

appropriate edifices for the worship and service of God! Church debts are like Delilah's scissors—they shear off the locks of energetic strength from the heads of those moral Sampsons, who otherwise would stand up in their might in defence of the Israel of God, and in the spiritual subjugation of the precious but impenitent portion of our people. If the world is compared to the *sea*, and the Church to a *ship*, then church debts are the sand-bars, breakers, and sunken rocks which impede and endanger the progress of the vessel! If the Church is like the *moon*, then church debts are eclipses which obscure the brilliancy of her glory! If she be a *bride*, then church debts throw her into dishabille and shame, and she is prevented from appearing in her true character and dress," like a bride adorned with her jewels." And if the Church be the garden of the Lord, filled with choice plants, then church debts are the *cut-worms* which gnaw at the root, eat out the germ of promising prosperity, and prevent maturity! But time would fail me to pourtray, in either simple statement or lively illustration, the blighting, baleful, withering influence of church debts upon the cause of Christ. Can anything be done to remedy *present* evils, and prevent future similar ones! It is believed that something effectual can be done.

Let the wealthy followers of Christ of each denomination bring forward "their silver and their gold" in the name of the Holy One of Israel, and extinguish as soon as possible every just debt in their respective departments of the Church of God. This is their privilege, and every privilege involves a duty. When present liabilities are honourably cancelled, then let the authorities of the Church resolve on two things—1st. Never to allow any new church building to be commenced in future, unless just and competent means be positively, or, to say the least, reasonably secured to insure its completion. 2d. And should any church edifice be hereafter erected, and left under a load of debt, let the same authorities see that no minister be placed there, until that load is removed out of the way, and competent and honourable provision be made for his support! Let all this be done, for it can be done. Then the Church will appear in character; she will "Arise and shine, and the glory of the Lord will be seen upon her!" Her moral power will be greatly augmented. The hearts of her people "will flow together," and they will "fly in clouds" to their sanctuaries, like "doves to their windows!" I say every lawful church debt in our churches can be soon paid, and fully paid, by the wealth that is in them. There is no use in denying it—this work *can* be accomplished. What say you, my rich, large-hearted fellow Christian? Will you come straight up to the work and begin at once? Do you like this doctrine? If you do not, please "show a more excellent way;" and if you do like it, then I conclude by asking most respectfully the question—"Who will respond and say, I believe the doctrine, and am ready to sustain it according to my ability?" ✕

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#### THE LAMP OF GOD.

True Religion, sprung from God above,  
 So, like her fountain, full of charity,  
 Embracing all things with a tender love,  
 Full of good-will and meek expectancy,  
 Full of true justice and sure verity,  
 In heart and voice; free, large, even infinite,  
 Not wedged in straight peculiarity,  
 But grasping all in her vast active spright,  
 Bright lamp of God! that men would joy in thy pure light.

HENRY MORE.