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## THE SCRIPTURES A GUIDE.

What is the world?—a wildering maze,  
Where sin hath track'd ten thousand ways,  
Her victims to ensnare ;  
All broad, and winding, and aslope,  
All tempting with perfidious hope,  
All ending in despair.

Millions of pilgrims throng these roads,  
Bearing their baubles or their loads  
Down to eternal night :  
One humble path, that never bends,  
Narrow, and rough, and steep, ascends  
From darkness into light.

Is there a Guide to show that path ?  
The Bible !—He alone who hath  
The Bible, need not stray ;  
Yet he who hath, and will not give  
That heavenly Guide to all that live,  
Himself shall lose the way.

MONTGOMERY.

## THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY :

A Discourse delivered in Rochester, N. Y., before the New York Baptist Union for Ministerial Education, July 12, 1853.

BY FRANCIS WAYLAND, PRESIDENT OF BROWN UNIVERSITY.

Mark xvi: 15. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.

[CONTINUED.]

This then is, I think, the generic idea of preaching conveyed in the New Testament. It is the proclamation to every creature, of the love of God to men through Christ Jesus.—This is the main idea. To this our Lord adds, according to the other evangelist, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The duty then enjoined in our Lord's last command is two-fold: First, to invite men to avail themselves of the offer of salvation; and, secondly to teach them to obey the commands of Christ, so that they may become meet for the kingdom of heaven. In so far as we do these we preach the gospel. When we do anything else, it may, or it may not, be very good; but in the sense here considered, it is not preaching the gospel.

Hence we see that we may deliver discourses on subjects associated with religion, without preaching the gospel. A discourse is not preaching because it is delivered by a minister, or spoken from the pulpit, or appended to a text. Nothing is, I think, properly preaching, except the explaining the teachings, or enforcing the commands of Christ and his apostles. To hold forth our own inferences, or the inferences of other men, drawn from the gospel; to construct intellectual discourses which affect not the conscience; to show the importance of religion to the temporal well-being of men, or the tendency of the religion of Christ to uphold republican institutions, and a hundred topics of a similar character, may or may not be well; but to do either or all of them certainly falls short of the idea of the apostle, when he "determined to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and him crucified."

And moreover, the command of Christ supposes our appeal to be made directly to the consciences of men; relying for success wholly on the promised aid of the Holy Ghost.—Our Savior gives us no directions concerning any indirect or preparatory labour. The preparation of the heart is a work which the Lord has reserved for himself. We are not to go about making men think well of religion in general, with the intention of afterwards directing them to Christ, and urging them to obey God. The Son of God has left

us no directions for civilizing the heathen, and then christianizing them. We are not commanded to teach schools in order to undermine paganism, and then, on its ruins, to build up Christianity. If this is our duty, the command must be found in another gospel; it is not found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are, at once and always, to set before all men their sin and danger, and point them to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." And here I would ask, are we not liable to err in these respects? For instance, when we profess to preach the gospel, is it right to take as a text the words of inspiration, and then discourse on something which inspiration never taught? It is not enough that what we say is true; so is geometry, or chemistry, or metaphysics; but is it the truth which Christ came from heaven to reveal? Again, is not our object frequently far too low in preaching? Do we not sometimes preach with the direct design merely of creating in men a respect for religion; and of inducing them to aid us in promoting the objects of religious benevolence, instead of striving to make them, by means of this very sermon, new creatures in Christ Jesus? Do we not labor, as it is called, to build up a good society; that is, to collect around us the rich and the well-conditioned, instead of laboring to save their souls from perdition?—The Almighty God sends us to make known his offer of salvation to sinful men; and we, instead of delivering his message, content ourselves with teaching them to pay a decent respect to us, and to our services. In the meantime, we allow their immortal souls to go unwarned to eternal perdition. On whose conscience will the blood of these souls rest?

Such, then, is the preaching of the gospel; it is the proclamation of the love of God to men in Christ Jesus. It may be in public or in private, to one or to many, from the pulpit or at the fire-side. Whenever we set before men the message of mercy, and urge them to obey the commands of Christ, then we preach the gospel in obedience to the precept in the text.

III. But who is thus to preach the gospel?

What would be the answer to this question, if we listened to the voice of common humanity? When the brazen serpent was lifted up, who was to carry the good news throughout the camp? When the glad tidings of peace arrived in the city, who was to proclaim it to his fellow-citizens? When the news of peace with God, through the blood of the covenant, is proclaimed to us, who of us shall make it known to those perishing in sin? The answer in each case is, every one. Were no command given, the common principles of our nature would teach us that nothing but the grossest selfishness would claim to be exempted from the joyful duty of extending to others the blessing which we have received ourselves.

But, besides this, we have, in the text, the command of Christ. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;" and, "lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The command is as universal as discipleship, and it is to continue obligatory till the Son of man shall come.

Does any one say that this command was given only to the apostles? It may or may not have been so; but were they alone included in the obligation which it imposes? The address at the last supper was given to them alone, as were many other of the instructions of our Lord; but were they the only persons to whom the words spoken apply? Is it affirmed that they and those whom they should appoint are alone to preach the word? I answer that Jesus Christ never said so, and we have no right to add to this any more than to any other of his commandments.

But let us see how the apostles themselves

understood the precept. Their own narrative shall inform us. "At that time there was a great persecution against the church that was at Jerusalem, and they were scattered abroad throughout all the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." "Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."—Acts viii: 1, 4. "Then they that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake also to the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord." These men were not apostles, nor even original disciples of Christ, for they were men of Cyprus and Cyrene. Yet they went everywhere preaching the word, and in so doing they pleased the Master, for the Holy Spirit accompanied their labors with the blessing from on high. The ascended Saviour thus approved of their conduct, and testified that their understanding of his last command was correct.

If we need any further confirmation of the interpretation which we have given of the precept in the text, we find it in other portions of our Lord's teaching. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." The words here indicate the manner in which the kingdom of Christ is to extend itself. Leaven assimilates the whole mass to itself by the contact of particle with particle—each particle, as soon as it is leavened, communicating its own virtue to all the particles surrounding it. So every disciple of Christ is bound, by proclaiming Christ to those near to him, to extend the kingdom of the Redeemer; and every one who becomes a disciple is bound to make it his chief business to disciple others.

Again, our Lord declares that every one who believes in him shall be the means of imparting salvation to others. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This he spake of the Spirit which, not the apostles, but they that believe on him should receive. Thus, as our Lord is the living fountain from which every believer drinks; so every one who has drunk of this fountain becomes, in this secondary sense, a fountain to all who are about him.

So, in the message to the churches, delivered by the ascended Saviour to the Apostle John, we find these remarkable words: "I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

You see then, brethren, the nature and duty of the church of Christ. It consists of the whole company of penitent sinners, united to Christ by faith, animated by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit, every one partaking with Christ in that love of souls which moved him to offer up himself, and every one labouring after his example for the salvation of the world. This is the object for which the believer lives, as it was the object for which Christ lived. This consecration of himself to Christ for this purpose, is a matter of personal obligation. It cannot be done by deputy. It must be done by the man himself. He can no more delegate it to another than he can delegate faith, or repentance, or prayer, or holy living. Every disciple must

be a discipler. Every individual is leaven, and he must assimilate to himself all that comes into contact with him. As he himself drinks of the fountain, he must become a fountain to his fellow men; otherwise, he has not drunk of the fountain himself. If he bear not fruit, he is cut off as a branch, and is withered.

This is the first and primary duty of a disciple, and to it his whole life must be conformed. He may enter upon no calling, he may occupy no station, he may indulge in no amusement inconsistent with this elementary duty of discipleship. A revival of religion represents a church in its normal condition, the condition which Christ always intended it to maintain. Then every believer makes it his great concern to call men to repentance not as a matter of form, but with earnest and moving persuasion. Every convert is inviting his former companions to turn unto the Lord. But, if this manner of life is appropriate to a revival, it is appropriate to all times; for men are everywhere and at all times sinners hastening to the judgment seat, and they must all perish unless they be redeemed by the blood of Christ.

It would be easy to show that it is by involving this obligation in the very elementary idea of discipleship, that Christ has provided for the universal triumph of his church. On this depends the vitality of personal religion. We can never in earnest call men to repentance, unless we are living holy and penitent lives ourselves. Hence, also, arises the separation of the church from the world, and hence the antagonism which Christ declares must always exist between them. "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It is under these circumstances that the church has always gained its most signal victories, and when these principles of duty exercise an abiding influence over the life of every disciple, the kingdoms of this world will soon become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.

Such, then, is the privilege, and such the duty of every disciple of Christ. It enters into the elementary idea of discipleship. With this every other subsequent idea must be in harmony. No ecclesiastical system which we form can either liberate a disciple from this obligation, or take away his privilege of thus laboring for Christ. Whatever offices are created in the church, are created for the purpose of enabling the disciple the better to discharge this duty. They are made for the church, the church is not made for them; and it becomes us ever to be watchful, lest by any error the church of Christ be deprived of this, the mainspring of all its efficiency.

I have thus far spoken of the gifts which are common to every man of a sane mind.—But almost every man has some peculiar gift, that is, some naturally bestowed means of usefulness. This also he is bound in the same manner to consecrate to the service of the Master. A brief allusion to some of them will sufficiently illustrate my meaning. One man may be endowed with uncommon conversational ability, so that in the ordinary intercourse of society, he readily leads the minds of men in any direction he chooses. The disciple of Christ is not at liberty to use this talent for the purpose of attaining to social pre-eminence, or for the gratification of personal vanity; he must use it as a means of winning souls to Christ. Beautiful illustrations of this form of consecration of talent were seen in the lives of the late William Wilberforce and Joseph John Gurney. Another disciple may be endowed with skill in the conduct of mercantile affairs, so that, with ease, he can accumulate a fortune, when other men would merely obtain a subsistence. This talent he has no right to employ for the purpose of hoarding up wealth for himself, or for his chil-