

—has the qualifications for the ministry according to the Pauline standard. So much for personal character and gifts. The apostle requires more than this. He regards

II. *The Minister as an Apostle.*—We use the word in its primary sense, “a sent one.” He is a “minister of Jesus Christ.” How came he to “minister unto the Lord?” Did he thrust himself into this sacred calling, was he constrained by others, or is he “a chosen vessel?” There seem to be two marks by which the candidate for the ministry may know that preaching the gospel is his life work. The first of these is

a. *The subjective call*—Paul speaks of himself as “a called apostle,” “separated unto the gospel of God.” In Damascus Ananias had said: “Brother Saul . . . The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth, for thou shalt be a witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.” Before Agrippa Paul represents Christ as declaring that he had appeared to him “to appoint him a minister”; and therefore in writing to the Galatians he tells them that he has been “called through His grace” . . . to preach Him among the Gentiles. He speaks of Archippus as receiving the ministry in the Lord, and warns the elders at Ephesus to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. So conscious is he that the minister is a “called” man that he cries “How shall they preach except they be sent?” and so intense is his conviction that he is “separated unto the gospel of God” that he pours out his heart to the Corinthians in the burning declaration:—“Though I preach the gospel I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”

But may not the preacher be mistaken as to his call? May he not be in error regarding his motives and overrate his capacity? There is another evidence by which a man may be assured that he has not mistaken the voice of God, viz:

b. *The call of his brethren*—Whether Paul was ever ordained as a minister of the gospel, during the early years of his preaching career, is uncertain. To the Galatians he writes as “an apostle not from men, neither through man but through