duty of the Evangelical Pastor to be alert and laborious when religion declines. He is called to mourn over it, to examine into its causes, and to use every proper means to obtain a revival of God's work with power. I here suggest,

1. If on examination he finds that *his own* neglect, carelessness, and conformity to the world, have contributed to the declension of religion, he should be alarmed, repent, reform instantly, for there is a dreadful woe impending on the unfaithful shepherd. He should be much engaged in secret prayer, and determine to retrace his steps, and to bring both his mental powers and his holy example into the service of the gospel.

But is it proper that a minister shall appear before the whole congregation, and confess his faults? No, by no means. The public worship of God is social, and not the place nor time for private confessions. In this act there is a show of humility, but very little religion. A minister has opportunities enough in private conversations to speak of and deplore his own past negligence; but his best confessions will be made by mourning before God in secret, and putting on the armor of light in public.

Let him no longer handle the Word of God deceitfully, nor depart from the truth to please men. Let him tell sinners their danger, call them to repentance, and point them to the Saviour as the only covert from the storm, and every eye and ear will soon perceive the change which divine grace has wrought in him.

2. Should the pastor trace the declension either to *professors* of religion, or to the corruption of morals in *the people*, he must endeavor to counteract and remove it, by private exhortation and admonition, by his public preachings, by praying societies, and benevolent exertions. Affectionately, but faithfully, should he admonish lax professors, and exhort them to rise and trim their lamps, otherwise they must fall under the denomination of "foolish virgins;" loudly should he call them to work for God, to maintain a conversation such as becometh the gospel, to show their love for the Saviour and his cause, and to acquire evidence of their peace with God.

Distinctly should he state their own sins, and the prevailing vices in the congregation which are the sources of the evil.

3. But it is obvious that the principal means in the hand of the pastor to effect a reformation and revival, is *the public and faithful preaching of the Word*. But here wisdom must be united with zeal, patience with labor. It is easy to declaim against the prevailing vices, and scold the profane swearers, drunkards, gamesters, and other sinners, and even to produce a little reformation,

without any radical healing of the declension. The pastor must go deeper for the seat of the disorder, in the aversion of the human heart to God, and its disregard of the obligations of religion, and its love of sin. The principal subjects of his discourses, in a time of declension, must therefore be,

(1.) God; his right to rule; his right to our supreme love and services; his right to condemn and punish the impenitent.

(2.) The certainty and awfulness of such punishment, as it is expressly declared in Scripture.

(3.) The danger of the sinner, and the wickedness of his heart.

(4.) The necessity of immediate repentance, and,

(5.) Embracing the gospel offer.

(6.) The love of Christ for lost sinners.

(7.) The necessity of holiness to the enjoyment of heaven.

(8.) The excuses of sinners.

(9.) And the misery of the damned.

On these important subjects the pastor should dwell with all the talent with which he is endowed; being more intent to preach solemnly, forcibly, and searchingly, than frequently. Indeed, in a time of religious declension, more pains should be bestowed on sermons; they should be such as to attract attention by every good quality of a pulpit discourse, and to bring people to the place of worship.

4. But as an additional important means in promoting revival, the pastor should collect the pious into *praying societies*. "God will be inquired of," and prayer is powerful. In such associations the godly should be directed to pray for the Spirit of grace and supplication particularly, and for the conversion of sinners and the enlargement of the Church. So also, should any sinner be impressed and awakened, the fact should not be concealed, but spoken of with thanks and rejoicing; "for the angels rejoice in heaven over the sinner that repenteth;" and the knowledge that one thoughtless sinner is awakened is often blessed by the Spirit, to render another more thoughtful of his eternal condition.

5. In aid of his efforts in *promoting a revival of religion*, the pastor should recommend strongly, when he cannot be present with a praying society, that such sermons as the "Village Sermons," Davies' and the Lyme Street Sermons, and Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted," *should be read*. These works are highly instruct-

ive, and have been instrumental in enlightening and awakening thousands. Many sermons now published are a wretched substitute for those valuable productions.

Here a question may be asked: "Should a protracted meeting be held, in order to check declensions and promote a revival of religion?" The answer to this question must depend on *what is meant* by a protracted meeting; for such a meeting may be good or evil, according to the doctrines preached and the measures adopted.

I remark, then, that to call to his aid, and hold subordinate to his direction, the efforts in preaching and praying of several of his brother pastors, sound in the faith, and judicious in their treatment of awakened sinners, during two or three consecutive days, may be done by the pastor, and be highly useful in advancing the interests of religion: for, first, it is scriptural, several apostles having acted together at times in the primitive Church; second, it exhibits a combination of strength, a concert of action, and intimates that the evil to be counteracted is *great*, and that the work to be done is *important*. Declensions in religion are wrought by combinations. Wickedness advances through associations. Hence *union* in religious efforts is to be recommended, and is productive of good.

The Spirit of God has furnished various ministers with various prominent gifts. They are not all equally "sons of consolation," nor equally "sons of thunder." Now, at a protracted meeting, those various gifts are brought into operation upon various minds, and may therefore have an influence more extensively beneficial. Their employment in this manner is like increasing the length of a *seine*, with the probability of enclosing more fish.

But every good thing may be abused, and the Devil may be converted, in certain aspects, "into an angel of light." So, what is excellent in a well-regulated protracted meeting, may be made the basis of a structure of error, fanaticism, and ultimately, of deeper declension in religion.

Every kind of protracted meeting, therefore, is not to be recommended. Some are fraught with great evils; such, for instance, as those meetings at which regular agents in creating certain excitements are employed, and to whose agency, to the exclusion or reduction of the pastor, the congregation is committed. Such meetings as derive their principal aliment from false teachers and false doc-

trine ; such as, in order to secure fame by the number of new converts, and to impose upon a credulous public, *break down the guards* which the Church, from experience, has set up against ignorance and an excited imagination, and for the trial of the heart ; resolving the whole matter of conversion and admission into an affirmative answer to such general questions as these, (an answer which hordes of poor deluded Catholics are prepared every day to give to their priests :) “ Do you submit to God? Will you submit now, or be damned for ever? Have you a comfortable hope?” Such meetings, in a word, as exhibit the art of man, in place of the power of the Holy Spirit ; substitute slavish fear for faith, and leave the awakened like cakes half turned ; calling women to pray publicly, and making the boldest hypocrites the prominent men in the Church.

Let the pastor, at every risk, (even if he be persecuted unto death,) *set his face against such meetings*. Their commencement may be *imposing*, but their end is *always injurious* to truth and godliness.

6. It remains to be observed, that the pastor may in no small degree promote religion when it languishes, by engaging his people in aiding *the missionary cause*, (of which I shall speak hereafter,) in circulating the Sacred Scriptures, in scattering tracts of a religious character, and in furthering the progress of temperance.

The best societies may be perverted to effect wrong ends. But it is certain that the more people work in a good cause, the less affection will they display for its opposite. By contributing to the building of tabernacles, they are kept from idolatry.

## LECTURE XXXV.

### PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### PASTORAL VIGILANCE IN SEASONS OF GENERAL AWAKENING AND ENLARGEMENT IN THE CHURCH.

I COME now to speak of another important pastoral duty, viz:

*That of pastoral vigilance in seasons of awakenings and conversion in a congregation, followed by an increase of the professors of religion.*

This duty, you observe, is rendered *occasional*, by the very circumstances which create it; for general awakenings and frequent conversions are not ordinary, but extraordinary events in the Church, and therefore demand extraordinary exertion and vigilance from the Christian pastor; for his trials will be uncommon, both internal and external—trials which, to endure well and to render ultimately subservient to the honor of religion, the salvation of souls, and the peace and prosperity of a church, require great wisdom, fortitude, and special grace.

Hence we discover so many ministers not sufficiently vigilant over themselves and over others, in times of general awakenings, deeply injured in their sentiments, spiritual state, and subsequent usefulness, by the effects resulting from the stir of religion under their ministration. It was during the great revivals in the State of Kentucky, that ministers whose labors had been signally blessed, were tempted by the prominence which they had acquired, to strike into new ways: two of them at length became Shaking-Quakers. Dr. Frøeligh was the leader in the defection from our Church; and I believe that the general awakening under his ministry served to move him into the course which he unhappily pursued. It elevated him in his own opinion; and when he was not appointed after-

wards to the highest offices in the Church, he became dissatisfied with his brethren, and matured the subsequent secession. Indeed, it is in seasons of revivals that the principal errorists and fanatics who have troubled the Church have sprung into existence. How forcibly do these facts speak to us! how clearly do they exhibit caution, humility, and vigilance, as our duty, whenever the Word which we preach is accompanied with an extraordinary awakening influence!

But before I speak particularly of the pastoral course to be pursued in an awakening season, it will be useful to remind you here of two or three important facts in God's dispensations towards his visible Church.

First. There is *no special divine promise* given in the Scriptures to any gospel minister, that his labors will be blessed with a general awakening of sinners, and with the conversion simultaneously of many under his ministry. The promises given to ministers are sufficiently ample, but expressed wisely and in general terms. The Saviour has promised to be with them always; to strengthen, aid, and comfort them under their various trials; to use them as instruments of blessing to others, and through them to "bless the provisions of his house, and to feed his poor with bread." But there are no particular promises in the Word, that any particular number shall be converted, or that many shall be converted at once, under the ministry of any man.

There is, then, a divine and holy sovereignty which the Spirit of God has reserved to himself in this matter. He will give, and he will withhold, in measure and manner as seemeth good in his sight. He will impart of his influence in refreshing drops, or in gentle and insinuating dews of the night, or in abundant rains, according to the good pleasure of his will. This he has done through the ages past; this he will continue to do till the millennial period, during which (as he has especially promised) he will pour out his grace upon the human family, like floods upon the dry ground. Accordingly we find, that even the ministry of the great apostle of the Gentiles served to exhibit this sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. In some places where he ministered, *none* were awakened; in other places, two or three were converted; and in other places again, many were renewed, and the harvest was great. "For the wind bloweth where it listeth."

On the review, then, of the past operations of the Spirit in connection with the preaching of ministers and its effects, we discover, that in the works of awakening and of conversion, (for they are distinct operations, and by no means inseparable,) the Holy Spirit has been pleased to pursue two methods, viz :

I. *Ordinarily*, he has brought his Word home to the hearts of sinners, by awakening one or a few from time to time, so that his work did not, from the small number impressed, excite public observation, or produce a general religious excitement. After Paul had preached at Athens, we discover the Holy Spirit to have wrought by the Word on the minds of a few persons; but no such awakening and movement among the people as was seen at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Indeed, the greater number of Christians through every age past, and all the world over, have been effectually called by the Word and Spirit in times of no general revival. They seemed to be awakened alone, or associated with a very few in the congregation; in a year, from one to a dozen would seek and give evidence of conversion. Thus ordinarily does the Holy Spirit operate in adding to the churches from year to year. And who shall prescribe to God a different course in the bestowment of his blessings? and who will undertake to dictate that He shall not save a few, but many at once? Rather should we ever wonder and rejoice that one sinner is brought to repentance, than to feel discontented that our ministrations do not result in general and powerful awakenings.

Take a score and a half of years, where the gospel is faithfully preached, and count the number awakened and truly converted, and they will be found nearly equal to the number of those who, during the same period, have given evidences of piety in a congregation in which a religious excitement has existed; and such extended calculations it is the duty of pastors to make, before they speak disparagingly of the ordinary operations of the Holy Spirit in the gospel kingdom.

These facts, however, are overlooked by some ministers and professing Christians, who seem to be quite miserable if there be no religious excitement all around them. Ready are they to think and say, "that there is little religion, little of the Spirit of God in a congregation, when there is no general awakening in it."

The scriptural indications of steady piety, substantial godliness of life, purity of morals, regular observance of divine ordinances, and Church order and beauty, go in their estimation for nothing. If the Holy Spirit will not operate as they wish, they intimate "that he does not operate at all." I need not point to the wickedness of such thoughts and sentiments, but remark, that those persons ought (though I know they will not) suspect the reality of their own conversion, who cannot enjoy the comfort of religion but under the influence of a religious excitement. This feverish religion, which must have *stir* around it, and which requires publicity to keep it in holy action, is not a sound state of the mind. It is one of the deceits of Satan. When the ministry of the Wesleys in England was blessed to the awakening of many, an excitement arose which was marked in many places, particularly in the city of Bristol, with violent nervous affections, which prostrated the body, yet left the mind free to think. Wesley thought that God here interposed by miracles, to bear testimony to his Word. Certain it is, however, that a party was formed among the Methodists, who considered conversion to be connected with these excitements. Hence, to keep religion alive, they set themselves to create, by various means, periodical excitements. But John Wesley himself lived to see among his disciples, that great stir and agitation in public worship, in prayer and class-meetings, did not indicate the promotion of true religion. "Our people," he said, "have a great deal of religion abroad, but I am afraid too little piety at home."

Let the pastor here remember to adore the Holy Spirit, by rejoicing in the discovery of his agency in human hearts, when he awakens men one by one. Let him preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season; and if one and another are successively, and without exciting observation, impressed and converted, let him give thanks, and persevere patiently in his work. In this course some excellent missionaries among the heathen have spent their days, bringing now and then a lost sheep into the fold, but witnessing no extensive awakenings; and they shall not lose their reward.

But it is an interesting fact, that occasionally, in one or more congregations, the Holy Spirit departs from his ordinary method in adding converts to the Church, and operates with great

power upon the souls of *many sinners at once*. This he did at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and in many places where the gospel was first preached; this he did at the Reformation in Germany, Scotland, and other countries. This the Spirit of God has done in our own country, in instances too numerous to be mentioned here; for it is just as easy for divine power to operate upon the hearts of many sinners, as to awaken one individual out of a multitude. "When he worketh, who shall let it?"

There is, then, in truth, a divine influence attending, at some times and in some places, the Word preached, which produces a general awakening or religious concern among those who have it. This event is known to be an uncommon one, and therefore attracts special attention. It is often called a REVIVAL, because it generally results in reviving religion in the souls of the godly, and in the increase of converts. But, strictly speaking, a general awakening and a general revival of religion are not one and the same thing. The former may exist to a considerable extent, where there is little of the latter. Occasionally, during the dark ages, the minds of multitudes were agitated with a religious concern, which did not result in a true revival, but in an increase of superstitions. The bones may be shaken, even so far, that bone may come to its bone, and yet there may be no life in the body. This leads me to state,

II. Another important fact in relation to this subject, viz: That the Spirit of God may communicate so much power to the Word, as to produce a *general awakening*, not with a view to convert many thereby, but particularly for the further trial of the hearts of sinners under the dispensations of the gospel.

Every conscience, enlightened by the Holy Spirit in the discovery of guilt and danger, is not accompanied with a heart *renewed by divine grace*. Every sinner awakened is *not converted*; nor is the Spirit of God *bound* to convert those whose fears he alarms; he may, through the Word, extend his operations just as far as he pleases, and he may cease to operate when he pleases.

Now, what is true of the operations of the Spirit in relation to an individual, may be and sometimes is true of his operations in relation to a *multitude*. He may awaken many together, and convert but few. He may fill the public mind with a religious concern, and still withhold his renewing grace; in consequence of

which, the general awakening may, through the depravity and pride of the human heart, result in more *evil than good*, and acquire ultimately more the character of a judgment than of a blessing.

In the purposes of Infinite Wisdom, it may be necessary to develop *the strength of sin*, not only under the ministrations of the gospel, but under the power of strong convictions and awakenings. Accordingly, in past dispensations, we perceive that rains of awakenings have descended upon ground which, notwithstanding, brought forth "thorns and briars." The generation that came out of Egypt saw the works of God at the Red Sea, and rejoiced; and at Mount Sinai, they saw the majesty of Deity; they were generally awakened and troubled in mind; yet they were so far from being converted, that they declined and perished in the wilderness. Other parts of the history of the Israelites serve to illustrate the same fact.

Let the pastor in the Christian Church therefore be wise in the observance of the various operations of the Holy Spirit, and never conclude that, if there be a general excitement, there must of course be an extensive blessing, and a great revival of religion. For a great excitement may be a *great trial* of the hearts of men, on which they may fail, grieve the Holy Spirit in various ways, and exhibit little improvement.

This fact, while it serves to explain to us *how religion has come to decline soon*, in a country and among a people, immediately after a great awakening has occurred, should excite us much to prayer, that awakenings may result in conversions, and prove rich and substantial blessings to the Church; and should render pastors, amid awakenings, uncommonly vigilant and incorruptibly faithful. The reasons which render such pastoral vigilance in times of awakening an important duty, I shall now state.

1. It is the duty of the Christian pastor to be always faithful, laborious, and vigilant; but when the Word preached is instrumental through the agency of the Holy Spirit in *awakening many at once, and in exciting a general religious concern*, then his faithfulness and his vigilance in the gospel service *should be doubled*; for religious excitements, as is well known, have a most powerful tendency to bring into action that principle which our Creator has superadded to our moral constitution, as an auxiliary to the sense of duty, and which is denominated sympathy.

That there is such a principle, every one knows; and its operations are such, and so strong, that Adam Smith has attempted to explain from this single principle all the phenomena of moral perception. His theory is erroneous; yet when so much has been ascribed to *sympathy*, we are called to look at this principle, and carefully note its operations and effects in certain circumstances.

Now the operations and effects of *sympathy*, when excited in consequence of what has transpired in social meetings, have been both curious and surprising. Under the impulse of this principle, large companies have been known to be affected with joy, sorrow, lassitude, and melancholy, without perceiving any rational cause for these various feelings. I shall not here detail facts, seemingly of an extraordinary character, which those who have searched into the human constitution have stated to be the effects of sympathy; but hasten to remark, that the operations of this principle as seen in society, have been eagerly snatched at by infidels and other enemies of true religion, as sufficient to account for those strong and extended feelings which characterize religious awakenings. It has been said, that in religious excitements there is no agency of the Holy Spirit, no divine power or influence; for the whole of what is exhibited, remarkable as it may be, is produced by sympathy.

This we deny, and consider the sentiment to be blasphemous and erroneous, even in a philosophical point of view; for, letting alone what the Scripture saith on this all-important subject, sympathy alone cannot account for all the effects produced in those religious awakenings which result in real conversions. A number of persons are awakened at once by the Word spoken, and their concern of mind is secret and unperceived. Here can be no operation whatever of sympathy. Sympathy, moreover, imparts no light to the understanding; it gives no knowledge of divine truths: and though it may bring the affections into strong exercise for a time, yet it produces no radical change of heart, no permanent holy principles of action. But where the gracious influences of God's Holy Spirit are imparted, there is light, knowledge; the simple become wise, and the depraved are transformed into new creatures in Christ.

But while there is a divine agency in real general awakenings under the gospel, those awakenings occur among sinful men who

have the principle of sympathy *in their constitution*. And this principle, let me observe, is liable to be brought into vigorous action under a religious excitement, in the minds of those on whose hearts the Holy Spirit does not operate. When one or two are awakened, as weeks roll away, their concern of mind is first concealed by themselves, then known to a few; and in the whole process of the change, there is no occasion created by their exercises on which the sympathy of others can be excited.

But very different is it during a *general religious excitement*. Such an excitement, it is well known, addresses itself most powerfully to our sympathy, and calls this principle into vigorous and extensive action. Many around us are troubled in mind, many weep, some rejoice, all are variously agitated; a religious movement is every where discoverable, and religious meetings to keep up the excitement are frequent. Can it then be surprising that the *sympathy* of those who behold such scenes should be awakened? No; this principle is a chord which will vibrate at the touch of such displays of religious affection. It is a combustible portion of the human mind, which without a spark of divine influence will be easily ignited, and burn furiously. These facts have been developed in every extensive awakening. They were known in England, under the ministry of Whitefield and the Wesleys; under the ministry of Tennent, Davenport, and others; and during the great revival in Kentucky, when persons were seen to fall through sympathy, who had no previous concern of mind, no conviction of their guiltiness before God.

So well is this fact known, that those persons who are anxious to acquire fame, and extend their influence by means of religious excitements, soon form plans and arrange their measures so as to operate upon sympathy. Their skill in the mechanism of their arrangements is great, their belief in the simple power of the Word is feeble, and they judge from their own experience of it.

Be this, however, as it may; when it is perceived that religious awakenings call sympathy into action, how watchful should the Christian pastor be over the operation of this principle, and require that those who profess to be exercised in religion should be actuated by a higher principle. In this case, he will not hurry the reception of members; he will not be duped by the exhibition of those feelings, and even tears, which sympathy so readily pro-

duces, nor by that zeal which it creates, nor that religious cant which it so easily learns to use; but take time, require knowledge, repeated self-examination, self-abasement, and the renunciation of self-righteousness. If the work in the human heart be of God, it will stand, for it is a work for eternity; and humble souls are afraid of being deceived, and are not the first to cry out, "Receive us; we are surely converted."

2. Another consideration, enforcing the duty of pastoral vigilance in times of general awakening, is the fact that men are inclined to conform to the existing predominant influence in society, whatever it may be. Hence we hear much of the influence of fashion, and the force of popular opinion; and in consequence of their sway in society, some writers have spoken of a principle existing in the human constitution which they call the *principle of assimilation*. Be this as it may, we know that in awakening seasons wickedness and infidelity are arrested in their course, and religion is rendered fashionable, and has for a time a commanding influence over many minds. Hence not a few persons, who were wont to follow the multitude to do evil when irreligion was predominant and strict godliness decried, are, when the current has changed, and religious feeling become fashionable, seen again to imitate the many, to become quite reformed and religious, and sometimes to render themselves quite conspicuous in season of awakenings, by their fervent prayers and enthusiastic boldness and zeal. Into this course they are the more freely impelled, by the well-known fact that piety is always respectable in good society, and that their respectability will be promoted by professions of religion.

Now, when from such motives, sinners, in a time of general awakenings, are seen to hurry into the communion of the Church, deceiving themselves and imposing upon the godly, how careful ought the pastor to be in the examination of their principles and in checking their ardor! how vigilant in inculcating much prayer and self-examination; in requiring knowledge of divine truth, and in affording time for serious reflection! For if the human heart be actuated by no higher principle than *assimilation*, it will probably happen that such heart will return to its folly (unless restrained by the fear of church discipline) whenever religion declines again.

This will account for the apostasies that are seen soon after an awakening has subsided. But take another :

3. Pastors are also urged to great vigilance, in times of general awakenings, by the fact that the *slavish fear of hell* operates powerfully at such times in making professors of religion. All know that they are sinners, soon to die and to pass into eternity ; and under the ministrations of the gospel, most men believe in a future state of existence, in a judgment to come, and in the future punishment of the wicked ; and though in the pursuit of pleasure, and amid the toils and anxieties of business, conscience may sleep, and "the terrors of the Lord" be so much lost sight of as to create no alarm, yet there is generally in human minds a secret fear connected with every serious contemplation of death and eternity.

Now, this fear becomes strong and perceptible in seasons of extensive awakenings. The sinner is no longer ashamed to show it, for almost all around him exhibit either concern of mind, or the peace arising from the enjoyment of religious comforts. The example of the many who are engaged in seeking mercy serves to impress the thoughtless with a conviction of the importance of religion, and of the reality of their danger ; to make them more attentive to the Word spoken ; to rouse their consciences into action, and to awaken their fear of future damnation.

And this fear alone will prompt sinners to do much in a religious way. It will cause them to weep and pray much ; to practise many self-denials ; to be active in religious service, zealous of certain good works, and prepared to make religious professions. Far, very far will it impel them, while their hearts are yet unrenewed.

How vigilant therefore should the pastor be in times of excitement, over the interests of his Master's kingdom ; guarding the Church against those who, if they are received, will, from their leading principle of action, settle down into formal Christians ; and striving to prevent men from deceiving themselves ! Fearlessly should he stand at the gate of Zion, and, regardless of every importunate request to enter, require a better principle of action than the fear of hell. "Thou believest," he should say, "that there is one God ; thou doest well : the devils also believe, and tremble."

4. Another argument in support of the required duty of pastoral vigilance in seasons of awakenings, is afforded by the fact,

that when the profession of religion becomes fashionable, *the strong principle of self-righteousness* will press forward to unite in such profession. Such profession will be regarded as an important item in the structure which the self-righteous attempt to erect for their own salvation. The Pharisees were warm professors of religion. I need not enlarge here. If the Christian minister is solicitous to serve his God, and to preserve his church pure, he will be careful to require the most decided submission to the righteousness of God; the most entire reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

5. One consideration more let me mention, by which the duty of pastoral vigilance in seasons of general awakening is enforced. It is this: In such seasons, *the pastor's own heart is deeply affected*, and its various affections are much excited; his joy is awakened in the view of God's work; he perceives many striving to enter in at the strait gate; he sympathizes with those in distress; he rejoices with those who have found the one pearl of great price, and all his feelings become tender.

Now, in this state of mind, unless he has grace to be vigilant, he will be led to open the door too freely and too wide for admission into the Church. He will yield too much—in pitying others in their distresses—to ignorance, to a general desire to be religious, and to join the pious; while he ought to stop awhile to instruct, to examine, to undeceive the presumptuous, and to require better evidences of conversion.

And while acting under this tenderness of spirit too precipitately, may not Satan stir up his pride to make the number of converts as large as possible? We have seen that exaggerated accounts of converts have been animadverted upon by judicious men in the papers, even after lax admissions had been practised.

To the above I would now add the following, regarding *the manner* of exercising this pastoral vigilance.

The arguments which we have just offered, render the pastoral duty on which we insist, very plain. But the important question still remains to be answered: *How, or in what way*, is this vigilance to be exercised in seasons of general awakenings? In answer to this question, we observe,

*First.* That the pastor should be careful not to adopt *those measures* during general awakenings, nor to indulge in those preach-

ings which would have a tendency to bring those principles and passions into action which operate to *mislead sinners*, and to give them wrong opinions of their own state, and wrong notions of religion.

1. His measures in such seasons of excitement must not be such as to excite, in a high degree, either *sympathy* or *slavish fear*. He must discourage in worship, or in social meetings for prayer and conference, loud and hysterical outcries, weepings, and groanings and shoutings. These things have been artfully encouraged by some to affect the minds of the hearers, to create sympathetic emotions and frights, as though the force of truth and the energy of the Holy Spirit were not sufficient to produce awakening and conversion. Hence many converts of *men* have been produced, who were not the converts of God. The Methodists formerly wrought much in this way, though experience has taught them better. And it is on the same principle that the Roman Catholics exhibit images of the Saviour expiring on the cross, and endeavor to overpower the soul by strains of exquisite music. These are not God's means of grace.

2. To prevent the undue operation of sympathy, the pastor should not congregate the excited in one place, *apart from the congregation*. He may require the aids of young converts in prayer-meetings, but avoid making the meeting to be composed of the awakened *alone*. Such assemblies have almost always been the parents of fanaticism, by giving to certain minds an impulse towards that high degree of excitement which made their religion to consist wholly of feeling, instead of knowledge and faith. Let the church meet and worship, and let the pastor converse and pray with individuals apart.

3. Anxious-meetings, therefore, for the same and other reasons, *are not to be recommended*. These meetings are very favorable to ministers who have themselves no religious experience. What is to be said at such meetings to the excited, can be easily said by those who have experienced no change of heart. Such sayings as these: "Come to Christ; submit immediately; you will be damned if you do not submit; this moment repent, and turn to God; don't hesitate, or tarry in the plain; escape for your life! Can't you give up your heart? you can if you will. Have you now a comfortable hope?" All this may be repeated by one who

knows no more of true repentance, and of actual coming to Christ, and closing with him, than the horse that grazes in the plain. And it is to hide the want of experience, that measures have been invented by which it is so easy "to wrap it up."

But apart from this consideration, anxious-meetings are objectionable, because they afford no sufficient time to ascertain whether convictions of sin are from enlightened views, deeply seated in the mind, or whether the present distress is not the mere offspring of the slavish fear of hell, powerfully excited by being told that damnation awaits one who does not instantly give his heart to God. They afford no sufficient time for the awakened to ascertain, amid their excited and bewildered feelings, the proper character of their wishes, desires, and feelings. The heart, we know, is incomparably deceitful. How often is the sincere and experienced Christian, after much deliberation, perplexed in trying to perceive the predominance of a holy principle amid the conflicts of sin and grace in his soul! What, then, must be the state of one who has just been awakened, who is called to answer from agitated and hurried feelings, and who has not any acquaintance with the proper evidences of the new birth! Many an answer has been given to questions in anxious-meetings, without due and prayerful examination; and when a sinner has once committed himself, and been hurried into the communion of the Church in this way, he settles down into the opinion that he is a Christian, and also that religion is easily acquired; that you can believe when you please, and be converted just as easy as to remain unconverted. Converts of this description will, when their zeal wears a little out, trouble the Church, and prepare for more serious and disastrous changes.

4. I shall not detail any additional considerations, save one. It is this: *For no useful purpose is there a necessity for anxious-meetings.* There have been extensive awakenings, and great revivals, in Europe and America; revivals, the happy effects of which have been seen for two generations, and during half a century, without anxious-meetings, and their usual concomitants. When we therefore look at the evils springing from them, we must say they are not even expedient.

*Second.* But the pastor, during a general awakening, must see to it that he does not preach imprudently nor erroneously.

Much evil has arisen from wrong preachings during excitements. From this source have flowed many fanatical sects. Exceedingly careful therefore should the pastor be, that he preach the words of soberness and truth, not only, but preach them in due harmony.

1. Preaching merely to excite the feelings, without enlightening the understanding; to create alarm, without exhibiting the Saviour in his offices and his moral excellences, is altogether wrong. If Christianity is not light, knowledge, wisdom, but only excitement and zeal, it cannot be from God. But men are so constituted that the doctrines which they receive are the impulse to their action; and if that doctrine be not true, it must be false. Simon, the sorcerer, was as much moved in his course by doctrine as the apostle Paul. All the wicked have their doctrines.

2. Preaching *merely* about damnation and the terrors of hell, so as to drive men into the communion of the Church through slavish fear, and to say little about Christ, and salvation through free grace, is not to preach the gospel, but to mislead sinners, and fill the Church with self-righteous professors, settled on their lees. Some are anxious only to awaken through fear; and the awakened, in their view, are the converted, if they will join the Church. This is awful deception. True religion springs from the knowledge and the reception of Christ; and it is love, and not fear, that lies at the foundation of evangelical repentance. While therefore the danger of sinners be exposed, let that "gospel which is the power of God unto salvation" be much preached.

3. But, above all, let *no errors* be preached, in order to increase the number of apparent converts. The whole system of Popery is founded on two principles, viz: that the depravity of the heart is easily overcome; and secondly, that slavish fear and self-righteousness constitute the very essence of religion. Now, in some excitements, of late, there is an alarming approximation towards those two principles by certain preachers; for they proclaim that it is as easy for a sinner to repent and believe, as to continue penitent and unbelieving. How a man who has experienced the power of religion can preach this, it is difficult to conceive. They try to hurry sinners into the Church, by saying that they must repent immediately or be lost for ever, which they have no authority for saying, and which the providence of God, in numerous instances, shows to be a falsehood after they have said it.

They make light of the resisting moral power of sin; converts to be the zealous members of a religious party, and the righteousness of Christ to be scarcely necessary for the sinner's pardon.

I shall not enlarge here, but proceed to observe, that all such errors will show their unhappy effects, both amid and after excitements. Let, then, the pastor make no compromise with human depravity, and thereby set aside the necessity of the agency of the Holy Spirit in conversion, for this error tends directly to Socinianism. Let him preach the truth with all solemnity, and leave it to work its way, through the operations of a higher power. Let his aim be to humble the sinner deeply, to make him solicitous to experience those divine influences, without which the dead may indeed be dressed up in the garments of the living, and be changed into nominal Christians and self-righteous professors, but cannot be made *to live*. Let him, in a word, so preach "that Christ shall be seen to be," in the work of salvation, what Paul describes him to be, "all in all."

We shall close this lecture with a few additional directions.

(1.) Let the pastor set his face against every thing during a religious awakening that verges towards *undue excitement and fanaticism*; inculcating the importance of secret prayer, searchings of Scripture, and careful examinations, as the heart is deceitful above all things, and as every grace of the divine life has its counterfeit. Good will arise from showing the difference between true and false repentance, living and dead faith, false and true hope.

(2.) Let the pastor dwell much, in his sermons, *on the necessity of humility and poverty of spirit*; discountenancing forwardness, rashness, and extravagance of every kind, which in some new professors are apt to appear under the name of zeal for religion. It is by the sweetness of holiness, and tenderness of love, and not by the fire of zeal, that our religion is to recommend itself to others.

(3.) Let the pastor not be too hasty in showing his new converts, in calling them up *to pray frequently in public prayer-meetings*, but rely more upon the prayers of old and experienced Christians. Some men become professors at such times who are naturally talkative and eloquent; hence they grow before others in the gift of prayer. Of these gifted men in prayer let the pastor beware. They soon learn to know that they have a superior gift. They often, when encouraged, assume too much, and seek to be leaders.

Almost all who trouble a church, in and after an excitement, are those who have much gift in prayer, with little grace.

(4.) Let the pastor watch over *his own spirit*. Sometimes it happens, not only that his own natural ardor of mind is much increased in a season of awakening, but that so many ardent minds are brought near and around him, that he is liable to be unduly excited, and in this state to say and do things which ought to be left unsaid and undone. Davenport split upon this rock; and Whitefield committed, in the ardor of his first successful ministry, many errors which he in after life acknowledged and regretted. Let the pastor, then, be unusually sober and watchful. To operate in an extensive revival, and to maintain a dignified and exalted character, requires much grace.

(5.) Let the pastor do his utmost *to keep down the spirit of censoriousness*, which is liable to arise and wax strong under a general awakening. The subjects of such awakening are excited, and in this state they are often seen to judge rashly concerning the state of others, and to speak of those Christians who do not exhibit the like warmth, as having no religion, as being unconverted, and enemies to God's work. Ah! let us be careful here, walking humbly and inoffensively, and pitying those who lag behind, and praying for them, instead of using censorious language. Some of these laggards-behind have gone on steadily in their Christian course, when bright stars have fallen, and been extinguished. "Be not high-minded, but fear."●

(6.) Let the pastor call loudly for *the proper fruits of conversion*, in a life of godliness, in good works; and require that Christians should do more than others, and exhibit a sterling and elevated morality.

But let him not, in the midst of an awakening, divert the attention of the people from religion to the building of a new house of worship, or set them about raising his own salary. "There is a time for all things."

(7.) Let not the pastor so talk, or preach, as if there could be no religion without *excitement*. Into this serious error some have fallen. Hence, when the awakening ceased, instead of rejoicing in the piety and order of the Church, they have been dissatisfied, and run into measures calculated to produce artificial excitements.

(8.) Let the pastor *not run to publish in the newspapers* an account

of the revival; and if he be called upon by distant Christian friends to write such an account for their information, let him avoid all exaggeration and vamping. Let his account be modest and simple, praising God, and forgetting himself.

Such extravagant accounts have been published as to sink revivals in the public estimation.

(9.) Let the pastor be careful to have, himself, a *private conversation* with every one who professes to be exercised in religion, and who offers for full communion. Such private converse and examination, as it admits of every thing being said with deliberation, and of the unqualified being kept back by tender advices, without painning their minds, is all-important, and the neglect of it has led to great evils. In many places where awakenings have existed, pastors have preached, and presently twenty or twenty-five have offered themselves for admission, one half of whom have not conversed with the pastor. Now, in such a collection, the examination of individuals, considering that all are more or less affected, must be slight. But what is worse, individuals are brought under temptation to say any thing rather than not be admitted with others. To which, let me add:

10. Let the pastor, after conversing with individuals, seek from Christians who dwell near them information concerning them as exercised and converted persons.

## LECTURE XXXVI.

### PASTORAL DUTIES—THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

#### PASTORAL INSTRUCTION BY EXAMPLE.

IN one of our early Lectures on Pastoral Theology, it was said that the duties of the pastoral office may be comprehended under the terms instruction and government; and that instruction comprises two things, viz: First. Instruction by words; and, Second. Instruction by example.

How the pastor is to instruct by *words*, in the various pastoral duties of praying, preaching, administering the sacraments, catechizing, and visiting families and individuals, we have shown in the preceding lectures.

We must now direct your attention to the pastoral duty of instructing those under his charge by his **CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE**. Precept teaches, but example moves.

That the Christian pastor is to promote the interests of the gospel by his example, is a fact so obvious, that were nothing said in Scripture on this subject, we should infer it from the connection which his office has with the great end which the gospel is intended to subserve, under the moral government of God. But the Holy Spirit has spoken very particularly by Paul in 1 Tim. iv. 12: "Be thou an example to the believers." "Example," "*τυπος*," "a figure, model, pattern." Here the word is used figuratively, and has an allusion to those who taught the art of writing, and placed before their scholars "copies" to be imitated. Now, such copies should the lives of Christian pastors be. The epistles of Paul to Timothy afford other passages, which have in view the same important object.

What Christian ministers ought to be, is plainly to be perceived in those places where the Saviour calls them "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth."

We hasten, then, to observe, that if the pastor is to instruct by his *example*, its great lineaments must be displayed in three particulars, viz:

I. In the performance of duties required.

II. In avoiding those vices which are forbidden. And,

III. In bearing trials with patience and fortitude.

In the performance of duties required, the pastor must be an example to the people committed to his care, and to all around him.

I. The duties required of us, it is well known, respect, first, God; second, our fellow-men; and, third, ourselves.

1. The duties which we owe to GOD, consist,

(1.) In holy affections of the heart, and in those effects which such affections, wherever they exist, produce in the conduct of life.

(2.) Our affections towards God cannot be seen by others as they exist in the mind, but are to be perceived through our temper and our conformity to the Divine will, expressed in the Sacred Scriptures.

Now, in such conformity of temper and life, the Christian pastor must be an "example to others." Eminent piety should appear in his temper. "Holiness unto the Lord" should be inscribed upon all his conduct.

(3.) In particular, he should set himself to imitate his divine Master. Paul did this; and in doing this, he knew that his example would be a proper pattern for others to copy after. "Be ye followers of me," said he, "even as I also am of Christ."

In copying after the example of the Saviour, the Christian pastor,

(4.) Will show that he loves God *above all*; and that this supreme love of God prompts him to take the deepest interest in the promotion of the glory of God, and to make that glory the great end to which he refers his thoughts and actions.

He will also, in imitation of his Master, "give himself unto prayer, reverence God's Word, and observe the ordinances of God's house. These sacred ordinances, I need not say, must be

observed by the pastor in the exercise of faith, hope, and love, in a manner externally solemn, and comporting with their sanctity and design.

Especially must the pastor religiously devote to God that portion of time called *the Lord's day*. But I need not enlarge here, but remark further,

2. That the pastor must be an example in the performance of those duties *which respect our fellow-men*. Those duties are various. They relate to different persons, and if neglected, will expose the pastor to severe animadversions. Let a minister be learned and eloquent; let him talk very piously; yet if he be unjust in his censures, unfaithful to his word, unkind in his disposition, avaricious, quarrelsome, proud and obstinate, he will command little respect. His morality should be more elevated and pure; his self-denial with respect to worldly enjoyments more decided; and his whole conduct towards others more expressive of the kind and benevolent affections than those of ordinary characters.

(1.) He should be *rigidly just and honest in his dealings*. Many will endeavor to take advantage of him in trade and in market. He will be cheated in bargaining, even by professors of religion; but be it so: rather than imitate such in talents and arts of this kind, let him *suffer loss*, and appear a simpleton in bargaining rather than a knave.

I shall not enter into particulars. At the commencement of these lectures, and when speaking of the qualifications for the pastoral office, I had occasion to speak of *various graces* which regulate and adorn the conversation of ministers of the Word whom God approves. Let it be sufficient to observe,

(2.) That the pastor should give unequivocal evidence of being a "*lover of good men*." He must converse with all; but it should be seen that he *holds in higher esteem*, and draws into his intimacy and confidence persons of distinguished piety. Unhappily this is not always done by those who have the oversight of a church. There are pastors who keep the pious who are poor, and who are, though well to live, undistinguished in the world of fashion and wealth, at a distance from them, while their intimate friends and associates are those who exhibit very little of the divine life, but are the great and elevated in society. Does not the apostle James speak pointedly in reproof of such conduct, James ii.?

and is not the adage true, when applied to ministers and their associates, "that birds of a feather will flock together?" How exemplary in this respect were those eminent servants of Christ who have just gone home, Rodgers, Livingston, Witherspoon, and Dwight; they treated the irreligiously great with polite attention, and were willing that they should bring gold and fine linen to aid in the structure of the tabernacle; but their intimate and confidential friends were those who were known to love their Master and their Saviour in sincerity.

So also we should be respectful to the irreligious who are elevated in society, and try to save their souls; but we should so act as never to leave it a matter of doubt by any, *that we love the pious most, though their circumstances in life may be ordinary.* We must be decidedly "lovers of good men;" and also,

(3.) "Lovers of *hospitality*," temperate in all things, humble and harmless.

(4.) Especially should a Christian pastor show that he can *endure injuries with patience*; that he can forgive those who despitefully use him; and not only suffer in the spirit of meekness, but, in his intercourse with various classes of men, manifest a kind, benevolent, merciful, and sweet disposition. If a pastor is ready to take fire at every injury he receives, or discovers in his intercourse with men a hasty and litigious spirit, he will ill recommend the religion of Jesus to others. Chrysostom and Martin Luther often injured the cause of Christ by their violent passions.

If a pastor is very zealous in preaching the duty of contributing to the funds of missionary and benevolent societies, while he manifests himself an avaricious and niggardly disposition, the inconsistency will soon be perceived, and injure both his character and ministry. But in showing mercy and doing good, let him in the exercise of sound discretion go to the extent of his temporal means, and by his example stimulate his flock "to go and do likewise."

It is an honor to the ministry at this day, that they lead in all benevolent and useful undertakings. Certain it is, "good will to men" should be inscribed upon their conduct, as it is upon their religion.

I have spoken of prudence and other virtues before. I shall hasten to say,

(5.) That *in his own family*, the pastor, in performing the duties which relate to others, must exhibit a fair example of the benign and blessed effects of that religion of which he is a teacher.

He must rule his own house well; this must be done by regular domestic worship, by instruction, by reproof, and by the example of a sweet and holy temper and carriage.

The eyes of parishioners look sharp into a pastor's dwelling, and mark his temper and habits there. They want to know what he is at home, and they have a right to know it; though the means by which some attempt to acquire this knowledge are base and reprehensible. They will employ servants to carry news, and by this very course corrupt good servants, and finally disturb in no small degree the peace of a pastor's family. You will know more of these facts hereafter.

But, in preparation for these and other domestic trials, resolve to observe double circumspection in your own house. Put no confidence in servants, unless their goodness and fidelity have been long tried and clearly evinced; and let your whole conduct in your family be dignified and pious. Guard against ill-temper; make those near you to respect, if they will not love you; and if children and servants will be wicked, let them have no excuse for their conduct, either in your laxity or undue rigor in the exercise of government, or in your careless walk and neglect of duty.

3. I shall not dwell upon the example which the pastor should exhibit in performing the duties which he owes *to himself and family*. For many things to be stated here will be mentioned in speaking,

II. Of that example which the pastor must set *in avoiding those vices which are forbidden*.

1. *Avarice* must be avoided. The pastor must not be "a lover of filthy lucre."

2. *Ambition* must be avoided. "He must not be high-minded." This passion—that is to say, an inordinate desire of honors and preferments—has given rise to many heresies, and been the parent of the whole Papal hierarchy. Under its influence, ministers envy one another, and defame one another. Under its influence a pastor is discontented with his situation among a plain people, and aims to occupy a great church in a great city, for which he is but slenderly qualified.

3. He must avoid *excess in eating and drinking*. "Gluttony" was formerly charged upon the clergy as being a very prevalent sin. The instances are at this day few. But it is to be lamented that so many ministers of the gospel have of late years been addicted to the intemperate use of spirituous liquor. Some bright stars have been extinguished by this low and beastly vice. To support, therefore, the character of the ministry, and to operate against a sin so exceedingly prevalent in this country, let pastors exhibit the greatest temperance. "They must not be given to wine:" nor is this sufficient; they must discountenance the unnecessary use of spirituous liquor by their example. They must be abstemious, sober, and self-denied.

4. To which let me add, that a pastor must avoid any thing that looks like *habitual fretfulness and discontentment*. Fretfulness will show itself in our domestic relations principally. It disturbs the peace of others; it renders us those who are hard to be pleased. Besides its sinfulness, it is in a gospel minister *an undignified habit*, and calculated to render his company very disagreeable, if not disgusting.

From his own house, a pastor may carry this unhappy temper into his pastoral relations, and let it appear in conversation and at consistorial meetings. Whatever then a people may do to render his situation comfortable, he is not satisfied. His mind is full of discontent, and his mouth is full of complaints and groanings. He is always overloaded with troubles. Every thing disturbs him. Such a pastor ought to inquire whether he finds substantial *rest* in religion; and whether an habitually discontented person can be at peace with God, though he be at war with his divine providence. How different was Paul's temper! and how different ought every Christian pastor to be! Certain it is, a minister of Christ should be an example in amiability of disposition and in contentment of mind. This leads me to observe, that his example should extend,

5. To his *bearing with firmness* the adversities by which he is tried.

The Holy Spirit enjoins it upon all Christians to "be patient in tribulation," and "to endure hardships, like good soldiers of Jesus Christ;" and should not the Christian pastor go before his flock in the performance of this duty?

When he is afflicted in his family, shall he repine, and discover excessive sorrow? No; he must set a bright example of resignation.

6. When he is persecuted abroad, *he acts ill* if he rushes into contentions, displays great irritation, and seeks revenge. Let him show that he can bear patiently, suffer unrighteously, and yet be happy, because "the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake." But I shall dismiss this branch of the subject with observing,

That the necessity and importance of such an example as we have insisted upon, are so evident, that to detail the proofs at large to those who believe the Scriptures, and desire to serve the Lord Christ in the ministry of his Word, would be almost wasting time. I shall therefore just remark, that such a holy example by a pastor is important,

(1.) Because the nature of the pastoral office and all its obligations require it.

(2.) Because, without it, a Christian minister injures the cause which his public discourses profess to advocate. He grieves the pious, upholds the wicked, exposes religion to the ridicule of its enemies, brings reproach upon the ministry, destroys his own usefulness, and retards the growth of the Church, etc., etc.

Such an example is necessary, also,

(3.) Because it is the only evidence which the pastor can give of his own conversion, and of his sincerity in his sacred profession. His words of pious import *are worse than nothing*, if contradicted by his temper and conduct, etc.

(4.) Because a pastor who is wanting in pious example *displeases* God. See Lev. x.

(5.) Because the influence of example is required to *influence* the minds of the people. And,

(6.) Because a pastor's own interest, comfort, peace, and usefulness, stand *inseparably connected* with such example. The most unhappy beings on the face of the globe are usually those who preach the gospel, and set a perverse example to others. They are at war with their own consciences, and who does not despise them?

† III. I shall now conclude these Lectures on Pastoral Theology, with first offering some considerations exciting to the faithful per-

formance of pastoral duties; and, second, presenting additional considerations to support and comfort faithful pastors *under the difficulties and trials of the gospel ministry*. These two particulars comprehend the last branch of pastoral theology; for you remember the definition formerly given of this theology, "that it is a science which treats, not only of the qualifications and duties, but also of the trials, encouragements, and consolations of the Evangelical Pastor."

1. In offering, then, some excitements to the faithful discharge of pastoral duties, I proceed to observe, that the Christian pastor may be animated to holy diligence by the consideration,

(1.) That he derives his commission from God, and that in this great work he is a special servant of, and a fellow-laborer together with, God. This consideration dwelt upon the mind of the apostle Paul, and animated him in his course. "I serve God, and I am his," was his exciting reflection. "Whose I am, whom I serve."

A similar commission had the Master of assemblies. The Son of God came and preached the gospel. Angels have been delighted to be, so far as they could, employed in this noble service. The best and noblest of men have been engaged in it, and endured its various trials. Prophets and apostles are the predecessors of the ministers of the Word.

(2.) Another animating consideration to the Evangelical Pastor, is that which the design and object of his office afford.

Why has God instituted the gospel ministry? To save immortal souls! What is the *end* for which a *divine commission* to preach the Word is put into the hands of certain men? It is not a commission to heal bodily sickness, nor to instruct men in the arts and sciences; not to deliver lectures on policy and government, but to make known the great salvation of God, and to act in subordination to the Saviour himself, in plucking brands out of the burning, and destroying the kingdom of darkness. How inferior is every other work in which the powers of intelligent creatures can be employed, when compared with this! What high interests are here involved! Look back, and compare the course of Paul the apostle with that of Alexander the Great! The one is employed in a work of heavenly benevolence, and, amid all his sufferings and contumelies, sustains the exalted character of one of the greatest benefactors of the human race; the other resembles

the lion, rushing forward to exhibit his strength in slaying more than he can devour.

Let the Christian pastor often reflect upon the inestimable value of one precious soul; and that in the gospel service he is to work for the saving of souls; and that through the eternal ages and in brighter worlds it may often be said of him, that he was instrumental in saving *more souls than one*, to be his companions in bliss.

(3.) But, in addition, to those powerful considerations, what excitement must the Evangelical Pastor find, in the thought of what he *owes* to that *Saviour* who died for him on the tree of the cross, and through whose infinite compassions he has been enrolled among the redeemed from everlasting destruction!

Why did Saul of Tarsus hasten, after his conversion, from Damascus into the regions of Arabia, to preach the gospel? Why did he *speed* his course afterwards to the cities and provinces of the Gentiles, to make known that Jesus was the Saviour of the world, and that sinners might "be reconciled to God by his death?" Did he not know that the world would hate and persecute him, that the Jews would conspire against him to kill him, and that the abettors of idolatry would show him no mercy? Yes, he knew it all; and he soon felt the keenness of those resentments, the cruelties of those hatreds, which spring from opposition in religion. Why then did he not "confer with flesh and blood," and decline "to serve the Lord Christ?" Paul tells us the reason: "His grace to me," he says, "was exceeding abundant." I was in the very suburbs of hell, but his mercy interposed; his arm snatched me out of the bottomless pit, into which I was ready to fall; never shall I be able to repay the debt of gratitude which I owe him. Let my sufferings and trials in the gospel service be what they may, I will preach "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." I will tell lost sinners that there is a Saviour of infinite power and compassion, and urge them to come to him. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

And should not the same grateful and noble sentiment live in the heart of every Christian pastor "whose name is now written up among the living in Jerusalem?" Who and what is he? Does he not owe as much to the Lord Jesus Christ as Paul did? Is he not saved out of the same pit, by the same grace, and to be an

heir of the same eternal glory? Can he be too thankful? can he love too much, and can he do and suffer too much in evidence of his gratitude and affection?

Let then the pastor feel all his indebtedness to his Redeemer, and he will go on in his service with a spirit that no discouragements can break, with a courage that no difficulties can deter.

2. But the gospel service, if there be trials of a peculiar kind connected with it, has its peculiar consolations too. Let these consolations be his additional excitement to duty.

(1.) His Master is with him. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

(2.) The Spirit of God is promised to be his helper and comforter, so that he shall say from experience, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

(3.) He has the sweet consciousness arising from his engagedness in a work calculated to promote the best interests of men.

(4.) And he has the promise that he shall not labor in vain, nor lose his reward. "If he suffer with his Saviour, he shall also reign with him." "If he turn many to righteousness, he shall shine as a star in the midst of the firmament." It was to his ministers particularly that the Saviour said: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

What were the consolations of the mighty conquerors of the world, of Julius Cæsar, Tamerlane, and others, when compared with those of Paul or Peter, who, looking upon their success in the conflict with the powers of sin and darkness, and upon intelligent creatures turned from lying vanities to God, could say, "Ye are our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing!" Mark the conqueror of the world, Alexander the Great, in his last moments, when, recovering from a fit of inebriation, he bequeaths a kingdom which he could no longer hold "to the most worthy;" and then turn to the apostle of the Gentiles, who is heard to say: "The hour of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day."

But if the consolations of the faithful pastor are so rich, how sad must be the feelings, how dark the prospects of the minister of Christ who has become tired of his service, and returned to the

friendship of the world, and who has been instrumental, by his unfaithfulness and example, in preventing sinners from entering into the kingdom of heaven!

(5.) It remains to be observed, that the Evangelical Pastor is further excited to labor in the cause of his Master, by the consideration that he shall soon be called to render in his account of the manner in which he has executed the *trust* reposed in him.

The years of human life here are few; the years expended in the gospel ministry usually one half less. Then comes eternity with its awful realities. Then follows judgment with its solemn scenes. Then Jesus shall descend from heaven, and the pastor and his flock shall appear before him to give their account; account by the pastor, of what? of the praises which he has received as a pulpit orator, of the riches which he has amassed, of the honors which he has acquired? No; but of the good he has attempted to do, by his faithfulness and example in converting sinners, in opposing the progress of error and delusion, in maintaining and propagating sound doctrine, in pressing sinners to enter in at the strait gate, and in building up the Church of God.

Let the pastor think of this solemn account, and he will be steadfast amid trials, and seek to be approved in the last great day by Him who shall judge the quick and the dead.

Let me now present some *additional considerations*, to support faithful pastors under trials inseparable from the sacred ministry.

These trials, creating difficulties, are of two kinds, each of which has its appropriate source of consolation.

*First.* The first kind are *common*, because all faithful ministers and all true Christians in a certain measure participate in them. For the pastor is exposed to the common afflictions of life. He also may lose his health, his property, his dearest relatives and friends. He also walks in an ensnaring world, and is exposed to the fiery darts of the Evil One. But apart from these ordinary afflictions, the faithful pastor, in common with his brethren in the gospel ministry, has to encounter certain difficulties which meet him in the execution of his office. The temper and habits of the world are opposed to the truths and precepts of religion; the rich and great and fashionable are averse to practical godliness; and the wicked are anxious to free themselves from every restraint which the divine laws impose upon them as intelligent creatures.

Hence ministers of the Word are called to endure "the contradiction of sinners;" a contradiction which sometimes uses all the weapons of infidelity and false philosophy, and sometimes discovers itself in direct enmity. Hence they are exposed to the opposition which the course of *fashion* creates, and are obliged to stem a torrent which sets with a mighty force against all seriousness and living unto God.

But the ministers of the Word have also to contend with *sin* in their own hearts, and are exposed to particular assaults of the Adversary. The flesh tempts at one time to slothfulness and laxity, at another time to discouragements; and if the heart through grace be strong, and external trials be few, ministers will then have much to vex and try them in their own families. The Devil has often much to do in the families of faithful ministers, so that they are often obliged to go bowed down with domestic troubles into the sanctuary.

But under the pressure of these various trials, there are *three sources* whence the pastor may draw consolation.

1. If the affliction be ordinary, he has all the precious promises given to the children of God for his consolation.

If the trial be one connected with his office, and if it be on account of his attachment to God and his cause, and his faithfulness in doing the work of the Lord, he may confidently *ask* for the Divine help, and *rest assured* that God will either remove it, or overrule it for good. It is to his ministers particularly that it is said, under the pressure of affliction, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is perfect in thy weakness."

A faithful servant in executing his Master's will never fails of protection. That protection is sometimes given by converting the worst enemies into the best friends; sometimes it is imparted by invigorating the graces of the Spirit in the heart of the pastor, so that he preaches and prays better, and has more seals to his ministry, brighter evidence of his own interest in the Divine love under afflictions than in visible prosperity.

The happiest times of a pastor are not those in which he is most free from trial. Indeed, at such times, when there is tranquillity all around him, let him guard against inward declensions and the neglect of duty. But,

2. Opposition of a certain kind is an evidence that a pastor is

well employed. He may therefore rejoice under the trials which that opposition creates.

Paul and Silas drew the richest consolations from this source. Their imprisonment at Philippi was the effect of their ministerial faithfulness, zeal, and success. They knew it; and were heard at midnight to pray to God not only, but to sing his praises.

Mr. Rothwell was a preacher in the Establishment, careless and vicious, when he was awakened. His conscience was first aroused by a few words spoken by an aged Puritan minister, who found him playing at bowls with some of his idle parishioners. After his conversion, he became a most powerful and zealous servant of Christ; in consequence of which he was known in England by the name of "Bold Rothwell."

This man received a call from Berwick-upon-Tweed, and his friends attempted to dissuade him from accepting the call, because the people of Berwick were wicked, and would give him much trouble. To whom Rothwell replied, "that since he knew the grace of God, he and the Devil had been at perpetual variance; and if he thought they should live in peace at Berwick, he would not go there."

It is then an honor, and there is a consolation in it, to have trials resulting from diligence in the Saviour's service; but to take this comfort, the pastor must be satisfied that his trials spring from right conduct in the ministry, and not from indiscretion, rashness, and violence of temper.

3. The pastor may be supported by the thought that his trials afford him an opportunity of setting an example before his flock—how trials and temptations ought to be borne.

*Second.* The second kind of trials to which the Evangelical Pastor is exposed, may be denominated *peculiar*, or less frequent.

These trials it will not be in my power to enumerate fully. I shall therefore hint at two only.

1. There is a trial which relates to a pastor's family. In his settlement he is sometimes removed, together with his wife, from all their kindred, and placed among those whose family connections in his congregation are strong; and in consequence of this connection, he is made to experience some disagreeable and vexatious things. But let him in such circumstances reflect that God can raise him up friends, even among strangers, to counteract the influence of family combinations, and that God will surely reduce

that family, that prefers their family interest to his glory and the good of his Church. You will see much to remind you of these observations, if you are permitted to expend a few years in a pastoral charge.

2. Another trial of a pastor is this: he sometimes has little visible blessing upon his labors. Years roll on, and few are awakened and converted by his preaching. His want of success may disturb his mind, and tempt him to think that he has not entered the gospel ministry with the approbation of God, or that he is not qualified for the solemn work.

Under the distressing influence of this particular trial, the consolations which Scripture facts offer are *these*:

(1.) The example of the Saviour and his apostles. Our Lord was unsuccessful in his public ministry of the Word among the Jews. Of Jerusalem he said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not." In several places the people rejected him openly.

His apostles achieved brilliant victories; but there were places where even they who were endued with extraordinary gifts were constrained to exclaim: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"

And if Christ and his apostles were thus left to see the Word attended *with no saving efficacy* among many who heard them, let not the Evangelical Pastor draw any rash conclusion affecting his own ministry. "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord."

(2.) Again: Let the Evangelical Pastor reflect, that in all his doings he must submit to and adore the Divine Sovereignty. That Sovereignty is pleased to appoint some of his servants to reap, and others to sow; some to dig up and stir the ground; some to plant, and others to water. That Sovereignty is pleased to use one minister more to render sinners inexcusable in their rebellion against Heaven, than to convert them; while another minister, of inferior talents and piety to the former, is a distinguished instrument in the Divine hand for general awakening and conversion. The prophet Elijah was employed in Israel to expose in a greater light the wickedness of Ahab, the witchcrafts of Jezebel, and the inexcusable idolatrous attachments of the

people. George Whitefield was used to arouse sinners, that the Spirit of God might work repentance in them, and bring them to the Saviour.

Let the minister of Christ continue to labor diligently. This is duty; but it is not duty to prescribe to Jehovah what particular use he shall make of those labors.

(3.) Again: It becomes the Evangelical Pastor to reflect, that though he may not immediately reap the fruits of his labors, yet that the seed sown may after a while spring up, and bless him with a joyful harvest. Rev. Mr. Jones, who was pastor of the Presbyterian church, before the American war, at Morristown, in this State, (N. J.,) said that he labored twenty years in that place with very little visible effect; but a blessing came at length, in a powerful work of God, which resulted in the conversion of many.

A minister may not live to see the fruits of his labors. This was the case of Rev. Mr. Vredenburg, of Somerville. It was acknowledged by Christian people that those serious impressions which resulted in an extensive awakening began under his ministry, though he did not live to witness all the good he had done.

The labors of a minister may be richly blessed among the rising generation, though their fathers should remain obstinate in their impenitency. Moses and Joshua could not prevail with those who came out of Egypt to manifest the "obedience of faith;" but their ministry was productive of the most happy effects in the souls of their children.

Let, then, the pastor not judge hastily respecting the results of his labors, but work on; for let it be observed once again,

(4.) That though not one soul should be converted under his ministry, yet that God will ultimately be glorified by the exertions of the faithful pastor, and the reward of grace promised to those who are faithful in God's house, as was Moses, will not be the less certain. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Here, you observe, the promise is not attached, is not suspended upon success, but upon faithfulness. Who had the distinguished honor of being translated bodily into heaven? *Enoch and Elijah*; yet they were remarkably unsuccessful, though incorruptibly faithful. It is the privilege of every good pastor to say: "Though Israel be not gathered, yet I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." But,

(5.) Lastly: Let the pastor reflect, that he is *not useless* because sinners are not awakened and converted under his ministry. If not one is converted, many of God's dear children may be fed, edified, built up, and comforted. Much wickedness may be restrained, and the march of many errors may be arrested, and thus the labors of a minister may operate directly to the preservation of the Church. Be faithful, if you become ministers of the Word; be faithful and prudent, and leave the rest to God.

FINIS.













