

The Commission of Christ's Ambassadors.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19.—“*Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.*”

It must be matter for sorrowful concern to every true disciple of Jesus to contemplate the jarrings and discord which rend the bosom of the Christian Church at the present day. The simplicity and united character which the Great Founder at first imparted to His blood-bought heritage have been, by permission, sadly disfigured and perverted by Satan. So true to itself is the spirit of the world—and so adverse to the pure element of Divine Truth.

Of the many divisions into which the so-called Christian Church is now separated, some advance the most presumptuous claims to absolute purity of doctrine and to the practice of faultless discipline, others arrogate to themselves the peculiar distinction of being “the Church of God,” while, practically, they exhibit very little that is God-like to substantiate this claim. After all, however, much worldly dissension in the Church is to be deplored; when we think of her noble mission into hostile territory, we are not greatly to wonder. In virtue of her high commission, she has to face the flood of Satanic influence and to stem the boiling torrent of man’s unbelief.

As early as the days of Moses, the foundations of the Church of God on earth were laid. A simplicity characteristic of her future history, marks her origin as given in Genesis iv. 26. In the time of our Saviour’s humiliation the Church which we behold emerging from darkness and shaking off the trammels of superstition, is but a further development of this early consecrated inheritance, and for her edification, comfort and guidance, it has pleased the only Redeemer of men, to make special appointments, which shall continue in force till the end of time—when, the conflict being over, she shall lay down the weapons of warfare, and wave the palm of victory in the Kingdom of Peace. Then, but not till then, shall we behold in Heaven’s unclouded light the true character, the beauty and power of the Church of Christ.

Over this household of faith, so long as it shall continue in the wilderness, certain officers have been unquestionably set apart by God. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the functions or authority of these men—no intelligent reader of the Scriptures will, for a moment, deny the fact of their appointment.