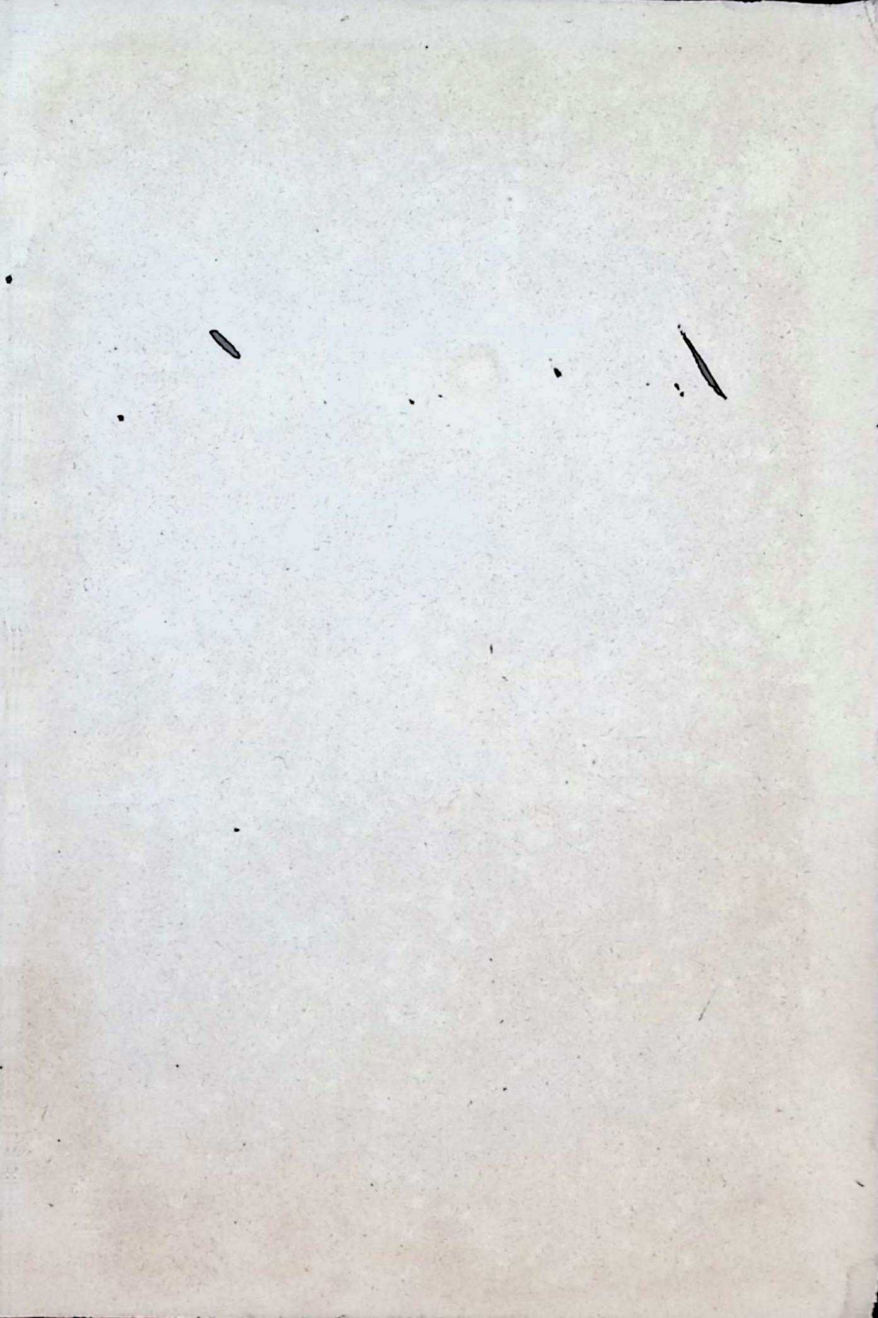


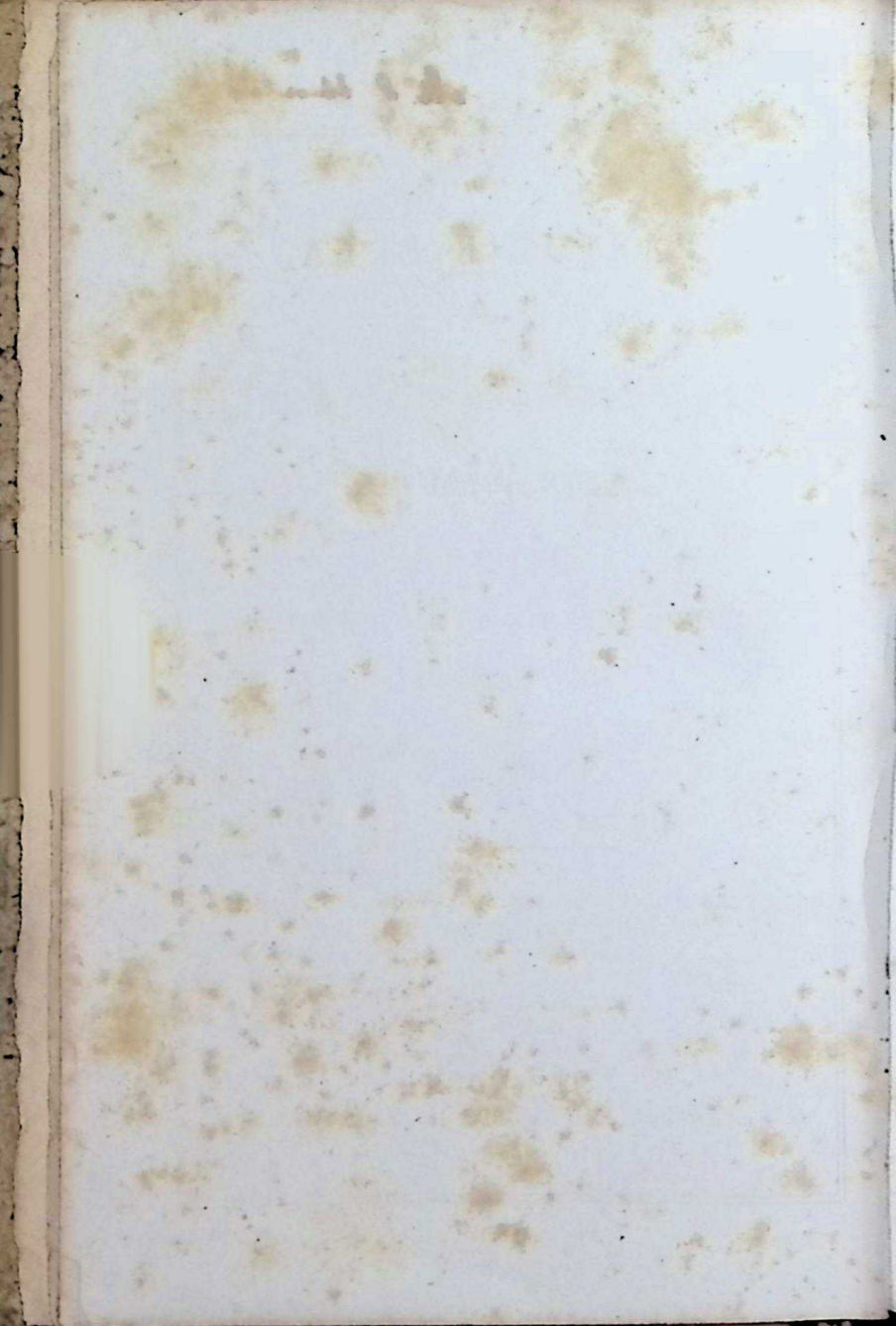


M E Shorter.









M P Hunter

A

PASTOR'S PLEA

FOR

Evangelical Catholic Truth.

IN SIX SERMONS,

DELIVERED IN

TRINITY CHURCH, COLUMBUS, GEORGIA,

BY

THE REV. W. D. CAIRNS, A. M.,
RECTOR.

APPENDED A DECENNIAL SERMON, PREACHED IN THE SAME
CHURCH BY THE RECTOR, JUNE 2, 1847.
PRINTED BY REQUEST.

NEW-YORK:
STANFORD AND SWORDS, 137, BROADWAY.
1850.

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Robart Press:  
JOHN R. M'GOWN, PRINTER,  
57 ANN-STREET.

TO THE  
COMMUNICANTS AND MEMBERS  
BY  
HOLY BAPTISM  
OF  
TRINITY CHURCH,

THESE FEW WORDS OF  
EARNEST AND AFFECTIONATE COUNSEL

Are Inscribed,

BY THEIR PASTOR,

WITH THE ASSURANCE THAT HE DOES NOT CEASE TO PRAY FOR THEM

THAT THEY MAY BE

"DAILY RENEWED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,"

AND BE MADE

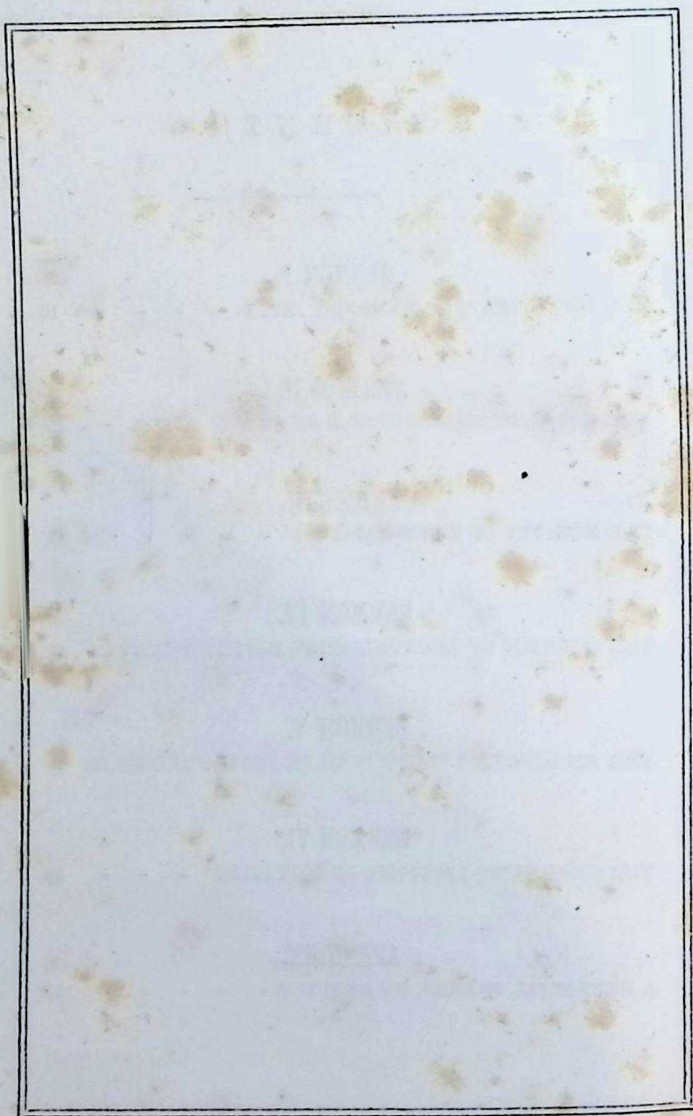
"NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST JESUS,"

AS THAT THEY MAY

"GROW UP INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS, WHICH IS THE HEAD,"

UNTO PERFECT MEN,

"AND UNTO THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULNESS OF CHRIST."



## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

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THESE sermons were not originally written with a view to publication. But in the withdrawal, caused by disease, from the discharge of his parochial duties, during the last few months of the author's life, his anxiety and love for the people of his charge, suggesting to him this mode of serving them, they were selected and arranged, as an "assurance," as he himself expressed it, that he did "not cease to pray for them."

In many instances, different forms of expression would probably have conveyed his meaning more clearly, but extreme bodily suffering, and almost total loss of sight, prevented his revising them for the press, as he would have done had the privilege been granted him.

It has been felt to be a religious duty to carry out, as far as possible, his intentions, and accord-

ingly, this little volume is now given to "his people," whom he loved, for whom he labored, and for whom he prayed, in the hope, that by it, he, "being dead," may yet be heard speaking to them, and that, at "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," he may present them as "his joy and crown of rejoicing."

NEW-YORK, *Nov. 1st*, 1850.

## SERMON I.

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### THE NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST JESUS.

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SECOND CORINTHIANS, V. 17-18.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God."

ONE might almost be prevented by fear, were it not for the imperativeness of duty, from entering upon the consideration of so high a subject as that which is presented before us in this language of the text.

The misunderstanding of it, which is so universal, we fear too, and the misapplication, in part, to which it has been so commonly subjected by undisciplined minds, will make the truth a novelty, as it is here simply stated by the Apostle—and as freed from the overlaying of a misjudging and perverted zeal.

To be "in Christ," to be "new creatures," for "old things" to be "passed away," and to have "all things new," are forms of expression as familiar to us as household words, and to which

we have been accustomed, even from earliest childhood. But what ideas have we attached to them? In what sense have they been received by us? and how are we better for the knowledge of them, than we should have been without them? To be born—to have been created—to be in the midst of things—are forms of expression equally familiar—conveying definite apprehensions to the mind, and easily explained.

It is the nature of sensible being—it is the act of its production—it is the consciousness of our relation to sensible things—about which the answer of experience in the child, who hearing and seeing, declares his knowledge with confidence, is quite as satisfactory as that of the sage, demonstrating the existence of an agent adequate to the production of the effect. It may be admitted, indeed, that these latter propositions are of sensible and natural things—and so capable of being received by the natural understanding, even before there shall have been such discipline of the reasoning powers, as may enable us to account for our convictions; whereas the former are of those which are spiritual and supernatural, and so subjected to different processes both in their revelation and in their reception.

In fact, it is the very *point* of the revelation—as when the Apostle said, “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither

can know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But then, they have been revealed, so that what is requisite is, and *all* that is requisite is, that we should put ourselves, or be put in a position to view them—just as we are put in a position to view *natural* things, in order to a just apprehension and reception of them, and to such a conviction of, and resting upon them, as will even make Faith, or the belief of them, to be what the same Apostle has described it, "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Are we *in* that position? May we be put in it? And how? Now these, it would seem, are to *us* the most necessary questions—and as we shall show, the most nearly relative also to the subject which is before us. The very form of the text shows an understanding sense, or apprehension of the greater truths upon which these are founded. Or, if that were not admitted, the very circumstance of the Apostle's claim of Divine Inspiration, and of the collection of the Corinthians also into a distinct congregation of professing believers, addressing to them Epistles, would suffice to show it. To them, therefore, the text was but a collection of affirmations. They were "in Christ." They were "new creatures." "Old things" with them "had passed away;" "behold, all things had become new." And upon the ground of these affirmations, which were not de-

nied by them; and which with their indoctrination under the teaching of inspired men, could not be denied, the claims of holy obedience and of saintly living were urged, which are so put forth, including the substance of Christian duty, in them, as in us, my hearers.

"By the phrase 'in Christ,'" says one of the most eminent of writers, "I understand all the supernatural aids vouchsafed, and conditionally promised in the Christian dispensation—and among them 'the Spirit of Truth,' which the world cannot receive, were it only that the knowledge of spiritual truth is of necessity, immediate and intuitive, and the world, or 'natural man,' possesses no higher intuitions than those of the pure sense—which are the subjects of mathematical science."

If this understanding of the text be true, and, but little reflection, I think, will be requisite to commend it to the acceptance of the intelligent; if, I say, this understanding of the text be true, these "supernatural aids vouchsafed and conditionally promised, in the Christian dispensation," although they may be general, as the diffusion of Christian knowledge is general under the ministrations of grace in the sincere preaching of the cross, yet are they particular, as being more especially vouchsafed and more surely promised in connexion with that system of sanctifying means which the Gospel embraces. In other

words, if we may employ such with sufficient reverence, although general views of the truth may lead some to a saving apprehension of the "mercies of God" without Christ, as we trust may be the case with the more pious of the heathen, as well as with those who are in involuntary or invincible ignorance under the Gospel, the moral character of their lives being right, still the particular blessing of the Christian lies in that he is placed, by an act of especial grace, in that very position from which revealed truth, by the gracious assistance of the blessed Spirit, may be so viewed as to make all spiritual and supernatural truth, as far as necessity claims it, *immediate* and *intuitive* to the mind. The mercies of God in Christ, are those which are especially included in "the Gospel" of His grace. These He has revealed to us in it, that by our engrafting into His Church, which is the body of His Son, and through which all means of spiritual sustenance are communicated to us, we may so be "in Christ" as to be enabled to exercise that spiritual intuition which is sufficient for all men, for the ignorant as well as for the learned, giving them "the knowledge of the truth," making them equally "new creatures in Christ," and without mere mental elaboration, assuring them, to the confidence of faith and the comfort of hope, that "all things are of God."

We deem this to be the more important, and look upon your acceptance of it, my hearers, with the greater interest, as the chief means for the correction of errors almost peculiar to the present age, and affecting injuriously, as far as they have an influence over us, our own spiritual condition. In the work of grace, to which we all look for sanctification and eternal life, the means of grace depended upon by the ancients have come to be neglected by us, until, in places, the very sacraments are deemed of as without grace, the altar is deprived of its sacrifices, the priest has denied to him his mediative power, and dependence for spiritual awakening is put upon a stirring elocution, described by St. Paul as made up of the enticing words of man's wisdom, and upon mere human inventions. The apostle preached for the conversion of the heathen, and was blessed in his ministry, as these two Epistles to the Corinthians inform us, to the extent even of founding a Church in the most voluptuous of the Grecian cities. But his preaching was for the conviction of the understanding, and for the subduing of the heart; nor did it ever enter into his mind to say, to this or to any Church, that they could "put on Christ" otherwise than in "Holy Baptism"—or be "in Christ," and yet not of that "Church which is His Body"—"the fulness," as he describes it to the Ephesians, "of Him that filleth all in all."

But that they are the words of St. Paul, we should fear to speak so, in these days of rebuke.

“They are not all Israel which are of Israel.” Such were the terms in which the Apostle stated an important truth in his Epistle to the Romans, presenting a distinction between the natural and the spiritual, independently of the due consideration of which, the promises made to the “seed of Abraham” must be felt to have failed, whilst confidence could not be otherwise than shaken in the integrity of teaching, accredited as Divine. Those promises were undoubtedly generic. God had chosen to himself one nation from amongst the nations of the earth, to show them His favor, and to make them the heirs of His covenant. It was not a *part*, but the *whole* of Israel, who had been chosen by Him; and not with a part only, but with the whole, did He enter into covenant. The mistake of the Jews, afterwards, who objected against the Apostle that, as the heirs of promise, they could not be rejected, lay in their misapprehension of the spiritual nature of the promise, and in their failure to perceive that, though the covenant was general, embracing all the natural offspring of Abraham, the promise was conditional—extended to those only who were the inheritors of Abraham’s faith. As the phrase, “in Christ,” therefore, according to the view which is here entertained, as the one most consonant with the

whole reasoning of the apostle, and capable also of reconciling the promises with the purposes of God, implies simply a covenant condition in which "all supernatural aid is vouchsafed," even that of "the Spirit of Truth, which the world cannot receive," but from which no one is indefectible. The residue of the text is to be considered as descriptive, chiefly, of the exalted prerogatives of the Christian state, and as presenting to us our sure ground of dependence in the being and attributes of God.

"In Abraham"—"in Christ"—as the covenants are parallel, why should not the forms of their presentation be parallel also? The Jew in his unbelief, when the conditional nature of the Abrahamic covenant was presented to him, objected—"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?" To which the Apostle answered—"Much, every way. Chiefly, that because unto them were committed the oracles of God." So, likewise may the Christian, to whom the erroneous estimates which are so common, of spiritual prerogative, may have become familiar, or upon whom some false notion of grace may have induced the expectation of miraculous benefit, deem it an undervaluing of the Gospel so to consider "the passing away of what is old" and "the making of all things new," the accidents only of a better dispensation, though

God even be declared as the author, until unbelief shall again object—What advantage then hath the Christian, or what profit is there of Christ?

Far be it from us, brethren, to wish even, so to restrict the meaning of the text, by the principles of a rigid interpretation, however needed, as to take you off from the contemplation of its spiritual value, or leave you to look for less in it than the Spirit warrants. If the Jew had “advantage,” and there was “much profit in circumcision” as the Apostle declares, the Christian must have greater, nor can words measure his benefit, “in Christ.” But whatever the terms be which he finds employed for its representation to him, no good can possibly come of misapprehension respecting it—but much evil, if gifts of the future should be unwarrantably anticipated by us—or such progress towards perfection alleged as should procure release from the necessary conditions of a probationary state. Descriptive of the exalted prerogatives which belong to him as a Christian, and designed to present him with a far more stable dependence than can be found in sentiment, or mere mental apprehension, however vivid, even the Divine immutability—it should be to him a subject of the most ardent rejoicing that he can declare in effect, with the beloved Evangelist, “those things which he has heard—which he has seen with his eyes—which he has looked upon,

and his hands have handled of the Word of Life ;” because “ the life was manifested, and has been showed unto us ; that eternal life which was with the Father, and has been manifested unto us.” If we forsake this then, and place our dependence rather upon modes and states of the mind, upon sentiments and feelings, upon excitements and such things as may be begotten of men, can it be wondered at that we should be the victims of self-will ? that we should be the makers even of our own religion ? or desiring to be teachable, that we should be “ driven about by every wind of doctrine ?” Surely it was truth which was spoken, when one said, “ There is much in the religious belief, even of the more serious part of the community at present, to make observant men very anxious where it will end.”

“ It would be no very difficult matter, I suspect,” he adds, “ to perplex the faith of a great many persons, who believe themselves to be orthodox, and indeed are so according to their light. They have been accustomed to call Christ, God, but that is all. They have not considered what is meant by applying that title to One who was really a man—and from the vague way in which they use it, they would be in no small danger if assailed by a subtle disputant, of being robbed of the sacred truth in its substance, even if they kept it in name.” It is so of other truth, of the

most of truth, until the evidence of our being "in Christ," of our being Christians, of our being "new creatures," of the "passing away of old things," and the begetting "all things new." The most comforting evidence of a Christian state—and that only which can give us comfort—has become the most unsettled and uncertain of things; for, who can depend upon modes, which are as changeable as the wind? Who can depend upon feelings, which are as evanescent as the dew? Who can keep up excitement, which is intoxication only of the moral sense? And when these fail, if these have been rested upon, who is there so poor, or so wretched, or so buffeted of Satan, as the soul "walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none?" It is not a vain undertaking then, which is here entered upon to correct misapprehension, brethren; and this labor will not be profitless, if we can only prevail with you to look away from those things which the age has resorted to, to place your dependence upon Christ, in the way of His gracious appointment; believing that in the Church, you are "in Him," "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." They are the words of St. Paul, whom you must believe; having "by baptism put on Christ," become Christians, and now bound by every holy consideration of duty, of gratitude and love, to live as Christians, as "new creatures in Christ,

being God's workmanship," as the Apostle says, to this end, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Who dare say that this is an elevation of the instrument above the agent? Who dare say that *this* is a substitution of the means either for the end? I know, and I lament to know, that the sentiment of the age is far different from this. But, who cannot perceive that the idea of being "in Christ," when only the subjects of excitement, of states of feeling, of moods of mind, must necessarily be often an erroneous one? Whereas that of condition, of association, of state, in which "all the supernatural aids of a dispensation are vouchsafed," and in which, also, the "Spirit of truth" Himself is resident, "to lead us into all truth," is fixed and immutable as the truth can be?

"In Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." What does it argue but carelessness in the study of the Scriptures, when these words of the Apostle are quoted against the Apostle himself? For who may not perceive that the relations are changed, and that there is a different sense, as when one says, of the Sacraments, that they are Ordinances having grace and truth, introduced into the place of Jewish rites, which had no substance of blessing in them, but yet, that they are

rites, as valueless and powerless, in themselves, as the Jewish ; but being, what the Jewish were not, instruments of the application of Christ's merits to individual believers ?

I am conscious of the difficulty of addressing you acceptably upon such a subject, but wishing to improve to you the teaching of the Apostle in the context, treating of the high mystery of God's reconciliation of the world to Himself by Jesus Christ, and of His gift of the ministry of reconciliation, I could not avoid the Scriptural interpretation of this text, as that upon which the other hinges, and without an understanding of which, I could not see how the other could be profitable to you.

In conclusion, now, let me contemplate you, my hearers, as in that position of which we spoke in the beginning, from which "the things of the Spirit of God" may be viewed, as things revealed ; as things of a revealed interest to you, as being "in Christ," so that, as natural things are presented to your bodily senses in such wise that you may have a just apprehension of them, even so spiritual things are presented, to such a conviction of, and resting upon them, that faith, in the view of them, is even as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." To contemplate you as in that position ! If the light of Divine Truth could, for one moment,

beam upon us, or the vail be removed which shuts us out from the "unseen world," the spiritual and true, how favored, how glorious, would *that* position be! And how to be envied, more than for all temporal distinctions, would he be, so placed in the presence, under a realizing sense, and full apprehension of the presence of God! "In Christ," new creatures, for what? Oh pause, but an instant, amid the toil and the distractions of life, and think of this, questioning yourselves concerning it. What does it mean? Why has it been? "What is man that God should be mindful of him, or the Son of man that He should visit him?" Angels He passed by, to man, in Christ, He came; for what. Oh answer it to yourselves my hearers; but that "in Christ" He might unite you to Himself again; so that after this season of discipline shall pass; purified and made clean, by the washing of His blood, you may be fitted to worship Him and rejoice with Him in His kingdom? Why should such words be without influence with us? Why should such deeds, as we are here assembled to commemorate be without spirit or without power over us? Of what are we made, and to what do we tend, that, when the angels even in heaven are stayed to look in mute astonishment upon the humiliation of the eternal Son, we who are "in Him," have no heart either to wonder or adore?

Surely, it is fearful then, as well as blessed, to be as we are, my hearers; and with what energy or devotion we may, we should see to it, that "in Christ," we be "of Christ;" that with "the supernatural aids of the Spirit," we have "the Spirit;" that, in a new creation, we be made "new creatures;" that "old things being passed away," we rest not, until "all things become new." The heart with its affections, the mind with its volitions, the understanding with its knowledge—that "all things" may be "of God," and that "every thought" also, may be "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Oh, delightful contemplation! One that shall be realized too, in all the fulness of that vision which was presented to the eye of the Evangelist, who "saw the Holy City coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Oh! delightful contemplation! How did St. Paul, even "in the midst of deaths oft," linger upon it, as when he wrote to the Ephesians, "Even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it," both "with the washing of water," (baptism,) "by the Word" in the Gospel of His grace, "That He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing;" but that it should be holy and without blemish.

This is the beginning of the "new creature"

in the new creation. As the creature which is, begins not with the maturity and the strength of manhood, but in the helpless feebleness of infancy ; weak, but increasing in vigor ; ignorant, but acquiring knowledge ; overcoming infirmity by failure, and gathering wisdom from the very consciousness of want—so the creature which shall be, in that “perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in God’s eternal and everlasting glory,” finds not its maturity here, but is “under governors, until the time appointed of the Father,” “increasing” like Christ, “in wisdom and in stature,” availing itself of all supernatural aid ; and so growing up into Him, in all things, “which is the Head,” until as “a perfect man,” in its perfect state, it shall attain unto “the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Ye are “in Christ,” ye are “new creatures,” and “all things are of God.” May He enable you to believe His affirmations, brethren, and to improve His gifts to your soul’s salvation in the day of Christ. Amen. Amen.



## SERMON II.

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### THE RECONCILIATION WHICH IS BY CHRIST.

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SECOND CORINTHIANS, V. 18-19.

“Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.” “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.”

INDEPENDENTLY of one consideration, my hearers, it will be impossible that we should ever rightly understand much of what has been written for our instruction in the Scriptures of truth—and that is, that the high attributes of the character of God, His purposes and His acts also, in His relation to us, are spoken of in language adapted to the need, as to the powers of comprehension, of those whom he has addressed, and not, by any means, as they would be declared to creatures in another state, or as they would have been declared to us, even, if we had never sinned. Hence it is that repentance, and anger, and placability—that passions, and affections, and states of mind, which seem to be peculiarly human, and which are so often objected to as arguing versatility and

weakness, are to be regarded as applicable only to those circumstances of condescension in which the revelation exhibits the God-head, provided as the means of redemption—the admiration and wonder of angels—and including motives of gratitude which can be adequately realized only by repentant men.

The bold intrusion into the things of God, His purposes, His plans, His acts, which we fear is but too common amongst us, is not, therefore, here to be indulged in; neither shall we dare to speak of possibilities or of impossibilities with respect to Him. We know so little, even of natural relations, as to be obliged to be humble in the contemplation of our ignorance.

In the consideration, then, of such as are Divine, what should we do, but “place our hands upon our mouths,” enforcing silence with regard to whatsoever is revealed, “and our mouths into the dust” of submission, conscious that if need be met, and there be mercy in the revelation, it must be true, though heaven be “the height,” and hell be “the depth” of it, and though “the knowledge thereof” be “longer than the earth and broader than the sea?”

If this, now, be the spirit and disposition of mind with which we come to it, we shall discover in it, even here, such “unsearchable riches of Christ,” as St. Paul proclaimed to the Gentiles, when he

essayed "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God," extending even "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places," a knowledge "by the Church of the manifold wisdom of God," as included in the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ," in "whom we have boldness and access with confidence, by the faith," the belief "of Him." Any true sense of our condition, my hearers, should beget this spirit and disposition within us ; and then from this starting point of advantage and of grace, as we preserve humility in our daily walk, and live in dependence upon the mercy of God, and cultivate holiness in the unceasing improvement of all holy means, we shall go on, to the fullest apprehension of that "friendship" even, which is included in the fact of our reconciliation with God, as "the Scripture" also "was fulfilled," which said "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God."

"Who hath reconciled us to Himself, by Jesus Christ." An agent, an object, an act, a medium of action, are here all expressed.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Besides the repetition, and re-assertion of what had been declared before, here is an extension of the

object, making it the comprehension of all men, and of the benefit conferred, in the most gracious assurance that sin should be so forgiven them as that it should be accounted of by them no more. Reconciliation implies likewise a previous state of enmity between the parties reconciled; and as in the greater it must be condescension, the measure of that condescension can be estimated only by the distance which has to be overpassed in the actual approach of the greater to the less, and the sacrifice made for securing the demands of justice, with respect to the penalty of sin, (for justice cannot be held in abeyance when so important a matter is to be adjusted as that of abused sovereignty,) and the gracious cancelling of obligations which arise out of the violation of a sovereign law.

These principles are of necessity stated in the abstract, whenever we come to the consideration of the Atonement, brethren, that act of free grace which was performed for us in connection with the death of Jesus, and in which, also, our very hopes of salvation lie. They may be, in their statement thus, uninteresting to us—a pity that they should be, as arguing an inadequate appreciation of the truth for its own sake. But this comfort and this assurance remain—they are the foundation upon which the majestic temple of the truth is built, which will be contemplated with ad-

miration by a few, whilst the many will still feel complacency, and in their measure, delight, as they look upon her "walls" which are "salvation," and "her gates" which are "praise."

If it were a manifestation of mere human sympathy, or of mere human glory, it would not be needed so to solicit or to urge your attention; yet, in the agent, the object, the act, the medium, of the mercy which is here displayed—whether collectively or separately viewed—there is wonder for the minds of angels, and there should be a power, therefore, over the minds of men. Oh, let us awaken, then, to a sense of the great duty which is so put upon us, that, in the sovereign act of condescension which is here declared, in the joy of a most gracious deliverance which it begets within us, and in the reunion of sentiment and of purpose between the soul and God, now begun, to be perfected in the future, we may find an interest, the cultivation of which constitutes one of the chief responsibilities of living, and in the increase of which lies the earnest of a blessing commensurate with the very majesty of Jehovah, and limitless as the eternity which it embraces.

The agent is God—the Supreme Good, the Infinite, the Self-existent, "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." The object is man—"created in the image of God," "a little lower than the angels," having "all things put under him,"

but now fallen, debased and sinful, hateful in his transgressions, and so, in so far as God can be the subject of passions, "hated of God." The act is of that Divine Agent adapted to the necessities of an object so debased—pitying him for his imbecility, his folly, his guilt—resolving upon his restoration, as an act more glorious than that of his original creation, and extending even to the issue of a perfect reconciliation, accomplishing the very greatest of moral improbabilities, in the forgiving of sin as if it had never been, and in restoring to the sinner that character of holiness which he had lost, and in which only, as being like God, can he be pleasing to Him. The medium of action is Jesus Christ, "the only begotten and beloved Son of the Father," "in whom all the fulness of the God-head dwells," "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet took upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

"A sin-offering for us, when He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." A mediator between us and God, acting for us both—God-man—God with God—man with man—"The great mystery of godliness, God made manifest in the flesh," "breaking down the middle wall of partition," and reconciling us together.

Without interest! Can subjects like these be without interest! No, if we have heart, if we have mind they cannot, for the heart must be warmed to gratitude when such condescension and such love are shown, and the mind raised to loftier contemplation than can be found in the fields of science, though the immensity of space shall be thrown open before it, and the strongest imagination aid in the labor of its exploration.

No, they cannot, unless we will that they shall not; for nothing but the most resolute determination, the most reckless depravity, can close the mind or shut up the heart from the reach and the power of evidence, which will speak of God and His goodness in convincing and humiliating accents, making the soul ashamed in its estrangement, even when penitence does not bring it to the foot of the Cross.

Unless we will that they shall not! But for the testimony which is within ourselves, which is found in our affections, in our passions, in our purposes and aims, in the whole tenor even and habit of our lives, we could not apprehend the possibility of such a determination as this, and the ingenuous spirit would receive with horror the suggestion, that there could be such alienation from the beautiful and true, as should make us insensible to the chiefest good; or so exclude us from the contemplation of virtue, as that Christ, in his hu-

miliation, would be unattractive to us. Yet have we found the words of the prophet true, for "He has grown up before us as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground. He had no form nor comeliness, and when we saw him, there was no beauty that we should desire Him." How should it be so, except to prevent the denial which the heart and the mind, equally, would offer to a truth obvious to conscience, but so degrading to reason as to compel its rejection, and which lies also at the very basis of that revelation of mercy contained in the assurance that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them?"

Viewed in its oneness, the plan of redemption is an illustration of the unchangeable purposes and character of God. We look upon it in its processes of development, as we look upon His moral administration of the affairs and the destinies of men, by parts, as it comes to be severally applied—in covenanted promises here, in prophetic annunciations there—in types, in shadows, in sacraments, and we find it disjointed. We can perceive no principle of divine unity in it, and so cannot apprehend how such a scheme can be of God, or, if it be, how God Himself can be regarded as without parts or passions, so as to remain unchanged by the ever changing circumstances of His moral creation. Now all this may appear to you irrele-

vant, but if the design can be effected, it may suffice to show you that whatever is of the nature of development is, of course, imperfect, in the moral, no less than in the physical world; belonging to a plan which is yet incomplete, except in the Divine determination, which is unchangeable, and finding its adaptation to moral agents in the accomplishment of moral ends, with the same unerring certainty as the law of the material system, and conducing no less, to the everlasting glory of Him who declared, in the beginning, that while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease. It is the perfection of law that it changes not. It is the glory of the Lawgiver that He changes not. It is the security of the moral agent that he can depend upon the ministrations of justice in his use of the good and of the evil which is about him, just as confidently in moral as in material things; assured no less of sin, than of poison, that it will kill, and with equal certainty applying the "Balm of Gilead" as an antidote for the virus of sin, as the appointed remedy of the physician, determined by the laws of affinity which prevail in the material world. Would it be just to say that nature had changed, because what was good in one period of our physical progression, had become evil in another? Would it not be more just to infer that the dif-

ference lay in the changed nature of our relations to it, especially when we found similar effects resulting from its application whenever relations were the same? Man is individual, and so the principles of moral government apply to him unerringly, as he passes through the changes of a moral condition, in which good and evil are before him, and he is free to choose. He changes, but the law of his administration is the same. Man is a species—a race—and so what was determined in the councils of eternity, before the creation began, fixed as the laws of the universe, meets man as he passes over the track of ages, in antediluvian deterioration, in patriarchal ministrations unto the Exodus, in the sacrificial requisitions of the law, in the free grace and mercy of the Gospel, varying as to its processes of development in the measure of its adaptation to him, but otherwise firm and immovable as the eternal throne.

How glorious and deserving of worship in this light, is shown the God, "The riches of whose grace" are so magnified towards us, in His kindness to us in Jesus Christ! and how in His work of reconciliation, in His condescension to those who were so debased, in the comprehensiveness of His mercies to the world, in the sacrifice which accomplishes its redemption, whatever is of value to the apprehensions of men, whatever is capable of commanding the admiration of angels,

how is it not all concluded in that one declaration of the Apostle, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself!"

"God in Christ!" The form of expression is peculiar, is striking; and what is it but the substance of the shadows which had, in all ages, flickered across the waste of mind—themselves the images of a great Truth which had been revealed in Paradise; and affording evidence the most certain, that before seer and prophet came, God walked with man in the garden of His own creation, and even spoke unto him "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend?" It is *our* fault if we have lost this Truth. It is great misery to be insensible to it. We are astonished that the first man, if the truth has been told of him, should so readily have forfeited so great a blessing as that of intimate intercourse and friendship with God. But why this difference of judgment between the *first* man and the *last*—accounting as infatuation and madness in *him*, the same act which we are so prone to justify as venial and irreprehensible in ourselves? Or, if not so judged, (which is denied as possible,) from ignorance of the greatest truth which has ever been spoken to the ear of man; bespeaking a wretchedness out-reaching apprehension, which can be weighed only with infinity, and measured by the endless line of everlasting ages?

I would not that this should be accounted as hyperbole. I do not believe that Adam, in his expulsion, would so have accounted it; and, when the mind which is, comes to be awakened to the same sense of misery, as the results of alienation from God; I do not believe either, that we can so account it. Until this shall be made apparent, it will be but of little use, that the most holy and exciting truths are unceasingly presented, for the reason that there is no call for them in human need, and must be profitless where no good can be effected by them. But, why should we doubt, when all which has been so revealed of the pity and condescension, and tender compassion of God, combines to illustrate what is so evident to universal experience, as to have made it a fixed sentiment of the mind—operative even in a heathen state—and begetting efforts for the Divine propitiation, which should lead us to commiserate and not to reprove the abjectness of our moral condition?

Oh, it is a blessing then beyond estimate, which is so declared. It is a truth, which begat "Glory to God in the Highest," as well as "Peace and goodwill towards men;" and, as "reconciling the world unto Himself," whatever the appointed instrument may be; whether by patriarch or prophet, under the law, or "in Christ" and His Apostles under the Gospel; there is the evidence, the ever present and abiding evidence, of the

great truth of the Divine condescension of our union with God "in Christ," of Christ's presence with us, in His means of grace, and of the actual indwelling of that blessed Spirit who was sent to be our Comforter and Guide, by whom we shall "know the Truth," and through whom, in our knowledge of the truth, even now, "We are free."

For this it was, that when this work of the new creation was announced, and God was declared as the agent of so glorious a change—and reconciliation was stated to be its effect—and the Divine Instrument was indicated to us "in Christ," that hope might not be discouraged, nor faith fail in the removal of the sensible Instrument, who could not "abide with us always;" for this reason, it was, I say, that having reconciled us unto Himself by Christ, He gave to us also, "in Christ," the Ministry and Word of reconciliation, the living Witness and written Record of His most gracious act. So that, as "ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we might pray you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God."

"God in Christ," reconciling, whom? If we say "the world," we declare the universality, the unlimited and unrestrained comprehensiveness of His grace, and call you to the contemplation of a subject which runs through the ages of creation,

which awakes new "joy in the presence of the angels," and for which anthems of everlasting praise shall be sung in Heaven. It is the opening of the bosom of God; and "in Christ" the beloved of His soul, placing there that which was redeemed by Christ, "the world" of the believing; "the great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb." It is a theme which should ravish the soul. It is a truth which should be forced from its ideality, and made, with all its living and undying power to possess the mind. But, alas! for the weakness of man! The very magnitude of the conception is beyond him, so that what should be realized to himself, as inclusive, even of his living and acting and immortal soul, as much his, as if it had been only his, and but to be valued the more, because it is not only his, but unites him in bonds of everlasting mercy with the whole body of the redeemed—"the elect from the four winds of Heaven." What should so be realized to himself, is without influence often and lost upon himself, because he will not apply it to himself, and applying, live, as if he knew that it comprehended himself.

"God in Christ," I ask again then, brethren, "reconciling" whom? I answer *you*—if you will be reconciled to Him.

*You*, the message is to *you*, the proffer of Divine mercy is yours. It is the overture of a father to his son, of a sovereign to his subject, of the Creator to him who has been created by Him. Most august contemplation! It is a message of kindness, it is an overture of love, it is a proffer of the free forgiveness of your trespasses to you, of their entire obliteration, so that they shall not be imputed any more. To you, as sinners; to each one of you; to me, a sinner, this grace is sent, this mercy is shown. How? What shall we do, in our consideration of it? By what means, and when, shall we signify our acceptance of it? By submission to the whole purpose, and economy of grace, of the mind, and will, and heart, to all the demands and requisitions of the Gospel, upon the instant, without any hesitation or delay. What less can be accepted? What less should be endeavored to be yielded by us? and then too, when the benefit is all to *us*, when the centre of the moral universe, like that of the material remains unchanged and unchangeable in His place, imparting life, and fruitfulness, and beauty, to all that are turned towards Him; but death, and barrenness, and deformity, to all that are turned away, under the operation of an unchangeable law, whose throne is at an immeasurable distance above the vapors of sin, which shut Him out from us, and who must be as unaffected, in

44 THE RECONCILIATION WHICH IS BY CHRIST.

truth, "by the fruit of their own doings," which the wicked eat, as the sun of the heavens is by the noxious exhalations of the night. When all this is so true as not to be disputed by us, and so evident as to be admitted without a question; why, with the promptest alacrity, do we not seize upon the blessing to which these convictions lead?

"Oh, that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments," says Jehovah, "then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea!"



## SERMON III.

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### THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.

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SECOND CORINTHIANS, V. 18-19.

"And hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation." "And hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation."

THE responsibility of sundering, "what God hath united," can be no less, my hearers, in the moral than in the natural world. Whilst in the absence of a due regard for the philosophy of relations, we may find the chief cause of error with respect to that Divine economy which reaches to all moral as to all natural things, in the teaching of the context, rightly received, there can be very little occasion either of difference or dispute. "A new creature" is spoken of, implying the existence of a new creation, spiritual and divine; as "all things" in it "are of God." Reconciliation between the Creator and the creature, is its object, extending even to the restoration of an original state, so that, without question, a system of means is to be presumed, unless it can be believed

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that, in the glorious consummation of the new birth under the Gospel, and in the state of being which it contemplates, God acts upon different principles from those which are manifested in the production and preservation of all natural being; a system of means, adapted and directed, with ineffable wisdom, to the accomplishment of so gracious an end, to be spoken of only as in those words of the Apostle, when he said that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; giving us the ministry and committing unto us the word of reconciliation." The "new creature" we have shown to be the Christian, in the Church, as the beginning of the new creation. The "Reconciliation" we have also illustrated as a state, in which change passes upon the creature, in the assumption only of new relations to the centre of his moral being, the Creator Himself remaining unchanged; finding its evidence in those new habits of living, and characters of action, and modes of thought, which have the incipency of holiness here, and shall attain to the perfection of holiness hereafter. Now, with respect to this it is, that the gift and the trust, which are declared in the text, to have been vouchsafed even unto us, claim to be considered by us. Unitedly entering as they are presented, into the formation of a means, the result of a Divine appointment, re-

specting which it would be arrogant to say, if not hazardous to presume, that disjointed it might subserve its end, making the living witness less needful than the written record, which is the error of some, whilst that also of others lies in the substitution of the witness for the record, God's testimony to the integrity of His truth.

"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." Multitudes of declarations of similar import from all the Epistles, might be cited to you, my hearers, for the purpose of showing the uniformity of a Divine appointment, to the end of salvation; and the measure of Apostolic estimate, with respect to those things which so entered into the purposes of God in His work of Grace—but it will not be needed. All that we should aim at, is such a perception of the truth, both in its parts, and as a whole, as that the Divine wisdom may be magnified alike, in all the particulars of its manifestation to us; and obedience be rendered to the whole purpose and economy of grace, as shown in the institution of a Church; the "Keeper and Witness," the "Pillar and Ground of the Truth," the written Record of which is the Gospel of Jesus; with its living Ministry, commissioned to its work of reconciliation, and so exercising an office of priesthood in their relations to

God, intercessors between man and God, and its sacraments of grace as the seals of a better covenant, and the pledges of a mercy, begun in the present forgiveness of all transgression, and such nurturing of the soul to the duties of the spiritual life, as shall become the earnest even of a blessedness that shall never end.

Venturesome thoughts they may be in the judgment of the unreflecting; but comprehensive, without doubt, of what was asserted by the Apostle, when he connected "the ministry" with the "word of reconciliation," and to be refused by those only who can answer that Apostle's question, in their rejection of them, "How can they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" "The Gospel of Christ"—it "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth." It is the "word of reconciliation;" the gracious record of what holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; the "Roll of the Covenant," which God has condescended to renew with rebellious men. Valuable to all the purposes of a covenant, when proclaimed with authority as of God, understood and accepted—but a dead letter unpreached and unexplained, and as valueless as when Philip said to the Ethiopian, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" and he replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" It is the very

issue of human necessity, a result as fixed and as certain as any in the order of our natural probation, and to the well-informed, no further opened to disputation or denial than any provision of natural means, whose end is ascertained in its effects.

The fact of a provision of grace may indeed not be denied, when the history of the fact is so disputed, and the fact itself so overlayed with the crudest human conceptions, as to render it nugatory to the great ends of an original institution, even if it be not a subversion of the purposes of wisdom in the order of its appointment. The fact, therefore, is universally admitted, and, in all the varying divisions of Christendom, no denomination, no sect, can be found which does not act upon it, to the creation of an order of its own, in the election, and setting apart by authority, of some to be the guides and teachers of the rest, with the expectation that there shall be in them, such abstractedness of attention from the ordinary pursuits of men, and such exclusiveness of devotion to the performance of holy duty, as shall give them a seeming superiority in holiness, and make them in common judgment, more fit, than they could otherwise be, as the leaders in worship, and in the quasi discharge of an office apprehended to be priestly. The very form, as well as substance of a Church, depends upon it, so that, whatever the mode may be, by which elders are appointed,

whether by the solemn imposition of the hands of a Bishop, with the Presbytery, or by the common consent only of the people, formally or informally expressed, to all the ends of an external administration, the collecting together, and sensible organization of a Church, the effect is the same. Rulers are appointed, discipline is administered, preaching is heard, worship is performed, and there is the semblance, as long as it lasts, of what was done by Christ when He "breathed upon the Apostles," making them His representatives amongst men; and by the Apostles afterwards, who "ordained elders in every city" to perpetuate that representation. Objection, therefore, is not founded upon the fact, for that is, of necessity, and so is universally admitted, but upon the *History* of the fact as to its essential and inseparable characteristics; and as to its continuance in one only form, to the exclusion and invalidation of all others. The Scriptures are received as the Gospel, "the word of reconciliation" addressed by God to men. This Gospel must be preached, as the appointed instrument of salvation to the faithful. Some must be commissioned to preach it, for they cannot preach "except they be sent." A power inherent, to such mission is assumed, therefore, where the succession of authority is *not*, and upon the ground of so necessary an assumption, the mission is exercised.

This is the sequence, my hearers, and whilst it indicates to us the existence of an universal sentiment of truth, should make us only the more anxious for such an entire possession of the truth, as would secure us the ministry of reconciliation, in all its historical tradition from the times of the Apostles, and in all its fulness of grace as the living witness, and visible representative of the Head—whose own words of commission can hardly be overvalued, when He said, “I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed me.” “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me. And, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.”

It is something superadded, then, to the ordinary possession of the Christian as such; something besides faith, besides hope, besides love; something external, sensible, visible; relating to the body, the outward representation of Christianity. The essence of an organization, in which “the truth,” the “word of reconciliation” is a deposite; and, independently of which, from want of adaptation to the animal nature of man, “the truth” itself would soon cease to be substantial, and its spirit of sanctifying power would be evaporated from the mind.

The history of the fact, in the records of its tradition, is before you in other forms, and interested as you should be in it, as intelligent Christians, I would rather suppose you uninformed and uncertain about the rightful transmission of your prerogatives as citizens, or the due record and authenticated transcript of your titles to an estate, than about those of this spiritual kingdom of which you are the freedmen ; or, of the legalized authority, and constitutionality of the act of your ingrafting into Christ. We shall not enter, therefore, upon the consideration of this subject here, but direct you rather, as more consonant with the course of holy contemplation through which it has been our purpose to lead you, to the essential and inseparable characteristics of this great fact, as the appointed instrumentality of God, for reconciliation to Him, as well as to that after "rooting and building up in Christ," of which St. Paul speaks to the Colossians, "and establishment in the faith, according to what they had been taught, that they might abound therein with thanksgiving."

"The gift or office cannot be named," says one "which belongs to our Lord, as the Christ, which He did not, in its degree, transfer to His Apostles, by the communication of that spirit, through which, He Himself wrought. One of course excepted, the one great work, which none

else in the whole world could sustain, of being the atoning sacrifice for all mankind. So far, no one can take His place, and His glory He does not give to another."

His death upon the cross is the sole meritorious cause, the sole source of spiritual blessing to our guilty race. But as to those offices and gifts which flow from His atonement, preaching, teaching, reconciling, absolving, censuring, dispensing grace, ruling, ordaining, these are all included in the apostolic commission, which is instrumental and representative in His absence. As was the consecration of the Master, such, we have seen, was also that of the disciples; for He said Himself, "As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Such as his, therefore, were the offices also, to which they were thereby admitted. And, in view of this truth, can surely be ascertained the sense which was apprehended by the Apostle, when he so claimed for a common ministry the power of reconciliation, and so coupled it with "the word," the great instrument of salvation, as that the Divine purposes of mercy might be seen to be, in the order of the Divine arrangement, as much dependent upon the one as the other in the great work of their final consummation.

A representative ministry, a reconciling priesthood, appointed of God in His new creation, with authority to dispense the word and sacraments,

the one as far superior to the legal sacrifices as the other is to the covenant of mere works, imparting to the Christian priesthood an elevation of office, as much above that of the Jewish priest, as the commemorative oblation which it offers is above "the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean." Wherefore it is that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, says, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Enter with me, if it be possible, brethren, into this conception, that you may more fully comprehend the nature of the privilege which is conferred upon you.

A representative ministry, acting for God in the stead of God, as St. Paul himself has declared in the context, "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us—we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It was so with him, and he is not regarded as arrogating anything to himself in the position which he so assumed, in his relation to men. He was an inspired Apostle; he was gifted also with the power of miracles. All extraordinary grace was conferred upon him for the great work to which he was commissioned, it could not be therefore, but that he was right when, as the representative of Christ, "in Christ's stead," he besought men to "be reconciled to God." But may *others* also

take this ground? May men, in our day, claim to be ordained even as was Paul, to the unutterable prerogative, the most fearful responsibility of such an office?

May sinners—and we say it with no affectation of humility, brethren, such as *we* are, stand so, as in the presence of God, claiming to be heard of you for Him, and demanding from you, even, submission to Him? It is a just principle of interpretation, that whereinsoever the nature of an office is changed, the character also of the officer is changed with it. In all its extraordinary functions, thus, the ministry of the Gospel is not what it was on the Day of Pentecost, and during the age of the Apostles, when miracles were wrought in attestation of the Gospel preached, and God, “by signs and wonders,” confirmed the testimony of His servants. With the extraordinary necessity, the extraordinary ministry has passed away. But if it be so—and the purposes of grace change not—human need still requires Divine intervention. Upon the same principle of interpretation, must not all that is ordinary remain, leaving to the written record its witnessing ministry, that where intercession is needed, there may be confidence reposed, even to the confirmation of faith, in the rightful authority of Him, acting for God in His relations to men?

It cannot be denied, with the ordinary neces-

sities, the ordinary functions of the office have been continued, and, to whatever purpose, of preaching, of teaching, of admonishing, of testifying for God, or of claiming submission to Him, the representative ministry is the same. With a necessity upon it, under a penalty of woe, of calling men to repentance, to continue the same so long as mercy is continued, and there shall be in this domain of grace, in this world for which Jesus died, one sinner whose probation is not expended, unsubmitive and unreconciled to God. "Son of man," the admonition of the Sovereign still is, "I have set thee a watchman unto the House of Israel, therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me." And "woe is unto me," we must say with Paul, "if I preach not the Gospel!"

A reconciling priesthood, an instrument of Divine appointment, an authorized agent of God, ministering between the soul and Him, in place of the great high priest, performing priestly acts of a commemorative nature, as his were propitiative, declaring with authority God's "terms of absolution," and dispensing, especially, those "sacraments of grace" which are not seals only, but channels of communication, insomuch that even St. Paul was "cleansed of his sins" in Baptism; and he that "eateth not the Flesh of Christ, nor drinketh His Blood," sacramentally administered,

"can have no life in him," as the Lord Himself hath taught us. Now, the universal sentiment of the human mind has comprehended this, so that sacrifice which found its beginning in sin, having been appointed to the first pair as their means of propitiation, has been depended on by all men, to the end for which it was given, was illustrated and authenticated also by every renewal of covenanted engagement, and would but leave "the New Dispensation" without sensible evidence of its best ministrations of grace, if in some form it could not be manifested, that in "the Word and Sacraments," or "Ministry of Reconciliation," "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

The great evil of this one position is, the necessity of explaining and defending a truth which, under the freedom of the Gospel, has been perverted from its legitimate intention, and unduly assimilated to such ritual observances of a former covenant, as were figurative only of a more efficacious sacrifice, and so ceased when that sacrifice was slain. Alas! that such a necessity should exist amongst us—that there should be, still more, so inadequate a perception of the rightful instrumentality of a Church, or "House of God," with its ministry, its Sacraments, and word. Alas! too, that misapprehension and misjudgment should be the result of such "magnify-

ing of our office," as was forced upon the Apostle, when he would "provoke to emulation His Flesh," that he might be "instrumental in saving them." And more, as another has most affectingly intimated, that "Faith should be so near robbed of its mysteries, and the Sacraments of their virtue, and the priesthood of its commission, as to cause sin itself to be considered a venial matter, and moral evil a mere imperfection, and man as involved in no great peril or misery, and his duties, even, as of no very arduous or anxious nature." We have ventured all this in the uncertain hope of awakening reflection. A ministry is appointed you, in men of like passions and like infirmities as others; perhaps, in cases, like "the Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat;" perhaps, like Judas, who sold his Master with a kiss. "A ministry of Reconciliation" it is notwithstanding, and to all the ends of a priesthood, effectual in that for which it was ordained. It is a thing of God—a part of His own plan of mercy—"a treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of Him and not of us." And not for its glorification, but for truth, it was said, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." It would be a *blessing* to realize this—that blessing which here, more than most others, we need, a sense of the presence of One, in His servants, in His House, at His altar,

in the commemorative emblems of His love, all His instruments of grace, all His, and only His, through whom reconciliation is offered us, and "who, in the days of His flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared." "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." It is a trial of faith, and may be hard to realize, yet "the Truth" hath said it, "Lo, I am with you," and for all its ordinary ministrations of reconciliation and love added, "always, even unto the end of the world."

For improvement, let us now connect all in one closing consideration :

A new creation, a Church, the purchase of Christ's Blood, is that which is here revealed, in which Christ, by His Spirit, is resident, and God in Him, reconciling the world unto Himself—the consummation of His grace to men, in the gift of His ministry, and in the keeping of His Word.

But, that it is revealed, who could have apprehended so gracious, so bountiful a provision? A plan of Divine mercy it is, admirable, ineffable; a holy constitution, communicating "unto the principalities and powers," even "in heavenly places, the manifold wisdom of God." Christ, the Head, "glorified at the right hand of His Father's glory"—He is its substance, its centre, its soul,

yet manifested amongst men by His Spirit, in those provisions of grace which are contained in His Church. Engrafting into Himself, "both by water and blood"—"seen in the breaking of bread," fed upon by faith in the sacrifice of the Eucharist, that, "holding the Head," from which is the Body, "having nourishment ministered," all may be "knit together, increasing with the increase of God." Such was the purpose, such will be its issue—"Apostles, pastors, teachers," given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ,"

