

THE AMERICAN

**NATIONAL PREACHER;**

*and village pulpit*

OR ORIGINAL

**MONTHLY SERMONS**

FROM

LIVING MINISTERS OF THE UNITED STATES,

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EDITED BY

AUSTIN DICKINSON, A.M.

NEW-YORK.

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"The freedom and power of the press, in a community like ours, is a price put into our hands, not only to get wisdom, but to impart it to *others*, and to *all*. We are under sacred obligations, then, of which we cannot divest ourselves, to *use* this power, and to use it *well*."

"My people are destroyed, for lack of knowledge."—*Hosea* iv. 6.

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**VOL. III.**

**FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING JUNE 1828.**

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*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

**BE IT REMEMBERED**, That on the 23d day of May, A. D. 1826, in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Austin Dickinson, of the said District, hath deposited in this (L. S.) office the title of a Book, or Periodical Work, the right whereof he claims as Editor and Proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"The National Preacher: or Monthly Sermons from Living Ministers. Edited by Rev. Austin Dickinson, New-York."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to an act, entitled "An Act, supplementary to an act, entitled An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

JAMES DILL,

*Clerk of the Southern District of New-York.*

## PREFACE TO VOL. III.

IN the course of this Volume, from fourteen to twenty-five thousand Numbers have been published monthly ; making about two hundred thousand during the year. They have found their way into most parts of the United States, and, some of them, to other quarters of the globe. What influence they may silently exert, in the conference room, the family circle, or the retired chamber ; or what bearings some of them may have on the nation, and the heathen world, will be told, when "God shall bring every work into Judgment."

In the first Number, the youthful Christian is summoned to a lofty standard of intellectual and moral excellence ; and that perfect EXAMPLE is presented, which should be imitated by all mankind. In the next, is exhibited the blessed influence of divine truth, on the understanding and heart. In the third, the delusive hope which some cherish, that after death it shall be as well with the wicked as with the righteous, is effectually exposed. And the fourth should convict all self-destroyers, of the exceeding malignity of sin ; and arouse them to seek help, where only it can be found. The next Number illustrates in what manner the power of Truth and Love may and must be exerted for renovating the world. The sixth furnishes weighty considerations in behalf of Prayer for rulers. And the seventh should convince both ministers and churches, of their sad defection from the example of Christ and his apostles ; and of their peculiar and increasing responsibilities. The one which follows, will be read with interest, by all who would grow in the likeness of their Redeemer and God. In the ninth Number, the delaying sinner may see, amid the beams of God's goodness, his own ingratitude, guilt, and danger ; and the mere moralist and philosophical christian may perceive the striking contrast between his views and feelings, and those of the true believer. In Number ten, the statesman and patriot may learn, how his country's glory and happiness may be effectually secured, or inevitably lost. In the next, all may learn the unchanging character of the God with whom they have to do ; and the wisdom of submitting, without reserve, to his sovereign will. And the concluding Number presents an illustrious example of that full assurance of faith and hope, which the diligent Christian may attain.

While no part of a preacher's duty will be undervalued, it is intended, hereafter, to insert a greater proportion of such Sermons, as are designed, by divine help, to have an immediate and permanent effect on *sinners*. Notwithstanding mankind are yet mostly in rebellion against God, there is, perhaps, from the sweetness and elevation of heavenly themes, a strong temptation to preach more frequently to saints, than is consistent with the rule of *giving to every one his portion in due season*. But he who keeps in view that great dividing line which extends alike through both worlds—who realizes that on the one side is nought but rebellion and suffering, and on the other, *joy unspeakable and full of glory*—he surely may even *forget* those already gained, if so doing, he can *persuade others* to turn, ere they reach the *impassable gulf*.

To despair of any, not yet under the final reprobation of God, is *unchristian*—is dishonorable, alike to the word, and blood, and Spirit of Christ, and to the Hearer of prayer. And, at the same time, the possibility of losing a soul by delay, is too tremendously awful, to allow any who have *words of eternal life* to dispense, ever to encourage *waiting in sin* till to-morrow.

The Sermons of this Volume, it is seen, are chiefly from those, who, in the ordinary course of Providence, must soon finish their testimony on earth. That they may have their full reward in heaven, and that the daily increasing circulation of this work may help to inspire others so to write for it, as to *save themselves and them that read*, is the fervent prayer and hope of the

NEW-YORK, MAY, 1829.

EDITOR.

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THE  
**NATIONAL PREACHER.**

Go...Teach all Nations....Matt. xxviii. 19.

Vol. III.

NEW-YORK, DECEMBER, 1828.

No. 7.

**SERMON XLVIII.**

Preached before the Clergy, at the Commencement of Williams College, Sept. 3, 1828.

By RICHARD S. STORRS, A.M.

BRAINTREE, MASSACHUSETTS.

CHRISTIAN AND MINISTERIAL SELF-DENIAL AND FAITHFULNESS  
URGED FROM THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

2 CORINTHIANS, viii. 9.—*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.*

THE example of Christ is often urged in Scripture, as a powerful motive to benevolence. It is with his eye fixed on the blessed Redeemer, that the apostle here urges the Corinthians to abound in liberality. He had, indeed, just drawn a powerful argument from the zeal of the poor and persecuted churches of Macedonia; and another, from the faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and diligence of the Corinthians themselves. But the last and most weighty argument is stated in the words of the text: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The context sufficiently determines the signification of the word "grace," as here used. It is "the *kindness* and love of God our Saviour" toward a fallen world.

I can only *glance* at the several topics suggested by the apostle in illustration of that grace which so often warmed his heart, and inspired his tongue: and I would do this, with a view simply to the enforcement of some duties obviously devolving on Christians and Christian ministers of this age.

I. We shall not duly estimate the grace of Christ, without keeping in view the glory he had with the Father before the world was; or the riches he possessed in eternity. "All things," says he, "that the Father hath, are mine." "By him were all things *created*, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers—all things were created by him, and for him." The wealth of the universe, then, was his, by right of creation; and to him it belongs to dispose of all things at his pleasure. Still,

II. "For our sakes he became poor;" and when a certain Scribe said to him, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest," he received for answer, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." "He made himself of no re-

the kingdom of darkness, that has not caused gnashing of teeth! Even the labours of infidelity itself, and all the stratagems employed to obstruct the march of truth, have contributed to its furtherance. The wrath of man praises God; and the remainder of wrath is restrained. Surely, the Most High hath girded his sword upon his thigh—and rides forth prosperously in the cause of truth and meekness—commanding all who have enlisted in his service, to go on with him from conquering to conquer, till the nations shall be subdued before him, and till a great voice shall be heard out of heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

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## SERMON XLIX.

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Preached before the Synod of Virginia, at Staunton, Oct. 22, 1822.

BY GEORGE A. BAXTER, D.D.

President of Washington College, Virginia.

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### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY AND CHURCH.

1 TIMOTHY iii. 15.—*That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

THE Church of God is undoubtedly the most important institution in the world. It connects itself, in a multiplicity of ways, with all the important interests of man. Were a community sunk in the lowest state of misery; distracted and degraded by every species of vice; the introduction of the pure gospel among them, would immediately renovate their condition; they would rise into a state of order and happiness. On the other hand, should the most moral and happy people apostatize from the faith of the gospel, and fall into gross error, that error would lead to vice, and their best institutions would decline. The truth of these observations is attested by the whole history of human affairs; and yet religion produces these results, not as its principal object, but in an indirect and collateral manner. The great object of religion is to train man for heaven; to prepare him for a state of happiness in worlds beyond the grave. But in preparing him for more perfect happiness above, it necessarily prepares him for happiness in the present state. It is hence a matter of the highest importance to mankind, that the affairs of religion should be wisely conducted. Indeed, among the many wonderful things connected with the gospel, I have often thought it not the least of its wonders, that we should have had this treasure in clay-vessels at all; that a system so evidently from heaven, and so connected with all the important destinies of the world, should have been intrusted, in any degree, to the management of imperfect man. But it has pleased Almighty God to honour his church and

people with a co-efficiency in these matters. His people are appointed to be fellow-workers with him, in bringing about the important purposes of the gospel : and this makes it a matter of unspeakable importance, that every one who sustains an office, or even a private station, in the church, should know how " to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

The text, and the occasion on which we are assembled, will lead us,

I. To consider how we ought to behave, as it respects the preaching of the gospel.

II. To make some general observations respecting the management of the church.

First ; *As it respects the preaching of the gospel.* While the church is considered as the pillar and ground of the truth, preaching must, beyond all question, be regarded as its most important duty. When I give this preference, it will not be understood that I mean to speak lightly of Bible societies, or Sunday schools, or any of those recent institutions, intended for spreading the knowledge of divine truth. These are among the glorious works of the church ; but the preaching of the gospel by the living voice, is essential to the life and existence of them all, and of the church itself ; it has, in all ages, been the principal instrument in the hand of God, by which the church has been sustained and advanced. Without the other institutions mentioned, the church has long existed ; and, to some extent, it has prospered. But go into a region where there is no preaching, and there you will find the church languishing, or dead ; you will find no Bible society, or Sabbath school ; but one general scene of spiritual desolation.

There is such fulness of precept and direction in the word of God, as to preaching, that it would seem at first view no difficult matter to ascertain our duty in this respect. But when we consider the importance of the business, in itself, and the consequences growing out of it—when we consider that a minister must rightly divide the word of truth, giving to every one his portion in due season ; and that to every hearer he will be a savour of life, or of death—we may well exclaim with the apostle, " Who is sufficient for these things ?"

There are many ways in which a preacher may fail in the execution of his trust. From inattention, he may be unacquainted with the wants of his people, and of course unable to supply them. The love of ease may prevent the efforts needful to enrich himself and his people with knowledge. But there is another principle, which I think lies at the root of ministerial unfaithfulness ; which slides very insensibly into the human heart ; and which has produced unspeakable mischief in the church : I mean a disposition to accommodate the truths of the gospel to the prevailing sentiments of the world ; or to form a compromise, between the doctrines of the cross and the feelings of the natural heart. Every pious minister, when attempting to preach the gospel, knows that he is about to deliver a message, most ungrateful to the ears of unregenerate men. Indeed there has never been any set of principles, or any system of truth on earth, which the world hates so much, as it hates the pure gospel of Christ. This at first view may appear strange ; it is,

in itself, a matter of curious speculation ; but it is undoubtedly true. The law of God reveals the condemnation of the sinner ; the gospel reveals his redemption ; and yet mankind hate the gospel more than they hate the law. In proof of this, it is only necessary to attend to the manner in which our Saviour, and many of his most faithful servants, have been treated. Moses established the law among the Israelites ; our Saviour established the gospel among the same people ; and yet the Saviour was persecuted with much deeper enmity than Moses. Indeed, there has never been such display of enmity on earth, as was manifested against the Saviour and many of his most faithful disciples. And the only cause of this enmity was, their determination to propagate the gospel. But this enmity of the human heart is the same in every age. And when a Christian minister is fully sensible of this fact ; when he knows that the message he is about to deliver, has so much opposition from the world to encounter, he is strongly prompted to change the aspect of that message ; and to substitute a little of his own wisdom, for the wisdom of God. And this he may do, in a manner very insensible to himself. It is not necessary, that he should say any thing untrue. He may keep himself within the bounds of orthodoxy ; and yet, by insisting on those parts of the system, which are least unpopular, he may keep back those truths, which humble the pride of the human heart ; which show the exceeding sinfulness of sin ; and which make the sinner feel his entire dependence on the sovereign mercy of God. The same principle of accommodating the doctrines of the cross to the sentiments of the world, has often given rise to the most dangerous speculations and refinements in divinity, and thus led the church into most destructive errors. This has undoubtedly been the cause of that tendency, which the church has manifested, in every age, to turn aside from the simplicity of the gospel.

There have been, as it appears to me, but two periods in the history of the church, in which the pure gospel was extensively preached with becoming pungency and faithfulness. One of those periods immediately followed the resurrection of our Saviour. But it was not long before various mixtures of heathen philosophy were sought for, with a view to make the gospel more acceptable to the world. The other period of pure preaching, was that of the glorious Reformation : and this period too was soon overclouded, and apparently from the same cause. The churches of Germany and France were soon filled with refinements and speculations, by which the purity of divine truth was defaced.

But while a disposition to accommodate the gospel to the taste of the world has perverted the matter of the Christian ministry, it has had a still more injurious effect on the *spirit* of preaching. When the ministry and the church entertain favourable expectations from the world, this insensibly leads to a spirit of formality, and false security. But, on the other hand, when a minister feels that the enmity of the world is against him ; and that, unless God is with him to bless his work, both the message and the preacher will be rejected with contempt ; then he has the strongest motives to a life of faith and prayer. Under this impression, in his closet, and in the preparation of his sermons, he

will be frequent and earnest in his applications to the throne of grace. And in the sacred desk, all his dependence will be on the blessing of God. I believe that this impression, that help for the dead in sin can only come from God, is the very life and soul of ministerial faithfulness; and I would rather have one sermon prepared in the fulness of effectual fervent prayer, than hundreds of sermons prepared with much study and little prayer. And I further believe, that this impression, that help must be had, and that help can only come from God, whether pertaining to temporal or spiritual things, has been the main-spring of effectual prayer, in every age of the world. It was this impression which gave to Jacob that persevering faith, which would take no denial; "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." This impression has pervaded every church in our own day, immediately previous to a revival of religion. Professors have seen and felt, that the spirit of the world was gaining ground, that piety was sinking in themselves and others, and that, unless God should appear, all would be lost; and this has brought them to a throne of grace, with that humility and holy importunity, which God always approves. It too often happens, indeed, that when a revival progresses with power and majesty, the church soon falls back into self-dependence and security; and then a lamentable reaction takes place.

It is also worthy of particular notice, that all those men, who have been distinguished instruments of good in the church, have been remarkable for prayer. Just as much distinguished for a life of prayer, as for a life of usefulness. This fact has been mentioned of Luther, of Calvin, of Whitefield; and we know it was the case of Paul himself, and of all the apostles. These men were placed in circumstances which made them feel their dependence on God at every step. They saw the church full of weakness, while its enemies were powerful and active. But are we not placed in circumstances which require the same reliance on Almighty grace? Is not the church always weak in itself? Were our eyes opened to perceive all the workings of the human heart throughout the world, we should see the church of God, as it were, on the verge of a volcano; and nothing but that power which governs the winds and the sea, restrains the secret fires of that volcano from bursting forth, and overwhelming every thing sacred.

I have dwelt the longer on this point, as I would, if I could, persuade the ministry, and the church, to withdraw all hopes and confidence from the world, and to rely on God to bless their efforts. I believe this is the first step towards the triumph of the gospel. There is, I believe, a mode of preaching and sustaining the gospel, which will make it completely irresistible. Let the gospel be affectionately preached, in its simplicity, without any compromise; and let it be supported by the faith, and love, and prayers of the church, and nothing will be able to stand before it. Its triumphant march is sure as the promise of God.

I have already alluded to two periods, in which the gospel was extensively preached in its purity; and in both those cases, the church rose from a state of great apparent weakness, to a state of triumph and victory; and the victory continued, as long as the faithful preaching continued.

Had we been present in that upper chamber, to which the disciples resorted

after the crucifixion ; had we seen how exceedingly small was the number of the church, without one name of power or influence among them ; we should not surely have expected, that the preaching and influence of this little company would so soon have spread the doctrines of their crucified Master throughout the Roman empire. Who would have expected to see the temples of paganism tottering—its philosophers and orators confounded and silenced—and, in the course of a few generations, the invincible legions of Rome marching under the banners of the cross ?

Some may perhaps think that modern preaching cannot be expected to be thus successful, because primitive preaching was accompanied by miracles. But it appears to me that undue stress is laid on this circumstantial difference. Miracles were addressed to the understanding ; they were intended to attest the divine mission of Jesus—to prove that Christianity was from God ; and *not to convert sinners*. It is true, a miracle was performed when Paul was converted, but he was not converted *by the miracle*. The men who journeyed with Paul, saw that great light from heaven ; they were struck to the ground ; and heard, though indistinctly, the voice which spake to him. They were no doubt confounded, and, for the time, cured of the spirit of persecution ; but the history gives no intimation, that they were ever converted. And Paul himself was not converted by the miracle, but by the influence of divine grace on his heart.

It is then plain, that miracles were not intended to convert the heart, but to convince the understanding, and to give to all succeeding ages sufficient evidence of the truth of Christianity. This evidence we have now, with nearly as much clearness as they had it in primitive times, and supported by other sources of evidence, which they had not. The truth is, the public mind, throughout the most enlightened parts of the world, is much more fully convinced at this time, that the Christian religion is from God, than it was in the days of the apostles ; and we have sufficient means and evidence in our hands, to carry this conviction through all the benighted nations. And there appears no reason to doubt, that if the gospel were preached now, with as much purity and zeal, and supported on the part of the church by the same devotion as in primitive times, the success would be similar. The promise, “Lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,” is as full of encouragement to us, as it was to the primitive Christians. The sovereignty of God accomplishes the purposes of the gospel ; but it does this in co-operation with human agency ; and I do not see how we can understand the promises made to prayer, and to the use of means, in any way which will not throw the blame of the church's failures, and her want of triumphant success, entirely upon her own unfaithfulness.

II. I now proceed to make some general observations respecting the management of the church. And I would first observe, that although the doctrines of the cross ought to be preached with simplicity and plainness, yet it does not follow, that they ought to be preached by ignorant or rash men. Whatever may be true, in particular cases, it is by no means expedient, in the general, that illiterate men should preach the gospel. The blind should not

lead the blind : a novice should not be put into the ministry. Indeed, next to the curse of an unsanctified ministry, there is perhaps no source from which the church, in its different branches, has suffered more than from an ignorant ministry. Omitting many things that might be mentioned here, I will just remark, that the setting up of unscriptural tests and evidences, for judging of the Christian character and conversion, must be traced principally to this source. This is certainly a great evil, in our day ; and is lamented by the wise and good of all denominations. In many cases, great stress is laid on certain things, as evidence of Christian conversion, or Christian character, which have little or no connexion whatever with religion ; whilst the proper and scriptural evidences of a new heart and character, are almost entirely overlooked. Such mistakes not only lead to delusion and corruption in the particular societies which entertain them, but they fill those societies, with uncharitable sentiments towards others. Judging of other denominations, by unscriptural tests, they must judge wrong, and may be led to denounce, as unchristian, those better than themselves ; they may even conscientiously think it their duty to counteract and pull down a society, which is doing more for the cause of truth, than they are doing. With respect to rash preaching, I will just make one remark. Paul was an excellent example of plain and faithful preaching. He declared the whole counsel of God ; but he was far removed from rashness. Many cases appear in his history and writings, in which he employed great address, for the purpose of exhibiting the truth, so as to give no unnecessary offence.

In the second place, I would observe, that much prudence and wisdom is necessary in conducting the controversies which must arise between different denominations in the Church. Many persons are of opinion, that there should be no controversy between Christians ; that it should all be reserved for infidels, and open enemies of religion. But if this opinion be right, the apostles were wrong. There was frequent controversy in the primitive church. Paul, at Antioch, zealously opposed Peter, rather than permit the cause of truth to suffer ; and he often contended strenuously, with Judaizing teachers, whom still he did not denounce as entire enemies to the gospel. So, also, when Luther and his associates began the reformation, those holy men thought the time was come, when not only peace, but life itself, should be hazarded for the cause of truth. No doubt, the love of peace, and the love of truth, are the two great principles which ought to direct in all the intercourse of the church. But if these principles should come into collision, as they certainly may, and often do—the love of peace should yield to that of truth. The love of truth is a principle of paramount authority. When the love of truth is genuine, it is in itself a principle of candour and charity, and will preserve the peace of the church as far as it can with propriety be preserved. But to sacrifice important or fundamental doctrines for peace, is just as bad as to sacrifice them for ease or safety ;—but if the truth could have been sacrificed for either ease or personal safety, the church would never have had its martyrs.

But if controversy be necessary, it should ever be conducted in a Christian spirit. And in order to this, in the first place, let every man who calls himself a Christian, lay aside that morbid sensibility, which rises into anger, when any part of his creed is questioned, even in a moderate manner; let every Christian be willing to have his principles questioned, and brought to the scriptural test, whilst there are other Christians who differ from him: and in the second place, let those engaged in controversy, remember that they are not contending for their own honour, but for the honour and cause of God: and let all pride of talents and love of victory, be kept down in religious disputation. Were these plain rules observed—and would Christians, with mutual regard to the rights of conscience, bring forward their differences, and discuss them in the fear of God; such a course might lay a true foundation for the peace of the church; and afford a prospect of removing from it whatever errors may at present exist; and of fulfilling that cheering prophecy, that “the watchmen of Zion shall see eye to eye.”

In the third place, I would observe, that it is the duty of all Christians to discountenance a proselytizing spirit. This is perhaps one of the greatest evils which can enter the church. By a proselytizing spirit, I mean that spirit which substitutes the love of party for the love of truth, and maintains the interests of that party on the principles of mere human policy. Such a spirit in the church is much like party spirit in the state. It is thought, indeed, that some degree of party spirit is useful in free governments; but when it passes its proper limits, all men are convinced of its ruinous tendency. It injures morals; it fills the land with slander and falsehood; and often throws suspicion on the best characters in the nation.

Now whatever effects the spirit of party may produce on the state, the spirit of proselytism will produce in the church—with perhaps this difference, that religion creates more intense feelings in the mind than even politics. How disastrous, then, must the consequences be, when the spirit of proselytism affects even a small part of the church! A few men, of even moderate talents, devoted to this employment, may do more injury, and produce more unseemliness in the house of God, than ten times their number of infidels, though of the most distinguished talents.

In the fourth place, I would observe, that the institutions which have lately arisen in the church, have received less attention than, from their importance, they deserve. These institutions are numerous, comprehending, among others, Bible Societies, Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, Concerts of Prayer, and Missionary and Education Societies, on an extended scale. These, in their united influence, form a most important machinery for the propagation of truth. The church had existed for near eighteen centuries, without these institutions; and yet, when they came into view, they appeared to have so much of the Christian spirit, and were so well calculated to embody, and carry forward, all the principles of the gospel, that we wondered the church should ever have been without them:

The manner in which these institutions arose, also deserves attention. They

evidently came not by the will of man, nor by human device, but by the interposition of God. The first movement in reference to a Bible Society, was a petty attempt to supply with the Scriptures, a few destitute families in a poor neighbourhood; and out of this arose the Bible Society, which now overshadows Christendom, and sends its blessings to the ends of the world. The prime movers in the scheme, intended no such thing. They were the first to wonder at what they had done; or rather to exclaim,—“What hath God wrought?” Similar remarks might be applied to most of the other institutions. Indeed, in their origin and progress, we have more than sufficient evidence to convince the Christian—we have almost enough to convince the infidel—that these institutions are from God. I say we have almost evidence enough to convince the infidel; and I believe I may add with safety, that infidelity has been greatly confounded, by these new appearances in the church.

But it is matter both of surprise and regret, that what has been sufficient to confound infidelity, has not been sufficient to awaken the whole church of God. Some parts of the church, indeed, seem to be alive to the subject; but with us, (to our shame and humiliation be it spoken,) professors of religion are generally asleep. Perhaps, then, the first thing incumbent on us, is to spread the knowledge of these institutions and their operations, as extensively as possible. For when they become fully known, they must, and will, in some measure, form a test of Christian character. They have so much of the Christian spirit, that all who love the gospel will love them, and every true Christian will do something for their advancement. The rich will then give as God has prospered; and those who have little, will still give something. I believe, even now, if it were communicated from heaven to any individual, that the great Head of the church would receive nothing more from him to aid the cause of religion—that God would carry on his own work—raise up and prosper his servants—and fill his own treasury,—but that nothing more should ever be received from him, in aid of the cause,—I believe that such communication would be regarded almost as a death-warrant: that individual would feel as if “God had taken away his part out of the *book of life*, and out of the *holy city*.” Who, then, will wilfully exclude himself from any part or lot in this matter?

These sacred institutions assuredly present a loud call to the ministry, and the church, to raise the standard of exertion in every form. And let it be remembered, too, that, in times of darkness, God might wink at things, which he will not pass with impunity in times of greater light. In this glorious day of the manifestation of divine power, the church is called to act under peculiar responsibilities. Let us, then, my Brethren, here dedicate ourselves anew to God: let us solemnly resolve, that through divine grace, we will stand firm and wakeful at our posts; and let us devoutly look to that God, from whom salvation cometh, to inspire the churches under our care, and all the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, with a spirit worthy of their Master, and worthy of this eventful age. AMEN.