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“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget its cunning.”—Ps. 137, v.5.

SERMON.

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II TIM IV. 2.—“Preach the Word.”

In whatever way unrestrained liberty is exercised, it is attended with dangerous consequences. This is easily perceived in various ways. Those nations of the earth that boast most of the liberties they enjoy, are those that most frequently and grievously suffer for the errors committed by them, in giving too much room for play to their liberty. The principal reason why they thus suffer is, that every one who has a voice in regulating the affairs of the nation, wishes to throw off every yoke imposed by wise and experienced legislators, and become a law to himself. There is as much danger arising from what is called liberty of thought in the matter of religion. Some persuade themselves to believe as fact some pet idea of theirs, whether they can make it rest on Scripture truth or not. What causes the errors that exist in various branches of Christ's church, but that those who act as the spiritual leaders of Christ's people, indulge too much in imagination, and remove to too great a degree the yoke imposed by Him, whose ambassadors they profess to be. Seeing that such danger arises from an undue exercise of liberty, which our age is so madly fond of, we cannot caution the votaries of liberty in more suitable words than those of the prophet Jeremiah: “Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your soul.” This danger was foreseen by those who saw their obligation

to walk according to rule, and who were possessed of the light of the Spirit, to enable them to see the dangers and errors looming in the distant future, by which less enlightened men would be sure to be led captive.

Christ when commissioning the Apostles to go forth on their errand of mercy, said, “Go preach the gospel to every creature, and lo I am with you to the end of the world.” Paul when charging his son Timothy, said, “I charge thee therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word.”

This brings us to the consideration of the following particulars, namely:—

I. The matter to be preached.

II. Who are to preach the word.

III. To whom is the Word to be preached.

IV. The end to be accomplished through the preaching of the Word.

According to this arrangement then, let us consider in the first place the matter to be preached—“the Word.” The subject of preaching may be viewed by us as bearing two very important significations. It signifies the Word of God, as we have it contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We have this Word, or all that God saw proper to reveal to us of His will, put into our hands as a rule to guide us in the performance of all our duties to God and to man. We are furnished with this rule not by man, but by God himself, “For holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” It is what is contained in those Scriptures that preachers of the everlasting Gospel are commanded to preach; and in order to be capable of preaching the Word, one must be familiar with the various duties commanded, and doctrines taught