

that Christ sent His servants. It was their whole work and mission. They were not to meddle with other things. But the message was to be addressed to men who were asleep and must be awakened, to the perishing, but who knew not their danger, and, therefore, they must rouse the sleeper and reveal the wrath that was impending. Here the faithful servants of Christ were distinguished from all false apostles. They sought not the applause of men nor did they consult their own interest. Their whole anxiety was to convince men of their danger, and show the way of escape from it, while in the case of all who made gain of godliness, the message was one which flattered the carnal heart. Sin and danger were both glossed over, for the object in view was not the glory of Christ and the salvation of the soul, but the esteem of men and personal advantages and exaltation. This characterizes all false teachers. Under the old dispensation, the false prophets invariably thus taught, and prophesied to their followers. They were careful not to alarm nor offend their hearers. Their language was smooth and pleasing. It wounded no conscience, it pillowed the sinner in his false rest, until the threatened judgment descended. Every true prophet of God knew his commission, and there he found the solemn charge, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression and the House of Jacob their sins." Faithfully did they fulfil their charge. Amid privations and persecutions and death, they proclaimed the truth, as they received it from God, and in the same spirit, and with the same resolute adherence to their Master's command, we see the apostles go forth to their work, and to this we trace their remarkable success. But, need we say, that what was necessary then is just as much so now, and to the same extent the duty of every ambassador of Christ. As the Apostles were, so is he, the bearer of a glorious message from God to his fellow-men. He is to preach the Gospel. That is the extent of his commission, and to that he must confine himself. His mission is to the captives, in bondage to sin, the world, and death, and as in the days of the Apostles, these captives do not feel their bondage, nor

believe themselves guilty and lost, and justly exposed to the terrible weight of God's displeasure. Therefore, this truth must be told in language so plain, that it cannot be doubtful, for until this is believed and felt, the redemption that is in Christ will not be understood nor valued. But, surely, it is not necessary for the preachers of the Gospel, when addressing men and women, born and trained in a Christian land, and known already as professing Christians, to speak as the Apostles did, when addressing the heathen. It is true, we are not required to denounce the open and visible idolatry which then prevailed and which still prevails in the dark places of the earth. The Apostles were, and Missionaries, now, laboring in heathen lands, are brought into open contact with gross idolatry, that is avowed and visible. They must faithfully declare the vanity and folly and sin of placing confidence in these false objects of trust. We labor among those who received the name of Christians from their fathers, and with that name their views of truth and doctrine, and whose sentiments and practices, too, have in some degree been shaped and moulded into Christian propriety. But, to the extent to which men are satisfied with the religion thus placed in their hands by their parents, and are ignorant and unconcerned regarding the influence which real Christianity must exercise on the individual heart and life, so far as that is so, in any Christian community, it is the painful truth, that they are destitute of the religion of Christ. The state of every man and of every community, of whom this is true, differs much, it may be, from that of the heathen in the estimation of men, but in the sight of God, the difference consists in this, that their guilt is fearfully more aggravated. It is expressed by Christ in the awful words, "It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for you." If, however, men are professedly followers of Christ, are we not bound to believe that profession, and address them accordingly? We are in charity bound to credit the profession which is made, unless the actings of the man's life contradict that profession. Actions utter themselves in more decided language than words can do. It