

By the Lord's own personal ministry in the cities and villages of Israel, the same process is conducted. He is testing His people by a proposal of Himself to them again and again ; but He is likewise witnessing sovereign grace and redemption, knowing, as He did, that they would but again destroy themselves under the trial that was then being made of them. By His commission to the twelve and to the seventy, He was doing the same—for such ministries were but a reflection of His.

And it is thus to the end. The apostleship at Jerusalem under the Holy Ghost upon the ascension of Christ was still testing the Jew ; and the Jew failed under it again. But "times of restitution" and of "refreshing" (Acts iii.) were looked at in the distance. And then in the last commission instituted by Him, that is, in the apostleship of Paul, the good news of God's salvation was sent to the ends of the earth, to gather the elect that they might act and shine as the Body of Christ ; but in that same apostleship He anticipates what the end of that ministry would be, and makes provision accordingly. This is seen in the second epistle to Timothy ; confirmed as that is by the challenge of the candlesticks in Rev. i.-iii. ; and further, by the judgment of Christendom in Rev. iv.-xix. These thoughts may naturally introduce me to my subject—"Dispensational Truth."

It has been said, "that the study of it has a withering effect upon the soul." Let us try this by the light of the wisdom of God, as we get that light (where alone we can get it) in the word of God.

In the epistle to the Romans, the saints of God are largely instructed in this character of truth. Chapters ix.-xi. are a very full writing on divine dispensations. But I grant this is *after* they have