

hold, I have taken your brethren, the Levites, from among the children of Israel; to you they are given as a gift from the Lord." Secondly, The *obligation* on the part of the people to them. "Wherefore forsake not the Levite so long as thou livest upon the earth." Under the old and the new dispensation, the principle of service and support is the same,—a principle of support meant to conduce to the highest measure of service, and service the most effective in quality.

The *principle* of support to those who preach the gospel, the *obligation* to support those who consent to be separated to this service, we find put by the Apostle Paul in a peculiarly terse and satisfactory way, as is the manner of that apostle to put things—in a sort of a closing-up fashion, as though the brief word he used held within itself the finality of all argument. He says, linking his conclusion with the arrangement divinely made ages before, "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live by the gospel." So far as *authority* can settle this principle, the arranging and commanding of the Supreme Lord settles this principle, that preachers derive their living from the people whom they serve.

## II.—THE REASONS OF THIS LAW.

There are *good reasons*, statements which come to the people with the *authority* of reason, why what the Saviour so explicitly enjoins should be done, viz., the labourer in this field have his hire; that the preacher of this gospel be furnished a living in it.

1. The first is, he is a *labourer*; what he does is labour. An apostle pronounces it good work. Every undertaker of it, who with a soul of zeal aims at any tolerable fidelity in it, is satisfied of one thing, that it is *work*; work various, multiform, ever-crowding, never finished; reaching to the inmost sensibilities of life; drawing off its most ethereal quality, its finest capital. No man could bear the strain and intensity of this toil, only as he felt and was allowed to say, It is a *good* work.

2. It is a work which, to get ready to do, fit, qualified to do, takes years of laborious preparation, and expenditure in the preliminary, *exceeded* in no other human function, equalled by very few. It is a work which cannot be worthily done unless done by a class prepared by the discipline of study and grace; to them committed; themselves consecrated to it, and made responsible for it; their *life's* work, and all the work of life they are allowed to do.

3. It is a work most vital in its bearing upon all human interests. Society could hardly subsist without it. It has an essentially modifying influence upon all branches of industry; makes even the fields more prolific, the houses more tasteful and comfortable. It elevates and makes purer the whole course of morals; holds in check the wasteful propensities; inclines toward harmony the conflicting passions; advances the character in all worthy attributes; greatly quickens and strengthens the intellect; lifts the heart to the divine and heavenly; nullifies, or turns into positive benefit, the most formidable powers of evil.

It is admitted, because *demonstrated*, that the work of the minister adds largely to a people's worldly prosperity, to their literal enrichment; brings a gain in character, in happiness, in possession, in items of benefit innumerable, beyond the count of gold.