

faith of Christ crucified is the power of God unto the salvation of sinners,—that through it all who believe are washed, justified, and sanctified, and so made meet for their inheritance in heaven,—and that however that faith may be opposed or perverted now, it shall at last be surely and eternally triumphant, we are animated to persevere amidst every discouragement, and amidst evil report and good report, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, we shall by God's grace continue to bear our testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, and in his name beseech men to be reconciled unto God.

Again, brethren, we are supported and encouraged in the execution of our sacred office by the consideration that we are duly called and commissioned by God to minister in His name. Without this, no one may venture, whatever may be the truth of the doctrines which he holds, or whatever his ability and zeal, to assume the name of a Minister of Christ, much less to expect a blessing on his ministrations. "I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah xxiii. 32.) "Under the old dispensation it was marked as the most dangerous presumption to touch the ark of God without a divine warrant, nor is it a less direct act of usurpation to assume authority in the Church of Christ without a commission from our Divine Head. Christ himself appeared with delegated, not with self-commissioned powers, nor can we conceive of an ambassador, a steward, a watchman, a messenger, with self-constituted authority."* Hence it is that the question is asked, how shall they preach except they be sent? hence our Lord so solemnly conferred upon the twelve their Apostolic authority; hence it was that they were so careful to ordain elders in every city, and to charge those to whom they communicated Episcopal powers to "commit the things which they had heard of them unto

* Bridges, on the Christian Ministry.