

known of God, the resurrection, the judgment and eternity, they have learned by patient research, and during the existence, we repeat, of the present dispensation, we must necessarily look through the Apostles and extraordinary Evangelists to Christ and to God for all light.

## 2. THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Special messengers were needed for the perfection of the Christian institution, and as they were wanted, the Lord specially called them: Hence all the Apostles were called. Peter was called to go to the house of Cornelius, Paul was called to go to the Gentiles, and Philip was called to go down from Samaria. This call was no matter of *impression* or doubt, but calls—divine calls—were always in *word*. Hence the Spirit said to Peter, “go” with the messengers, and Philip was directed to “join himself to the chariot.” The angel said, Come over into Macedonia and help us. But after the completion of the Christian system, no special or extraordinary messenger has been needed, and hence there has been no special call.

All, however, who enter the body of Christ are required to labor according to the ability of each, and hence the demands of Christianity are equivalent to a call for all the saints to exert their influence to spread the truth of God. Such as suppose there is no requirement resting upon them, have poor conceptions of Christ's government. In a very short time after the planting of a Church, if the members are taught to exercise these gifts, it will be seen that some are qualified to perform one part of the service, and others are better fitted for other departments. Some can exhort, some can teach, and others are capable of overlooking the flock. Whenever the different members give demonstrable evidence of usefulness in the different departments, the Spirit substantially says, “Separate the members to their various labor.” With this view not only are some, in the language of Paul, made “overseers by the Spirit,” but they are also made exhorters and preachers by the Spirit.

Our conclusion then is, that the Spirit calls not specially, but generally, yet the call is as binding upon us to act well our part as if he were to call us each by name to our different departments of labor. It is the duty of the Church to call all her members into active exercise, and to see that each labors in his proper department; but no man should be consecrated to a work, who has not given practical evidence of ability to discharge the duties with credit to himself and honor to the Church.