

FOR  
MISSIONARIES  
AFTER THE  
APOSTOLICAL  
SCHOOL

Edward Irving

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Jesus sends out the Twelve

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# Foreword

By Frank Zimmerman (Editor)

I FIRST became aware of Edward Irving through a study of early Adventist history, and particularly through his mention in L. E. Froom's series, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*.

After his name was planted in my mind, some years later I was browsing a theological library on the campus of the *University of British Columbia*. I happened across a six-volume set of the *Writings of Edward Irving*. I was delighted to find two whole volumes devoted to an exposition of the book of *Revelation* (covering the first six chapters). I borrowed these two volumes from the library and photocopied them, and then some years later, ocr'd the copies and have since published them in PDF format on my website.<sup>1</sup>

One of the other volumes in this six-volume set, was devoted to a study on the Incarnation of Christ. My mind had been turned to this subject through the writings of E. J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, and the controversy over Christ's nature that took place in the Adventist Church from the 1950's onward. I found that Irving's explanation of Christ's human nature was perfectly in line with what Waggoner and Jones expressed about 60 years later, sometimes to the point of using almost the same expressions.

There were many other interesting things in Irving's writings, and his short history (he only lived to the age of 42) was full of color. He was a very talented man, who had strong command of the English language, and was a skilled orator, but one who held his eye single to the glory of God, and would not compromise on principles of truth.

At first, his ministry drew the attention of many classes, even among the wealthy. But as his eye was directed to the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.practicaprophetica.com/books/edward-irving/>

study of prophecy, the number of followers dwindled substantially. This did not bother him, however; in fact, it confirmed that he was on the track of truth, which has no interest to the worldly mind.

Just prior to his participation in the prophetic movement in England, he was invited by the *London Missionary Society*, to preach an Anniversary Sermon. For the *Society*, this was a recognition of Irving's talent and popularity, but for Irving, it was a divine call to present the truth. He diligently studied into God's idea of the Missionary calling and vocation, and in his resulting sermon painted a picture far different from what the *Missionary Society* had accepted as practical and expedient. The unfolding events are well described in the book, *The Life of Edward Irving*, by Mrs. Oliphant<sup>2</sup>:

His next point of contact with the astonished and critical world, which watched for a false step on his part, and was ready to pounce upon anything, from an imperfect or complicated metaphor to an unsound doctrine, occurred in the May of this year [1824], when he had been selected to preach one of the anniversary sermons of the *London Missionary Society*.

The invitation to do this was presumed to be a compliment to Irving, to do voucher of his popularity, as well as a prudent enlistment of the "highest talent," to give attraction to the yearly solemnity of the Society.

Had the London committee been wise they would scarcely have chosen so daring and original an orator to celebrate their anniversary; since Irving was exactly the man whose opinions or sentiments on such a topic were not to be rashly predicated.

The preliminaries of this discourse, as afterward described by himself, were not such as generally usher in a missionary sermon. Instead of reading up the records of the society, and

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<sup>2</sup> *The Life of Edward Irving*, Chapter IX, "1824," p. 94-99; by Mrs. Oliphant, Fourth Edition, London: Hurst and Blackett, Publishers.

making careful note of the causes for congratulation and humility, as it would have been correct to have have done—instead of laying up materials for a glowing account of its progress and panegyric upon its missionaries, Irving's preparations ran in the following extraordinary channel:

“Having been requested by the London Missionary Society,” he writes, “to preach upon the occasion of their last anniversary, I willingly complied, without much thought of what I was undertaking; but when I came to reflect upon the sacredness and importance of the cause given into my hands, and the dignity of the audience before which I had to discourse, it seemed to my conscience that I had undertaken a duty full of peril and responsibility, for which I ought to prepare myself with every preparation of the mind and of the spirit.

“To this end, retiring into the quiet and peaceful country, among a society of men devoted to every good and charitable work, I searched the Scriptures in secret; and in their pious companies conversed of the convictions which were secretly brought to my mind concerning the missionary work. And thus, not without much prayer to God and self-devotion, I meditated those things which I delivered in public before the reverend and pious men who had honored me with so great a trust.”

It may easily be supposed that a discourse, thus premeditated and composed by a man whose youth was full of missionary projects such as no practical nineteenth century judgment could designate otherwise than as the wildest romance, was not likely to come to such a sermon as should content the London or any other Missionary Society. It was not an exposition of the character of a missionary as apprehended by an heroic mind, capable of the labors it described, which had been either wished or requested. But the directors of the *Society*, having rashly tackled with a man occupied, not with their most laudable pursuits and interests, but with the abstract truth, had to pay the inevitable penalty.

The day came. In preparation for a great audience the chapel in Tottenham Court Road, once known as the Tabernacle, and built for Whitfield, was selected. The day was wet

and dreary, but the immense building was crowded long before the hour of meeting, many finding it impossible to get admittance. So early was the congregation assembled, that to keep so vast a throng occupied, the officials considered it wise to begin the preliminary services a full hour before the time appointed. When the preacher appeared at last, his discourse was so long that he had to pause, according to the primitive custom of Scotland, twice during its course, the congregation in the intervals singing some verses of a hymn.

One of the hearers on that occasion tells that, for three hours and a half, he, only a youth, and though a fervent admirer of the orator, still susceptible to fatigue, sat jammed in and helpless near the pulpit, unable to extricate himself. All this might have but added to the triumph; and even so early in his career it seems to have been understood of Irving, that the necessity of coming to an end did not occur to him, and that not the hour, but the subject, timed his addresses, so that his audience were partly warned of what they had to look for.

But the oration which burst upon their astonished ears was quite a different matter. It had no connection with the *London Missionary Society*. It was the ideal missionary—the Apostle lost behind the veil of centuries—the Evangelist commissioned of God, who had risen out of Scripture and the primeval ages upon the gaze of the preacher.

He discoursed to the startled throng, met there to be asked for subscriptions—to have their interest stimulated in the regulations of the committee, and their eyes directed towards its worthy and respectable representatives, each drawing a little congregation about him in some corner of the earth—of a man without staff or scrip, without banker or provision, abiding with whomsoever would receive him, speaking in haste his burning message, pressing on without pause or rest through the world that lay in wickedness—an Apostle responsible to no man—a messenger of the cross.

The intense reality natural to one who had all but embraced that austere martyr vocation, in his own person, gave force to the picture he drew. There can be little doubt that it was fool-

ishness to most of his hearers, and that, after the fascination of his eloquence was over, nine-tenths of them would recollect, with utter wonder, or even with possible contempt, that wildest visionary conception. But that it was true for him, nobody, I think, who has followed his course thus far, will be disposed either to doubt or to deny.

The wildest hubbub rose, as was natural, after this extraordinary utterance; but through the midst of it all, preoccupied and lost in the contemplation of that most true yet most impossible servant of God whom he had evoked from the past and tie future to which all things are possible, Irving, all unaware of the commotion he had caused, went on his way, not dreaming that anybody could suppose the present machinery and economics of common-place missionary work injured by that high vision of the perfection of a character which has been, and which yet may be again.

He says, he “was prepared to resist any application which might possibly be made to me” to publish his sermon; an entirely unnecessary precaution, since the complacency of the *London Society* evidently did not carry them the length of paying the preacher of so unwelcome an address that customary compliment.

But in the commotion that followed—in the vexation and wrath of “the religious world,” and the astonished outcry of everybody connected with missions—the preacher, not less astonished than themselves, discovered that his doctrine was new, and unwelcome to the reverend and pious men for whose hearing he had so carefully prepared it.

When he heard his high conception of the missionary character denounced as an ill-timed rhetorical display, and that which he had devoutly drawn from the only inspired picture of such messengers characterized as not only visionary and wild, but an implied libel upon their present representatives, his sincere heart was roused and startled. He went back to his New Testament, the only store of information he knew of. He drew forth Paul and Barnabas, Peter and John, first missionaries, apostles sent of God. The longer he pondered over them the more his picture rose and expanded. Was not the

errand the same, the promise of God the same?—and why should the character of the individual be so different?

The natural result followed; confirmed by further examination, and strengthened by opposition, the sermon enlarged, and grew into an appeal to the world. Only the first part of this work, intended to be completed in four parts, was ever finished, the mind of the preacher being more deeply engrossed from day to day in that law of God which was his meditation day and night, and directed ever to new unfolding of doctrine and instruction....

In essence, what Irving did here, was to present the message of Christ to the Laodicean church; a church who thought she was rich and increased with goods, but whom Christ saw as being spiritually...

### **Revelation 3**

<sup>17</sup> ...wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

He did this work by faithfully presenting what God had revealed to him, through the Word: God's idea of the true Missionary. Many did not wish to be awakened to see their need; it was too much for their pride, to have to admit that they had so far missed the mark, while at the same time thinking of themselves as being leaders in that very work. Mrs. Oliphant goes on to describe the reaction:

This publication was received with shouts of angry criticism from all sides, and called forth an *Expostulatory Letter* from Mr W. Orme, the secretary of the outraged *Missionary Society*, which, however, being long ago forgotten, needs not to be here discussed.

While this controversy is now in the past, the same clash between the divine idea, and man's poor substitute, remains. Therefore, this work warrants being revived from the records of the past, until such time as a better work is produced, or the Missionary work recovers its compass and bearing in Christ once more.

# Dedication

To Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Esq.

MY DEAR AND HONOURED FRIEND,

Unknown as you are, in the true character either of your mind or of your heart, to the greater part of your countrymen, and misrepresented as your works have been, by those who have the ear of the vulgar, it will seem wonderful to many that I should make choice of you, from the circle of my friends, to dedicate to you these beginnings of my thoughts upon the most important subject of these or any times.

And when I state the reason to be, that you have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all of the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation, it will perhaps still more astonish the mind, and stagger the belief, of those who have adopted, as I once did myself, the misrepresentations which are purchased for a hire and vended for a price, concerning your character and works.

You have only to shut your ear to what they ignorantly say of you, and earnestly to meditate the deep thoughts with which you are instinct, and give them a suitable body and form that they may live, then silently commit them to the good sense of ages yet to come, in order to be ranked hereafter among the most gifted sages and greatest benefactors of your country.

Enjoy and occupy the quiet which, after many trials, the providence of God has bestowed upon you, in the bosom of your friends; and may you be spared until you have made known the multitude of your thoughts, unto those who at present value, or shall hereafter arise to value, their worth.

I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from

being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honored me, and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and a preacher of the Gospel, as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor; and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend, and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who has helped in the way of truth, I do now presume to offer you the first-fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths, from listening to your discourse.

Accept them in good part, and be assured that however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind,

EDWARD IRVING.

## Preface

HAVING been requested by the LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY to preach upon the occasion of their last anniversary, I willingly complied, without much thought of what I was undertaking.

But when I came to reflect upon the sacredness and importance of the cause given into my hands, and the dignity of the audience before which I had to discourse, it seemed to my conscience that I had undertaken a duty full of peril and responsibility, for which I ought to prepare myself with every preparation of the mind and of the spirit.

To this end, retiring into the quiet and peaceful country, among a society of men devoted to every good and charitable work, I searched the Scriptures in secret; and in their pious companies conversed of the convictions which were secretly brought to my mind concerning the Missionary work. And thus, not without much prayer to God and self-devotion, I meditated those things which I delivered in public before the reverend and pious men who had honored me with so great a trust.

At that time I had no design whatever of giving to my thoughts any wider publicity, and was prepared to resist any application which might haply be made to me to do so; but an application presented itself from a quarter which I was not prepared to resist,—my own sympathies with a heartbroken widow, the widow of JOHN SMITH, the Missionary, who had died in prison under a sentence of death, which the good sense and good feeling of England united in pronouncing to be *unjust*.

Inasmuch as he suffered unjustly, I viewed him as a martyr, though condemned, like his Lord, with a *show* of law. And being unable in any other way to testify my sense of his injuries, and my feeling of the duty of the Christian Church to support

his widow, I resolved that I would do so by devoting to her use this fruit of my mind and spirit. Thus moved, I gave notice that I would publish the discourse, and give the proceeds of the sale into her hands.

When again I came to meditate upon this second engagement which I had come under and took into consideration the novelty of the doctrine which I was about to promulgate, I set myself to examine the whole subject anew, and opened my ear to every objection which I could hear from any quarter, nothing repelled by the uncharitable constructions and ridiculous account which was often rendered of my views.

The effect of which was to convince me that the doctrine which I had advanced was true, but of so novel and unpalatable a character, that if it was to do any good, or even to live, it must be brought before the public with a more minute investigation of the Scriptures, and fuller development of reason, than could be contained within the compass of a single discourse.

To give it this more convincing and more living form, was the occupation of my little leisure from pastoral and ministerial duties, rendered still less, during the summer months, by the indifference of my bodily health. And it was not until the few weeks of rest and recreation which I enjoyed in the autumn, that I was able to perceive the true form and full extent of the argument which is necessary to make good my position. Which things I mention, in order to explain the delay which has taken place in the publication.

## **The Missionary Charter**

The doctrine, of which I have convinced myself out of the Scriptures, and which I propose by the grace of God to demonstrate and commend, in a series of Orations, is contained in:

- *Matthew 10*

- *Mark 6*
- *Luke 9 and 10*

—which text I have prefixed to the work under the name of “THE MISSIONARY CHARTER.” The twelve apostles and seventy disciples, acting upon this commission, I consider as a school of Missionaries, from which we should take:

- The Character of the Missionary,
- The Nature of his Qualifications, and
- The Methods of his Proceeding,

—with the same exactness with which we take the character of a pastor and the nature of his duties, the character of a private Christian and the nature of his duties, from the other constitutions of the Lord and his Apostles.

Under this conviction, I have entitled my work, “FOR MISSIONARIES AFTER THE APOSTOLICAL SCHOOL.” Of how many Orations the work will consist, I am not able at present to determine, but the plan of it, as well as the occasion, is fully contained in the Introduction, which I have entitled “THE OCCASION AND METHOD OF THE ORATIONS.”

## **Faith or Prudence?**

This is the age of expediency, both in the Church and out of the Church; and all institutions are modeled upon the principles of expediency, and carried into effect by the rules of prudence. I remember, in this metropolis, to have heard it uttered with great applause in a public meeting, where the heads and leaders of the religious world were present,

“If I were asked what was the first qualification for the Missionary, I would say, Prudence; and what the second? Prudence; and what the third? still I would answer. Prudence.”

I trembled while I heard, not with indignation but with horror and apprehension, what the end would be of a spirit

which I have since found to be the presiding genius of our activity, the ruler of the ascendant.

Now, if I read the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of St. Paul's *Epistle to the Hebrews*, I find that from the time of Abel to the time of Christ, it was by *faith* that the cloud of witnesses witnessed their good confession and so mightily prevailed. Faith is there defined as:

### Hebrews 11

<sup>1</sup> ...the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Whereas *prudence*, or *expediency*, is the substance of things present, the evidence of things seen. So faith and prudence are opposite poles in the soul, the one attracting to it all things spiritual and divine, the other all things sensual and earthy.

This expediency has banished the soul of patriotic eloquence from our senate, the spirit of high equity from our legislation, self-denying wisdom from our philosophy, and of our poetry it has clipped the angel wing and forced it to creep along the earth.

And if we look not to it, it will strangle faith and make void the reality of things which are not seen, which are the only things that are real and cannot be removed. "Money, money, money!" is the universal cry. Mammon has gotten the victory, and may say triumphantly (nay, he may keep silence and the servants of Christ will say it for him,)

"Without me you can do nothing."

This evil bent of prudence to become the death of all ideal and invisible things, whether poetry, sentiment, heroism, disinterestedness, or faith, it is the great duty of religious faith to withstand, because religious faith is the only form of the *ideal* which has the assurance from heaven of a present blessing and an everlasting reward.

Poetry is a tender delicate plant, which seeks solitary cul-

ture, and ill endures the rough handling of utility. Sentiment is a flower which vanishes into beautiful colors and sweet odors, that moment it is placed by the side of politics and economists and chrestomathies,<sup>3</sup> and such other thistle-like productions of the mind, (if indeed they belong not rather to the sense.)

And heroism and patriotism and virtue and other forms of disinterestedness, having no exchangeable value in the marketplace, and must keep at home in books or be shown only in family circles, like the antiquated dresses of our grandfathers and grandmothers, with whom the things so named were in fashion.

But *faith* is born to brave contempt, to defy power, to bear persecution, and endure the loss of all things. And in doing so, faith will overthrow the idol of expediency, and recover those heavenly and angelic forms of the natural man,—poetry, sentiment, honor, patriotism, and virtue,—which the worshipers of the idol have offered at the idol's shrine.

And truth will not retaliate upon prudence the evil aim which she has bent against her and all her daughters: but, upon the other hand, will bestow even upon prudence a heavenly form. For,

### Hebrews 11

<sup>1</sup> Faith is the substance of things hoped for,

—and therefore is ever looking onward. It is...

<sup>1</sup> ...the evidence of things unseen,

—and is therefore ever looking beyond the present. Futurity is its dwelling-place.

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<sup>3</sup> *Chrestomathy*: a collection of selected literary passages; a selection of literary passages from a foreign language assembled for studying the language; or a text in various languages, used especially as an aid in learning a subject. (Wikipedia)

And, therefore, as it grows in the soul, it makes it full of forecast and consideration. And forecast and consideration being in the soul, it must be provident and prudent, with a true wisdom, which, making its calculations for eternity, applies them also to the present. Hence it is written, that:

#### **1 Timothy 4**

<sup>8</sup> ...godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

The moment you make a poor man religious, you make him sober and economical and prudent. Hence, also, the most faithful and religious nation upon the earth, is also the most prudent and prosperous on the earth. So that prudence, in the end, will grow upon that same stem whereon grow poetry, sentiment, honor, patriotism, virtue, and every other form of invisible truth,—upon the stem of that tree whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.<sup>4</sup>

If you thus make a stand for the dignity of faith alone, and show, out of the Scriptures, what in all ages it has accomplished for the well-being of man, in the teeth of expediency and power and wealth, by no ministry or help but that of all-prevailing truth; lo! even the faithful rise upon you like locusts and cry,

“But these Scripture-men had miracles, and the mighty power of God; what are we that we should liken ourselves to them?”

These men place their refuge in the physical power of a miracle,—another form of the doctrine of expediency, which must have a solution of every difficulty from the visible. All the other evidences:

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<sup>4</sup> **Revelation 22** <sup>2</sup> In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bore twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- the consistency of the Christian doctrine with everlasting truth;
- the more than chivalrous, the divine intrepidity, and disinterestedness of its teachers;
- the response of every conscience to the word of the preacher;
- the promise of God's Spirit;

All these are accounted as nothing. Instead, it is all to be resolved by the visible work, the outward show of a miracle. This was the only point on which the Gospel came into contact with the visible; and expediency having corrupted the mind of this age, to look for the cause and effect of every thing in the visible, they at once cry out with one voice,

“The Gospel owed its success in the first ages wholly to this, or to this almost wholly; but for us we must accommodate ourselves to the absence of these supernatural means, and go about the work in a reasonable prudent way, if we would succeed in it. We must calculate it as the merchant does an adventure; set it forth as the statesman does a colony; raise the ways and means within the year, and expend them within the year; and so go on as long as we can get our accounts to balance.”

Into this exaggeration of miracles, out of which I foresee the chief objection to the doctrine of the Orations now published, I will cover in the next discourse, in which I shall do my best to put the question of the primitive success of the Gospel upon its proper basis: the character of the doctrine and the character of the preachers of the doctrine. The Jews required a sign (that is, miracles) and the Greeks sought after wisdom, but it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:21-22.

## Offices in the Church

This unfounded reference of every thing peculiar to the primitive times, to the influence of miracles, not only draws an impassable gulf between our sympathies and the actions of Christ and the Apostles, making their example of little or none effect, but it has brought about the idea that certain offices have altogether ceased in the Church.

To many raised in these current ideas, it will seem little short of blasphemy in me to have referred the modern Missionaries to the Apostles as their only patterns. And the same horror would arise in pious minds, if I were to say that the preacher here at home is no other office than that of the ancient prophet to the land of Israel. And yet both these positions I have the hardihood to assert, and hope to be able to demonstrate to the Church.

Those five offices mentioned by the Apostle in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors
- Teachers

—are not offices for a time, but for all times. They denote the five great divisions of duty necessary for the prosperity of the Church;

1. **Apostles**: those sent out to preach the Gospel unto the people who do not know it;
2. **Prophets**: those who are to prophesy in the midst of the people who know it but do not obey it, to call them to repentance, and to read out their doom if they do not repent;
3. **Evangelists**: those who are to build up in knowledge

and faith, comfort and charity, those who already do believe the Gospel;

4. **Pastors:** those who are shepherds over a flock, and guide every one in the way, teaching them from house to house, and communing with their souls;
5. **Teachers:** or doctors, whose office, according to the second book of the Discipline of the Church of Scotland, is “to open up the mind of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, simply, without such application as the ministers use, to the end that the faithful may be instructed, and sound doctrine taught, and that the purity of the Gospel be not corrupted through ignorance or evil opinions.”

These five offices arise out of the everlasting necessities of the Church. When there are no heathen to reach, the Apostolic office will cease. When there are no lukewarm, backsliding, or rebellious hearers and professors of the truth, the Prophetic office will cease. When there are no popular prejudices of ignorance, or heresies of error, or learned oppositions, the office of the Doctor will cease. Then there will be no need save of the Evangelist and the Pastor.

But as this bright period is remote, and the heathen abound upon the earth, and those who have but a name to live abound in Christendom, and almost every learned man is a professed or disguised disbeliever and gainsayer, these offices must continue to exist, and officers must arise and bear them, whether they assume the name or not. Otherwise the Church will shrink, and grow full of spots and wrinkles and blemishes and corruptions.

The miraculous endowments of all these offices have ceased, because there is no longer any occasion for them (the external healings, which were like fruit before the harvest, being superseded by the fruits of health and blessedness, which the Gospel has produced, not upon individuals, but upon nations

and generations; the internal powers of understanding and discourse being superseded by the thing understood and discoursed of, which we have in the writings of the Apostles).

The miraculous gifts, whether external or internal, have brought themselves to an end; but the use and purpose of these offices as surely remain as the use and purpose of the evangelical minister and the faithful pastor remain. And if our Churches were in full possession of the Spirit of Christ, they would order themselves and their operations after these five divisions of the Christian ministry. Indeed, they are beginning to do so imperceptibly.

Every Church and body of dissenters have already reconstituted the Apostolic office in the Missionary; the office of the Preacher or Prophet is also beginning to separate from the office of Pastor in our great cities (pity that it were at the expense of the latter), and the office of Evangelist is well sustained by what are called the evangelical clergy (pity that they did not address themselves also to the pastoral and prophetic offices); the Doctors should be in the universities and schools of learning, as is well set forth in the fifth chapter of the second book of Discipline; and, for Pastors, they are to be found, still in ancient simplicity and faithfulness, in many parishes of the North.

Whether it be possible for one man to discharge all these offices of the Church, I know not. But this I know, that any one of them is a sufficient field for the faculties and energies of the most able and active man.

## The Main Point

Into these matters of ecclesiastical polity it may be thought out of place to have entered here, but it is important to have communicated in this short and simple way the leading idea of this discourse concerning doctrine, which is intended:

- to bring back the Missionary to the Apostolical office,

- to restore the gospel Messenger to his dignity of place,
- to give him back his charter and prerogative,
- to deliver him into the liberty of his office out of the hands of whomsoever would enthrall it,
- to make him the servant of our common Lord, the dependent of our common Father, the mouth and voice of our common Spirit, subordinate to nothing upon the earth save the authority of the Church which ordained him, and the law of the Gospel verity.

Though published separately, in order to redeem my pledge to the public and gratify the feeling out of which the pledge was given, it contains a full development of the Missionary Constitution and a demonstration of its perpetuity. It is therefore complete in itself, though only a fragment of the whole discourse; which I shall be the better able to address to the conditions of the present time, when I shall have gathered the judgment of the Churches upon the doctrine, through their several public organs of opinion.

Now, if the members and managers of Missionary Societies think that I entertain towards them any feelings contrary to brotherhood in the work in which they labor, they deceive themselves and disbelieve my declarations.

It is among the pleasantest recollections of my early years, that in my youth their cause was the subject of my prayers and the end of my secret savings; that many years before I reached man's estate, I was chosen to be the manager of one of the country Bible Societies, and one of the country Missionary Societies of Scotland. I afterwards filled the office of secretary to the two chief Societies in the most populous city of Scotland. In all these offices I had the approbation of the Societies entered on their minutes.

And it is now a continual subject of regret to me, that the duties of the ministerial and pastoral office, to which I am ordained, leave me no time for serving their most noble cause,

otherwise than by the silent and secret meditation of these unworthy thoughts.

- That I consider their plans imperfect and immature, is, I trust, no more than they do themselves.
- That I search the Scriptures for light, is, I trust, no more than they do themselves.
- That I make known to others the knowledge which is revealed unto my mind, is no more than they do in every one of their publications.

Therefore, let them take me to be, as indeed I am, a true friend to the work in which they are engaged; and let them judge me in the spirit of love, not of bitterness or strife.

My desire and prayer for every Missionary Society which is embodied, for every Mission which is undertaken, for every Missionary who adventures from the bosom of his home, for the sake of the Gospel of Christ and the salvation of the unbelieving nations, is, that they may prosper to the ends of the earth.

If I forget them in my prayers, private and public, may my right hand forget her cunning; if I fail to contribute my mite to their support, may the Lord's providence cease to provide for me and mine. Nay, but more, I will think for their sake, and meditate my inmost thoughts, for their success.

My mind, as well as my soul, belongs to Christ, my Creator and Redeemer, and unto His cause they are due and are devoted. And in this spirit I do now pray to Him, to save or destroy, to prosper or blast, these first fruits of many thoughts, according as they are fitted to advance or to retard the glory of His great name.

*Edward Irving*  
*Caledonian Church, January, 1825*

# 1. The Occasion and Method of the Orations

## Introduction

**M**EN, Brethren, and Fathers, it has never been my lot to be present on occasions like this, and the labors of my ministry have hindered me from going about to learn of others, what is the use and wont, and common expectation connected with the annual discourses, which are preached before the guardians and friends of the Missionary Cause.

So I stand up, inexperienced and ignorant, to attempt a work from which able ministers have shrunk back abashed, and to which the ablest within the land have approached with fear and trembling.

It is, therefore, no less necessary for the reassurance of my own mind, than it is expedient for the edification of this enlightened and spiritual convocation (if, indeed, I may hope without presumption to edify such,) that I should meditate beforehand the nature of the office which I have undertaken; what is the measure of my responsibility to Christ the head of the Church; and to the venerable Society which has intrusted me with this charge; and what is the nature of my commission to the multitude now assembled to hear what I shall speak.

The high and seated dignity which this Society has attained in the judgment of the Christian church, and the weighty and well earned reputation which it has obtained, not in Christendom alone, but over the widest bounds of the habitable earth, relieve its advocate from the dangerous office of eulogy and panegyric, which he may safely leave to the...

### Isaiah 42

<sup>10</sup> ...the isles, and the inhabitants thereof.

<sup>11</sup> ...the wilderness and the cities thereof...the villages that Kedar does inhabit...the inhabitants of the rock...

Its labors also, and the labors of its servants, on every for-

eign shore, its blessed toil among the barbarous people with the fruits thereof the sufferings and deaths of its true and trusty messengers, or their return in godly triumph, attended with the spoils of idolatry and crowned with the olive crown of peace, their gifts of tongues, and their interpretations of tongues, all the pious rehearsal of its story, with the pleasing task of justifying, approving, and applauding its various proceedings, he may likewise decline to touch, as rightfully belonging to another place and to another meeting, expressly set apart for that more secular end.

Holy assemblies, like this, which are opened and concluded with praise and prayer, and wherein a minister of the blessed Gospel is called to discourse from the Word of God, before the Patrons, President, Guardians, Office-bearers and Friends of the Missionary Cause, ought to be taken up with higher and more sacred discourse than the praising of men, or the upholding of man's imperfect works.

The preacher has before him the spiritual counselors of the heathen, the propagators of the faith of Christ; who, being conscious of their insufficiency for such a trust, and knowing how they are liable to decay, and fail under the difficulties of spiritual work, if not refreshed from the everlasting fountain of life and truth, judge it wise (and most wise surely it is,) to select from the churches ordained ministers of Christ, who may discourse to them freely and largely upon the cause which they have set their hearts and strengthened their hands to carry forward.

For such an end they place him in the chair of verity, and put into his hands the oracles of God, and without let or hindrance or instructions of any kind, they say,

“Brother, as you have freely received, to us freely bestow of the gift that is given unto you.”

Now, at any time, it is a high commission for a frail mortal

to publish the Gospel of Christ, and he should seek for his soul every pious help; but to counsel the counselors, to judge the judges, and prophesy to one of the great witnesses of the church, is an overwhelming duty, whose approach I have long dreaded, as of a mountain-billow which threatened to overwhelm my scarce seaworthy bark. And now that it is at hand I scarce can summon strength to face it, or know how to steer through it safely. God be my help!

I have hardly proved the armor of this warfare, before I am called to give counsel to the leaders of the host, and the assembled camp. The burden is too great, and oppresses my spirit, and I would flee, like the prophet Jonah, from declaring the message with which my spirit is oppressed, were there not a heavy woe denounced upon every prophet who shuns to declare the whole counsel of God.

To which call being obedient, the call of a higher authority than the leaders of the host and the assembled camp, even of Him under whose commission the work proceeds, I take unto myself courage to declare that which I have long apprehended, which, in God's word, I have well considered, and whereof I have endeavored to be well assured.

### **Three Similar Assemblies**

In casting about to discover in what way I might strengthen my spirit to this high occasion, and in what style it became me to address this very grave and reverend assembly, and in seeking counsel of the Lord; it pleased Him to recall to my mind three instances in the history of the Church, wherein His faithful servants have been called to bear testimony before assemblies clothed with still higher dignity and importance than this before which I now address myself to speak:

#### **1. THE APOSTOLICAL SYNOD OF JERUSALEM**

This was the first and gravest assembly which Christendom has ever seen, wherein the Apostles and Elders with the Holy

Ghost met in Jerusalem, to consider how far the Gentiles were to be bound by the ordinances of Moses. Applying myself humbly to learn from the manner of this assembly, whereof we have a particular account in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Acts*, I perceived that:

- Peter and James, Apostles though they were, and inspired of the Holy Ghost, framed their discourse with a diligent reference to Scripture and to their own experience;
- Paul and Barnabas for their argument gave a simple narrative of what God had wrought among the Gentiles by their hand;
- And that every speaker abstained from words of policy, address, and worldly wisdom;

—insomuch, that there is found in the whole proceedings of that assembly, neither obsequiousness, nor eulogy, nor idle words of apology, nor general commendations of the work; but throughout, a devout spirit, deliberative wisdom, plain-spoken discourse, and a steady application to the matter in hand.

## 2. AT THE REFORMATION OF ENGLAND

The second instance which came opportunely to my mind while deliberating of this exigency in which I am placed, was from the times of the Reformation of England, when the godly Edward, and the Protector, with the chief statesmen and office-bearers of the realm, were wont to hear the master spirits of the Protestant faith discourse before them.

On which high occasions these men, who, next to the Apostles, were the best Missionaries that Christendom has seen, valiant men and true, who sealed their testimony with their blood, thought it beside their holy office to eulogize the most gracious youth that ever filled a throne, since the days of good Josiah; and they held it beneath their office to smooth down the stern and rugged voice of truth to the ear of the princes

and politicians who sat in state before them: but like prophets arisen from the dead (and what are Christian preachers but the prophets of the New Dispensation,) they fulfilled their office by thundering into the ears of king and peers, of courtiers and men of war, the religious necessities of the realm, and the religious duties of the rulers of the realm.

For, as you may still see by the writings of Ridley and Latimer, and Gilpin, there were in the discourses which they held, no panegyrics of the work of reformation yet imperfectly done, no idle commendations of the laborers in the work, but:

- Rebukes of hungry courtiers, and hollow-hearted friends of the cause,
- Pictures of an ignorant and famished people,
- Enumerations of the religious wants and abuses of the realm,
- Plans of spiritual and charitable undertakings, with a restless urgency towards the high mark of the people's thorough reformation.

And sermons such as these were fruitful things, as the noble foundation of Christ's Hospital does testify, which was the offspring of one of these fearless pleadings for the sake of truth.

### **3. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

The last instance, by the authority of which I embolden myself to the undertaking of this discourse, is derived from a quarter to which I, at least, and I trust all judicious and charitable Christians along with me, look with like satisfaction as to the other two,—the church from whose members one of the least worthy has been chosen this night to hold forth to you the word of truth.

The national assembly of the Kirk of Scotland,—which is by far the most venerable relic of ecclesiastical dignity, a sort of

house of commons to the Church of Christ, and which ere this time would have wrought out for the religious rights of man whatever the House of Commons has for his civil rights, had not the strong and villain hand of power brought in Patronage against the Claim of Rights and the solemnest faith of treaties,—that assembly (whose pious labor, now about to commence, may the Lord bless!) never sits down to deliberate upon the grave matters committed to its trust without first appointing one of the Brethren to discourse before it from the Word of God.

Upon this occasion the preachers, of whom I have heard many, do never, even in these degenerate days of pulpit liberty, condescend to flattery of the learned, reverend, and noble personages before them, nor to empty eulogies of the church; but, as beseems the minister of truth and the chair of verity, they maintain a grave and serious discourse upon the high matters for which the ecclesiastical estate of the nation is assembled, and give forth with authority the Doctrine, Re-proof, Correction, and Instruction in righteousness, for which all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and for the promulgation of which this office of the ministry is maintained on the earth.

### **Preparation for the Current Discourse**

Which three instances—of the Apostolic age, of the Reformation of England, and of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland,—coming seasonably to my recollection, while I was in doubt and much dismay concerning that which I had undertaken, I resolved to establish my feet upon them as upon a sacred tripod; and to crave of the Lord, as indeed I have done, to breathe upon me of the spirit of the great Fathers in His church, that I might be enabled to speak at this time, in that bold and fearless style, in which they, standing in my room, would have dared to speak.

For I said unto myself: though all the Missionary Societies

of this land were assembled within these walls, they would not form so grave an assembly as that which met in Jerusalem in the primitive times; neither has the work on which they are entered yet grown to be so great a work as the Reformation of England, whereof the Missionary work is but one of the children; and this assembly, however reverend, is not yet so venerable as the great deliberative assembly of our national church, which for which centuries has maintained the fear and discipline of God within a realm, and once or twice, nay thrice, saved the realm from the armed paw of violence and misrule.

Therefore, I said further unto myself, I will not shrink back abashed from the full and fearless declaration of what seems to me right: I will not sink my office into that of a money-gatherer, or a talebearer, of an advocate of institutions, however good, or a worshiper of mortal men, however excellent. But I will be a teacher of the Gospel, and a publisher of the praise of Christ, and will not shun to deliver the whole counsel of God upon this all-important matter of the Missionary work.

And I will speak it with the more plainness because the heads and leaders thereof are now before me, that haply the Lord may carry the principles, which I am about to deduce from His holy word, into the Court and Citadel of this great and glorious cause, to which our countrymen, ever forward and ever foremost in a good work, have set their shoulder, resolved to maintain it unto the death.

But when I took to myself this high commission of counseling the counselors, and judging the judges of this great undertaking, I besought the Lord, that He would cast out all thoughts and conclusions which had their origin in myself, all fears and apprehensions which came in from other quarters, and that He would make of my organs of thought, feeling, and speech, an instrument wherewith to declare the mind and will

of His Holy Spirit of truth.

And, that I might not be wanting in my duty of searching His revelation, I examined everywhere for a basis and as it were a constitutional charter of missionary associations, and a rule for them to proceed by in all their transactions. And having found, as it seemed to me, for reasons which I shall show hereafter, such an abiding constitution, four times repeated in the Gospels, and given at large in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of *Matthew*, which I have read as the ground of this discourse; I gave thanks, and said:

“Now my way is clear before me; I will be an expositor of these instructions of my Redeemer; here is the matter of my discourse; here are the everlasting instructions of the Missionary; this let me endeavor to comprehend, and set forth unto the people.”

And being, as it seemed to me, directed of God, both in the matter and manner of this discourse, I gave thanks, and took courage, and being delivered from my fears, I now proceed upon my course rejoicing, and hope to steer safely through that mountain-billow, whose rough top came threatening to overwhelm my scarce seaworthy bark.

## **The Method of the Discourse**

Having entered with caution, I resolved next to proceed with order in handling this great question of the Missionary Work, and it seemed to me best to set forth my thoughts after the following method:

1. To give an exposition of the Missionary estate, as it is laid down in the fore-mentioned chapter of instructions given by Messiah to the first apostles of His kingdom.
2. To examine if it was meant to be of continual authority in the Christian Church, as the Constitution of Christian Missions.
3. To examine how much of the success of the Apostolic

age depended upon their exact adherence to the spirit and letter of this Constitution.

4. To show, from the history of Christian Missions subsequent to the primitive times, that they have been prosperous in proportion as they conformed to, and unsuccessful in proportion as they departed from, the spirit and letter of Messiah's Constitution for the Missionary estate.
5. To study it in practice, and consider what good fruits at home, whence the Missionaries go, and abroad whither they proceed, would come from the exact fulfillment of it.
6. To explain the office of a Missionary Society in carrying it into effect.
7. To show the duty of private Christians to support all such institutions, as endeavor to conform themselves to the appointment of the Lord, and to keep on the great work of converting the nations.

So that our whole discourse will be an argument founded upon our Lord's words, and concluding for the support of this cause for which we are assembled, and throughout instructing those who are engaged therein.

Now, brethren, I ask your patience, the patience of this religious and Christian assembly, to hear me at length upon this, the most important question of the present times; and not to restrict me to the bounds which are observed in ordinary discourses, but, as they do in the courts of justice, and the national assemblies, to give me a latitude commensurate with the weight and importance of the question, which not of my own will, but by request of this great Society, I come forward to advocate.

According to this plan, the first thing to be considered is the Office of the Missionary, as it is laid down in these words of Messiah, who himself was Heaven's high Missionary to the

earth, and fulfilled to the letter every one of the instructions which He gave unto those who should travel in His footsteps.



Medical Missionary attending to a sick African Boy  
(Harold Copping, 1916, Wellcome Collection)

## 2. The Missionary Charter

*or Messiah's Instructions to the First Missionaries*

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not:

<sup>6</sup> But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

<sup>7</sup> And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

<sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give.

<sup>9</sup> Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

<sup>10</sup> Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

<sup>11</sup> And into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till you go thence.

<sup>12</sup> And when you come into a house, salute it.

<sup>13</sup> And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

<sup>14</sup> And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

<sup>15</sup> Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

<sup>16</sup> Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be you therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

<sup>17</sup> But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

<sup>18</sup> And you shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

<sup>19</sup> But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what you shall speak.

<sup>20</sup> For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you.

<sup>21</sup> And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against

their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

<sup>22</sup> And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endures to the end shall be saved.

<sup>23</sup> But when they persecute you in this city, flee you into another: for verily I say unto you, You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

<sup>24</sup> The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

<sup>25</sup> It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

<sup>26</sup> Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

<sup>27</sup> What I tell you in darkness, that speak in light: and what you hear in the ear, that preach upon the housetops.

<sup>28</sup> And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

<sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

<sup>30</sup> But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

<sup>31</sup> Fear not therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup> Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

<sup>33</sup> But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

<sup>34</sup> Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup> For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

<sup>36</sup> And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

<sup>37</sup> He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

<sup>38</sup> And he that takes not his cross, and follows after me, is not worthy of me.

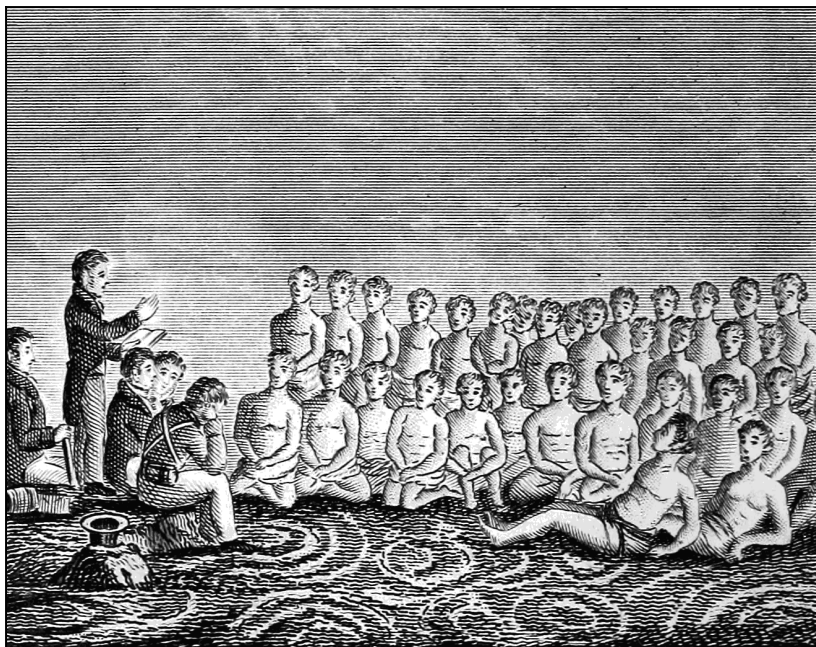
<sup>39</sup> He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life

for my sake shall find it.

<sup>40</sup> He that receives you receives me, and he that receives me receives Him that sent me.

<sup>41</sup> He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

<sup>42</sup> And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.



A Missionary Preaching  
(Religious Events, 1848)



The Apostles leaving for a Missionary Journey  
(Anon 16<sup>th</sup> c., British Museum)

### 3. The Missionary Constitution

#### Worldly Ambassadors

WHEN kings send out ambassadors to represent their person and their interests in foreign courts, they choose out from among the people, men of high name and reputation, well skilled in the ways of the world, and the policy of states; whom, having clothed with powers plenipoten-tiary,<sup>6</sup> and appointed with officers and servants of every kind, they send forth, accredited with royal letters to all courts and kingdoms, whither they may come, furnished with grace and splendor to feast the common eye, and laden with rich gifts to take the cupidity or conciliate the favor of those with whom they have to do.

Also, when a nation fits out a journey or voyage of discovery, as we now do to the Polar Seas (which as it is the third time, may it be blessed with threefold success!) they choose out men of fortitude, humanity and skill, upon whom to bestow a valorous and steady crew, who will not be daunted by the dangers, nor baffled by the difficulties of the work; and having called in the whole science and art of the country, to fortify and accommodate the danger-hunting men, they launch them forth amidst the hearty cheers and benedictions of their country.

And when a nation arrays its strength to battle for its ancient rights and dominions; or when a noble nation arms in the cause of humanity to help an insulted sister in the day of her need, as the Britons have oft been called upon to do, the nation is shaken to her very center with commotion, and every arm and sinew of the land strains to the work.

Fleets and armies, and munitions of war; the whole

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<sup>6</sup> *Plenipotentiary*: a person, especially a diplomat, invested with the full power of independent action on behalf of their government, typically in a foreign country. (Oxford Dictionary)

chivalry, the whole prowess, strength and policy, and oft, the whole wealth of the land muster in the cause; and the chief captains forsake their wives and children, and peaceful homes; and the warlike harness is taken from the hall where it hung in peace; and the bold peasantry come trooping from their altars and their household hearths; and...

The trumpet speaks to the armed throng:<sup>7</sup>

—they gather into one, and descend unto the shores of the surrounding sea, whither every fleet ship and gallant sailor have made ready to bear them to the place where the rights of the nation, or the insulted rights of humanity cry upon their righteous arm for redress: and their kinsmen follow them with their prayers, and their wives and children, their fathers, and the households of their fathers, with the assembled congregations of the people, commit them and their righteous cause to the safe conduct and keeping of the Lord of Hosts.

## **Ambassadors of God**

But, when the King of Heaven sends forth these twelve ambassadors to the nations, fits out these discoverers of...

### **Matthew 4**

<sup>16</sup> The people that sat in darkness...and the shadow of death,

—and furnishes forth this little army to subvert the thrones, dominions, principalities and powers of darkness which brooded over the degenerate earth, to bring forth the lost condition of humanity, and establish its crown of glory as at the first, He took men of no name nor reputation, endowed with no Greek, with no Roman fame, by science untaught, by philosophy unschooled, fishermen from the shores of an inland sea, the class of men, which of all classes is distinguished for no exploit in the story of the world; Galileans, a people despised of the Jews, who were themselves a despised people.

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<sup>7</sup> John Milton, *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, 1629.

As at first, when God wished to make a man...

### **Genesis 1**

<sup>26</sup> ...in His own image, after His own likeness,

—He did not bring the materials from heavenly regions, nor did He create a finer type of matter for the high occasion, but took from the ground a handful of dust, to impress His divine image upon, and to breathe into it the spirit of life. So the Son of God, himself a servant,

### **Isaiah 53**

<sup>3</sup> ...despised and rejected of men,

—when He chose vessels...

### **Acts 9**

<sup>15</sup> ...to bear His name before Gentiles and Kings, and the Children of Israel,

—preferred that they should be empty of human greatness, without any grace or comeliness in the sight of man, without any odor of a good name, or rich contents of learning or knowledge—that...

### **2 Corinthians 4**

<sup>7</sup> ...the treasure being in earthen vessels, the praise might be of God.

## **No Visible Sustenance**

Such men having chosen, for subverting the ancient thrones of darkness, and recovering the world from the perdition of sin and the night of the grave, He sent them forth, destitute of all visible sustenance, and of all human help, and forbade them, to be beholden unto any.

### **Luke 9**

<sup>3</sup> And He said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

## **Matthew 10**

<sup>9</sup> Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass, in your purses,

<sup>10</sup> Nor scrip for your journey, neither have two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, and salute no man by the way.

## **Luke 10**

<sup>4</sup> Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

No means of any sort did He permit for procuring the necessities of life, or purchasing the helps of their journey; no store of provisions, nor even a scrip for containing what might be offered them by the pity or piety of the people; no raiment nor vesture, with the change of which to comfort their weary and way-worn limbs, besides what was sufficient for nature's modesty and her present necessity. Without staff, without shoes, they fared on their way two by two; their sandaled feet exposed to dust and sultry heat; their bodies to every blast of heaven; their natural wants to man's precarious charity.

The most defenseless bird that flies athwart the heavens, the weakest, most persecuted beast that cowers beneath the covert, or scuds along the plain, are better provided with visible help than were these Apostles of the Highest; for the birds of the air have nests to which to wing their flight at even tide, and the beasts of the earth have holes wherein to screen themselves from pursuit; but the founders of the spiritual and everlasting kingdom had not where to lay their head.

Whom having thus divided from the resources which human weakness has in the storehouse and armory of nature, He next divided from the resources which she has in the power and patronage and friendship of men. They are to compose no speeches for the ears of prince or governor, but to speak as the Spirit of Truth gave them utterance; they are not to go from house to house making friends against the evil day, but to abide where they first halted, so long as they are wel-

come; they are not even to salute a friend, acquaintance, or neighbor by the way.

And if, in spite of these preventions, it should come to pass that the people they conferred with, well disposed to them for their word's sake, should take pity upon their unprovided estate, and offer them money to help them on their way; lo, they have no purse for containing it! If they should offer them provision to be their *viaticum* from town to town; lo, they have no scrip wherein to bestow it! They cannot possess, they cannot accumulate, they are cut off and separate from all fixed and movable wealth which the world holds within its fair and ample bound.

What will preserve life, they are to take upon the credit of their universal message, without feeling obligation, for the laborer is worthy of his meat, and they are wholly obliged to another cause. In no earthly shape can they benefit from their labors under the sun; to no account can they turn the children of men, from whose liberality they can profit no further than to live.

Like Jonah, commissioned with the burden of Nineveh, they are to gird up their loins and make speed; they are to hie from house to house, and hasten from town to town, inquiring after the spirits of men; to tell their tale and hurry onward: as the heralds of the northern chiefs were wont to hasten from house to house, and village to village, when rousing the mountain clans to war.

And truly I see no reason why they who hold the commission to make peace should not be as fleet as those who hold the commission to levy war, and the messenger of salvation fly with as hasty a wing as the messenger of death; why servants should not be found to do as much, and to do it as hastily, for the King of Heaven, as for the lordly chieftain of a mountain-clan, or the throned monarch of a mighty land.

## **Their Prospects from the World**

Thus unfurnished of resources from Nature's storehouse, and hindered from plowing with human help, do you ask if these first Missionaries of the Gospel had promises of welcome every where, and went forth on a flourishing and popular cause? If the way was prepared for them in every city? And a hospitable home made ready for them in every house? Hear what their Lord says to them at parting:

### **Luke 10**

<sup>3</sup> Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>17</sup> But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

<sup>18</sup> And you shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake...

<sup>21</sup> And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

<sup>22</sup> And you shall be hated of all men for my name's sake...

Such was their heavy parting. No Missionary that ever went to the heathen, fared forth on his way with so gloomy a foreboding, so cheerless a farewell. Let no one object, in the face of these predictions too truly fulfilled:

“But these are not men like us, open to every want; they are inspired miracle-working men who had nature under their control.”

Their miracles, which saved many, protected not themselves; their inspirations, which blessed many, could not bless themselves from every harm and sorrow which patient nature can endure. They are to be placed at the bar of civil law, to be hunted out with religious persecution; against them the tender affections of life are to rise in arms, and the soft and downy scenes of home are to bristle like the iron front of war;

the tender hands which are wont to pluck the thorns of sorrow from our feet, are to guide the weapons of their death; of all men they are to be hated for His name's sake: they are to be hunted like the partridge on the mountains, and every refuge upon the earth is to be hidden from their sight.

“Go, [said He,] my chosen ones, go like the defenseless lamb into the paw of the ravenous wolf: the world thirsts for your blood, and is in arms against your undefended lives. Nevertheless, go. You are without weapons of defense, no bribes are in your hands, nor soft words upon your tongues; and you go in the teeth of hatred, derision, and rage. Nevertheless, my children, go.”

They are launched into a stormy sea, a sea of storms and shipwreck is before them, and their frail bark is not fenced or fitted out for any storm, or furnished for any voyage. So the world would say, because so it seems in the eye of the world, which looks but upon the visible and temporal forms of things. They would say:

“It is madness, moonstruck madness, to think that of such should come any speed; it is not in the nature of things they should exist a week in any region of the earth, and in barbarous regions not a single day: no policy of insurance would do their risk at any premium: they are shipwrecked, cast-away creatures, doomed to death, and destined to effect no good even if they should outlive their first outsetting.

“Men must have a livelihood before they can speak or act: they must have protection to cover them from the tyranny of power, and law to save them from the riots of the people: they must be well paid if you would have them work well, for if a man have no comforts his life is miserable.

“What! such mendicants as these convert the world?!”

The well-conditioned classes say:

“Vagrant, vagabond fellows, they are fitter for the stocks or the common jail. Such illiterate clowns, such babblers as

these, instruct mankind!”

The learned classes say:

“Away with them to their nets and fishing craft.”

And, the political classes say:

“It is dangerous to the state; they cover plots under their silly pretenses, and must be dealt with by the strong hand of power.”

Methinks I hear, in every contemptible and arrogant speech which is vented against the modern Missionaries by worldly and self-sufficient men, the echo, after two thousand years, of those speeches which were wont to be poured upon the twelve apostles and seventy disciples, when they began to emerge out of the foundation of society, into the neighborhood and level of its higher ranks.

But the Wonderful Counselor,<sup>8</sup> in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge,<sup>9</sup> and who knew what was in man, did not without good and sufficient cause divorce the human desires from those objects on which they naturally rest. He knew that if He gave the messengers of His kingdom, which is not of this world, and against which this world conspires, to expect any ray of hope, any shadow of consolation, or scantling of support from the things of this world, it would be only to disappoint them in the end.

For though He foresaw that fair weather would dawn and much enjoyment be partaken in the progress and towards the latter end of the work, He saw, hanging over its first beginnings in every region of the earth, storms and tempests, and terrific commotions, out of which the eclipsed light of truth was to come forth, and the day of peace to be established.

He knew that in every realm His truth was to make way

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<sup>8</sup> *Isaiah* 9:6.

<sup>9</sup> *Colossians* 2:3.

against the edge of the sword, and, like the phoenix, to procreate itself in the flame of fire, and that His servants were to be heard from the paw of the lion and from the horn of the unicorn: wherefore it suited not to amuse those who were to plant the plant, and those who were to propagate the plant, with the enjoyments which were to be partaken under its future shade; and He spoke plainly unto them and said,

“If you have not a heart for the extremes of human suffering, and a soul above the fear of man, you need not undertake this work,—more perilous than war, more adventurous than a voyage to ‘regions of thick-ribbed ice,’ and more important to the earth than most sacred legation which ever went forth in behalf of suffering and insulted humanity.”

He cut them off from the power and virtue of gold and silver, which, they say, will unlock barred gates and scale frowning ramparts. He denied them the scrip, and therewith hindered the accumulation or use of property in any form. He forbade them change of raiment, that is, pleasure and accommodation of the person; and with their staff interdicted all ease of travel and recreation of the sense by the way; and in hindering salutations hindered the formalities of life and the ends of natural or social affection.

All these the natural motives to enterprise and the sweet rewards of success He cut asunder, because He foresaw that whether He did so or not, the world would soon do it for them.

### **Their Prospects from God**

But He did not leave their minds in a void state, without motive or inducement or hope of reward; but proceeded to fill each several chamber thereof with the spirit of a more enduring patience and a more adventurous daring:

- He gave to Faith what He took from Sight
- He supplied from the Invisible what He interdicted in

the Visible

- He repaid with things Spiritual and Eternal what He spoiled them of Temporal things.

And instead of a home He gave them this declaration, which raised them first to a footing with himself, and then to a footing with God:

**Matthew 10**

<sup>40</sup> He that receives you receives me, and he that receives me receives Him that sent me.

<sup>41</sup> He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

Instead of food, He gave them this promise,

<sup>42</sup> And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

Instead of protection and a safe-conduct on the way, He gave them this stout-hearted admonition,

<sup>28</sup> And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

<sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

<sup>30</sup> But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

<sup>31</sup> Fear not therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows.

And when delivered up to councils, and brought before governors. and kings, instead of human help and countenance, and skill of pleading and persuasive words, He gave them this sentence:

<sup>19</sup> But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what you shall speak.

<sup>20</sup> For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you.

And when their fathers and mothers should betray them, and their sons and daughters should spit upon them, which the first confessors sadly proved, He gave them this consolation to their heavy hearts:

**Matthew 10**

<sup>37</sup> He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

For their sustenance under false accusation, He gave them this comfort:

<sup>24</sup> The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

<sup>25</sup> It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

For the comfort of their hearts under blackening calumnies, when their sun of life was setting under thick and dark clouds of falsehood, and their name was like to be overshadowed forever, He gave them this assurance:

<sup>26</sup> Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

<sup>27</sup> What I tell you in darkness, that speak in light: and what you hear in the ear, that preach upon the housetops.

And for their use, when they were enveloped in the flames, or extended upon the honorable cross, He gave them this heart-establishing word:

<sup>38</sup> And he that takes not his cross, and follows after me, is not worthy of me.

<sup>39</sup> He that finds his life shall lose it: and he that loses his life for my sake shall find it.

And to keep up a constant cheerfulness in their hearts under every hardship and mistreatment, He gave them to know and to rejoice, that their names were written in heaven; removing their confidence from every thing terrestrial, that it might rest at the right hand of God, where there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

Thus He furnished His Missionaries, building them up in faith, and establishing them with infallible promises, weaning them from the bosom of the earth, to place them in the bosom of their Father in heaven.

- He took them from the hands of human protection, to put them under the arm of the mighty God of Jacob.
- He emptied them of self-dependence and dependence upon human strength and prudence, to fill them with the Spirit of wisdom and truth.
- He bestowed upon them the elements of heaven's heroism when He took from them the elements of earth's heroism.
- He conveyed their treasures away from hence, where moths corrupt and thieves break through to steal, depositing them safely in the heavens; where also He prepared for them a place in His Father's house of many mansions, and wrote their honored names in the book of life.

It was a spiritual work they had to do, therefore He disembodied (if I may so speak) and spiritualized the men who were to do it.

- It was Faith they had to plant, therefore He made His missionaries men of Faith, that they might plant Faith, and Faith alone.
- They had to deliver the nations from the idolatry of the Gold and the Silver, therefore He took care His messengers should have none.
- They had to deliver them from the idolatry of Wisdom,

therefore He took care they should be Foolish.

- They had to deliver the world from the idolatry of Power and Might, therefore He took care they should be Weak.
- They had to deliver the world from the idolatry of Fame and Reputation, therefore He took care they should be Despised.
- They had to deliver the world from the idolatry of Things that are, therefore He took care they should be as Things that are not.

In all respects He made them Types and Representatives of the Ritual they were to establish, models of the doctrine which they went forth to teach.

Such were the men, and such the spiritual equipment of the men, who were sent forth by Messiah, the missionary of Heaven, into all the world, to teach all nations His discipline, baptize them into His faith, and lay the foundations of that spiritual kingdom which is to cast down every other kingdom, and endure for ever.

### **Their Instructions for the Work**

And the instructions which He gave them, how to proceed in the effecting of this great revolution, were after the same unearthly and spiritual strain; such as the wisdom of this world sets utterly at naught, yet, wherein are contained the everlasting principles, by which alone the Spiritual Sovereignty over the souls of men is to be established.

And when we come, in the progress of this discourse, to argue upon these premises whereof we are now making the statement, we hope to manifest unto the spiritual man, and somewhat to discover unto the natural man, that this and this only is the strength in which the Cross is to conquer and subdue the Glory and the strength of the nations.

These instructions were in the following words:

## **Matthew 10**

<sup>11</sup> And into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till you go thence.

<sup>12</sup> And when you come into a house, salute it.

<sup>13</sup> And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

They were not, like poor Mendicants, to go from door to door, and from town to town, craving a morsel of bread and a cup of water; but like the Royal Ambassadors of Heaven to the place, they were to inquire who was most worthy to be honored with their presence, and blessed with the good tidings which they bore from the Majesty of Heaven.

God thus established the everlasting connection between natural worth and dispensations of grace, by bestowing His blessings upon the most deserving. He fulfilled the cardinal principle not only of divine but of human government, the rule of all natural and supernatural dispensations (for at bottom these are one),

## **Mark 4**

<sup>25</sup> For he that has, to him shall be given: and he that has not, from him shall be taken even that which he has.

“Inquire,” said He, “the most worthy.” There was to be no stealthy progress, nor keeping in the shade, but open dealing with the most open-hearted and even-minded of the people. There was to be no preference of ranks shown by these men of no rank, who counted themselves kindred with Messiah, the missionary of Heaven, and were God’s adopted children and honored ambassadors to the earth.

They were not, like the Jesuits, to lay their artful toils around the high and noble and princely of the nations; nor like the Mendicant Friars, to go about preaching a crusade of poverty or meanness; nor were they to take their distinction by the grade of intellect or of taste, which compose, even at the best, but a fractionary part of human nature, and may ex-

ist in strength surrounded with the most dwarfish and pestilent forms of the moral, social and spiritual man.

But like messengers and missionaries from Heaven, they were to make their distinction by the grade of worth, or practical goodness; to inquire, whom the judgment of their fellow-citizens had pronounced worthy, judicious, well disposed men; those who, like Cornelius, were devout towards God, and full of alms towards the poor; or who, like Dorcas, employed their leisure and their labor to promote good and charitable works. To whose house coming with a conscience full of heavenly purposes, and lips overflowing with blessing, and hands rich in heaven-derived powers, they were to salute the worthy household with a salutation of peace.

## **The Son of Peace**

### **Luke 10**

<sup>6</sup> And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it.

Before their steps proceeded an invisible minister called the Son of Peace, who settled in these worthy habitations, and made the souls of the inmates ready for these Apostles of the kingdom of Peace. This Son of Peace is none other than the Prince of Peace, who sealed His instructions to His missionaries and concluded His incarnate ministry, with these words:

### **Matthew 28**

<sup>20</sup> Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

The same who...

- appeared to Cornelius in a dream, when He directed him to Peter, and
- advertised Peter of the approach of the messengers, after He had prepared him for their coming:
- directed Philip to the Eunuch while he crossed the desert, and caught him away when his work was done:

- appeared to Paul as he journeyed to Damascus, and afterwards in the likeness of a Macedonian, invited his blessed steps to our quarter of the globe, saying,

### **Acts 16**

<sup>9</sup> Come over...and help us.

And, to this day, wherever the true and faithful missionary proceeds in the faith of Christ, this same Son of Peace goes before his footsteps, in the place of sealed letters, forerunner and guide, instead of safe-conduct and welcome, and every thing else with which the prudence of men would furnish his perilous way.

Without dependence upon this Child of Peace, the missionary is a Vagrant and a Vagabond upon the earth. But in dependence upon Him, the Son of Peace is the most gracious Legate of heaven, never to return to heaven without accomplishing the high and holy intention for which He is commissioned of heaven to go forth unto the nations.

Being welcomed upon the strength of their salutation of peace, and through the predisposition of this Son of Peace, with whom God blesses the hearts and the habitations of worthy men, the missionaries sat them down and were content with any fare, and with any accommodation.

### **Their Reception**

A little bread they needed to feed their natural hunger, a little water to cool their natural thirst, a little space to stretch their weary limbs; and in return, they had deep, rich and various discourse upon the moral condition of mankind, copious and faithful revelations of the grace of God, glad tidings of great joy to the sons of men: and in earnest of that salvation, wherewith they were intrusted, they would heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils, and raise the dead.

Every good thing which can be wrought without the ministry of visible and temporal powers; every good thing which

holds of the invisible, that is, every consolation, instruction, counsel and revelation which man's condition needs, they held, by free gift of God for free giving to man. All that they needed or sought in return, was a morsel of bread to preserve their lives; a little oil to feed the lamp which was giving light to all that were in the house.

And they made no haste to be gone, neither did they crave liberty to remain; they stayed while they were welcome, or till their work was done; and whosoever came to the house from the neighborhood or village or town, was free to sit and listen to the good tidings of the kingdom, without having even this pittance of bread and water to give in return.

But what is this, I say? I will not libel mankind so far as to suppose they would grudge so penurious a return for so rich a gift.

There they sat day by day in the house of the worthiest men, holding forth the Gospel of peace unto the people, and by all spiritual persuasion seeking to persuade the people to accept the overtures of its salvation.

The men being so harmless, their destination so peaceful, and the spirit of their instructions so heavenly, it is difficult to imagine how it were possible they should meet with any thing but welcome wherever they came. But it is one of the sorest libels upon the spirit of the world, that almost all of them came to an untimely and violent end.

Well said the just and devout Simeon, who stayed on earth to welcome the great Son and Heir to the house of His Father, and wished to stay no longer, that the infant in his arms was...

## **Luke 2**

<sup>34</sup> ...set for a sign to be spoken against;

<sup>35</sup> ...that the secrets of many hearts might be revealed.

And by Christ himself in these instructions, whereof we now present the substance, it is with still more clearness pre-

dicted that He...

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>34</sup> ...came not to send peace upon the earth but a sword.

How true alas! was shown the first year, yea, perhaps the first month of His life, by the crudest sword that ever drunk innocent blood, for which Rachel wept in Rama with great lamentation.<sup>10</sup>

### **Their Dealing with Rejectors**

Therefore it was necessary to prepare these missionaries for the shadowy side of that experience whereof He had forewarned, whereto He had foredoomed them.

They were Spiritual vessels; bound for every port where souls did tarry: and they had spiritual blessings to give in return for a welcome; but they had also spiritual terrors and cleaving curses, thunders of heaven against every city which gave them no harbor. The ambassadors of heaven held both the blessings and the curses of that court which they represented; otherwise they would have been only half accomplished for the work: and thus their instructions ran in regard to all who mistreated them and held their commission cheap:

Their instructions in such a case,

### **Mark 6**

<sup>11</sup> And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when you depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

The city, into any house of which the messengers that came forth from heaven with heaven's credentials were not received, having in it not even one worthy man to arrest the merciful hand of heaven, was well nigh unto destruction; and

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<sup>10</sup> *Matthew* 2:18.

the commission of Heaven's servants was to read out its doom, and give it over to its hasty end. For they were not only messengers of the Gospel of peace, but ministers of the wrath and justice of God, men clothed in sanctity, and in the august robes of righteousness, to offend whom was to offend the Lord which sent them.

And therefore they held the terrors of justice no less than the overtures of mercy. But because this extreme commission of cursing the hardhearted places is given unto them, we are not to understand that they were to proceed to extremes at once, and to deal only in blessings or curses. These are but the extremes on both sides, between which their spirits were to move according to the circumstances in which they found themselves.

If the people argue, the missionaries argue again; and being assaulted with scoffs and cunning, they defend themselves with meekness and long suffering, and from the wisdom of the world they protect themselves with the wisdom which is from above. For besides the harmlessness of the dove, they had given to them the wisdom of the serpent, with which to expose sophistry, to outwit cunning, to defeat artifice, and meet every emergency.

None of the ordinary powers of the human mind were taken from them when they were deprived of the ordinary accommodations of the world,—whereof they were deprived only to disengage them from carefulness and trouble into the protection of their heavenly Father.

They were delivered out of the conditions of the sense into the conditions of the mind, that the mind might act with the more alertness and force. The play of their spirit was not fettered in the way in which, in these times, they would fetter the ministers of the Gospel. They had the righteous indignation of the ancient prophet, added to the humility and graciousness of the Christian pastor.

They were armed men, men armed with the wrath of God. And I cannot and do not doubt, that when they put a city to the ban of God's tribunal, there came upon it, if it repented not, judgments of a signal kind, according to the letter of our Lord's threatening quoted above.

And I believe in my heart that even to this day, were messengers to go forth into all cities arrayed after the fashion of these instructions, they would act like the test of heaven among them, and according to their welcome or their rejection, it would be seen that blessings of peace and prosperity, or commotions, revolutions, sieges, wars, and discords would befall those places; not indeed miraculously, but in the natural course of things, yet not the less at the command and by the will of God. For in a city which shall scornfully reject or cruelly maltreat such innocent, harmless, and heaven-gifted men, the elements of evil are in strong agitation, and the explosion cannot long be stayed.

It is come to a crisis with them as with Herod when he ordered the crudest sword which was ever unsheathed, to drink the blood of Rachel's children; or with the other Herod, when he imprisoned the brethren, and slew James with the sword. Such acts show that men are lost to all hope of repentance, and cities to all hope of recovery, ripe for hell, and unfit any longer to live upon the earth.

## **Recapitulation**

Thus went forth the first messengers of the kingdom, commissioned to the most pure and benevolent and worthy part of the people, and they approached them upon the side whereon a good man likes best to be approached, of kindness and humanity: for it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Yet, to keep their character clear from all associations of mendicity or meanness, there is no scrip nor purse, nor obsequious demeanor allowed them, nothing that might take from

the heavenly condition of the men; no demand for food or raiment; what is set before them they partake of; and the spiritual knowledge and power which they possess they as freely give in return.

If none is worthy, they pass on: if they are persecuted, they escape away, as it were, fishing the land, and taking in their spiritual net the worthiest and the best thereof; establishing the everlasting covenant between God and good men, between heaven and whatever is best upon the earth.

They are kept in close dependence upon God's assistance, and cannot move a step but in the strength of faith.

They are delivered out of the conditions of policy, out of the conditions of force, out of the conditions of gain, out of the conditions of selfishness and of ambition; for I defy any one maxim which appertained to these four spheres of human activity, to help them one jot in fulfilling their instructions.

And they are delivered into the spiritual conditions of the spiritual kingdom which they went about to propagate.

In prayer and communion with the spirit of God they sail along upon an unseen and unpiloted course.

They are living models of what they teach; moving epistles of the spirit of God; incarnations, each one in his measure, of the divine nature; instead of the Scriptures to those who have them not, and commendations of the Scriptures to those who have them.

And if, as has been said, the Bible is its own witness, these men who personified all its truth that can be personified, and with their lips spoke the rest, must be their own witness.

And by being hindered from worldly interests and worldly attachments, they are hindered from worldly discourse. They address only the spiritual part of the people; they confer upon no news but the good news of the kingdom; they touch no in-

terests but the interests of eternity; speak of no country but heaven, in no authority but the name of God.

These four things are surely four of the great principles in the propagation of the Gospel.:

- wisdom to address the worthiest people,
- entire dependence upon God,
- exemplification of the doctrine, and
- constant debate with the spirits of men,

And it is incredible from how many altercations, from how many aberrations of purpose, and strivings of passion, and oppositions of interest, they are cut off!

For if they are brought into debate, it must be for some spiritual sake, and spiritual truth must be elicited. If they are mistreated, it must be in the face of justice and innocence, which makes friends to the injured; and, doubtless, whatever happens good or ill to them, good must come out of it to a cause thus implicated with no earthly interests and devoted wholly to spiritual ends.

## **The Contrast with Other Enterprises**

They who go forth to extend temporal power, and lay the foundations of earthly dominion, must go in the strength of chariots, and horsemen, and munitions of war. They who go forth to establish an influence and empire over royal courts, may go in the strength of all-subduing wealth, and diplomatic cunning. And they who go forth to discover the unknown regions and limits of the terraqueous globe, must go with the state of science, and in the strength of bold adventure.

But they who went forth to bring all earthly powers under the Prince of Peace, and to subdue all arts and policies of man to the childlike simplicity of the wisdom which comes from above, and to spread the spiritual kingdom of Christ over the bounds of the terraqueous globe, must divest themselves of

those helps and instruments, whereby the others prosper. They must not cast out Beelzebub by Beelzebub. They must not conquer a peace with arms in their hands, which, though a good enough combination of words for the earth, is a solecism<sup>11</sup> in the speech of heaven.

By being under Mammon, they will never come to be under God: by conferring with Belial, they will never hold communion with Christ.

Each kind has its appropriate equipment; that which is appropriate to the powerful is power, to the politic is policy, to the scientific is science, to the spiritual is the Holy Spirit. The weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual; yet powerful to the pulling down of strong holds.

The stone that Daniel saw cut out without hands, must swell without the help of human hands, and fill the earth. The kingdom which is to cast down every other kingdom, must be independent of those kingdoms which it casts down; must establish itself in its own proper strength; and living in this heaven-derived strength, must live forever.

## **The Dignity of the Work**

Such a life of occupation round and round the land as was appointed to these men, is a disinterested, is a philosophical, is a sage, is a divine manner of life.

Socrates, the wisest man of antiquity, of whom it may be said, that of all the heathen he was the man most after God's own heart, and who, from his pure soul struck out conceptions which were like morning stars in the darkness, heralds of the dawn, not only saw the high dignity of such a life, but had the resolution to fulfill in Athens, in the heart of polished Athens, this very way of life which Christ appointed to His missionary servants.

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<sup>11</sup> *Solecism*: a grammatical mistake in speech or writing. (Oxford Dictionary)

And he was so blessed in his deed, that, though he lost his natural life (least valuable of spiritual possessions!) he founded a school of masterminds, which wielded the longest lived empire, and hold to this day the highest place, among the uninspired sons of men.

Socrates foresaw what the Spirit of wisdom appointed. For verily, the twelve apostles and seventy missionaries were each a Socrates in his kind; and greater than a Socrates: for Socrates went about in quest of wisdom, and complained that he could not find it, because it is not of the earth; but they had found it, being supplied with it from heaven.

Nay, further, I will make bold to say, that if our wisdom were Christian or even Socratic, it would prefer no other way of life. It is our folly, our earthliness which binds us to the fardels<sup>12</sup> of this world. The spirit of man spurs them by its proper nature, and effects emancipation from their bondage, in proportion as it is conformed to that Spirit of Truth which possessed these twelve most honored of the sons of men.

## The Fortune of the Work

Now, bad as the world is, wild as is its ambition, heartless as is its vanity, proud as its riches are, and mad as they are all, ambition, vanity and riches, I cannot but please myself with the imagination that there is no clime so barbarous, or, (which I believe the more dangerous extreme,) there is no region so polished, as not to possess a gleanings of worthy spirits to welcome these travelers between heaven and earth. For,

- There is no visible thing about them to create hatred; the men come in the name of peace:
- There is no visible thing to excite jealousy; the men are possessed of nothing, and coveting nothing:
- There is no visible thing to excite envy, for the men call nothing but their life their own and even of that they

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<sup>12</sup> *Fardel*: a bundle, or burden.

are not careful.

And they meddle with no earthly concern, and have no earthly end, and walk in innocency, and live in simplicity, and cleave to no sect or party of men, and know no country, and intend no interests. And,

- Their tidings are all from heaven, and their discourse all of immortality;
- Their debate ever held with the inner soul;
- The end of their ministration is the salvation of mankind;
- It is virtue which they commend, and peace which they promote and charity toward all which they enforce;
- A blessing goes with them, and health comes to the house where they abide, and the son of peace rests there, and salvation enters in as into the house of Zacchaeus, that day they arrive.

I cannot help thinking that the men were well endowed for their work, and that their work was worthy of the endowment, and that they would find in the worst of climes (as verily they did, for these same twelve planted the Gospel far and near, from India to the British Isles,) a class of men, and that the highest, to give them welcome.

The ambitious I see, would spurn them, and they would be content to be spurned; the cruel, I see, would maltreat them, and they would be content to be maltreated; the hollow-hearted wits and satirists would make merry with them, and they would be content to be made merry withal; and the busy bustling crowd would pass them unheeded, and they would be content all unheeded to be passed.

“What do these babblers say?”

“They seem to be setters forth of strange gods.”

“Great is Diana of the Ephesians.”

“They set up another king, one Jesus.”

“Away with them, they are not worthy to live.”

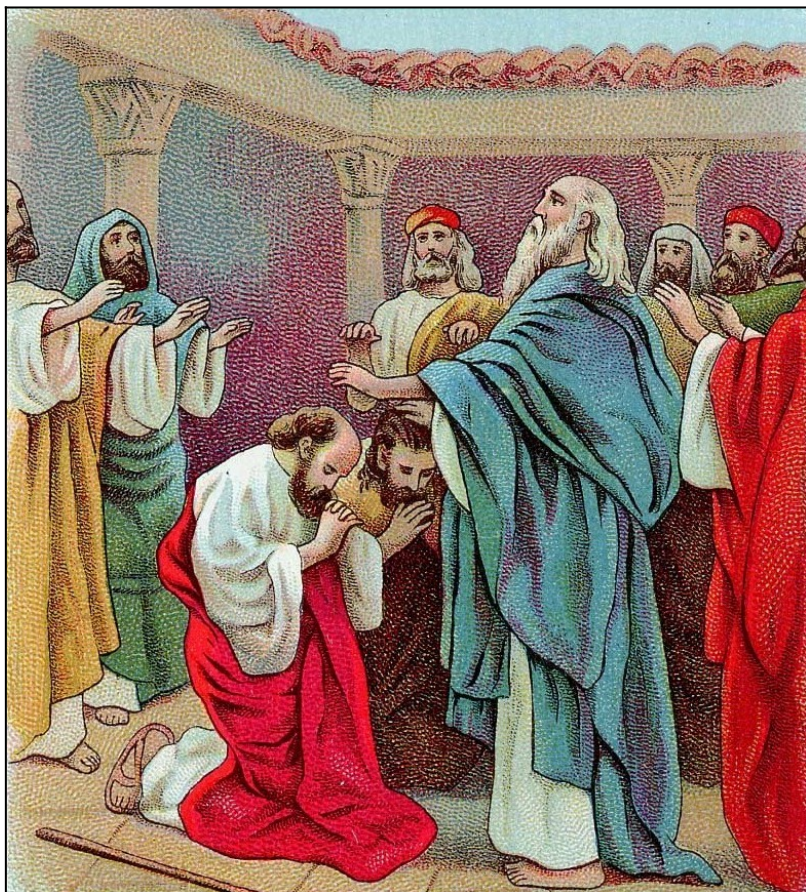
I hear these sentences echoing round their path; and I see them following it fearlessly onward to the death. But do I not see:

- a Felix trembling, and
- a royal Agrippa knitting his half-convinced brows, and
- a judge of Areopagus blessing the heavenly tidings, and
- a Jason giving pledges for them, and
- a Gamaliel speaking before senates in their behalf,
- a Dorcas, a Lydia, and honorable women not a few, waiting upon the wants of the all-enduring men:
- and the thoughtful of the people are pondering the words which they speak,
- and the serious-minded are applying their heart to the doctrine,
- and charity is leading them by the hand,
- and brotherly humanity is opening to them the gate,
- and affliction, comforted by their presence, is anointing them with tears of joy;
- and the genius of every high and heavenly faculty of the soul is sitting at their feet, well pleased to be schooled and taught by the messengers of heaven.

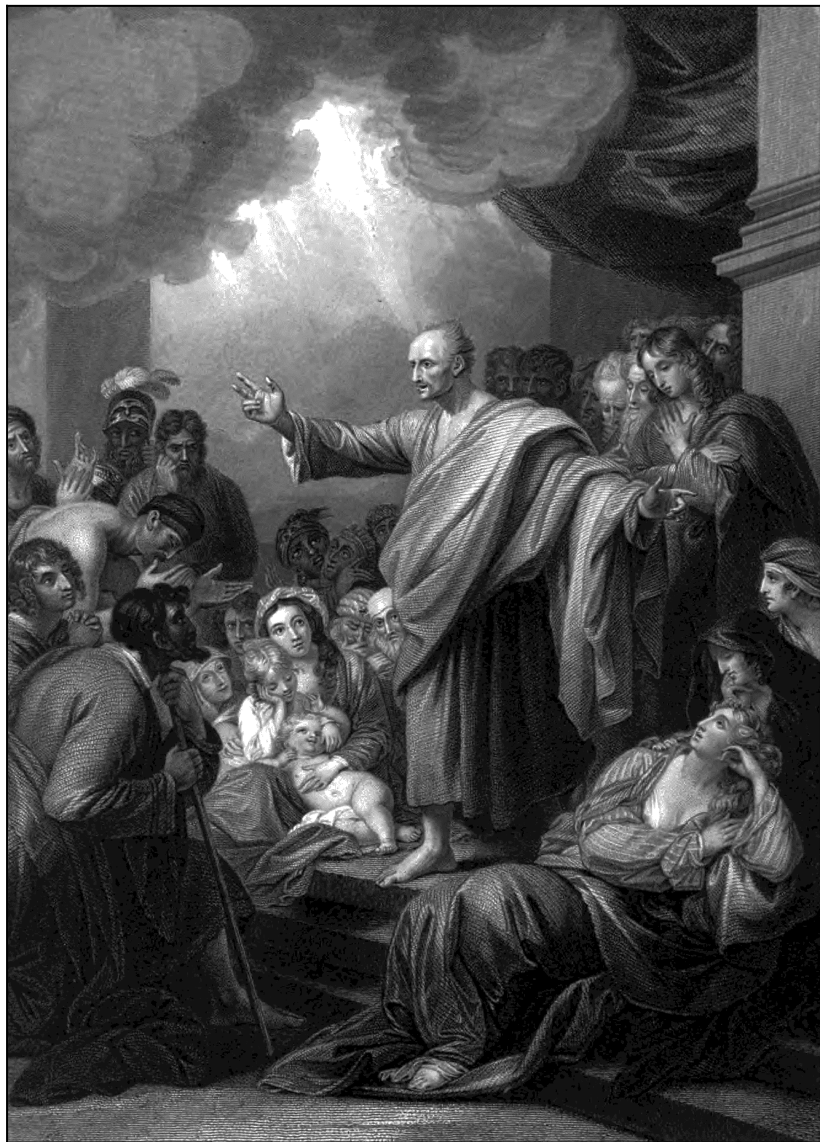
I see they are but searching the land for the good, the noble, and the true, leaving the wretched which love the earthly garbage, to wallow in their sensualities. They are gathering each sweet and savory plant, leaving the weeds standing for a devouring conflagration which is to come.

The fire of heaven has come down unto the earth; (for these twelve were baptized with fire;) but it loved not the earthly elements, and ran along seeking materials which had some savor of the worthy regions from whence it came, which having found, it took and enkindled, and left in a heavenly blaze each

one in his place, to purify, enlighten, and enkindle the region round about.



Saul and Barnabas are set apart for their Missionary Work  
(Children's Bible Cards, 1896-1913)



Peter preaching at Pentecost  
(Gallery of Scripture Engravings, vol. 2)

## 4. An Abiding Constitution

The Missionary Constitution established by Christ is still in effect.

### Testimony from the Document

SUCH was the character and the commission which Messiah gave to the twelve Apostles, whom He sent forth to preach the glad tidings of His kingdom; and when He afterwards preferred other seventy to the same high office, He gave them their instructions in nearly the same terms.

He never afterwards repealed these instructions; He never afterwards added to them. And when He enlarged their commission from the limits of Judea to the utmost bounds of the habitable earth, He gave them no new directions, no new promises, no new warnings or predictions, nothing further, save the assurance that He was with them to the end of the world.

When these men, schooled according to this discipline, went forth afterwards in the same behalf, it is not to be imagined therefore that they would adopt other principles than those which they had already received from their Master, and practiced with so much success.

And if they would not, then it is not to be imagined that we ought, unless some speciality in our case can be shown of importance enough to annul these commandments of Christ, and make the example of the apostles of none effect.

But as it is of great importance that this point be established beyond all doubt, we have given it a separate place in this argument, and shall now proceed as was proposed: to show that these instructions are of continual obligation, present the everlasting type of the missionary character, and are not by any human authority to be altered or abridged.

To establish this most important conclusion, let us first apply ourselves to the document itself, that we may ascertain

from its style and matter, whether it is meant to be local and temporary, or universal and everlasting.

Now we are bold to say, that from the beginning to the ending of it, there is not a single sentence (save two afterwards to be considered,) upon which the whole church of Christ has not passed a judgment, that it was pronounced for the constant use and edification of all who put themselves in jeopardy for the sake of the spiritual kingdom.

Every promise in it has become a standing order of the church; its predictions have been fulfilled in every realm where the Gospel of Christ has been preached; and the first preachers of the Gospel in every realm have established their hearts with the consolation which it contains.

- The direction “to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (verse 16), has always been the policy of Christ’s confessors.
- The assurance “that the Lord would put into their mouth what they should say” (verses 19-20), has always been the fountain of their eloquence.
- The privilege, when “persecuted in one city to flee into another” (verse 23), has always been the measure of their self preservation.
- The declaration “that the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord” (verses 24-25), has been their support under every infamous accusation.
- The knowledge “that the sparrows are objects of God’s care, and that He numbers the very hairs upon the heads of His servants” (verses 29-31), has sustained them in the utmost jeopardy and straits.
- The promise of Christ, “to confess before His Father those who confessed Him before men, to save the everlasting life of those who laid down their temporal life for His sake, to be instead of father and mother to those who preferred His cause to filial duty” (verses 32-29),

and every other sentence, of whatever kind, whether breathing sorrow or joy, foreboding ill or promising good, has become, as it were, an armorial bearing to the soldiers of the militant church, household words in the city of our Zion, with which she trains up her sons and her daughters to be valorous for the Lord.

Can a document, then, I ask, to which the church in all ages and in all countries, has attached an everlasting importance, and which contains within it the watchwords of every battle that has been struck in this spiritual warfare, the last breathings of every valiant man who has sacrificed his all for its sake, can such a document be allowed to perish? Shall any base-born generation be allowed to hide it from the eye of the church?

Accursed be the generation that would harbor the thought. Shall any man or body of men, to answer their ends, veil it up or venture to annul it? Let him be *anathema maranatha*.<sup>13</sup>

And it is nothing to the prejudice of this reasoning, that the document contains two clauses which are local and temporary, and which can by no means be applied to any thing beyond that journey among the towns and villages of Jewry, upon which they were sent, and from which, we are told, they soon returned with gladness.

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>5</sup> Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

<sup>23</sup> You shall not have gone over the cities of Israel until the Son of Man be come.

For it was necessary to define the extent of their first peregrination, otherwise they would not have known where to direct their steps, or when to return to attend upon their Lord,

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<sup>13</sup> *Anathema Maranatha*: Let him be accursed. The Lord is coming (to take vengeance).

for whose witness they were chosen.

And there is no more of a local and temporary nature than just to guide them in this essential point. They are directed to limit themselves to the lost sheep of Judah, because, before they had gone this round, the Son of Man would come; that is, would openly announce himself to the nation.

Now, because He marked their route, and gave them an idea of the duration of their journey, will any man infer that His instructions and counsels were intended only for that journey, and were to be cast away when it was over?

That man would make his Saviour's words of less value than the words of the most ignorant parent, who gives parental counsel to his child, which the child holds sacred till death, never dreaming; that it is canceled at the expiration of his first absence, and if not repeated, is to be cast at his feet.

But the document contains within itself the direct refutation of these detractions from its dignity, and restrictions of its duration. For, except in those two clauses by which it was necessary to define the extent, of this first peregrination, there is hardly another clause which is not rendered insignificant and even absurd by being applied to that solitary journey. It is said,

### **Matthew 10**

<sup>17</sup> Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

Now we have not the slightest hint that any of the twelve or seventy suffered indictments before civil councils, or scourgings at the hands of religious rulers during this journey, from which they returned with joy, confessing that they had lacked nothing. And indeed, I know not what councils there were in the towns of Judea (for they went not to Jerusalem) before which they could be brought. Again, it is said,

<sup>18</sup> You shall be brought before governors and kings for my

sake...

And it is further said,

**Matthew 10**

<sup>18</sup> ...for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

Now what kings, governors, or Gentiles, could they be brought before, or testify against, in a journey, within whose bounds there was neither king nor governor, and during which they were not to go...

<sup>5</sup> ...in the way of the Gentiles?

And we have warnings of brother delivering up brother to death, and the father the child, and the children rising up against their parents and causing them to be put to death;— and yet all the twelve returned safe and sound.

Again, it is said,

<sup>22</sup> You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake...

Did that come to pass in this journey? Again,

<sup>22</sup> ...but he that endures to the end shall be saved.

Is it meant to the end of this short journey? But further to apply this *experimentum crucis*<sup>14</sup> to the hypothesis that these instructions were intended for this journey only, would produce such a tissue of absurdities, as might destroy in my hearers that grave frame of mind with which discourses from this place ought always to be heard.

Therefore, let what has been said suffice for showing the evidence, which the document yields to its own durability, and the express denial and flat contradiction which it gives to ev-

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<sup>14</sup> *Experimentum crucis*: (English: crucial experiment or critical experiment) is an experiment capable of decisively determining whether or not a particular hypothesis or theory is superior to all other hypotheses or theories whose acceptance is currently widespread in the scientific community. (Wikipedia)

ery daring temporizer; and let us proceed onward in the establishment of this our second head of discourse, whereof, if we succeed in convincing this assembly and the Christian church, we shall have done no mean service to the Missionary cause.

Against the perpetuity of these instructions, an objection may be taken from a passage in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the Gospel by *Luke*, where they are alluded to in such a way as, to a superficial reader, might seem to repeal them and to substitute others in their room. It is as follows:

### **Luke 22**

<sup>35</sup> And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, did you lack any thing? And they answered, Nothing.

<sup>36</sup> Then said He unto them, But now he that has a purse. let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

If this passage refers to the same object as the other, *viz.* the propagation of the kingdom of Christ, it makes a remarkable alteration indeed; not only permitting the help of purse, and provisions of life, but also of instruments of war; and while it gives a permission to the two former, makes the latter indispensable, requiring the Missionary, who is without a sword, to sell his garment to buy one. This the crusaders fulfilled to the letter, who converted all their property into steel and armed men, and went forth in panoply to spread the Gospel of peace.

But as no one in these times is disposed to fit out such an evangelical armament, all confessing it to be against the spirit and the letter of the Gospel, no use can be made of this passage to invalidate any part of the other. It cannot be in part taken and in part rejected. The mercenary spirit of these times will not lay hold of the purse and scrip, while they deny to the crusader the sword which is made peremptory, while the oth-

ers are but licensed.

So that we might dismiss the passage as totally inapplicable to the propagation of the kingdom, and leave the man who uses it against the argument of this discourse, to deliver himself from the dilemma into which he brings himself, of converting every Christian Mission into a Crusade.

But, that we may carry along with us as much conviction as possible, we shall interrupt our course for a moment to explain the true intention of our Saviour in this remarkable passage, which we have seen strangely employed both by the enemies and the friends of His cause.

It was spoken to the eleven after the institution of the supper, immediately before they arose and retired to the Garden of Gethsemane, where our Lord was straightway betrayed into the hands of His enemies; being the last words which He uttered to them before the hour and the power of darkness had the ascendancy over Him.

For they had no sooner reached the Mount of Olives, where the garden was, than His agonies and temptations came hastening in thick array upon His innocent head. And it is to be regarded as a warning of the terrors which were closing in upon their Master and His cause, a permission to provide for their own safety, as best they could, and an intimation that the Son of Peace, which went with them on their former journey, standing them instead of purse and scrip and defensive arms, was now unable to defend himself, being about to bow His head and expire upon an accursed tree. Therefore, said He,

“Until these days of darkness be overpast, and times of refreshing have come from the presence of the Lord, let every one of you betake himself to his natural shifts, and consider himself no longer as the child of an invisible providence.”

And accordingly, while His cause continued under this eclipse, they were delivered each one into his own protection.

And when He arose from the dead, His first instructions to them was, to depart from the scene of danger into a retired mountain of Galilee (perhaps that same where they had been set apart,) and wait there till He should come and take them out of the hands of this temporary expediency.

But before ascending from them for ever, He was at pains to assure them that He had triumphed over His enemies, and that all power was given to Him in Heaven and in earth, and that He would send them His Holy Spirit, a better comforter and provider than the former Son of Peace. Therefore, restoring them again to their former divine liberty, He said,

**Matthew 28**

<sup>19</sup> Go forth into all nations,...

<sup>20</sup> ...and lo, I am with you unto the end of the world.

That these words, which He spoke on the eve of this hour of darkness, were intended only for the use of that awful season, is not a conjecture, but the result of a deep consideration and analysis of the context, which, for your further satisfaction, I shall not hesitate to lay before you.

The supper, which in every word and action signified His immediate death, was instituted and ended; but His disciples continued as steadfast as ever in their misapprehension and unbelief: which they manifested by beginning to dispute about precedency in that kingdom which they expected Him to establish.

With a delicacy and wisdom, which breathed in all He said, He first corrected their worldly ideas of dignity, and explained that their true dignity in His kingdom should consist in judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Thence pursuing the discourse, that they might be humbled out of their present disposition of pride, which is Satan's snare, He warned them of the danger to which they stood exposed from the temptations of Satan. This part of His dis-

course He addressed to Simon, foreseeing his fall, and wishing to administer to him comfort under the deep contrition and sorrow that was to follow it:

### **Luke 22**

<sup>31</sup> Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you (the twelve,) that he may sift you as wheat:

<sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not, and when you are converted, strengthen your brethren.

This brought forth a digression in the discourse with the twelve; whom having warned of Satan's snares, assured of His own prayers for their sakes, and advertised of their need to be strengthened, He immediately adds the passage under consideration, as His counsel to them in the emergency which He had foretold.

Fearing lest they might trust to that same protection which had been extended over them hitherto, and which had so wonderfully provided for their wants in their former journey, He turns their attention to their former experience by the question,

<sup>35</sup> When you went forth without purse or scrip, did you lack any thing? And they said, Nothing.

Having thus fixed their minds upon their former estate, in order to make the impending change of their circumstances the more remarkable, He added,

<sup>36</sup> But now he that has a purse let him take it, and his scrip, and he that has no sword let him sell his garment and buy one.

That is, trust not now, under these perilous trials of Satan just coming on you, to be supported with any help supernatural. For my kingdom is to suffer violence, and the violent will take it by force. Therefore, look every man to himself, and to his resources; and be upon your guard from violence, which is more to be dreaded by you than the wants of nature and the

inclemency of the skies; and though you should sell your garment to provide a defense for your lives, sell it and therewith purchase that defense.

“For,” He immediately added, as the reason of the innovation, and He added it in His most solemn manner,

### **Luke 22**

<sup>37</sup> For, I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

If any thing were wanting to confirm what has been said of this passage, it were to be found in this reason expressly assigned by the Saviour himself for the innovation which He made.

“I am to be treated as a transgressor and a malefactor, and the predictions concerning my death have now their accomplishment. Therefore, banish these high notions of power and dignity; for Satan is now about to sift you as wheat, and you shall find none of my help which heretofore sustained you, but you shall find your own weakness, and be forced upon your natural defenses. For the meanwhile, therefore, humble yourselves to the expectations of ordinary men, and have your refuge in the resources of persecuted men.”

In all this, there is nothing which has, or can have, a wider application than to that hour of darkness, during which the glory of His kingdom was eclipsed. And, even of this season, that it was not to be literally interpreted, is manifest from the scene which immediately took place. The disciples mistaking His meaning, made answer to Him in these words,

<sup>38</sup> Lord, here are two swords.

And He answered them,

<sup>38</sup> ...It is enough.

That is,

“It is enough that I have reduced your minds from these high and towering expectations of power, which would have cast you upon ruin, to the lowly sense of your weakness, and the prudent thought of your safety.”

But they, imagining that He really meant them to use these two swords, with which they were provided said, when the rout came upon Him in the garden,

### **Luke 22**

<sup>49</sup> Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

And Peter actually lifted up his sword, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his ear. To which action our Lord made this reply,

### **Matthew 26**

<sup>52</sup> Put up again your sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.

Which shows that not only did He not intend the sentence under consideration to be understood of the propagation. but not even of the defense of His cause; that so far from intending it to be applied literally to all times, He did not intend it to be literally applied even to that time of oppression, for the sake of which it was spoken.

That it was to be understood, as we have explained it, for a strong and figurative way of reducing their minds from the ambitious thoughts of power which their question indicated, down to a lowly sense of their true condition, its trials, and its dangers.

## **Pentecost and Beyond**

We have been the more particular concerning this passage of scripture, because it is the only one which seems to bear against those Primitive Instructions of the Missionary, for the perpetual obligation of which we hold the argument. This being rightly interpreted (and no one but a crusader could think

of interpreting it of the Missionary cause,) every other part of scripture proves that the Apostles carried these instructions rigorously into effect.

On the day of Pentecost, when they were furnished with all manner of gifts necessary for the work of converting the nations, there was nothing appertaining to purse or scrip, to power or influence, to name or reputation, bestowed on them.

The things interdicted by the Saviour continued to be interdicted by the Spirit; for outwardly the men remained unaltered, after they had been inwardly endowed with the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the gift of prophecy and miracles, the gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues.

If money and provisions, if goods and possessions had been necessary, why were they not bestowed at this time, when Heaven furnished out its ministers to all nations?

But that needed not to be bestowed from Heaven, which was soon forthcoming in all abundance. For in these times, as soon as the Spirit took hold of the converts, He made them indifferent to all outward distinctions and emoluments wherein they formerly prided themselves.

And not only the missionaries, but even the converts of the missionaries, becoming careless of purse, and scrip, and possessions, forgot the distinctions of “yours and mine,” and parted their all to such as had need.

Now the Apostles, when plenty of everything came flowing into their power, kept free from the worldly encumbrance, and continued breaking bread from house to house, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

And when they went forth to the temple, so true kept they by Christ’s first instructions, that they said unto a man who sought an alms,

### Acts 3

<sup>6</sup> Silver and gold have we none.

And when the converts brought their all and poured it at their feet, not only would they not own any of it, but they would not for the sake of holy Charity and sacred Justice, be diverted by its distribution, from the higher and better calling, of giving themselves wholly to the ministry of the word and to prayer.

And they continued as they began; for throughout the whole book of the *Acts* there is not one word from which it can be gathered that in journeying from town to town, and from region to region, they had any convenience of travel, abode in any houses of public entertainment, possessed any property which they could call their own, or in any way deviated from the spirit, or from the very letter of our Lord's instructions.

While they abode in a place, they continued, according to the commandment of the Lord, in the house of one man, whom, when writing letters from the place, they call their host.

When Paul went up to Jerusalem, he communicated that Gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, to them only which were of reputation, using the privilege of inquiring after the most Worthy.

When the Jews of any town would no longer hear him, he condemned them, and turned unto the Gentiles; and when with one accord both Jews and Gentiles rose up against him, he shook off the dust of his feet against that city, and proceeded on his course.

In short, I find not one of the instructions which they did not literally carry into effect. They had no wages; they depended upon no remittances; they lived all along and altogether upon the brethren.

And the Gospel must surely have changed its nature and abated its efficacy, when the converts shall become loath to support the man, who, under God, has brought them from darkness to light, and from the service of Satan to serve the living God.

And the converts must be miserable indeed, if they have not bread and water for the mouth which has brought them glad tidings of great joy. For in the primitive times it was counted an honor, not a burden, to give them the small accommodation which they needed.

Cornelius prayed Peter to tarry with him certain days. Lydia, as the firstfruits of her conversion, besought Paul and Silas in these words,

#### **Acts 16**

<sup>15</sup> If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.

### **Paul's Exception of Laboring**

At Corinth, while yet Paul held with the Jews, he abode with Aquila, and wrought at his craft; but when he turned unto the Gentiles, he entered into the house of Justus, one that worshiped God, and abode there. And on parting from the elders of the Ephesian Church, he said,

#### **Acts 20**

<sup>33</sup> I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

<sup>34</sup> ...[but] these hands have ministered to my necessities, and to them that were with me.

Which two last instances show us how they were wont at times to labor for their bread, that they might not be burdensome; but that this was the exception, and not the rule of their proceedings, is manifest from Paul's apology for it in his *Epistle to the Corinthians*.

The rule was, to follow out the unworldly, unselfish, unambitious way of life which Christ had taught, to be wholly care-

less of the present world, wholly disengaged from its concerns, that they might be wholly occupied with the things of the world to come.

And when deviations do occur in the practice of the primitive times, from this exact ritual of the Missionary laid down by our Lord, they are of that kind which confirm the spirit of the rule, being all deviations by excess, not by defect, of its peculiar characteristics.

Paul, in these two instances of Ephesus and Corinth, saw it good to forgo the right of living by his ministry, but in foregoing it he carefully excepted against its being considered as a precedent.

### **1 Corinthians 9**

<sup>4</sup> Have we not power to eat and to drink?

<sup>5</sup> Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other Apostles, or as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?

<sup>6</sup> Or I only, and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?

In these questions of the indignant Apostle, is revealed the custom of the first founders of the kingdom, to go from place to place, carrying with them no earthly means, and devoting themselves to no worldly calling, but depending upon the benevolence of the worthy, and having their feet shod with no preparation but the preparation of the Gospel of peace. In his triumphant answers to the same questions, we have it asserted as a fundamental law of the propagation of the kingdom, and supported by the reasonableness of the thing, by the Mosaic laws, and last of all by the ordination of the Lord,

<sup>14</sup> ...that they which preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.

Now I ask, in what part of the Gospel this is ordained by the Lord, if not in the passage, for whose everlasting obligation we plead, wherein it is said:

## Luke 10

<sup>7</sup> For the laborer is worthy of his meat?

There is not another of the Lord's sayings which makes even allusion to the subject. Here, then, Paul quotes a standing rule of the kingdom, upon the authority of this document, which the practice of many moderns would wipe out of the Canon. Do you ask,

“Why, then, did Paul dare to set aside the ordinance of the Lord?”

Let him answer for himself.

## 1 Corinthians 9

<sup>12</sup> If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ.

He did it out of the *nobile officium*,<sup>15</sup> the high prerogative of an inspired Apostle, because he saw that the Gospel of Christ, with which he was intrusted, would be advanced by his doing so; and how advanced, he has told us in his next Epistle, when speaking of the same thing, he thus expresses his noble and magnanimous soul,

## 2 Corinthians 11

<sup>7</sup> Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that you might be exalted, because I have preached unto you the Gospel of God freely?

<sup>8</sup> I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service.

<sup>9</sup> And when I was present with you. and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me, the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so will I keep myself.

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<sup>15</sup> *Nobile Officium*: (English: Noble Office) A provision in Scottish law, whereby the Court can afford relief in cases where none is possible with existing laws.

<sup>10</sup> As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

<sup>11</sup> Wherefore? because I love you not? God knows.

<sup>12</sup> But what I do, that will I do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory they may be found even as we.

<sup>13</sup> For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ.

These false apostles and deceitful workers had accused the pilgrim-traveler from town to town, and from region to region, as a needy vagabond, who thus earned dishonorable bread; whereby they sought to obstruct his success in the regions of Achaia.

But the pilgrim-traveler had a soul full of resources, and a heart full of stoutness, to overthrow these railers against the honorable calling and providential life of a Missionary. Coming into the region which had been poisoned against him,

### **Acts 18**

<sup>2</sup> [He] found a certain Jew, named Aquila,...with his wife Priscilla,...and came unto them.

<sup>3</sup> And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tent-makers.

Thus did he defeat the wicked stratagem of Satan's servants, who had transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ, by demonstrating that he sought no gain, nor cared for no livelihood, but became...

### **1 Corinthians 9**

<sup>2</sup> ...all things to all men, that he might gain the more.

And though I have said the Apostle did this by virtue of his apostolic prerogative, the church will suffer no damage whatever, if her Missionaries, when they find the same false report circulating to the prejudice of the Gospel, should adopt the same magnanimous course, of working with their hands, in order to put the calumny to death, and triumph over it with a

holy indignation and joy; and not only contribute to their own necessities, but even to the necessities of others who have need.

But I would advise them first to beware that they become not instrumental in spreading the very notion, that they are hirelings and gainers, by taking fixed and stated salaries, like any other craftsmen, which is the sure and certain way to make themselves not only be reputed but justly regarded as hireling craftsmen.

So that this example of Paul's deviation does, as it were, rivet upon both sides, the well-driven and well-directed bolt of the Lord: inasmuch as he honors the fundamental principle, that the Gospel should seek and have no worldly emolument, nor depend upon any expedient of earthly dignity; while, in order to make the principle triumphant in an extreme case which occurred in his travels, he reaches into the region of self-denial and destitution farther than the Lord required, in order to get the weapons with which to meet the new and unprecedented obstacle that had been opposed to his course.

And while he rivets the well-directed bolt of the Lord, he re-proves that poor and pithless<sup>16</sup> weapon with which the prudent spirit of these times aims its puny blow at the Heathen world. For, truly, we moderns have taken the very means to create that stumbling block which Paul found in his way at Corinth, by so constituting the Missionary office, as that the men of this world might have in their mouth the very words of which Paul reproved the Corinthians, and to disprove which he needed to adopt this voluntary act of self-humiliation.

To cure this, our shallow prudence, if we would use the lesson given by this leader of the Missionary army, we would do well, for as many years as we have fed and hired men, to require that they should go, as Paul did, into the other extreme

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<sup>16</sup> *Pithless*: having no substance or significance.

of not even eating and drinking at anyone's expense, but that they should support themselves by the labor of their hands, and glory thereby over the false prejudice with which the cause, by our mismanagement, has come to be circumvented.

This is the proper use of the Apostle's deviation.

Now, further, lest a sentence which occurs in the above quotations should be turned aside to justify the modern method of furnishing out the Missionary, which the occurrence at Corinth does so utterly discountenance; it is fortunate, that, from the *Epistle to the Philippians* we can explain what those wages were which Paul took, and what his robbery of the churches, and what the supply of the Macedonian brethren, by the help of which he carried out his hardy scheme of confuting the false report by which the enemy had sought to impede his missionary progress.

It is found written in the conclusion of his epistle to the Philippians (and how happy I am to make such quotations, God knows! for they bear my spirit up in the hopelessness of this controversy),

#### **Philippians 4**

<sup>10</sup> But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me has flourished again; wherein you were also careful, but you lacked opportunity.

<sup>11</sup> Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

<sup>12</sup> I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

<sup>13</sup> I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding you have well done, that you did communicate with my affliction.

<sup>15</sup> Now, you Philippians, know also that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only.

<sup>16</sup> For even in Thessalonica you sent once and again unto my

necessity.

<sup>17</sup> Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

<sup>18</sup> But I have all and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.

<sup>19</sup> But my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.

This is the Apostle's receipt in full for his wages; this is his voluntary confession of his robbery; this is the help with which he was helped at Corinth of these good Philippians. And as the former quotations are a proof of his most nice and chary<sup>17</sup> delicacy lest the Gospel of Christ should be breathed on with any aspersion, and of his magnanimity to bear every extreme of hardship, rather than the missionary calling should be calumniated; let this stand for the proof of his most generous spirit to partake and receive brotherly help.

And let it divide and distinguish that chariness and magnanimity from the natural pride and independence of the human heart; from which the former spirit is as distinct and distinguishable, as the spirit of Christ, who gave all heaven's glory up and took mendicant crumbs of men, is distinct and distinguishable from Satan's spirit, who, though the brightest of the sons of the morning, could not brook the rich endowment because he had to give for it an act of reverence to the Most High God.

And let it show, moreover, into what straits Paul passed, and with what difficulties he was beset around, in following out his missionary peregrinations, and how he had no dependence upon foreign churches; (for no one communicated with him save this of Philippi, whose gift he knew not of, and expected not, till Epaphroditus brought it in his hand.)

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<sup>17</sup> *Chary*: cautiously or suspiciously reluctant to do something. (Oxford Dictionary)

And, finally, let it show how the Lord, the Son of Peace, forsook not in His wandering, His hungered, His own laborious workman, whose niggard craft, oft interrupted, yielding him but a bare support, He brought him supplies from afar, and made them to follow him to Thessalonica, to Corinth, to Rome, everywhere through the heathen desert, as the waters of Meribah and the quails of the morning and the evening, followed the sandy parched footing of the camp of Israel.

After perusing which examples, will any one say that Paul conformed not to the ritual of the missionary school, because he took foreign supplies when they were offered, and wrought with his hands when it served his turn? You are right, he conformed not; that is, he did more than conform; he was an Apostle, and more than an Apostle, for he magnified the Apostleship.

### **Luke 10**

<sup>37</sup> Go and do likewise.

Be more than a Missionary, magnify the Missionary office, and in such a way show your non-conformity to your Lord's commission and passport. But first, be careful that you are a Missionary, and that the office in your hand is not diminished of its due size nor shorn of its proper beams.

## **Another Apparent Deviation**

I have heard quoted, as another deviation from the letter of the missionary charter, what is obscurely hinted at in the *Epistle of John*, addressed to Gaius, in these words,

### **3 John**

<sup>5</sup> Beloved, you do faithfully whatsoever you do to the brethren, and to strangers;

<sup>6</sup> Which have borne witness of your charity before the church: whom if you bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, you shall do well:

<sup>7</sup> Because that for His name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

<sup>8</sup> We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

This, like the former, proves more for the spirit of the missionary charter, than if it had been in most exact conformity with its letter; showing that...

1. The travellers and ambassadors of the kingdom, in these times, were wont to be brought on their way from place to place by the charity of brethren, even though strangers, and did not hesitate to be beholden to their charity;
2. They went forth to the Gentiles without any means of conveying themselves there, but needed assistance to reach the scene of their labors; and having readied the harvest-field, they put in their sickle and reaped without any hire, taking nothing for their reward, but passed on dependent as before upon the bounty of the brethren.

So much the passage proves, that these Christian expeditions were undertaken without any dependence upon ways and means, and were executed without any fee or reward; but it does by no means prove that while they were with the Gentiles they refused to be beholden to them for their subsistence.

They took nothing from the Gentiles, and needed to be helped on their way, that is, they departed as poor as they came; but how they fared among them is not stated, because it was not necessary for the Apostle to state more than their present condition, as his argument for the brethren to help them.

The passage, therefore, is nothing more than a certificate of the poverty and disinterestedness of these Missionaries, given under the hand of an Apostle to a brother, who, on other occasions, had been helpful to the brethren. How much it supports the spirit of the Apostolical school of Missionaries, any one can see; how it bears upon the present school, it is not yet

the time to discourse of at large.

## **Other Deviations**

And other instances of this kind occur in the Apostolical record. Paul, writing to Philemon from his bonds in Rome, desires him to provide him a lodging, trusting that through their prayers he would be given to them. He was then Paul the aged, and Philemon was his dearly beloved brother and fellow-laborer, from whom he might, without fear of misconception, ask such a favour; yet with what delicacy he touches upon pecuniary matters, anyone who reads that model of delicate affection may well apprehend.

At Rome, in like manner, he dwell two years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; because he was there as a prisoner upon parole, and accommodated his apostolic character to his forced conditions: but on his journey to Rome, the Missionary constitution was fulfilled to the letter by the brethren at Puteoli, with whom he was desired to stay seven days; and also by the brethren at Rome, who met him at the Three Taverns, and conducted him on his way.

In like manner, Titus is instructed to bring Zenas the lawyer, and Apollos, on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. In like manner, he writes to the Corinthians concerning Timotheus, that they would...

### **1 Corinthians 16**

<sup>11</sup> ...conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me.

And of such importance was this part of apostolical discipline held, that it is enjoined in general precepts like any other great head of Christian duty,

### **Romans 12**

<sup>13</sup> To distribute to the necessity of saints, and to be given to hospitality;

—and it is set down as a mark of those widows who are to be taken into the number,

### **1 Timothy 5**

<sup>10</sup> ...that they have lodged strangers;

—and of a bishop it is required, as an indispensable quality, that he should be given to hospitality; and to all it is often enjoined, as to the Hebrews, that they...

### **Hebrews 13**

<sup>2</sup> Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

## **Modern Reluctance to Believe**

Sometimes, in casting my eye back over what I have written, and considering the new doctrine which I have dared to advance in opposition to the universal practice of the Churches, I have felt a fear come over my mind, as if I had been guilty of presumption in daring to interpret God's word, upon this subject, for myself.

But the more I have been led to study it, by the opposition which these ideas have received, the more I have been convinced of their truth. The passages which have been quoted against them have, upon deliberate study, turned out to be in their favour; and the instances which have been given of deviation, have always proved to be deviations in excess, not in defect, of the standard of faith and self-denial.

Moreover, in making those researches into the primitive appointments of Messiah, and practices of His Apostolic servants, many new convictions have been brought to our mind concerning the office of the pastor, and the office of the preacher, which differ from the approved notions as widely as those which we have set forth of the Missionary. So that, silently, we have come to the strong and steady persuasion that this is but a silver age of the Church, taken at its best, and that the golden age is yet to come; that we are not per-

fect, any more than our fathers; that we should learn to believe in our imperfections, and welcome any one who will honestly declare them to us.

Sometimes, on the other hand, I have been tempted to indignation and wrath, that the institution and appointment of the great head of the Church should have been so widely departed from in these modern times, and being honestly and plainly stated, should find so little favor in the eyes of a generation which prides itself in the evangelical character of its missionary undertakings.

And that, instead of going about to seek men who were advanced in faith to the height of the undertaking, they have gone about to reduce the undertaking to the measure of an ordinary faith, and have attracted to the service many who were hardly fit for a pastoral care in the Church at home, much less for laying the foundation of Christian empire abroad.

But most of all has a holy indignation risen within my breast, when, to keep up the popular glory and renown of their work, which they should be ever rectifying by the word of God, they should be content rather to obliterate and annul that part of His holy word which is able to give them counsel.

It is instructive of the self-exaltation of man to hear with what cool indifference they would consign to uselessness those immortal counsels which our Lord gave for the conduct of Christian Missionaries, in order that they may have the field open for their own infallibility.

- They would break through all rules and laws of interpretation, and to a passage whose every word and sentence breathes immortality;
- They would give a temporary application, destroying its obligation, losing its comfort, and abolishing its promises to the evil-entreated messenger of peace;

—all because it contains in its bosom two clauses which

were necessary to make it useful and applicable to the time which then was, as well as to the times which were to come.

Against this I have argued by an analysis of the passage, against it I have protested by an appeal to the apostolical times, in the hope of being able to prevail by argument and appeal; though I confess, with slender hope in a time when names or periodical organs of opinion have obtained almost the whole authority in the Church.

But if there be left in the Church any reverence for the Holy Scripture, any love to the words of Christ, any superiority to the things of sight, and trust in the good promises of God, any memory of her past triumphs, or any hope of future victory, by these I do entreat the Church to hesitate how she discredits this portion of the Holy Scriptures, because it applied to those times no less than to all other times.

### **Universal Application of Christ's Teachings**

For upon the same principle she would annul every word of the Sermon on the Mount, which was suggested by Jewish errors and was given for the abolition of Jewish errors; and every parable, and every rebuke, and every exhortation, and every instruction of the Lord, which all sprung out of the occasion presented to Him, and applied to it with far more exemption of every other occasion than the passage before us; which, if it be distinguished by anything, is distinguished by this, from most other of our Lord's discourses, that it will not apply, cannot by any showing be made to apply to that occasion, but bursts all limitations of time and place, and writes its own superscription to be, to the Church universal upon the earth.

There are some passages in our Lord's instructions which apply only to a particular time and condition of things, such as that spoken at the Last Supper, of which we have given a commentary above, and which can never come to be applica-

ble again, because the Son of Man can never again be removed by the hour and power of darkness from the power of protecting His Church.

But when any man would rob the Church of any of the Lord's sayings, which the first Apostles were glad to catch from oblivion, rather than to convey to it (of which their zeal we have seen an instance quoted from the Missionary charter, *1 Corinthians* 9:11,<sup>18</sup> and may see another, *Acts* 20:35,<sup>19</sup> in Paul's discourse to the Elders of the Ephesian Church,) then, that man should be indicted as guilty of high treason to our King, who lives upon earth only in His words,—of sedition against His kingdom, whose laws are the words of our everlasting King.

Foolish men! vain, ignorant, and foolish men! they know not what they do, in their haste to annul the precious words of Christ; neither understand they the nature of the words of Christ which they would annul. The glorious words of Christ were not for one occasion, but for all occasions; not for one race of men, but for all races of men; not for one age, but for all ages of the world.

And yet, in that which He said, there was always something local, temporary, and occasional, enough of the present time and present manners, for it to lay hold of the feelings of the present audience. But because the eternal truth which He spoke, had around it the drapery of the times, did it thereby become temporary?

We, whose souls are educated in time, being of yesterday, do smack of time in all our thoughts and speeches, except wherein we are guided by revelations of eternity; but He, who

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<sup>18</sup> **1 Corinthians 9** <sup>11</sup> If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

<sup>19</sup> **Acts 20** <sup>35</sup> I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

was from eternity,

### Hebrews 13

<sup>8</sup> ...the same yesterday, today, and forever,

—partakes not, and cannot partake of the same infirmity. The truth which He spoke, is truth metaphysical, that is, truth independent of the conditions of time and place, applicable to all times and places, and equally applicable when time shall be no more. The truth which He spoke addresses not the temporary but the eternal in man; and by awakening the spiritual in us, enables us to shake off the temporal coil with which we are enslaved.

Yet, as has been said, the eternal truth which He spoke, and from which all ages since have derived the knowledge of eternity and the sense of immortality, had a special application to the people to whom it was first addressed, and took hold of the forms of thought then current in the world, in order to deliver men from what was false, and manifest more clearly what was true, in those very things which they believed, and by which they were surrounded.

But this taste of the times, and glance at the occasion, must never for a moment beguile us into the imagination that they reach no further, and were intended to reach no further, than to that occasion. Otherwise we must be content to lose all which He spoke from first to last.

For example: the sermon which He preached on the mount, wherein He gathered up the fragments of all moral feeling and moral law, to issue them anew with divine wisdom, and write them in everlasting letters, not only searched into the joints and marrow of the Pharisaical sophistry and hypocrisy, but has become to every country where it has been published abroad, the basis of law and manners, and will continue the perfection of both while the world lasts.

Again, the comforting speeches He made to His followers

before His crucifixion, not only moved them to earnest questions indicating their personal concern in what He said, but have been the sustenance of His disciples ever since, in all the trials of their lives, and in the hour of their departure; and will never cease to be as refreshing to the Church as the waters of Meribah.

And His prayers, however aptly addressed to the occasion on which they were first uttered, are still the most frequent and the most soul-impressive of all our addresses to the throne of God.

And those parables, whose images, like the Gorgon's head, froze His opponents to stony silence, are to this day the beautiful pictures of all social and religious duty; each one of them the porch and entrance to a magnificent temple of truth and blessedness.

And those very parables which shadow forth the nature of His kingdom—the parable of the mustard seed, of the leaven, of the twelve virgins, of the steward, of the royal feast, of the laborers in the vineyard, of the sower and the seed,—are not these as applicable now as then, and as frequently enforced and applied by the ministers of the Gospel?

And if in all other things He spoke for eternity, yet missed not the present occasion; if in all other things He spoke for all times and all occasions; who is he who will say, that when equipping and instructing the messengers and Missionaries of His kingdom, upon whom all the rest depended, He has said nothing perennial, but only spoken well for the occasion, and must not be understood as instructing us in the same terms in which He instructed them?

The man that says or fancies so, has need to learn again what be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and I warn him to beware how he takes from or adds to the words of the prophecy of this book, lest God shall add unto him all the plagues that are written in this book; how he break one of

these commandments, or teach others to do so, that he be not called least in the kingdom of heaven.

If He, the King and Founder of the spiritual kingdom, in whom dwelt...

### **Colossians 2**

<sup>3</sup> ...all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,

—did not understand and know the full provision and furniture for His own envoys and ambassadors, the strength in which they should fight, and the weapons with which they should overcome the powers of darkness, I marvel, indeed, who should understand and know them; and if His rules fail to be applicable to our case, I marvel who shall help out their inefficiency.

“The Church,” you say.

But what is the Church without its Head? and where is its counsel without its Counselor? and where its authority without the Spirit of Christ?

### **Conclusion**

Therefore, let no man nor body of men, no Christian or society of Christians, nor the whole visible Church, in their presumption, dare to say, these instructions of Christ to the messengers of the kingdom are now inapplicable, are Utopian, are extreme, are to be cautiously interpreted, and prudently carried into effect. For if these be cast aside, I, for one, see not upon what scriptural basis a Missionary Society rests. Nor do I see by what principle a Christian Missionary is to guide himself.

But these instructions remaining, I perceive the use of a Missionary College, to see them carried into effect; and I see the calling of a Missionary to be the highest upon earth, and the nearest unto God; I see that he is a messenger not of time but of eternity; that his soul is dressed not in the confidence

and trust of time, but of eternity; that he is a man of faith, and of faith alone, and therefore able to plant faith wherever he is permitted; and I perceive that the world is his diocese: and if the world is mad enough to despatch him away from its coast, then I find a haven of rest and glory provided for him by these his instructions.

In short, without this document, I am all at sea upon the Missionary question, and must handle it like a question of state policy, or of church management: but preserving this, I have the *Magna Charta* of the Missionary Constitution:

- the description of the Missionary character,
- the scale of his qualifications,
- the directory of his procedure,
- his safe-conduct from the court above, and
- his assurance of success upon earth, and of immortality in heaven.



Moravian Missionary instructing the Esquimaux Indians  
(Historical Religious Events, 1828)



"Silver and Gold have I none; but such as I have, I give you:  
In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." (Acts 3:6)  
(Vintage Bible Illustrations)

## 5. The Perpetuity of This Constitution

Proved from the Analogy of the Christian Faith and Discipline

HAVING thus established beyond a question, from the document itself, that it is written for all ages; and having shown that it was acted upon in the spirit, and beyond the letter, by the Apostles and first Missionaries of the Church, I see not what remains further to be said in order to prove that it ought still to be regarded as the constitution of the Missionary estate, and the directory of the missionary course.

### From Man, or From God?

But I feel, while I speak, a certain inward admonition, to weave the tissue of my argument as it were of double strength. For I seem to see the apparition of many enemies, and to have the foretaste of a fiery trial, for these thoughts which I have adventured forth.

- The warlike Spirit of the Crusaders, who unsheathed the sword which the blasphemous Father of Christendom had blessed, and unfurled the consecrated banner of the cross, therewith to spread the Gospel of peace, and
- The artful Spirit of the Jesuits, who brought all the stores of human wit and worldly wisdom to the same great undertaking, and
- The Spirits of this monied and prudential age, who preach the crusade of gold as eagerly as Peter the Hermit preached the crusade of steel:

—all these seem to arise to overwhelm the poor wight who shall say that neither gold, nor steel, nor worldly wisdom, are essential to the equipment of a Missionary.

But so far from being the allies of Christ in the propagation of the spiritual kingdom, are the three chief powers against whose combined strength His servants have to make their way, and upon whose humbled pride they have to lay the

foundations of His empire.

Therefore, I oft pause and look to my instructions, and see whether I be well sustained in the cause which I plead, and a still small voice whispers to me that I am. The monitor within me says unto my hesitating mind,

Behold you not that the deficiency of earthly means is balanced by the sufficiency of unearthly promises?

And that though there be no purse wherewithal to purchase the means of life, there is an admonition from Heaven to all men, to take the unprovided Missionary to their home, and give him bread and water?

And though there be no steel with which to cleave obstacles in twain, there is the Word of God, which is a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

And though there be no defense of Jesuitical wiles, there is the eye of Providence which counts every hair upon their head, and holds their lives more dear than the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven, for which He liberally provides?

Perceive you not that the former and the latter end of the instructions balance and sustain each other, and that if the former be taken away, the latter has no counterpoise, and the whole proportion and wisdom of the passage is destroyed?

Therefore, seeing it will not permit of mutilation, or of abrogation, or of temporizing, what can I do but redeem my pledge of upholding the truth of my Master, with that liberty of prophesying which this grave and revered assembly, taking example from those three still more venerable assemblies mentioned at the beginning, will not hinder in him whom they have set up to prophesy to them out of the word of the Lord.

It is not for the words, purse, scrip, raiment, staff, and friendship, that I contend. Whether a man shall have money, provisions, comforts, conveniences of travel, and friendly sus-

tenances, or shall not have them, is not the question. Whether a man shall hide himself from all the secondary means of prosperity, or shall profit by them, is not the question. The question is concerning those fields of interest, those spheres of ambition, and refuges of trust, which the words, purse, scrip, raiment, staff, and friendship denote:

- Whether the Missionary shall occupy any of them, or shall not;
- Whether he shall go forth independent of them, or dependent on them;
- Whether his character shall be molded and modeled after the fancy of the times, and the current maxims of the Christian world, or shall stand unalienable and unalterable, like the character of the Pastor or the Christian.

If a Missionary, possessing all these things, can be a man of as entire faith and devotion as though he had them not, it is a small matter so far as he himself is concerned; yet not a small matter, as we shall see, so far as the success of the work is concerned. But it is not a small matter...

- Whether the idea of the Christian Church concerning these offices shall be a constant or a changeable thing;
- Whether the idea of the Missionary concerning his office shall descend to him of God, or descend to him of men; and
- Whether those that guide the work shall consider themselves as infallible to give law to the Missionary,—a commission, self-appointed, of *oyer* and *terminer*<sup>20</sup> in this great cause,—or men acting under authority, under responsibility, and by exactly prescribed rules.

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<sup>20</sup> *Oyer and terminer*: [French, To hear and decide.] The designation “court of oyer and terminer” is frequently used as the actual title, or a portion of the title, of a state court that has criminal jurisdiction over felonious offenses. (West’s Encyclopedia of American Law) Irving’s use of the terms in this case, refers to those in Missionary Societies who hold positions as self-appointed judges over the Missionaries.

These are questions vitally concerning both the glory of God, and the well-being of man; and I feel that I have been agitating a mighty matter, and am myself under terrible responsibility, if I advocate not to the utmost the perpetuity of these decrees.

## The Outward Form of Spiritual Truth

Taking courage, therefore, I now venture a little higher into the dignity of this argument, and declare that not only do the unrepealed authority and the intrinsic character of these instructions bind them forever upon the propagators of the kingdom, but that, from the nature of the Gospel itself, he who propagates the Gospel must be separate from worldly interests, and stand aloof from worldly occupations. And just in proportion as he gets under the spirit of his high vocation, he will, of his own accord, though there were no binding precept upon the subject, cast himself into that outward condition here presented to the twelve great champions of Christendom.

It is not a *conventional* but an *appropriate*, not an *expedient* but a *necessary* character for everyone who possesses a certain measure of God's spirit: or, to speak in the language of the metaphysical schools, it is the outward and necessary form under which a certain large measure of spiritual influence will always manifest itself. But first, it may be necessary to explain the language which I use.

The twofold nature of man, body and spirit, makes it necessary that every thing by which he is to be moved should have an outward form. While yet it lives in spiritual essence alone, it is to him as if it lived not, and its life has over his life no influence or control. Hence the great Father of Spirits has given to all the attributes of His being an outward form and manifestation.

### Psalm 19

<sup>1</sup> The heavens declare His glory, and the earth shows forth  
His handiwork;

—and the sun which circles round the earth, is the tabernacle of His effulgency. The written law, which is holy and just and good, is the form of His holiness; and the Gospel of His Son is the form of His mercy and grace.

Heaven is the outward form of His blessedness, and hell of His fearful wrath against the rebellious. And every doctrine in revelation is a form to the intellect of some spiritual attribute of the Invisible: the doctrine of the atonement, of His justice; the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, of His help.

And to the most noble and capital truths or doctrines, He gives not only a form for the intellect, but for the very sense of man.

- His incarnate Son is the fleshly form of His glory, and the visible image of His person.
- The doctrine of our natural corruption and gracious purification by the blood of Christ, has the sensible form of Baptism.
- And the doctrine of our continued sustenance by His Word and Spirit, has the sensible form of the Supper.
- And the doctrine of the creation of the world, and the resurrection of Christ, which is the re-creation of the world, has the sensible form of the weekly Sabbath.
- And the visible Church is the sensible form of the heavenly communion.

And there is nothing in the being and purposes of God, which it might benefit man to know, that has not a form of expressing itself to the soul of man through the intellect or through the sense.

Now, in like manner as God has given to *His* spiritual being a constant form in revelation, so has He appointed unto His servants to manifest *their* spiritual being under some constant form. To every man in his station He has appointed his duties: to the servant and the master, the husband and the wife, the

parent and the child, the ruler and the ruled; which duties are the outward form which His Holy Spirit takes in these persons and conditions.

- To a rich man, He has given rules how to use his riches, and
- To a poor man, how to bear his poverty;
- To a wise man, how to use his wisdom, and
- To a fool, how he may be cured of his folly;
- To the strong, how to employ his strength, and
- To the sick, how to bear his affliction.

And so to all the various gifts of nature, allotments of Providence, and preferments of rank and power, has God appointed a certain formulary for their right manifestation in the sight of men; nor allows, without rebuke and chastisement, that these conditions should be otherwise occupied than for the ends for which He has bequeathed them diversely, that they might rightly occupy the diverse members of His great household, and bring out the common weal of also the whole family.

## **Comparison with the Minister**

And while over every chamber of this world's variety He appointed a spiritual servant to preside, He did also appoint an order of men superior to these, who should travel over the many chambers of the house, and see that each servant was rightly occupying till the great householder should come; stewards who should neither occupy...

- the treasury chambers,
- nor the attiring rooms,
- nor the bazaars of business,
- nor the museums of knowledge,
- nor the shops of art,
- nor the halls of judgment,

- nor the apartments of state and dignity,
- nor the saloons of grace and beauty,
- nor the awful places of throned sovereignty;

—but who should travel over all these from room to room, even from the dark and laborious foundations up to the stately elevations and gilded pinnacles of society, surveying the work and occupation of every inhabitant, and carefully keeping them to the right and diligent performance of their several parts, that they may be able to render an account of their work when the Lord shall come to call the work of every man into judgment.

This watchful, careful office appertains to the minister of the Gospel or the pastor of the souls of the people, in which, if he faithfully travel, his shall be a great reward. But if he stoop to engage himself with any of the diverse traffics, and meanwhile, for want of careful oversight and spiritual instruction, the souls committed to him go astray to serve other masters than the Lord, their blood shall surely be upon his head.

Now, if the Lord our God has taken to himself a form in the Scriptures for the instruction of man, and has instructed each of us in his station to take a form for the edification of one another, and wherever His councils are revered and obeyed, has added the form of a minister, who, standing aloof from the several engagements and their temporal rewards, shall be His voice and messenger unto the people; satisfied with the singular dignity thereof; is it to be believed that He should have appointed no outward form to those chief and leading men, who were to carry abroad over the earth these celestial instructions, and teach the nations to rule their character and set forth their works after the will and pleasure of their heavenly Father? that giving to all others good and particular instructions, how they shall best and most happily fill their stations, He should leave the perilous Apostles and Missionaries of the whole institution no instructions as to the form which they

should take, in order to move the nations and prevail on them to return to their rightful fealty to the Most High?

This were to build a ship, with occupations for a numerous crew, and births provided for many officers and men, but to make no provision how she should be launched into the deep: or, being launched into the deep, it were to fill her with plentiful supplies to some distressed colony, and man her with able hands, but make no provision of a skilful pilot and good instructions to carry her through the strong currents and stormy winds which set adverse to her course.

The thing is not once to be imagined of Him who is All-wise and All-provident, as well as All-good and bountiful. *A priori*,<sup>21</sup> before any appeal to the fact, it may be concluded that the Missionary doubtless will have his form, as well as the people whom it is his calling to inform after the will of God. And his form will be after the fashion of the minister or pastor, somewhat more devout and adventurous, as the discoverer and subduer of a country needs to be more adventurous than he who keeps it under regiment.

- The one fearless, the other watchful;
- The one expedite and ready for all encounters, the other burdened with many charges;
- The Missionary a spiritual warrior, the Pastor a spiritual shepherd.

What this form of the Missionary is, we have already gathered from Messiah's own constitution of the Missionary estate. But it will be a great confirmation of the doctrine if we can show that, from the very nature of the Spirit's operation upon the heart of man, it must necessarily follow that the Missionary should be such a self-denied and world-divested creature, and that he cannot come into a more full and suffi-

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<sup>21</sup> *A priori*: Latin for "from the former," is traditionally contrasted with *a posteriori*. The term usually describes lines of reasoning or arguments that proceed from the general to the particular, or from causes to effects.

cient condition without incommoding himself and hindering his work; that it is the necessary form of his office, from which every deviation must be lamented as a defect, and deliverance from it earnestly ensued as an attainment of stature, and a step towards success.

Also, that it has been, from the first of God's revelations to the last of them, the form which the messengers He chose either assumed at the outset, or came to in the end. Also, that the work has not changed in these times, that we should ignorantly conceit a change in the workman or his tools to be expedient.

Also, that this unworldly and extreme character of the Missionary is in perfect keeping with the other parts of Christian discipline, of which no part can be leveled down to worldly prudence and homely practice without loss to the Church and deception of the world.

And, therefore, that our true course in this and all other Christian institutions, is to work our character up from worldly levels into their pure elevations, assured that at every step we come into nearer neighborhood to the divine Spirit. and a larger sphere of blessing unto men.

Such is the train of argument which this Oration will take, in order to justify this form of the Missionary, by showing its alliance and affinity with the rest of the Christian revelation.

## **The Obstacle of Material Things**

It is the nature of man, fallen from truth, and alienated from the life of godliness, diligently to seek how he may bestow upon the creature, and of all creatures upon himself, that worship and glory the which is due to God alone. His talents, though they be created and matured by God; his knowledge, though all that he knows be of God's providence and handiwork; his possessions, though they consist in a portion of God's goods freely bestowed; his bodily strength, his form, his

very name, that most airy and accidental of all things, it is man's nature to magnify into a God, and to worship as his chief good.

And some will fall prostrate before science, and others before literature; and others before brute and senseless nature; and others before idols of wood and brass; and, in short, there is nothing inherent in the nature of man, or existent in the outward world, whereof the fallen soul has not, at some time and place, made an idol, and with which, in all times and places, it has not a tendency, less or more, to divide the reverence which is due to God alone.

So that the greatest impediment to the progress of the Gospel in the soul arises out of the things which are seen and temporal, the world and the things of the world, which come to nought. These occupy our senses, and thence steal into our affections, when the imagination forms them into more lively and wily combinations, and the intellect busying itself with their relation, at every step of the investigation discovers them to be so wisely adapted to the wants of man, so stimulative of a thousand pleasures of the sense, and so profitable to the ambition and enjoyment of the present world, that they gain and gain over our time, our interests, our desires, our fears, until at length there is left in the soul no room for the Gospel to occupy.

All is prepossessed and preoccupied, when the Gospel comes into action, which has therefore to begin its course by checking, cutting off, prohibiting, rebuking, and the like distasteful operations, known generally by the name of repentance. And after having brought these former propensities to a stand, it seeks to drive them all backward; to turn the tide of bitter waters upon their evil fountain, and to recover the fields of the soul which they had drowned and wasted from their rightful possessor.

And in proportion as this work of emptying goes on, the

work of the Spirit proceeds, the dew of God's blessing descends as upon the thirsty earth, and the fruits of the Spirit fill the former waste places; the evil invaders are cast out, the turbulent possessors are quieted, the lamb lies down with the leopard, and the young lion and the fatling together,<sup>22</sup> and the desert of our spiritual state rejoices and blossoms like the rose.<sup>23</sup>

If so it be found, in the experience of all Christians, that the things of the spirit prosper in proportion as the things of the flesh decay, and that confidence in the right-arm of Jehovah increases as our confidence decreases in princes and the sons of men, in the corn, the wine, and the oil; and that allegiance unto Christ does undo and dissolve the allegiance of the human soul to Mammon, and Belial, and Satan, and even to the dearest and nearest friendships and relations of life, it is most manifest, that the disseminators of such a doctrine over the earth must be denuded of all the things in which men place their trust, and to which they render their homage, in order that they may be wholly under the influence of that spirit, worship and allegiance, under which they seek to reduce the rest of men.

And these deprivations exacted by our Lord, of those who go forth as the propagators of His spiritual kingdom, are to be considered not only in the sense of tests or trials imposed by Him, or of mortifications imposed by themselves, or of examples offered to the people to whom they go (though in all these respects they may and do serve good ends,) but as the necessary and indispensable condition to their being wholly under that very Spirit to which they would persuade the world to be subject, and as sure evidence that they continue under it so long as they love and submit to such a discipline.

Christ wished none but spiritual men to take this office

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<sup>22</sup> *Isaiah* 11:6.

<sup>23</sup> *Isaiah* 35:1.

upon themselves; and of the spiritual men in the church, He wished those who were strongest in faith, and those alone, to venture forth. Therefore, He set the mark to the most un-earthly standard, and appointed that there should be no purse, that is no pecuniary emolument; no scrip, that is no possessions; no change of raiment, that is no pleasures or accommodations of the body; no staff, that is no ease or pleasure of travel; no salutations by the way, that is no ends of natural or social affection.

Which He ordained, not because He was a hard master, for He exacts of no one to undertake the perilous yet glorious work; but because, if anyone would undertake it, He would not permit him to be ignorant of the cost, but instructed him in the measure of faith which was indispensable to the work; saying to them,

“Unless the things of the Spirit have prospered thus and thus far with you, unless the kingdom of heaven has prevailed within your soul, and subjected all these regions of natural gladness, you are not prepared for the work; but if otherwise, then go your ways, and, lo! I am with you unto the end of the world.”

If this argument, drawn of necessity from the nature of the Christian spirit, be well founded, then it will follow that among those who are full of the Spirit, he who has a purse is as he who has none, and he who has a scrip as he who has none, and he who has a field as he who has none, and he who has a kingdom as he who has none.

And it confirms us the more in the soundness of the argument, that at the great outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, this condition of things was realized among the disciples, who had all things in common, and sold their possessions, and poured out their price at the Apostles' feet.

It will likewise follow, that a Missionary in proportion as he is careful of these things, shows himself deficient in the sup-

ply of that Spirit, whose chosen vessel he prefers himself to be; and that no age of the church which sets store by these outward visible means is greatly enlightened of the Spirit, but has need to seek for a more plentiful diffusion of His ghostly influences.

It will follow, moreover, from this fruitful proposition, that, though a Missionary in the first instance should go forth stocked like a trader, fitted out like a discoverer, accredited like a royal envoy, and three times armed with prudence like a hostile spy, when he comes into close communication with the Spirit of God and the spirit of the people, in order to be the mediator between these natural enemies, he will, if his mind be open to light, be taught the utter helplessness of all these helps, the utter uselessness of all these useful things, to that work in which he has embarked: that, though they may commend him to the proud and worldly part of the people, and gain for him a place in their regards as a man of some consequence and reputation, they are so far from bringing him into contact with their spiritual feelings, which alone he cares or ought to care for, that they set him more remote from thence, and induce a mistake with respect to his unearthly purpose, which it will require him much time and labor to correct.

And if he be a true man, and a man of spiritual discernment, I think that a transmutation will speedily come upon the outward estate of this well-furnished Missionary. He will by degrees divest himself of all those things which withdraw the people from the word of his mouth, or hinder them from apprehending the simplicity and sincerity of his spiritual purpose.

He will adopt their dresses, follow their manner of life, eat with them and drink with them, and seek access to them at all their unguarded moments, that he may be always at hand to drop his words seasonably into their ear, and manifest con-

stantly before their eye the influence of his faith over all the conditions of man, instead of merely addressing them now and then with set speeches and abstract discourses against the very time, form, and place of which, their minds are already in arms.

And he will not scruple to take favors at their hand, if that will bring him into closer confidence of their souls, which it does far more frequently than otherwise; and if not, he will work to them for his meat, teach them the arts of his country, do anything that may bring him and keep him in close and frequent contact with their personal affections: and he will learn to be of no country, that he may remove political hindrances out of the way, and he will learn to carry no temptations about with him.

His wealth, which makes him to be envied, and perhaps endangers his life, he will cast into the first brook which he crosses, or diligently hide it from the people (but how shall he hide it from his own heart!).

His equipage of travel he will put aside; and, like Bernard Gilpin, the Reformer of the North, he will give his horse to the first poor family which has need of one to earn their bread.

And, like that most noble of parish priests, however full-handed the Missionary may set out on his expedition, he will, if his mind be open to light, and his heart to love, return from his excursion, not only empty of all things, but beholden to the worthy men who had compassion upon him by the way.

So that, according to the argument, the spirit which prevails within the Missionary's breast, will never fail to bring him into that very condition of nakedness and dependence, I should rather say, fullness of faith and spiritual plenty, which the Great Counselor and Founder of the Missionary cause, in the plenitude of His wisdom, ordained as the proper condition, not to end with, but to set out with, in this faithful and spiritual adventure.

It is not that we attach any importance to the outward costume of a missionary, which also may be assumed. Under the coarse frock of a friar lay oft more pride and cunning than beneath a cardinal's hat; and the triple crown has not covered more ambitious purposes than lay within the cowl of the Jesuit who exposed himself to every blast of heaven.

The pride of human nature may make noble-minded men to dwell like Diogenes, in a tub;<sup>24</sup> the disappointments of the world may drive them like Timon to the woods;<sup>25</sup> and racking remorse may send them unprovided pilgrims over untrodden deserts, or attach them to the coarse fare and bare walls of a hermit's cell; the forms of poverty and meanness are endless, which the spirit of man may assume for its own particular gratification, without any regard to the well-being of others, or the propagation of the kingdom of Christ; and therefore no form is to be taken as a sure test of the true spirit of a Christian missionary.

Nevertheless, as has been proved above, there is a form which, beyond others, is expressive of a heavenly mind and a disinterested mission, that which Messiah chose for himself when coming into the world, and which He laid upon all who would travail with Him for the redemption of the world. It is not indispensable to the true Missionary spirit, but the true

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<sup>24</sup> *Diogenes*: a Greek philosopher and one of the founders of Cynic philosophy. Diogenes made a virtue of poverty. He begged for a living and often slept in a large ceramic jar in the marketplace....He inured himself to the weather by living in a clay wine jar belonging to the temple of Cybele. (Wikipedia)

<sup>25</sup> *Timon*: a reference to a play by William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*. In *Timon of Athens*, Lord Timon discovers the limits of wealth and friendship. He spends freely on others and hosts banquets for many guests. Despite his servants' warnings, he spends so excessively that his money runs out—and the philosopher Apemantus condemns his flatterers as insincere. Soon Timon's creditors begin to call in their loans. Timon expects help from his friends, but they all refuse him money. Furious, he invites them again to a banquet, but serves only water and stones before he dismisses them, cursing Athens. He exiles himself to a wilderness. (shakespeare.folger.edu)

Missionary spirit loves it, and cannot without self-denial be brought to lay it aside; it is not unequivocal to those without, but it is least liable to be misinterpreted; it is not a capital crime against the laws of the spiritual kingdom to lay it aside for an occasion, as it is not a capital crime against our naval laws for a captain to lose his ship, but as in the latter case, so in the former, he ought to be put upon his trial, and make appear before the statutes of our king, that it was for the best interests of the kingdom that it was set aside.

## **Examples from the Old Testament**

Such is the argument drawn from the necessary laws of spiritual influence; and such are the consequences of the argument: but what says the fact? The fact says this, that by men, so conditioned as these instructions set forth, God has always wrought enlargement or salvation to His spiritual kingdom.

### **JOSEPH**

Joseph, by whom He saved the promised seed, and got for them the land of Goshen, was first stripped of everything, father and mother, and brotherly love, made a bondsman, beleaguered with temptation, falsely accused and imprisoned, friendless and helpless in the dungeons of a foreign land. And when, the people being lost to the knowledge of God and the nobility of their calling, the orphan shepherd Moses was chosen for the great work of setting them free, and receiving the law from the mouth of the Lord, he argued three times his unfitness for the work:

1. From Pharaoh's strong and high condition;
2. From the unbelief of the people;
3. And, lastly, from his own meanness and want of eloquence.

But the Lord gave him no appointments under heaven save his shepherd's rod.

## **ELIJAH**

Elijah who was called on at another similar pass, when the people had with one accord fallen away under idolatry and tyranny, had not a house or a morsel of meat or a friend within the bounds of Israel to give him shelter; yet the Lord by his hand slew all the priests of Baal, and overthrew their altars in the high places.

## **ELISHA**

And Elisha, on whom his mantle fell, and with it his perilous work, that same day he received his commission to go forth to the Lord's work, sacrificed his oxen, and made the fire for the sacrifice out of the wood of his agricultural implements, cutting asunder all connexion with the world, and destroying that which won his bread, devoting the instruments of his wealth in thanksgiving to the Lord, who had called him to the work of a higher husbandry.

## **DAVID**

David, from feeding the sheep, by neither chariot nor horsemen, won favor in the sight of Israel, and was advanced to the throne.

## **ESTHER**

Esther, an orphan woman, saved the people of the Lord from utter ruin.

## **THE PROPHETS**

And all the prophets were without reputation or worldly condition, otherwise they had been unfit for their perilous work.

- Amos, from among the herdsmen of Tekoah,
- Ezekiel, from the captives by the rivers of Chebar,
- Daniel and the three Children from menial offices in the palace of an Eastern king.

And whosoever else, under the former dispensation, was

separated as a chosen vessel for containing the revelation, and doing the work of the Lord, was either ill-conditioned by birth, evil-starred of fortune, or stripped naked by the world, made a Nazarite of, separated by the Lord unto himself, before he could be entered to the work of doing great and lasting service to the interests of righteousness.

## **Examples from the New Testament**

### **JOHN THE BAPTIST**

And John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, who may be reckoned the great type of Missionaries, if Christ be the great type of Shepherds or Pastors (for the Missionary prepares the way for the Pastor, as the Baptist did for Christ,) was made a Nazarite from his mother's womb; that is, he was separated from strong drink, which represents all artificial stimulants of the spirit and luxuries of the body. And a razor was not permitted to come upon his head, which means that he was separated from all outward show and ornament.

And thus being hindered from regarding his own gratification and the world's eye, he was come into a condition for receiving the inspirations of the Spirit of God, which cannot enter into communion with sense and selfishness, those two great idols of men.

### **JESUS CHRIST**

And Christ himself, though He was...

#### **Philippians 2**

<sup>6</sup> ...in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God,

<sup>7</sup> Made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

<sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

<sup>9</sup> Wherefore God also has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name:

<sup>10</sup> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

<sup>11</sup> And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Thus making himself both a model and a history of every one who is to extend that kingdom which He founded, and labor in the salvation which He purchased.

## THE TWELVE AND SEVENTY

And, finally, what the twelve and seventy were, and how they were fitted out for their work, we have spent the former head of this discourse in explaining. And what the people were who first received their message, and in their several neighborhoods propagated the kingdom, Paul has told in the Corinthians,

### 1 Corinthians 1

<sup>26</sup> Brethren, you see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:

<sup>27</sup> But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

<sup>28</sup> And base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.

What more, then, is required to show that there ever must be, and ever has been, a necessity for disjunction from the works of the world in order to work the works of God, that the great heralds of heaven must take a stand above the earth, in order to raise men above the earth; that they must undervalue those things which they teach men to undervalue?

## Prophets to the World

What are Missionaries but the prophet's order enlarged from the confines of the land of Israel, to roam at large over the world? God's messengers to the nations, telling them their

several burdens if they repent not, and showing them salvation if they repent. Each a Jonah to the several quarters of the heathen world: not servants of this or that association of men; but heralds of heaven, who dare not be under other orders than the orders of Christ.

It is a presumption hardly short of Papal, to command them. They are not Missionaries when they are commanded. They are creatures of the power that commands them. Up, up, with the stature of this character: it is high as heaven: its head is above the clouds which hide the face of heaven from earth-born men: its ear hears the word of God continually, and continually re-echoes what it hears to the nations.

The Missionary is the hollow of that trumpet which resounds the voice of God. Let us reverence him, he is above us all, he is above the world, he is an ethereal Being, and cares not for the concerns of time.

I wonder how anyone can be so impious towards God, so cruel towards men, as to wish to obliterate one feature of his Celestial Character. Though none of those who at present respectably bear the honors of the name come near to it, still let it stand, that, being ever in their eye, they may approach it more and more near. Though none of this generation can bear the palm of it away, some of our children may. And though none of our children should reach it nearer than their fathers, some of our children's children may.

Some favored one may be raised up of God, who, like another Paul, may give it full and complete vitality. And when he shall arrive, rest assured that, like another Paul, he will convert half the nations. For well am I convinced that the Gospel waits only for such spiritual men, in order to burst its present narrow bounds, and the Spirit waits only for these necessary conditions to fill the inward soul of any man, and make him a chosen vessel, a royal stately ship to sail in all seas, and bear the treasure unto all lands.

## An Unchanging Form

I feel, that in pleading for the perpetuity of the Missionary form of manhood, I am pleading the cause, not only of the unconverted nations, but the cause of divine power and truth, which is hindered from descending to tabernacle with mortals only by our low-thoughted cares and worldly occupations.

Martha, who was burdened with many things, is the genius of the human race; Mary, who had chosen the one thing needful, is the genius of the Missionary band, who, not out of the greatness of their grief, but the greatness of their love, have become careless of all those things, save that good part which shall not be taken from them.

Who is he that talks of change? The Missionary ordinance can never change, for the Missionary work never changes. His work is still to overthrow the prince of this world, seated upon the beauty and pleasantness, upon the magnificence and glory of the visible creation, and to deliver the souls of men into the worship of the invisible God.

Kingdoms may undergo every vicissitude, and be found under every form of civil polity; nations may exist in every degree of culture or barbarism; they may be noble, high minded and proud; sordid, and base, and given over to gain and sensual indulgence; vain-glorious, pompous, and fond of a thousand spectacles; they may be grovelling in superstition, sunk in ignorance, abandoned to sloth and effeminacy, or fierce, fiery and uncontrollable; but never will a kingdom or nation be found possessed of the knowledge of the true God, devoted to the faith and pursuit of spiritual objects, or living in the practice of Christian precepts.

The maxims, the spirit of the laws and policy, the motives and principles of private conduct, the whole tenor of their society, and influence of their religion, have to be counteracted and overthrown in these times, as entirely as in the days of the Apostles. There is no relaxation of the oppositions, there

is no mitigation of the difficulties of the work, which never changes.

And the Gospel which the Missionary has to preach, the kingdom which he has to propagate, is still the same spiritual kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit, whose King has no communion with Belial nor with Mammon, in whose sight iniquity cannot stand, and to whom the proud heart and the high look are an abomination.

This Gospel, which has toleration for no natural form of humanity however excellent, and condemns every living man, which begins in sorrow and repentance for the past, proceeds by the faith and preference of things unseen, and is perfected in a thousand acts of self-denial and self-discipline, is not now more agreeable to the nations than it was when first revealed by our Lord and Saviour.

And if the Gospel, after two thousand years, is still as unaccommodating to the world, and the world is still by nature as averse from its faith and discipline, how should the manner of its propagation be altered in any respect from what was laid down and followed at the first?

If the first Missionaries were made spiritual personages, in order to exhibit practically to the people that preference and all-sufficiency of spiritual things which they preached; if they were men of faith alone, in order to exhibit that principle which they sought to magnify over sight and sense, why should they not be so likewise in these times, in which the heathen are still as devoted to things seen and temporal, as they were in the days of Paul?

Even supposing the present Missionaries had more divinity of nature than the Apostles, and that they could possess purse, scrip, and all other accommodations without being thereby unspiritualized, how shall they hinder the evil interpretation of the heathens, who see them hired, paid, accommodated, befriended, and in all outward things better condi-

tioned than themselves?

- “They speak to us of faith, let them show us their own.”
- “They speak to us of the providence of God, but they ventured not hither without every security.”
- “They tell us of Christ’s disinterestedness to us, but what lessons give they us of the same?”

And so forth through every particular of their condition, by which Christ intended that they should evidence the doctrine which they taught.

I cannot understand, therefore, in any way, how the condition of the Missionary work should be changed, when the work itself remains the same; or how the instruction which Christ gave for the propagation of His kingdom should now be null and void, when it is the same kingdom that is to be propagated, and the difficulties and impediments are still the same, over the head of which its propagation is to be effected.

## **A Heavenly Standard**

I admire the steadiness with which the spiritual people of this day have stood out against the ignorant clamor, that the heathen must be civilized before they can be christianized; I admire, also, the faith which they have shown in the power of God, to save men by the preaching of the word, without any help of the arts of government, or of civil life; and the simplicity with which they devote themselves to the circulation of the scriptures, and the sending out of Teachers and Preachers; and they are never enough to be commended for standing aloof from the employment of force, and power, and civil policy; in all these respects, fulfilling the maxim of Christ,

### **John 18**

<sup>36</sup> My kingdom is not of this world.

But there are a few things which still savor of the spirit of the world, and which must be put away by the diligent pe-

rusal and faithful execution of this the Missionary charter; which, instead of arguing against or pulling down, they should regard as the everlasting conditions of the Missionary work, within which men have only to come in order to be ready for the high office, and ripe for scattering the everlasting seed among the nations.

There has been much searching of the scriptures for a platform of church-government, and every passage which can be forced into that application, has been strained, to the utmost, in order that a *jus divinum*<sup>26</sup> might be made out for episcopacy, presbytery, and independency in their turns.

Sure I am that none, nor all of these put together, can make out such a divine right as the Missionary work has in these instructions of our Lord; and had there been human interests concerned in the establishment of it, as human interests there are none, unspiritual men would long ere this have used it for securing them.

But being the death of secularity, the essence of spiritual-mindedness, and the quintessence of self-denial, I perceive that it has every thing to contend with, scoffs, ridicule and worldly wisdom, and cannot be generally acceptable in times when the secular and the spiritual have become strangely intermingled, and maxims current on the Exchange, have become current in holy places, when the offices of the church have come to be valued by their emoluments,<sup>27</sup> and for their emoluments sought out, and as an emolument discoursed of among the people.

It is not now the time to discourse of the pastoral office (I shall hereafter,) but it were easy to show from the epistles of the Great Shepherd to the angels of the seven churches of

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<sup>26</sup> *Jus divinum*: divine law. (The Free Dictionary)

<sup>27</sup> *Emolument*: a salary, fee, or profit from employment or office. (Oxford Dictionary)

Asia,<sup>28</sup> that it is an office in its spirit, consenting with that view of the Missionary office which we labor to establish, and widely dissenting from those views of it which are now current among both priests and people. But while those erroneous views prevail of the pastoral office, which is under our eye at home, and from which we derive our notion of the Missionary, it will be in vain to think that the latter notion can be a correct one.

Therefore, it is the more necessary, among the many sources of error to which we are exposed in making up our idea of the Missionary, to adhere to the divine platform contained in these verses, and be governed by the *jus divinum*, the divine authority of that unrepealed constitution.

Therefore I say, let this type of the Missionary stand, that he is a man:

- without a purse,
- without a scrip,
- without a change of raiment,
- without a staff,
- without the care of making friends, or keeping friends,
- without the hope or desire of worldly good,
- without the apprehension of worldly loss,
- without the care of life,
- without the fear of death;
- of no rank, of no country, of no condition;
- a man of one thought, the Gospel of Christ;
- a man of one purpose, the Glory of God;
- a fool, and content to be reckoned a fool, for Christ;
- a madman, and content to be reckoned a madman, for Christ.

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<sup>28</sup> See Irving's writings on *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*.

Let him be enthusiast, fanatic, babbler, or any other outlandish non-descript the world may choose to denominate him. But still let him be a non-descript, a man that cannot be classed under any of their catagories, or defined by any of their convenient and conventional names.

When they can call him pensioner, trader, householder, citizen; man of substance, man of the world, man of science, man of learning, or even man of common sense, it is all over with his Missionary character. He may innocently have some of these forms of character, some of them he cannot innocently have; but they will be far subordinate, deep in the shade, covered and extinguished to the world's incurious gaze, by the strange, incoherent and unaccountable character to which he surrendered himself mainly.

The world knows the Missionary not, because it knew Messiah not.<sup>29</sup> The nature of his life is hid with Christ in God,<sup>30</sup> he is not a man, but the spirit of a man; he is a spirit that has divested itself of all earthiness, save the continent body, which it keeps down and uses as its tabernacle, and its vehicle, and its mechanical tool for speech and for action.

The standard is a high one, and suits not an easy and prudential age, and we that are bred in peaceful places, may stumble at it, and some of our self-sufficient spirits may scoff at it. But our fathers held it in reputation when they suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but as dung, that they might win Christ;<sup>31</sup> and the Missionaries who came to our fathers, were accustomed to it.

And what is a Missionary who shrinks at it? Can he stand the stake or the cross, who cannot bear hunger, thirst, and nakedness? Was any man a martyr who could not be a hungered for Christ? What are purse, staff, scrip, raiment and

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<sup>29</sup> 1 John 3:1.

<sup>30</sup> Colossians 3:3.

<sup>31</sup> Philippians 3:8.

friendship, but the help and sustenance of life, taking their value from the love we have of life? And if we are prepared to scuttle the ship, are we not prepared to sink the timbers, and cordage, and tackle of the ship?

This unearthly dimension of the Missionary character is in such keeping with the rest of the Christian dispensation, as to commend itself to our mind on that very account. Had it not been perfect in this its beau-ideal,<sup>32</sup> had it not been accommodated to prudence and practice, a plausible, reasonable, fair-looking speculation like that which it seems hasting to become, I for one would have said,

“This is not like a character of Christ’s delineation; it wants the touch of the divine hand; it has not the supernatural air. It is of the earth, earthly: it is not of the heavens, heavenly: it is born of flesh, it consorts with Mammon and has fellowship with Belial.”

I doubt whether it be an original or not; for here, in Christ’s style, is a description of faith as the *substance* of things hoped for, and...

- here is a cloud of witnesses, who by faith substantiated invisible things;
- here is a description of the Christian life, as a walk by faith and not by sight;
- here is a description of charity so perfect as to make the holiest man abhor himself;
- here is a law which condemns the justest men;
- here is a rule of chastity,
- and a rule for behaving to enemies,
- and a rule for alms-giving,

—and a thousand other schemes and rules of Christ; not one

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<sup>32</sup> *Beau-ideal*: a conception of perfect beauty; a model of excellence. (Dictionary.com)

of which is calculated in accommodation to man's imperfections, but in accommodation to God's perfections; not in measure with man's weakness, but in measure with the Spirit's power; not for the strength of fallen nature, but for the sufficiency of the grace of God.

And shall the individual traits of the Christian character be superhuman, and the whole Christian not be superhuman? shall the Christian be superhuman, and the Missionary not be three times superhuman?

Stumble, therefore, who pleases, at the severity of these institutions of the Missionary; I glory in them. Tame them down who pleases; I, while I live, will uphold their sublimity. Temporize with them who please, they do it at their proper risk. Let it be mine to love and reverence my Saviour's words.

Nay, moreover, let them who please cool down the temper of the Missionary, and lower the mark of his high calling; be it mine to rouse his spirit, and if duty hindered not, to rouse my own spirit to the height of the undertaking.

When the Missionaries, the forlorn hope of our warfare, issue from the gate of our camp, let us cheer them with songs of ancient chivalry, with examples of ancient victory; let the daughter of Zion brace the heart of her warlike sons, with her heaven-derived minstrelsy; that they may go forth in the spirit of the mighty men of old, and scale the steep which frowns upon flesh and blood, and plant the good standard of the faith upon the loftiest battlement of the enemy's strongest hold,—which strong and lofty though it be, is not more strong than the strength of our God, nor more lofty than the flights of our faith;—which strong and lofty though it be, is permitted thus high to rise and thus sternly to frown, only that it may prove the good temper of the warrior's soul, and prove before the high witnesses of the contest, how humanity in the weakest of Christ's servants, is stronger than death and the grave, than earth and hell, and can triumph over them, and lead

them captives, as did the great Founder and everlasting Captain of the Missionary work.

Therefore, I say, let the lineament of perfection stand flaming forth, because it is the failing of human nature to rest satisfied with its attainments, and to come to a stand in its progress, through the might and multitude of surrounding objects. Unto feeble and faithless man, there needs always a voice like that which was given unto Moses when the people pressed between the angry sword of Pharoah, and the raging sea stood still in sore dismay:

### **Exodus 14**

<sup>15</sup> Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.

And of all men, the Missionary needs this voice the most, because his course is the roughest, and his enemies the most inveterate. As the Baptist came in the desert, so he comes in the moral wilderness and spiritual desert of human life; and though he be nothing but a voice, he cries out,

### **Luke 3** [Isaiah 40:3-4]

<sup>4</sup> Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.

<sup>5</sup> Let every valley be filled, and every mountain and hill be brought low, let the crooked be made straight, and the rough places be made smooth.

Such a one shall have in his teeth a phalanx of opposition, and he has need of a heart like a lion's heart, and of a wing like an eagle's wing, and there must be upon his banner, Forward, Forward: and that he may never faint or fail, his banner should be this divine portrait of a perfect Missionary, this safe-conduct and assurance of ultimate success, to flame over the darkness of his path, like the pillar of fire which directed Israel in the watches of the night.



Jesus as the Chief Missionary:

"The Son of Man has not where to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20)

(Story of the Gospel, 1884)

## 6. Conclusion, from the Missionary Doctrine

### For Encouragement, not Discouragement

WHILE I contend with all my might that the portraiture of the Missionary given by stated above, Messiah, with His instructions for the perilous voyage, should not be hid from the sight and study of the Church, but live in its few grand and simple lineaments, untouched by any mortal hand, and unsoftened by the compromising taste of any age; and that every one who looks to this,—the highest preferment in the kingdom of Christ,—should be qualified according to the Testament of our King, over which Testament the Church is the guardian to execute it faithfully, not to enlarge or abridge it in one jot or tittle: I am far from intending, as the conclusion of the whole matter, that no one shall make trial and experiment of this service until he feel the image of Messiah perfected in his soul, or that God will withhold His blessing from the rude beginnings and mistrustful settings-out, of this high and holy calling.

As God does know, and my conscience bears me witness, it is not to discourage or repel any spirit which feels stirred to attempt the undertaking, but to encourage and attract all Christian spirits by its ethereal excellence and transcendent glory, that I would preserve the standard perfection of this character un-reduced and unveiled before every eye.

And if any one think that by the opposite course of reducing its lofty dimensions, or veiling its heavenly purity, he will recommend this or any other part of the Christian system to the world, he does err, nothing knowing the end of Christianity, or the nature of the world.

By doing so, he shall but place the world on good terms with itself, and mislead still further its false estimation of its own wretched conditions, while he prostitutes the great boon of Heaven, which was given not to please the deluded world,

but to redeem it out of its present self-satisfaction and self-complacency.

The world is to be undeceived with respect to all its ideas of greatness and goodness, its heroism to be despoiled, its virtues put to shame, its boast and glory mocked, by the new school of character and action, which the Gospel introduces, in order to cast all its conditions into the shade and force them to confess that they are nothing.

The divine stature and heavenly majesty, the unstained purity and tender mercy, and the self-divested, self-devoted disinterestedness of the *new* man, created in the image of God, are intended to silence the empty boastfulness of the *old* man, to call forth spiritual faculties from their hiding places of ease and selfishness, and to offer a wisdom and righteousness, an honor and glory of another kind than that whereof nature is ambitious, and wherewithal she is content.

It is not by *indulging* nature, therefore, in her false judgments and depraved tastes, but by *rebuking* her, by exhibiting ideas and forms of higher things, that she is to be led onward to perfection. Her own self-love will draw the standard down, without any help on your part, and in spite of all your endeavors the other way.

Your office, therefore, is to propound to her no second edition of the things revealed from heaven for her regeneration, but the very things, if you would humble her, beat her out of her proud refuges, prostrate her in sorrow and repentance, and bring her to be an earnest suitor for the sufficient grace and perfect strength of God.

And he who shrinks from the perusal of these new forms of character, because they are too high for him, and cannot be entered into at one attempt, and would therefore have them lowered, does err no less, than he does, who, to serve his error, would bring them down to his low desire or faithless timidity.

For it is to which this, wholly to mis-state the nature of this holy operation, to imagine that it is finished at one *fiat* as creation was at first, and that the child of God starts at once into being and perfect manhood. We grow in grace as we grow in nature, from the new birth, through the helplessness of babes, the weakness of childhood, the instability of youth, to the maturity of perfect men in Christ. And it is by exercise we grow, for the grace of God is a vital principle which begets life and action.

By this new life and action of the soul's faculties, we do both discern the presence of that grace which we have received, and our need of more, which we receive in due time after we have proved ourselves faithful over the few things already committed to our trust. And so we go on from grace to grace, and from strength to strength, by diligently occupying that which we have, and fulfilling those duties which are meet to our present infirmity.

Therefore, the perfections of holiness presented in Scripture, and the sublimities of character exemplified by Christ, ought to be constantly kept full in our view, that we may know what the Lord our God requires of us, and how far we come short of His glory; whence are fed the fountains of our penitence and humility, at which prayer refreshes her too feeble voice, and the Lord hearing her refreshed voice, supplies all our wants in due season, out of His inexhaustible fullness.

And thus, as in a circle, from the idea of perfection, to the consciousness of weakness, and from the consciousness of weakness, to the increase of strength, and from the increase of strength, to the increase of performance, and from the increase of performance, to the idea of still higher perfection, we approach more and more near to that purity of holiness and sublimity of character, without the knowledge and perusal of which we should not have known our deficiency, and not knowing our deficiency, not have besought for higher aid,

and not beseeching the aid of Heaven, should not have received the grace which is sufficient for us, and the strength which is perfected in weakness.

## **The Wound That Heals**

If such be the progression of the Christian graces, it is most manifest that whosoever can recover a true Christian idea from the corrupting hand and compromising spirit of his age, and give it to the world in its original form and beauty, does serve the best interests of his age, though he may somewhat trouble its present self-sufficiency.

For though he rebukes the imperfect measures with which the over-easy times are satisfied, and turn against himself the zeal which he disturbs in its well-meant but ill-informed courses, he does open to all candid and truth-loving spirits a higher region, to which they may cast their longings, and for the occupation of which they may weary Heaven with their humble prayers.

And if any one, in the couch of his contentment, should feel himself rebuked of listless self-satisfied ease, he ought, while he plucks up his pilgrim's staff, and manfully addresses himself to another stage of his progress, give thanks unto God, who sent a messenger to rouse his spirit afresh, and show him the way to new enjoyments and new entertainments of his spiritual life.

If, therefore, in the idea of the Missionary, which we have sketched in the first of these Orations, and which in the two latter we have sought to fix and make lasting by many fiery ordeals, there be anything more enlarged and elevated than that which at present prevails in the Church; the use to which it should be put, after it has been first tried by non-conforming truth, is to rouse the spirit of Missionaries to still higher aims, to whet the present zeal of the Church to a still finer edge, and to set on fire whatever is noble, and generous, and

devoted in the breasts of godly men.

It were totally to misuse the truth, and to misunderstand the whole economy of grace, for anyone to take offense at the height and purity of the character delineated above, or to withdraw his shoulder from the Missionary work, because the work turns out to be a more stiff-necked work than he had at first conceived.

For, as it is the perfect purity of the law which slays our self-sufficiency, arouses our dormancy, and, like a good schoolmaster, forces our childish reluctance to betake itself to Christ for help; so is it the nobleness of the Missionary character, its independence of all natural means, and indifference to all human patronage, its carelessness of all earthly rewards and contempt of the arithmetic of visible and temporal things, which force the man who would essay it, to pass out of those resources human nature fosters within herself, and have his refuge and dependence upon the Spirit of God, for sustenance, for patronage, for reward, and for a rule of procedure.

## **Growing in Grace**

And after all he can do in this kind, it will still be the complaint of every good and faithful Missionary, that he has not been able to eradicate self-confidence, that root of bitterness which poisons spiritual health, and brings on a prostration of spiritual strength. So that these deprivations of Christ, are but incumbrances kindly removed, weights cast away, and besetting sins (sins that beset every man) warned away from the Missionary, in consideration of the arduous race which he has undertaken to run.

Seeing, then, that every Christian grace has its slenderest beginnings, as well as its ultimate attainments, it is to be inferred that the Missionary is not perfected without use, nor by one effort of faith carried to so great a height above sublunary things. We are told of the mighty Nazarite, under the former

dispensation, that...

### **Judges 13**

<sup>25</sup> The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

So when the Spirit of the Lord begins to move the Gospel-Nazarite, though it be in his native village, his native town, or his father's house, let him obey its movements, and not quench them, but follow onwards at their bidding. And even in this, the infancy of his calling, he will find it needful to renounce the approbation of the world, perhaps the affection of his friends, certainly his own ease and natural pleasure, with many other things dearer to life than a meal of meat or a change of raiment.

And as he obeys the divine voice which speaks within his soul for the salvation of men, and encounters the strokes of their undiscerning blindness to that which is spiritual, he will experience so much support of the Spirit, such inward joy and satisfaction, that his faith will gather courage, and spread its wings abroad, beyond the confines of his father's house, his native village, or his native town. He will grow so full of faith, and contemplative of things unseen, as to forget his trust in sight, and dependence upon the things that are.

Inward assurances of God's direction will become so strong, the monitions<sup>33</sup> of his Spirit so audible, the commands of Christ to go forth unto all nations so imprinted in fire upon his heart, and invocations from the perishing souls of the Heathen will wax so loud and frequent in his ear, and his whole inward man become so restless and aroused, that he will have no peace till he arise and go forth.

This strength of faith has a beginning in the soul like the grains of a mustard seed, which being crushed or neglected in

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<sup>33</sup> *Monition*: a warning of impending danger; a formal notice from a bishop or ecclesiastical court admonishing a person not to do something specified. (Oxford Dictionary)

the embryo, will never grow to the largest tree of the forest, in whose branches the birds of the air build their nests, and under whose boughs the beasts of the field have their habitations.



Parable of the Mustard Seed  
(Anon, Wellcome Collection)

The word of God at first is a spark, then it is a burning coal, at length it is a consuming fire within the hearts of his servants, and they are weary of forbearing, and they cannot stay nor hold their peace; they must speak or they must die, and though they should die they will speak; then have they no rest, but hasten over land and over sea, over rocks and trackless deserts; they cry aloud and spare not, and will not be hindered; in the prisons they lift up their voices, and in the tempests of the ocean they are not silent; before awful councils and throned kings, they witness in behalf of the truth; nothing will quench their voice but death, and in the article of death, ere yet the spiry flame and rolling smoke have suffocated the organs of the soul, they speak, they pray, they tes-

tify, they confess, they beseech, they warn, and at length they bless the cruel people.

But to arrive at this supremacy of human nature, the perfection of the Missionary, that most perfect form of manhood, many degrees must be passed through and much discipline endured. These high graces are of gradual progress, not attained without hard and patient trials, which are to be had in the Missionary field, not out of it. Therefore it is expedient, for the very attainment of perfection, that the Missionary should make proof of what faith and spiritual strength he is already possessed, in order that, being found worthy, he may have an increase of talents from the Master of the House.

To take the *spolia opima*<sup>34</sup> of the war, he must be inured to every adventure and address in arms. And, therefore, with what zeal I discover and set forth the form of the high calling, and urge the souls of Missionaries to read it, with that zeal also I urge them to every step by which it is to be reached, looking not at what is behind, as if they had already attained or were already perfect, but looking to the things which are still before, and pressing onward to the mark.<sup>35</sup>

And whether the blessing of God will be vouchsafed to the lower degrees of this majestic character, no one can doubt who knows anything of His revelations, which are not for the perfect, but that we may grow up to the stature of the perfect.

He blesses the humblest effort to advance: He rewards the smallest measure of attainment. The very thought and imagination of good He blesses with an inward satisfaction of the soul. Nay, even sorrow and penitence for evil committed, and the relaxation of wickedness before any contrary movement has been made, He regards with approbation, and rewards with a certain dawn of hope and foretaste of peace.

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<sup>34</sup> *Spolia opima*: rich spoils: the armor and arms taken by the victor from a slain general. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

<sup>35</sup> *Philippians* 3:12-14.

And of all His revelations this is the spirit: that He is the origin, the promoter, and the strength of every good thought within our breast, and of every good cause which has an existence in the world, or is yet to be brought into being.

Therefore, at home or abroad, whoever out of a pure heart seeks to promote the Gospel of Christ, which is the world's redemption and salvation, may rely upon a blessing; and the more pure his intention, the more will it be approved of God; and the more spiritual his means and instruments, the more speed will he come; and when his whole heart, strength, soul, and mind, are brought over from resting upon the visible to rest upon the invisible helps, then his horn shall be exalted, and the full measure of the Lord's blessing poured out upon his handy-work.

Though God has appointed to the minister at the altar, no more provision than that he shall live by the altar at which he ministers, he refuses not to bless the pious labors of the bishop who owns a palace, and is dignified with the title of lord. Though he has interdicted his disciples from dignities, he does not therefore blight or wither the pious labors of the archbishop who has precedence of all dignitaries except those of the royal blood. Nevertheless, his ordinance of the pastoral office stands sure; and in proportion as it is delivered out of these unfavorable conditions of rank and riches, prospers the more.

So with the Missionary. The good Missionary may take his own wisdom for his guide, and furnish himself with all natural resources, and depend upon the patronage of man, rejecting those eternal instructions by which he ought to be guided, and God will not fail to bless him according to the measure of his faith and zeal. Nevertheless, be it known unto him, that he cannot have the full horn of his blessing, until he show more dutifulness, and trust in his Father; more resemblance to Messiah, his great ensample.

- It is well that he has gone out to the battle, but it is not well that he has gone out armed not according to the nature of the service.
- It is well that he has arrayed himself upon the right side, yet not well that he has so many open rivets in his armor.
- He has done well to land upon the shores of the enemy, for the emancipation of which he is to contend, but it is cowardly that he has all things so well prepared for retreat.

He should have burnt his ships and cast the scabbard of his sword away, and trusted in the goodness of his cause, his leader's good conduct, sufficient wisdom, and all-conquering power.

Therefore, it is not to be inferred that these instructions preclude anyone from going in the way or manner he pleases; they do but inform all which is the right and mannner. Neither is it to be inferred that because God has blessed with partial success other ways of going forth, that they are therefore sanctioned as of equal authority with this which is written in His word.

I think the lame and partial success which has attended modern Missions in the way of conversion, compared with those of former times, should have humbled us to revise the principles upon which we have proceeded, and see whether there be not a large mixture of human wisdom and creature-trust in our measures.

## **The Stone Which the Builders Rejected**

But it is not yet time to enter into the proper office and duty of a Missionary Society, which is surely not infallible, but liable to be canvassed, judged, and, if need be, censured and rebuked by Christian judgments. This will come in a more ad-

vanced part of our discourse;<sup>36</sup> and the subject which should now come to our hand is to justify and recommend the practice of this Missionary Constitution, which we have drawn from the words of Messiah, and defended from the attempts of temporizing men to annul it, and so deprive the Church of what may be termed the principles of her foreign policy.

When I shall come to justify the wisdom and commend the practice of this self-denying Missionary ordinance, I will not stoop so low from the high dignity of the subject, as to notice the sneers and sarcasms and disappointed speeches with which the sensual man, and those spiritual men in whom the sensual man still struggles for the ascendancy, will assail the principle, of...

- no scrip,
- no provisions,
- no accommodations for the journey,
- no stately deputations to the authorities of the place,
- no traveling charges,

—nor any of all the other fat and convenient things, which are now held almost as indispensable to the carrying on of a religious work, as heretofore they were to a county canvass, a judicial assize, or a parliamentary commission to inspect the condition of the realm.

Those who have accustomed themselves to carpet warfare, cannot like the conflict of naked steel; those who have rejoiced in the countenance of a wealthy or a noble man, as in the face of heaven, must needs sink to the center, when they are told to go forth where every fat and fair countenance is set against them like a flint.

With such objectors I will have nothing to do, until they learn out of the Scriptures whence the strength of Israel

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<sup>36</sup> Editor's note: Irving's intention was to continue this discourse over four parts. But only one part was finished in his lifetime.

comes, and with what arms the Lion of the tribe of Judah does triumph over his foes. They need to learn what are the first principles of that kingdom, concerning the high offices of which the present discourse is held; and they must be given into the hands of some wardens of the outposts, to be a little instructed in the vulgar language and household customs of the holy land, before they can be admitted to speculate on these its high and noble commissions, of which their jokes and sarcasms do only betray their gross and blinded ignorance.

But, on the other hand, every objection and doubt which presents itself in a serious frame of truth, and breathes the brotherly spirit which is proper to the disciples of Christ, I promise to do my endeavor to remove out of the way, that I may carry the greater consent of my hearers along with me to the question,

“How will this Constitution answer in practice?”

And for the purpose of hearing all that can be said against Messiah’s institute, and all that can be said in favor of the innovations which have usurped its place, I delay at present going into the other parts of this discourse, content that I have laid before the Church what seems to me the sound doctrine concerning the Missionary question.

Perhaps someone, able to defend it, may in the meantime rise up. Certainly many will rise up to impugn it. And though I should have to undertake the work alone, I will, by the grace of God, most certainly undertake to justify in practice what I have delineated in idea; being convinced that, if, as Milton has said, for the loss of single truths whole nations have fared the worse,<sup>37</sup> for the loss of these few verses of the Gospel, the

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<sup>37</sup> “...revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole Nations fare the worse.” *Areopagitica: A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc’d Printing, to the Parliament of England*.

whole Heathen world has fared and will surely fare the worse, and the day of their salvation be far, far off postponed.

And not the Heathen world suffer alone, but the Church of Christ among ourselves, to whose wounds this Missionary Constitution, if adopted, would afford a healing balm. For being set up as sufficient, and upheld as binding, the Missionaries, from whatever sect proceeding, would tend to unity of spirit, and recognize each other as brethren, and bring back with them the happy oblivion of those uncharitable divisions, which are fatal to the communion of the body of Christ, and destructive to its vigorous exertions and great success at home.

As it has come to pass in science, that Astronomy, which is conversant with the distant spheres, did bring to the earth the knowledge of geography, and extend navigation and commerce, which are the best guardians of community and peace among the divided nations; so might it come to pass, that the Missionaries who are conversant with distant regions, if chosen by one principle and made obedient to one walk and conversation, might return home and become the mediators of our discords, and teach the body of the Church to know its own constitution, which is charity; and the condition of its welfare and prosperity, which is communion.

## Summary

The argument for the perpetuity and unchangeableness of the Missionary Constitution is now concluded, and rests upon these main pillars of truth:

1. The instructions of our Lord to the first Missionaries, four times recorded in the Evangelists, unrepealed, un-supplemented, unabridged;
2. The obedience thereto of all the Apostles and first ministers of the Gospel, whose record is in the Scriptures (their deviations, when they do deviate, being always

by excess, and never by defect, of our Lord's injunctions);

3. The necessary law of the Spirit's operation;
4. The constant condition of God's chosen Messengers from the time of the patriarchs;
5. The constant and unchanging form of the work which they have to do in converting the nations;
6. And the perfect keeping which there is between the form of the Missionary as given by our Lord, and the other parts of the Christian institution.

I am aware how this position is to be assailed by those who have built up a system of administration on which they have set their heart to call it perfect and infallible, and which I charge as exceedingly imperfect, destined to much improvement, and with its improvement, destined to much greater simplicity and larger success.

And I am alive to the inveteracy of hatred, and the injustice of argument, with which this position will be treated; and conceive it right to put the Christian Church upon their guard, that they sell not this question, in which the present and future generations of the world are concerned, to the highest names upon a subscription list, or discern it by the ostracism of the people, or yield it to the voice of a hireling and sectarian press: which courts are not competent to the issue.

I solemnly charge the Church, by my authority of a Minister ordained to keep and watch over the verities of the Holy Gospel, that they determine the issue that will be joined between us by a trial of these six counts:

1. Whether Christ's instructions were for that first journey, or for all the journeys of His Missionaries.
2. Whether the Apostles walked in them or not; and if they deviated, whether they deviated *in* the spirit or *from* the spirit of these instructions.

3. Whether the Holy Ghost, in proportion as He possesses the spirit of a man, does not lift him out of worldly dependence into an assured faith upon the providence and promises of God.
4. Whether God's preachers and prophets and Missionaries, to whom He extended and redeemed His Church, from the time it was the single family of Jacob down to the time that the Lion of the tribe of Judah came, were not stripped bare of earthly refuges and reliances before being employed, or brought to that condition, before being prospered in their work.
5. Whether the obstacles to the spiritual kingdom, which God heretofore chose *things that are not* to bring to nought, be not still the same, and by the same means to be overcome.
6. Whether this idea and outward form of the Missionary, contained in Messiah's instructions, be not consistent and in keeping with the idea of a pastor, with the idea of a private Christian, and every other idea which is revealed by Christ for the redeeming and perfecting of the fallen condition of humanity.

Upon these six counts I will risk the issue and stand by the award of the question:

Whether Messiah's Constitution was intended for an unchangeable Constitution in the Church, or is to be patched and mended, helped and repaired, and accommodated by wiser heads to the changing condition of the world.

Whether, in this great work, the Catholic Church<sup>38</sup> is to act upon a common principle and be guided by a common law, or each sect of it to adopt a principle which may seem to it the most expedient, and follow a rule which may appear to it the most wise.

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<sup>38</sup> Editor's note: Irving uses the term "Catholic Church" not in the sense of a particular denomination, but in the sense of the Church universal.

Whether the Churches, which they may be honored to plant, are to have the character of *the order* that plants them, like the Jesuit settlements of Paraguay; or to have the character of the primitive Churches, which were of one heart and mind, because the Apostles were obedient to the instructions of one common Lord.

Whether, in fine, we are to open in the hearts of our Missionaries inlets to every spirit of hypocrisy, avarice, and ambition, and close as many inlets to the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, quenching by our prudences and policies the one everlasting Spirit of God, and giving vent to as many spirits, crusading, Jesuitical, commercial, or political, as there are diverse ages in the Church, which are not, like the ages of the world, fourfold,—of gold, of silver, of brass, of iron,—but manifold, according to the degree of impurity and incompleteness in the doctrine which is preached, and in the degree of laxness or lordliness in the discipline which is administered in the Churches.

END OF THE FIRST PART.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Editor's note: As mentioned already, Irving intended to write four parts to this theme, but only this first part was completed in his lifetime.



