

of Hebrews, that thanksgiving and beneficent contributions hold the same place under the gospel, that sacrifices of thanksgiving and free will offerings did in the Jewish Church. Having shown in the beginning of the chapter that expiatory sacrifices were done away in Christ, he says in the fifteenth verse, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually." As if he had said "Expiatory sacrifices being abolished in Christ, let us nevertheless continue our sacrifices of thanksgiving; let us offer them through Him as the only acceptable medium of worship; let us offer them to God continually; and then as if to specify what these sacrifices are, he says, "*To do good and to communicate* forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." To "do good," that is to practise christian beneficence, and to communicate in acts of charity forget not; that is, do not suppose that this is done away; for now that all christians have become priests unto God, let these be their sacrifices, for with such God is well pleased.

Charitable contributions are therefore the christian's sacrifice; "and if sacrifice" says another, is not worship, what is? It follows that the christian worships God now just as directly and solemnly by his beneficent contributions, as the Old Testament saint did by his sacrifice.

Other proofs, if needed, might be multiplied in abundance. When the Angel said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up as a memorial before God," did he not link prayer and alms deeds co-equally and inseparably in the bonds of worship? In 2 Cor. 8: 4 beneficent contributions are called a "fellowship;" "praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift, and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." The word here rendered fellowship, is elsewhere translated communion. In 1 Cor. 10: 16, it expresses the communion of the saints in the body and blood of the Redeemer. Hence it follows, that christians have communion in beneficent contributions, just as they have in the Lord's Supper. They are therefore both ordinances of worship, kindred in their nature.

The Apostle in 2 Cor. 8 urges to Christian beneficence, because in so doing they would resemble the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, "though He was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich." Hence it is plain that giving to pious uses is an act of devotion similar in kind to that of Christ in giving Himself an offering and sacrifice. "But the death of Christ," as Dr. Thornwell has powerfully shown, "was a stupendous act of prayer, an amazing tribute of praise." "Never was there such a doxology as when Christ died; and the whole work of redemption is a grand litany which has no parallel in the universe."

The last proof which we shall adduce is the order of the Apostle to the churches of Galatia and Corinth: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The first day of the week, the christian Sabbath is consecrated to the worship of God. Why then this covenant to arrange and apportion our charities on this day, if they are not recognised acts of worship well pleasing to God, and instituted parts of Sabbath worship?

From the doctrine thus proved, we now invite you to turn to a solemn consideration of ITS PRACTICAL RESULTS. These are comprehensive and discriminating; extending through the whole field of beneficence, and controlling the rules and modes of its action. Just as the circulation of the blood is the vital power that influences the laws, determines the conditions, and fixes the details of our physical organism; so this doctrine, that giving is an act of worship, is the central principle that influences every question, solves the difficulties, and arranges the details of practical beneficence.

MORAL OBLIGATION OF GIVING.

1. It settles, in the first place, *the moral obligation of giving*. This is a point of almost universal failure. There are few indeed who do not feel that giving is in some sense a duty, but it has no strong hold on the conscience; their feelings of obligation are so vague and indefinite that they easily forget or neglect it. An accidental circumstance may excite their sympathies, or an