

# The BEREAN.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—Acts xvii. 11.

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[Vol. I.]

## GOD EVERY WHERE.

"Where is God?"—We hear Him, child,  
In the chilly, whistling wind,  
In the roaring sea, which He can bind,  
And in the breezes mild.

"Where is God?"—We see Him, love,  
In the clear and starry sky,  
In the light of the sun, which shuts your eyes,  
Does He his presence prove.

"Where is God?"—My child, He is here,  
Hearing whatever you say;  
He is always by you, when you pray,  
Wherever you are, His near.

Will you remember; He sees and hears  
And knows even what you think:  
Never, my child, from His presence shrink,  
Let love remove your fears.

FROM A SCRIP-BOOK.

## MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

SERMON PREACHED BY THE RIGHT REV. C. P. McILVAINE, D. D., BISHOP OF OHIO, AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE REV. ALFRED LEE, D. D., TO BE BISHOP OF DELAWARE.

"Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."—1 TIMOTHY IV. 16.

Both save thyself and them that hear thee!—such is the work committed, of God, to the minister of his word. One would think it were enough for a sinful man, with such corruption within, and such a world around him, to take heed to the saving of his own soul. But when to this is added the saving of them that hear him, well may the bearer of such an office be filled with fear and trembling, for "who is sufficient for these things?" What it is for a soul to be lost, to go down to hell under the anger of Almighty God, and from under all the privileges of the gospel, having to answer, amidst innumerable other sins, for that one most awful sin of receiving the grace of God in vain, of rejecting the precious blood of Christ—we cannot approach the conception of such a destiny—a lost immortal soul—eternity without God, without hope—everlasting woe!

But we turn away to think of the salvation of the soul, through Christ for ever; what it is for a sinner to be confessed of Christ in the great day, as one of his ransomed and beloved brethren; to be received of the Father to his own right hand as one of his adopted, beloved children; then to enter upon the incorruptible inheritance as "joint heir with Christ," like Christ in his glory, with Christ in his kingdom, seeing him as he is, changed more and more, ever and ever, into the same image; oh, such salvation! What an alarming consideration for us, ministers of the gospel, that whether the sinners that hear us shall attain that blessedness, or go down to that woe, is to so great an extent committed to us, by our faithfulness, or unfaithfulness, to decide!

Two questions arise out of these meditations, and stand before a minister of the Gospel in an aspect of magnitude and solemnity, before which all other questions must needs stand aside and keep silence—what must I do to save my own soul under such responsibility? what must I do to save them that hear me?

To put in diligent practice the right answer to these questions, is the one great business of him whose high dignity it is to have been put in trust with the Gospel, as a preacher of the same. How ought we to "covet earnestly the best gifts" for such a work, and how anxious should we be to mark, learn, and inwardly digest whatever will give us more knowledge, more spiritual discernment, more practical wisdom, more seriousness, singleness and constancy of purpose, more diligence of mind and heart and life, in regard to the infinite interests which this stewardship involves! It is that, under the good blessing of the Lord, I may contribute something to the furtherance of my brethren in the ministry, and especially of that brother who is now to be invested with the chief stewardship of our ministry, in discharging the duties of so high a dignity and so weighty an office, that I have selected the words of the text. They are part of the charge of St. Paul to Timothy, bishop of the church of Ephesus, as to how he should behave himself in the house of God, as a "messenger, watchman, and steward of the Lord." Two distinct injunctions are contained in them—take heed unto thyself—take heed unto the doctrine. On the faithful keeping of these injunctions ensues an assurance—thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.

The most natural order of discourse is often the reversed order of nature. We take up the second of the above injunctions.

1. Take heed unto the doctrine.  
And here let me begin with directing your attention to the evidence that the hearing of the word, by the preaching of the same, is that special means of grace by which, under the ordinance of God, the minister of Christ is to seek the salvation of men. By taking heed to our doctrine, as well as to ourselves, it is promised, we shall be instrumental in saving them that hear us; whence it follows that doctrine heard, and therefore doctrine preached, and consequently the preaching of the Gospel, as distinct, though not separated, from all other means, is the one great ordinance for the bringing of sinners to repentance, and for the building up of penitent believers in their most holy faith; according as it is written, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and how shall they hear without a preacher?

As to the relative importance of the preaching of the Gospel, and the public worship of the house of God, taking into view the whole object, interest and structure of the church,

it is impossible to make any comparison. You might as well compare the head and heart of man, in reference to his life. The one is the great means for one set of objects, the other equally essential for another.

The ministry of the word and the ministry of worship are parts of the same body, equally vital, but of different use. To represent the duty of preaching and hearing God's message in his Gospel, as if it were of subordinate importance, as regards the highest interests of the church and of souls, is as erroneous, as to assign the like place to the duty of maintaining, and attending upon, God's worship in the sanctuary. Carefully should both extremes be avoided. We are all, as Christians, "a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ;" but the distinguishing and leading charge of the Head of that one and only catholic priesthood, to the ministers of the same, is "go preach the Gospel;" go give light, that there may be love; go, make disciples, that there may be worshippers; go and gather the living stones for the temple, and build them up together, by the line and plummet of the word, upon the one corner stone, "elect and precious" and erect therein an altar composed of hearts renewed and sanctified "through the truth;" then will follow the sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise unto God for the unsearchable riches of his grace as made known in his Gospel. If the church, in reference to her communion with God, is called his temple, because therein is the daily oblation of his people's praise and prayer; so also in reference to her influence in enlightening the world, through the preaching of the truth, is she represented as the golden candlestick, and her ministers as shining stars, held in the right hand and made luminous by the light from the face of the Lord, her sun and glory.

In the holy place of the tabernacle, which was a type of the church in its earthly state, there was the golden candlestick with its seven burning lamps, as well as the altar of incense with its golden censer. These stood equidistant from the entrance to within the veil. While the way into the holiest would have been unhallowed without the one, it could not have been seen without the other. Incense was burned on that altar, morning and evening of every day; but let it be marked, it was always at the time when the priest, evening and morning, trimmed and replenished those ever shining lights. Thus intimately was the symbol of a worshipping church connected with that of a preaching ministry; and thus we are taught by these divinely appointed types to understand that the worship of the sanctuary will be maintained in spirit and in truth, only so long as the Gospel shall be preached in purity and faithfulness; and moreover, that the best evidence of faithful preaching is when it promotes the offering of the incense of fervent prayer. But hence comes with the greater impressiveness the injunction, "take heed unto the doctrine."

In speaking further on this portion of our text, we will confine our attention to two points of care, on the part of a minister; viz: that his every doctrine be according to the only divine rule of faith, and that all his doctrines be exhibited, in their several relations, "according to the proportion of faith."

Take heed unto the doctrine that it be according to the ONLY DIVINE RULE OF FAITH, THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God"—any man, any where; but how much more should we who speak as "ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech men by us!" "Preach the word," is the inspired charge, through Timothy, to all generations of preachers. He who magnifies his office as God's messenger, and knows the worth of his own soul, and seeks earnestly the souls of his hearers, and would preach "as one having authority, and not as the scribes," will not venture one step beyond what he is "persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture;" knowing that he "cannot by any other means compass the doing of so great a work; but with doctrine and exhortation taken out of the holy Scriptures." The seed he is now to sow in his field has been given to him of the "Father who is the husbandman." To that only it is true that "God giveth the increase." By that only are we ordained to go and bring forth fruit, fruit that will remain. To sow any other, and expect from it righteousness, is no wiser than to look for "grapes of thorns or figs of thistles." Even an unrighteous prophet was so afraid of not speaking the oracles of God, that he said, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord: what the Lord saith, that will I speak." What the Lord saith, that is our lively oracle. And since we have no evidence that the Lord hath so spoken to his church as to furnish her with any other oracles than those of his holy Scriptures; and since of them we have the evidence of divers miracles and prophecies, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, that they are "given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine;" we are left to conclude that in them is the only final rule of faith to the church, the only final authority to which the minister is to go for the words of eternal life. And hence the introduction of the Scriptures so conspicuously, so singly, into the offices of our church, for the ordination and consecration of those who are to feed her flocks; the candidate being required to declare himself "persuaded that the holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary to salvation, and that he is determined, out of the Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to his charge, and to teach nothing as necessary to eternal salvation

but that which he shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scripture."

Till recently it was not supposed possible that, under such solemn pledges, the single authority of the Scriptures, as alone the oracles of God, could be drawn into question. But strange and mortifying it is to say, that the Protestant church is at this day molested with attempts within to introduce for co-ordinate authority, that which we had hoped had long since been finally rejected and protested against with all other like devices of the Man of Sin for overthrowing the reign of Christ.

Into a consideration of what is now taught on the subject of tradition as the "authoritative interpreter" of the Scriptures, as constituting with them "a joint rule of faith" as proceeding originally from the same fount of inspiration, and so meriting, in this the eighteenth century of its course, an equally reverential regard, we have no intention of entering. The existence of such an apparition in the present age of our Protestant church, has been alluded to for the sake of the strong contrast by which it enables us to show the doctrine of our ordination vows, as above cited, concerning the Scriptures as alone the oracles of God; and also that I may urge upon my brethren in the ministry, that whatever evil may come to others from the gathering up of the traditions by the draught of a drag net which embraces the rubbish of even seven centuries, for an infallible interpretation of the Scriptures; they, for themselves will take heed that the affliction may be so sanctified to them, that by showing them how easily the wisdom of man may be deceived, by a false "angel of light," and how prone it is, under an idea of doing God service, to pervert his plain truth by complex inventions of men, they may be led by the present evil only to search more diligently, follow more simply, and preach more exclusively and fondly the plain text of the Bible. Be assured we escape no controversies, but multiply all, by associating with the Bible, for final authority, the judgments of men, however numerous, learned, holy, or ancient. It is not because the Scriptures are not plain enough that divisions in doctrine abound; but because the hearts of men are not honest enough. The same cause would darken any counsel and pervert any rule, and the easier in proportion as the rule was strict and the counsel holy. It is no more to be supposed that God, in providing a revelation for man, would have furnished such means of understanding it, that none could help knowing the doctrine, than that he should have so displayed its evidences, that none could help believing its truth. It is as really our probation whether we will so read the Scriptures as to understand their doctrine, as whether we will so read the same as to obey their precept. To seek a rule in tradition, or in any thing else, by which to prevent the possibility of errors, and divisions, and heresies, concerning the faith, no matter what the jaundice of the eye, or enmity of the heart, is to seek what would be wholly inconsistent with that probation under which we are held, as well for the unbiased use of our understanding, as for the obedient submission of our will. If, notwithstanding all his mighty works, our Lord, in the days of his ministry on earth, did not so reveal himself as that none who saw his miracles could help believing his word, we may be sure, now that miracles have ceased, that he has not so committed the treasure of his truth to earthen vessels, as that none who read can avoid an erroneous or heretical interpretation. The existence of divers opinions as to what is truth, is no more the evidence that the written word, as a rule of faith, is defective, than the multiplied forms of ungodliness in a christian land are proof of defect in the motives for holy obedience to the moral law. The remedy against error is not in mending the rule by which we measure our doctrines, but in taking the beam out of the eye that judges of their truth; not by making the Scripture "profitable for doctrine;" by dividing its authority with the traditions of many centuries, but by humbling the reader into a more implicit submission to, and a more entire contentment with, whatever it teaches. "The wayfaring man" who cannot choose his course by taking observations of the sun as it shines in the broad daylight of the Scriptures, will little help his accuracy by resorting to the dead reckoning of tradition.

Then let the Bible be our only final appeal—the Bible in all its parts—the Bible in its unutterable mysteries—the Bible in its every subordinate statement—the Bible meekly received, as "the engraven word which is able to save our souls;" and those that hear us, "through faith in Christ Jesus."

To be continued.

## MEDITATION FOR LENT.

HEBR. IX. 26.—Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.—We conclude our remarks on this text with two or three important inferences.

1. Of what portentous malignity must sin be, and what an indignity must it put upon Jehovah, when it requires, in order to be pardoned, so vast an expiation as the sacrifice of Immanuel. That nothing short of this would answer the end may be fairly concluded from reason and Scripture: from reason, because it is unreasonable to suppose that God would institute an apparatus of more virtue and power than was absolutely requisite for the object he had in view; from Scripture, inasmuch as Christ is prophetically introduced by the Psalmist, asserting that on this account he made his own soul an offering for sin, because animal burnt-offerings and sin-offerings had in them no atoning virtue.

ly which declaration he certainly intimates that nothing of intermediate value would answer the purpose. No, brethren, man had sinned, and man's nature must suffer: but that nature must first be so closely wedded with the divine, that its peculiar sufferings shall be of a value to bogzar human and angelic conception. And shall we still regard sin as a trifling evil; and think little of the dishonour done to God by an enmity of heart, that is perpetually breaking out into vicious action? Could that guilt be small, which it required such a victim as the Son of God to cancel? Or is it possible to overrate the terror of that doom, which could not be averted except by a constitution such as that of a sacrificed Immanuel, and by rites of such awful import as those performed on Calvary? Ah, brethren, if you cannot discern the tremendous malignity of sin, in the atonement upon which a God of boundless love insisted, before he would extend the least indulgence to sinners, it is difficult to conceive of any evidences that would satisfy your minds, or any terrors that would awaken your consciences.

2. How great must be the sin and danger of rejecting this gracious plan for our restoration to the divine favour! Rebels against the most sublime of beings, and utterly unable (even had we been disposed) to make any overtures towards reconciliation, we are suddenly addressed by Him whose wrath we have provoked, with assurances of a willingness to forgive in a certain order and method, which discover the brightest points of his adorable perfections. The injured Majesty of heaven stoops to earth, to level a way by which guilty man may ascend to heaven. O glorious mystery of unspeakable grace! O wonderful and transcendent combination of wisdom, power, and mercy! Shall we, my brethren, turn away from such astonishing manifestations of God's fatherly tenderness to his apostate creatures? Shall he open a fountain to wash away our sins, and we refuse to bathe therein; and shall the forward movements of his vast benevolence meet with cold, and contemptuous, and ungrateful repulses? After he has performed so much for the purpose of reconciling us to himself, shall we refuse to fall in with his gracious dispositions; and instead of prostrating ourselves before his throne, and heartily renewing our allegiance, adhere to those base usurpers Sin and Satan? O let it not appear at the last day, that we have gazed unmoved on the love of the Father in resigning his Son to the cross; and on the love of the Son in consenting to so dreadful a death: or we must fall under a sentence terrible in proportion, not only to ordinary sins, but to the aggravated guilt of trampling under foot the blood of propitiation, and of doing despite to the grace that would have saved us.

3. Lastly, what comfort, peace, and joy, must the awakened sinner derive from the consideration of Christ having "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Convinced by his own conscience and sentenced by the law he had looked about in vain for help or shelter. He could make no amends to the injured justice of Jehovah: he could offer no gift to propitiate the judge, nor interpose any shield to ward off the sword of vengeance. Naked and despairing he awaited the stroke, which it seemed impossible to prevent or elude. With what ecstasy and transport, then, does he hear a voice from heaven proclaiming: "Thine iniquity shall not be thy ruin; neither shall the law take its course and consign thee to destruction, for I have found a ransom." A ransom! Hast thou indeed, O my God, achieved in my behalf such a miracle of power and goodness? Hast thou devised a remedy for my lamentable case, in which all thy perfections acquiesce? Yes; I turn mine eyes to Calvary, and perceive that such a ransom has been found, such a remedy provided. The curse which, had it fallen on my head, must have crushed it to the lowest hell, is transferred to a head, which it could wound indeed but not incurably; and which, after being humbled for a season to the grave, is now lifted up to the highest heaven, and "crowned with glory and honour." Yes, blessed Jesus, thou hast died that I might not die. By thine obedience unto death thou retrievest the honour of the law, which my disobedience had disgraced: and now the law itself consents to my pardon, my adoption, and my final glorification. For ever hast thou put away sin,—abolished its guilt, and given a death-blow to its power,—by the oblation of thyself upon the cross: and evermore standing before the throne of grace, and representing the merit of that sacrifice, thou obtainest for penitent believers in thy name a complete discharge. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for us." It is enough, O adorable Immanuel. No more can I distrust thy sufficiency, nor question thy love. From this moment will I take up a song of adoration and praise, which I trust to prolong, in a state that angels cannot rival, through all eternity. For thou hast borne the curse of a malefactor, that I might receive the adoption of a son. Already hast thou ransomed me from the sentence of the law; and in due time thou wilt complete my salvation, by purifying my soul from the remainders of sinful corruption, and rescuing my body from the grave, and then raising me to a state of heavenly glory and happiness. Therefore be thy name for ever blessed. "Ye," Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Amen.—Christ Crucified, by the Rev. J. N. Pearson.

If you wish to do honour to your piety, you cannot be too careful to render it sweet and simple, affable and social. FENELON.

## WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS.

"Some desire, as the grand desideratum of our Church, that we should have a learned clergy. And learning doubtless is, especially under our present circumstances, invaluable. But let that learning be sanctified, otherwise it is collateral to our main business, and irrelevant to our great concern.

"Others point out as the panacea for all our evils, that we should have an active clergy. Yes. And activity in itself is good. But let it be more than mere bodily exercise, which profiteth little, a restless bustle about we know not what, a running to and fro we know not where. Such is not the activity which this crisis calls for, and these times demand. We want an activity which is the velocity of light and the energy of love; which is not seldom most effective where it is least perceived. For

"Stillest streams  
Of water fairest meadows, and the bird  
That flutters least is longest on the wing.

But others say (and this was the language which I remember in my youth—a time of which, as it respects the Church, I trust 'we ne'er shall look upon its like again,') 'Let us but have a resident clergy, and all will be well.' Resident clergy! and were there any, even then, who would leave their helpless flock to wander on the wide wastes of such a weary world as this? Were there any who by undertaking a trust which they themselves betrayed, excluded therefrom perhaps some faithful shepherd who would have guided the sheep and lambs into the sweet pastures of the Gospel? If such things were, we are not at least at a loss to know the cause. 'The hireling fleeth,' says our blessed Saviour, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.' But after all, would residence alone produce the desired effect? Certainly not, where the residence was forced. Certainly not, when the minister, the exact inversion of St. Paul, was present in body and absent in spirit. Assuredly not, when he would rather be an infliction on the parish than a blessing to the flock.

"What, then, as far as the ministry is concerned, should we desire and pray for, as the one thing needful.

"The sovereign balm for every wound," the articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesia? It is to have an experienced clergy. I speak not of 'that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years.' What I mean is, that those who minister to the souls of others, should know the value of their own—should be such as have felt 'a work of grace upon their own hearts—should have gone through the process they recommend, used the regimen, and tried the medicines they prescribe—that they should, in a word, be divinely warranted to say, 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.' 'The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: let us therefore pray the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth such labourers into his harvest—men of God and men of prayer—men who are in communication with heaven, and who have interest in the courts above—men who, like Gabriel, 'stand in the presence of God,' and have thus fulfilled and realized to them the promise: 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.' Gracious promise! Blessed prospect!—*Visitacion Sermon, by the Rev. Henry Woodward.*

## REDEEM THE TIME.

Sir Matthew Hale filled the successive offices of Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Chief Justice of the King's Bench, during fifteen years; and, besides a previous judicial station, had passed his life in the laborious pursuits which qualify for these. After having for a time neglected study at Oxford, where he was noted as robust and expert in fencing, at the age of twenty he entered at Lincoln's Inn, where for many years he studied sixteen hours a day.

In one of this Judge's papers, "The account of the good steward," which the friend who published them calls "his very picture," he states, "I have endeavoured to husband this short, uncertain, important talent (time) as well as I could,—by dedicating and setting apart some portion of my time to prayer and reading of thy word; which I have constantly and pre-emptorily observed, whatever occasions interposed, or inopportunities persuaded the contrary." We see, therefore, that he gives advice founded on his own practice, when in another place he enjoins, "Be obstinately constant to your devotions at certain set times;" and we may form the same opinion as to the following observations and counsels on other points which have been named. "An industrious husbandman, tradesman, scholar, will never want business fitted for occasional vacancies and horae succinae. Gellius's Noctes Atticae have left us an experiment of it; and a Christian, even as such, hath ready employment for occasional interstices, reading, praying;" and again;—"Whatever you do, be very careful to maintain in your heart a habit of religion.—This will put itself into acts, even although you are not in a solemn posture of religious worship, and will lend you multitudes of religious applications to Almighty God, upon all occasions, and interventions, which will not at all hinder you in your secular occupations; but better and further you. It will give a tincture of devotion upon all your secular employments, and turn those actions which are materially civil or natural, into the very true and formal nature of religion; and make your whole life to be an uninterrupted life of duty to God. For this habit of piety in your soul will not lie sleeping and unactive, but almost in every hour of the day will put forth actual exertions of itself in applications of short occasional prayers, thanksgiving, dependence,