

for, no doubt, these words were put on record for our benefit. The things that hindered the gospel of Christ, and that tended to deprive him of the stars and jewels which belong to his crown were antichrists. They are so still (if they exist). Everything that tended to dishonour the Saviour, or to oppose the glory of his kingdom, was an antichrist, *then*. It is just the same now, in his estimation. Bearing then, as we do, the charge of watchmen on the walls of Zion, it were indeed a crime to be punished by the great King and Head of the church, were we to treat such a subject with indifference, and, by so doing, afford an opportunity to the enemy to rob our blessed Lord and Redeemer of that glory which belongs to him.

Following the plan which I have proposed in dealing with this subject at the present time, I would, first, point out and describe some of the antichrists of the apostolic age; secondly, making use of the light obtained from the inspired record, I propose to point out some of the antichrists of the present day; thirdly, I shall endeavor to point out the duty of the church, and especially of her office-bearers, with reference to the antichrists that are in the world.

I. THE ANTICHRISTS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

The prominent subject and personage in christianity is Jesus Christ: Jesus in his person, offices, mediation, sacrifice, and intercession. Jesus as "Head over all things to the church, which is his body; the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Whoever, therefore, oppose christianity, whether in attempting to prove that the scriptures are not divinely inspired, and are not to be received as the word of God; or who profess to believe the bible, but endeavour to undermine the doctrines which it contains; or who attempt to add to the word of God; or who fail to "receive, observe, and keep pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in his word," may be considered as antichrists.—Every doctrine or practice in the church which stands in the way of the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom is entitled to this

appellation. This plainly was the mind of the apostles.

1. *The Divinity of Christ* may be specified as fundamental. There is no doctrine of the bible more important than this; and there is none that more readily stirs up the worst feelings of Christ's enemies. It was therefore denied. The same may be said of his *Humanity*. The incarnation of Christ is an essential doctrine of religion, for it stands in immediate connection with his atonement. This therefore, like the former, was generally denied by the different classes of heretics. Some pretended that he had not a human body. Others, that though he had a human body, he had not a human soul. It is evident that the opposers of Christ looked beyond the mere abstract question as to whether Christ was really man or not. His death for sinners, which is the leading doctrine of Christianity, was *the truth* which they desired to overthrow. And when, farther, they endeavoured to explain away the statements of scripture relative to the resurrection of Christ, they aimed at something more.—Hymeneus and Philetus, who taught that the "resurrection was past already," aimed thereby to render inoperative the truths which stand connected with that doctrine. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

2. Some of the early opposers of the gospel pretended to adopt the christian system, but in a modified form. They insisted that Jesus and Christ must be carefully distinguished from each other. That Jesus was a mere man, and that Christ, whom they called one of the "Aeons," descended upon him at his baptism, dwelt in him till he was about to suffer death; and then left him and returned to the "pleroma." To this heresy, no doubt, the apostle refers when he says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." The heresy just referred to might appear to the ignorant comparatively harmless, but it was in reality of most dangerous tendency, as it denied the permanent union of the divine and human natures in "one person."

3. In several passages the apostle Paul cautions christians against corrupting the