

sterling sort of theology, and which cannot fail to unhinge the minds of weak persons, who trust less to the plain truths of the Bible than to the exposition which is given them by bold theorists. In former times it was customary to teach, that if a man did not believe and act like a Christian, he could not enter the kingdom of God. It was generally held, that if Christ and his apostles impressed any one truth with greater emphasis than another, it was that the favour of God, reconciled through the mediation of the cross, is to be obtained by reposing faith in his Gospel, and by walking in his commandments: and it was thought that the duty of man consists not only in loving God, but in his fearing him, imploring forgiveness, and soliciting mercy. These plain maxims are now attacked by a contemptible species of sophistry, drawn from a perversion of the apostolic language.

"I cannot better expose the absurdity and danger of rejecting faith and obedience as conditions of salvation, than by quoting a passage from the famous Mr. Hall, one of the ablest preachers and most ardent Christians of the present day. 'For presuming,' says he, 'to speak of conditions of salvation, the author is accused of employing anti-evangelical language, and suspicions of his orthodoxy are pretty loudly insinuated. When the term conditions of salvation or words of similar import, are employed, he wishes it once for all to be understood, that he utterly disclaims the notion of meritorious conditions, and that he intends by that term only what is necessary in the established order of things, a *sine qua non*, that without which another thing cannot possibly take place. When thus defined, to deny that there are conditions of salvation, is not merely to approach to Antinomianism: it is to fall into the gulf. It is nothing less than a repeal of all the sanctions of revelation, of all the principles of moral government. Let the idea of conditional salvation, in the sense already explained, be steadily rejected along with the terms, and the patrons of the worst of heresies will have not further to demand. That repentance, faith and their fruits in a holy life, supposing life to be continued, are essential pre-requisites to eternal happiness, is a doctrine inscribed as with a sunbeam in every page of revelation; and must we, in deference to the propagators of an epidemic pestilence, be bound to express, by obscure, and feeble circumlocution, a truth which one word will convey, especially when that word, or others of a precisely similar meaning, has been current in the productions of unquestionable orthodoxy and piety in every age? The author is at a loss to conceive on what principle or for what reason, dangerous concessions should be made to Antinomianism; that thick-skinned monster of the ooze and mire, which no weapon can pierce no discipline can tame. While this heresy is making rapid strides through the land, and has already convulsed and disorganized so many of our Churches, it is not the reason for half measures; danger is to be repelled by intrepid resistance, by stern defiance, not by compliances and concessions: it is to be opposed, if opposed successfully, by a return to the wholesome dialect of purer times. Such is the intimate alliance between words and things, that the solicitude with which the term *condition*, and others of similar import have been avoided by some excellent men, has contributed more than a little to this wide-spreading pestilence. As almost every age of the Church is marked by its appropriate visitation of error, so little penetration is requisite to perceive, that Antinomianism is the epidemic malady of the present, and that it is an evil of gigantic size and deadly malignity; it is qualified for mischief by the very properties which might seem to render it only an object of contempt—its vulgarity of conception, its paucity of ideas, its determined hostility to taste, science and letters. It includes within a compass which every head can contain, and every tongue can utter, a system which cancels every moral tie, consigns the whole human race to the extremes of presumption or despair, erects religion on the ruins of morality, and imparts to the dregs of stupidity all the powers of the most active poison. The author will ever feel himself honored by whatever censures he may incur through his determined opposition to such a system."

Gospel, by a divine Commission—'How shall they preach except they be sent?'

On this point, but little would be required to be said, was it not for the operation of those dissensions and divisions in Christianity, which by length of time, and established habits of thought and the power of prejudice, and the pertinacity of party feeling, and I may add, the apathy and indifference of an unbelieving age, have fulfilled the predictions of the author and finisher of our faith, defaced the beauty and simplicity of the Gospel, and cut the nerves of revealed religion.

Yet, my hearers, in this, as in all others, the appointments of heaven for our good, God hath not left himself without witness, or placed his creatures under any necessity of erring from his way, or of defeating the comfort and assurance derived from the Gospel, by reason of uncertainty in the administration of the word of his truth, and the means of his grace. By an undeniable appointment of the first preachers of the Gospel, certainty and assurance were given to the first converts to Christianity, that their faith was not built on a cunningly devised fable, the contrivance of human wisdom, but on the power of God, certified to their senses by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost. On this foundation the Church of Christ is built up, and on this foundation it must continue to the end of the world, or cease to be the Church of the living God. For, while faith shall continue to be the essence of religion, it must be derived from the same source: while revelation shall continue to be the only ground of faith, it must be derived from the word of God; while the word of God shall continue supreme for the direction of man in his spiritual concerns, it must be certified to his senses, as the standard of all duty and of all hope; and, while it shall continue to be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith, it must be accompanied with the same divine commission and authority, by which it was verified at the beginning, as the truth of God, for man's salvation. Now, as faith, considered as a religious principle, is inseparable from Divine operation and Divine warrant for what is believed, not only is the revelation itself, but all other ministrations connected with the religion thus established, dependent for certainty and effect on the same principle. As it is competent to no man to declare the will of God without revelation, so neither is it competent for any to administer the affairs of Christ's kingdom, except he be sent—that is, as the apostle evidently means, except he be duly authorized thereto—a conclusion so clear and so reasonable, and at the same time so wise and so profitable to creatures dependent on the use of means for spiritual attainment, as to create wonder that it should ever have been, or yet continue to be, overlooked and disregarded by Christian people.—*Bishop Ravenscroft.*

#### SCRAPS OF CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITY.—No. III.

Moreover he [Egesippus] declareth, that Vespasian after the siege of Jerusalem, caused inquiry to be made, of such as were of the line of David, lest any should remain among the Jews of the royal blood, so that thereby was raised again a great persecution among the Jews.—*Euseb. Ecc. Hist. Book iii. Chap. xii.*

When Vespasian had reigned ten years, Titus his son succeeded him in the Empire; in the second year of whose reign, LIXUS, after he had been Bishop of Rome the space of twelve years, deceased, and him succeeded ANACLETUS. When Titus had reigned two years and two months, his brother Domitian took the imperial crown. In the fourth year of the reign of Domitian, ANIANUS the first Bishop of Alexandria, (having continued there two and thirty years) died, after whom succeed ANILITUS.—*Ib. Chap. xiii.*—[Titus was crowned in 81, and Domitian in 83. Anianus died in 87; from which deduct 32, and it leaves 55, the year of his consecration to the See of Alexandria.]

#### INNOCENTS. (December 29.)

—These were they who suffered death under the cruel decree of Herod, who thought by a general slaughter of young children, to have accomplished the death of the infant Jesus. They are so called from the Latin term *innocentes* or *innocent*, harmless babes, altogether incapable of defending themselves from the malice of their inhuman prosecutors. The celebration of the martyrdom of these innocents are very ancient.—*Sword's Almanac.*

#### DIVINE COMMISSION OF THE MINISTRY.

As the discoveries of the Gospel are of Divine Revelation—so is the preaching of the word and the administration of the