

terizes an uninstructed and an unfaithful ministry. Who would ever think of asserting, that the reason why saving conversions are not multiplied in the Roman and the Unitarian churches, is, that God, by a pure act of sovereignty; is not pleased to grant them a blessing? It is, indeed, the sovereign purpose of God to bless the truth, and not error, to the salvation of souls. But this is not the point at issue. Why does he, as far as we know, in certain circumstances grant his blessing; and in others, withhold it. When obvious reasons can be assigned, and those, too, belonging to the very nature of the case, or growing out of the moral relations between God and his creatures, we never refer the case, for solution, to his sovereignty. If two cases precisely parallel can be presented, and in the one a blessing is granted, and in the other withheld—if the same means are employed; and urged with the same spirit and fidelity—if the condition, physical, intellectual and moral, of those to whom the truth is addressed, is in all respects the same then any difference in the results must be ascribed to the sovereign good pleasure of God. But to infer the existence of all these parallels between the apostolic and the present age, without establishing these positions by proof, and to attribute the different practical efforts of the gospel upon the souls of men, at these two periods, to divine sovereignty, is a mere begging of the question. Till it can be proved, that as much is done now to save men, as was done in the days of the apostles, and that these efforts are as pure and elevated, in their moral character, as were the efforts of that age, it is perfectly safe to affirm, that we are not at liberty to ascribe the difference in question to a mere sovereign act of God.

5. *The apostles and first preachers of the gospel were supremely devoted to their work; and in this fact, we find one of the elements of their success.*

The one great object on which they had fixed their hearts, was the salvation of men. This was their deep and absorbing purpose. A portion of the same spirit, and a large one too, which animated their master's bosom, and which drew him down from heaven, filled and fired their hearts in the enterprize in which they had embarked. With him they could say, "our meat is to do the will of him that sent us, and to finish his work." They consecrated themselves to the ministry, keeping back no "part of the price." They had counted the cost, and determined to *build their tower*. They had surveyed the whole field of labor, and entered their Master's service with the deliberate purpose of bearing the burden and heat of the day," till the last earthly sun should go down, and the morning of a brighter world dawn upon them. Nothing could warp

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