

writer, "this much may be said of its perpetual and universal obligation that it stands alone having the seal of the Divine sanction in the New Testament, while embracing the principles contained in the Old Testament arrangements, that it obtained in the apostolic churches; that it bears all the marks of, and is found by many to be a sacred means of grace; and that its practice proves at once convenient and advantageous to ourselves, generous to men, and pleasing to God, while every human expedient proves deficient both of material supplies, and of gracious influences on the heart. If the epistles addressed to ancient churches impose any obligation on us, why not this obligation? If they impose no obligation where is our charter of grace and privilege?"

To these weighty words may it not be added that if we generally cite, as our authority for the method of celebrating the Lord's Supper, the terms of the institution as found in this very epistle; if we bow reverently and universally to its authority when it treats of the obligation of the mode of commemorating the Saviour's love to us, where is our consistency if we ignore or deny its binding force, when it teaches us the method in which we should manifest our love to Him?

But it is necessary to advert briefly to the other aspect of the same objection, viz.: to the position of those who admit the universal and perpetual obligation of the precept so far as it concerns the provision which is required to be made by the church for the poor, while they deny that it has any authority as a rule for the method of securing funds for other purposes. In this connection it may be proper to inquire, why was this provision for the poor made a part of the Sabbath service, and required to be attended to "on the first day of the week" by every person to whom the precept came? Unless we are to yield the position that the great duties of the Sabbath are rest and worship, it does seem that the only satisfactory answer which can be given to this question is that giving for the relief of the poor saints from right motives is worship, that on account of the identity

between Christ and His poor followers, what was done for them was an act of homage to Him. Upon no other principle does it seem possible to account for the prominent place which the subject of Christian Beneficence holds in the epistles of Paul, and especially in his epistles to the Corinthians. With the exception of the great doctrines of Justification by Faith, the Priesthood of Christ, and the Final Resurrection there is no such elaborate argument as on this subject in all the Apostle's writings. Besides the first seven verses of the sixteenth Chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, it is the theme of the eighth and ninth of the second. Following immediately upon the statement and proof of the animating doctrine of the resurrection, in the former of these passages, it contributes one of the most important elements in its application, for closely linked with the charge, "Be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," is the precept "Now concerning the collection for the saints as I have given order in the churches of Galatia, &c." Only upon the supposition that the duty enjoined enters into the very essence of true and acceptable worship can we satisfactorily account for all these facts. But if the Lord Jesus has identified His ministering servants as well as His poor saints with Himself, if when He sent forth the first preachers of the gospel He declared, "He that receiveth you receiveth me," if He has fully set His heart upon the evangelization of the world, if as Lord of all, He has bestowed the gold and silver upon His people for the purpose of enabling them to manifest their love to Him by their frequent, grateful, joyful contributions to His cause, must not the consecration of our property to religious purposes under proper impulses constitute a true act of homage to the Lord Jesus, and so in its essence become identical with gifts for the poor? Does it not also seem every way probable that as in many other instances, so in this case the Spirit of inspiration designed by enjoining a precept in a specific connection to establish a general principle which should rule in all similar cases?