

side of this it places the doctrines of vicarious atonement and eternal punishment.—These are now assailed by appeals to the divine benevolence, and by plausible declamation, which if they prove anything, prove that there ought to be no sin, no pain, no evil whatever, and that consequently the government of God is imperfect. This sentimentalism thus ends in the denial of the plainest facts—in the denial of all sin, and the abolition of all punishment, and ultimately in infidelity and atheism.

LUTHER ON THE SUPPORT OF GOSPEL ORDINANCES.

The following passages which we quote from LUTHER's admirable "Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians" are quite as appropriate at the present day, as when the fiery Reformer first published them.—The portion on which he comments is Chapter 6 : 6, 7.

I have sometimes marvelled why the apostles commanded the churches so diligently to nourish their teachers. For in popery, I saw that all men gave abundantly to the building and maintaining of goodly temples, to the increasing of the revenues and livings of those which were appointed to their idolatrous service. Hereof it came that the estimation and riches of the bishops and the rest of the clergy did so increase, that everywhere they had in possession the best and most fruitful grounds. Therefore, thought I that Paul had commanded this in vain, seeing that all manner of good things were not only abundantly given to the clergy, but also they overflowed in wealth and riches. Wherefore I thought that men ought rather to be exhorted to withhold their hands from giving, than encouraged any more; for I saw, that, by this excessive liberality of men, the covetousness of the clergy did increase. But now I know the cause why they had such abundance of good things heretofore, and now the pastors and ministers of the word do want.

Before time, when nothing else was taught but errors and wicked doctrine, they had such plenty of all things, that of Peter's patrimony, (who denied that he had either silver or gold,) and of spiritual goods, (as they called them,) the pope was become an Emperor, the cardinals and bishops were made kings and princes of the world. But now since the gospel hath been preached and published, the professors

thereof be as rich as sometime Christ and his apostles were. We find, then, by experience, how well this commandment of nourishing and maintaining the pastors and ministers of God's word is observed, which Paul here and in other places so diligently repeateth and beatech into the heads of his hearers. There is now no city which is known to us, that nourisheth and maintaineth her pastors and preachers; but they are all entertained with those goods which were given, not unto Christ, to whom no man giveth any thing, (for when he was born he was laid in a manger instead of a bed, because there was no room for him in the inn; afterwards being conversant among men, he had not wherewith to lay his head; and being spoiled of his garments, and hanging naked upon the cross between two thieves, he died most miserably,) but to the pope, for the maintenance of his abominations, and because he, oppressing the gospel, taught the doctrines and traditions of men, and set up idolatry.

And as oft as I read the exhortations of Paul, whereby he persuadeth the churches that they should either nourish their pastors, or give somewhat to the relief of the poor saints in Jewry, I do greatly marvel, and am ashamed that so great an apostle should be constrained to use so many words for the obtaining of this benefit from the congregations. Writing to the Corinthians, he treateth of this matter in two whole chapters 2 Cor. viii. and ix. I would be loath to defame Wittenberg, which, indeed, is nothing to Corinth, as he defamed the Corinthians, in begging so carefully for the relief and succour of the poor. But this is the lot of the gospel when it is preached, that not only no man is willing to give anything for the finding of ministers and maintaining of scholars, but men begin to spoil, to rob; and to steal, and with divers crafty means one to beguile another. To be brief, men seem suddenly to grow out of kind, and to be transformed into cruel beasts. Contrariwise, when the doctrine of devils was preached, then men were prodigal, and offered all things willingly to those that deceived them. The prophets do reprove the same sin in the Jews, which were loath to give any thing to the godly priests and Levites, but gave all things plentifully to the wicked.

Now, therefore, we begin to understand how necessary this commandment of St. Paul is, as touching the maintenance of the ministers of the church; for Satan can abide nothing less than the light of the gospel. Therefore, when he seeth that it beginneth to shine, then doth he rage, and goeth about with all main and might to quench it. And this he attempteth two manner of ways. First, by lying spirits, and force of tyrants; and then by poverty.