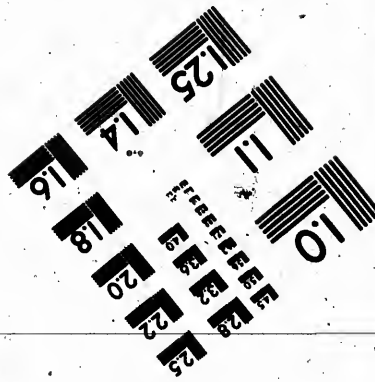
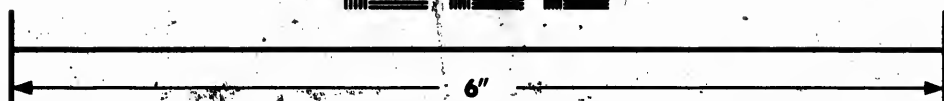


# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



Photographic  
Sciences  
Corporation

23 WEST MAIN STREET  
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580  
(716) 872-4503

**CIHM  
Microfiche  
Series  
(Monographs)**

**ICMH  
Collection de  
microfiches  
(monographies)**



**Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques**

**© 1993**

# Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

- ☐ Coloured covers/  
Couverture de couleur
- ☒ Covers damaged/  
Couverture endommagée
- ☐ Covers restored and/or laminated/  
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- ☐ Cover title missing/  
Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Coloured maps/  
Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/  
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- ☐ Coloured plates and/or illustrations/  
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- ☐ Bound with other material/  
Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion  
along interior margin/  
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la  
distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- ☐ Blank leaves added during restoration may appear  
within the text. Whenever possible, these have  
been omitted from filming/  
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées  
lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte,  
mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont  
pas été filmées.

- ☐ Additional comments:/  
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- ☐ Coloured pages/  
Pages de couleur
- ☒ Pages damaged/  
Pages endommagées
- ☐ Pages restored and/or laminated/  
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- ☒ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/  
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☐ Pages detached/  
Pages détachées
- ☒ Showthrough/  
Transparence
- ☐ Quality of print varies/  
Qualité inégale de l'impression
- ☐ Continuous pagination/  
Pagination continue
- ☐ Includes index(es)/  
Comprend un (des) index
- ☐ Title on header taken from:/  
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:
- ☐ Title page of issue/  
Page de titre de la livraison
- ☐ Caption of issue/  
Titre de départ de la livraison
- ☐ Masthead/  
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

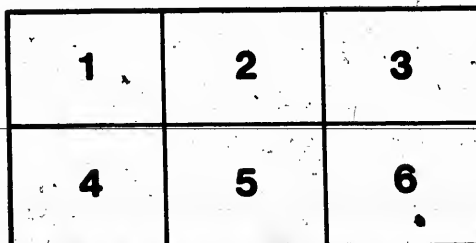
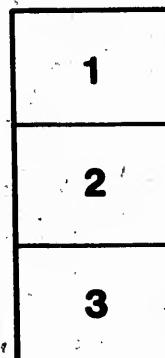
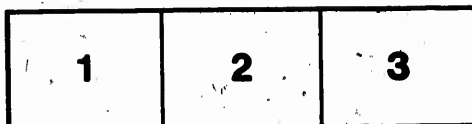
Anglican Church of Canada  
General Synod Archives

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol ➡ (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ▼ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Anglican Church of Canada  
General Synod Archives

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole ➡ signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ▼ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaires. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

MM54  
N57

# The Power of the Keys.

## A SERMON

Preached February 7th, 1892, in Trinity Church, Quebec City,  
by the Rector,

THE REV. W. T. NOBLE, B.A., L.TH.

---

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

---

TORONTO:

THE J. E. BRYANT COMPANY (Limited), 58 Bay Street.



## THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

*"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."*—John xx. 23.

THESE words—like most words of transcendent importance to mankind, and perhaps on that account—have become the subject of bitter controversy; and if their intrinsic value is to be measured by the extent and intensity of this controversy, then it is great indeed, if not incalculable. But here the same law prevails as in all matters subject to the control of fallible free agents; namely, the greater the power for good when rightly directed, the greater the power for evil when wrongly directed. Therefore the duration and unabated fierceness of this controversy indicate the importance of the issues at stake, and prove that the truth has not yet been discovered; for when Truth in her native majesty and dazzling splendour takes the field darkness will vanish and error will disappear, like phantoms of the night when the sun has risen in his strength. But the pernicious deductions and sophistical quibbling with which these words are still surrounded amply prove the magnitude of the unsolved problem which now demands our consideration. If these words are correctly translated and mean all they say, they are laden with boundless blessings for all mankind; but if they do not mean what they seem to say, then they are a sublime mockery and a cruel sham, calculated to deceive and damn the souls of men. They are surrounded by every circumstance that can add solemnity and importance to the message they contain. For God incarnate, after His resurrection from the dead, breathed on His apostles and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22. This is neither a prayer nor the profane acting of a sinful mortal, but the sober language of Christ commanding them to receive what He, and He alone, had power to give. It is the gift of One in whose wise and economical administration nothing is wasted. For what great and gracious purpose, then, was such a special blessing vouchsafed? Our text supplies the answer: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." This commission, thus translated, conveys to the apostles authority to remit or retain, to save or to damn, all mankind in every subsequent age or nation; for there is no limitation placed on the exercise of this authority, and there are no conditions imposed. It contains a judicial as well as a dispensing power, for they are called upon

and left free to determine whose sins they will remit, and whose they will retain; that is, whomsoever they will they may save, and whomsoever they will they may damn. Who is sufficient for these things? God alone. And yet Christ appears to surrender these divine prerogatives of justice and mercy to the apostles, and these He leaves them free to exercise according to their own good pleasure, without regard to the quantity or quality of any man's sins. Thus, having procured the world's redemption by His incarnation, life, death, and resurrection, He places the world's salvation in the hands of sinful men, to be disposed of by them according to the ruling whims and fancies of such beings; and henceforth every appeal for justice or mercy must be to the apostles, Christ having thus divorced Himself from the Church, "which he purchased with his own blood," and placed its eternal destinies in the hands of sinful mortals. All access to God through Christ is thus cut off or superseded, and we are left to the tender mercies of men.

This is no exaggerated dream, but the sober interpretation which has been placed on these words, and, if our Lord's language will bear this interpretation, many will have to reconsider their present position; but the very possibility of such an interpretation suggests something wrong somewhere.

This commission, thus interpreted, places an awful responsibility on the apostles; and if they recognized and realized it, their lives would henceforth have been spent in pardoning sinners. Now, when we turn to the apostolic history, to learn what interpretation they put upon their Lord's commission, we are struck with the remarkable fact that they never once presume to forgive the sins which men have committed against the God of heaven. If our Lord's words had conveyed this meaning, it seems impossible that they could have remained all their lives ignorant of it; and if they consciously possessed the power, it is equally unaccountable why they did not exercise it. Shall we charge them with culpable ignorance, or criminal malpractice? Neither, at present, until we have examined the correctness of our English translation. Here we are met by the strange facts that the Greek word *aphiemi*, here translated *remit*, occurs one hundred and thirty-four times in the Greek New Testament, and is never so translated except in this verse; and the Greek word *krateo*, here translated *retain*, occurs forty-five times in the Greek New Testament, and is never so translated except in this verse. What motive could have produced this unparalleled rendering of these words? Now there is something unaccountably suspicious about this translation, derived—as it manifestly is—from the Latin, when read in the light of the history of the middle ages, with its sale of indulgences, for which some authority was required. Thus we have an unusual translation coming to us through the Latin or Roman Church, and we find that *this* Church had a sufficient motive for adopting this transla-

tion, and that this Church did actually avail herself of all the authority which it ostensibly conveys; and, as if to emphasize and utilize this authority, this commission, thus translated, was imported into the ordination service in the thirteenth century; hence the sale of indulgences, that woke the lion-hearted Luther, in the early part of the sixteenth century. And Rome has even gone beyond what this commission authorizes, and imposed conditions not contained in it; for she has classified sins into *venial* and *mortal*, and imposed penances on the living and purgatorial torments on the dead, remission from which, directly or indirectly, may be purchased for money. And it is a notorious fact that an enormous revenue has been derived from this source in the past. Thus the Church of Rome, having put the most literal interpretation on this mistranslation, and regarding the commission therein contained as a hereditary bequest, claims a dispensing power over the living and the dead; and as this dispensing power has a market value, she has a vested interest in the sins of mankind; and the assumption of this dispensing power, thus regulated, is the chief source of wealth and power in the Church of Rome. And what a source of wealth and power it may become, in the hands of an avaricious and ambitious priesthood, the page of history unfolds. But this translation, with its obvious interpretation thus elaborated, is *God-dishonouring* and *immoral*, and has resulted in mortals assuming divine prerogatives and making merchandise of sin.

And hence we are driven to seek for another translation, more consistent with the teaching of Christ and the practice of His apostles. Is such a rendering of the original Greek possible? Yes; upon the authority of Liddell & Scott's Greek Lexicon, it may be thus translated: "*Whose soever sins ye let alone, they are permitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye prevail against, they are vanquished.*" What a transformation this creates! It sweeps away at once all apparent sanction of the above blasphemous assumptions, and imposes such rational and practical duties as may be performed by men. The obvious duties here imposed on the apostles are to identify sin and brand it as such, and, with all the intellectual and moral forces at their command, to fight against it until it is vanquished. This is a great and important work, thoroughly consistent with the relative positions of God and man, gloriously possible, and highly desirable. And it was to qualify them for this work that Christ breathed on them and commanded them to receive the Holy Ghost, whose peculiar office it was to "reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment," John xvi. 8. The necessity for this work Christ points out in the following words: "Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged," John xvi. 9, 10, 11. Now Christ, the only perfect man

who ever rendered a perfect obedience, in the letter and in the spirit, to the righteous law of God, was about to return to His Father; and with the gift of the Holy Ghost He delegates to the apostles the responsible duty of upholding the standard of righteousness which He had exemplified in His own life on earth. To realize the importance of this work, we must remember that the Jews had made void the law of God by their traditions, and that the heathen by their philosophy—falsely so called—had obscured the light of nature and blunted the moral conscience; and hence the whole world lay in darkness and the shadow of death.

In such a world there was no well-defined and commonly recognized line of demarcation between right and wrong; and hence there could be no unconquerable love of right and irreconcilable hatred of wrong. And yet these two principles, love and hatred, are essential to the destruction of wrong and the triumph of right. But wrongdoing is the offspring of error, and error can only appear as such in the light of truth. John says: "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil," I. John iii. 8. What are they? The propagation of error, for Christ calls him "the father of lies," John viii. 44. Now as Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and as you can only destroy falsehood by the truth, how did Christ regard the accomplishment of this work? He says: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," John xviii. 37. Thus Christ regarded the truth as the ordained instrument wherewith to destroy the works of the devil. And to His disciples He said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me," Acts i. 8; that is, witnesses to the Divine witness to the truth, for the destruction of the works of the devil. And to qualify these human witnesses for so important a work He gave them the Holy Ghost to guide them into all truth, and to make them strong and fearless in proclaiming and defending the truth. The utility of all this is manifest from the fact that it is only in proportion as you clearly see, deeply love, and firmly grasp the truth that you can hate error. And you must hate it, with an intense and well-sustained hatred, to prevail against it and vanquish it. Now the commission for the carrying out of which they received the Holy Ghost not only authorizes this kind of warfare, but is calculated to impress them with the importance of carrying it on with all the energy and resources at their command. For the sins they let alone were permitted to the people, with all their damning consequences; but the sins they prevailed against were vanquished, to the benefit of mankind and the glory of God. Thus the apostles were to carry out the work of the incarnate Christ on the very same lines and with the very same weapons which Christ employed; restoring the standard of right by the manifestation of the truth, and putting an end to wrongdoing by the destruction of error, and thus destroying the

works of the devil. It is worthy of careful observation that the practice of the apostles is in perfect accord with this translation and interpretation. For example: A member of the Corinthian Church marries his father's wife (I. Cor. v. 1), and if Paul had let him alone this practice would have been permitted, with all its pernicious consequences, as there was no other standard by which it could have been condemned and stamped out. But the apostle, mindful of the Divine commission, and sustained by the Holy Ghost, prevailed against this sin and vanquished it. This obvious interpretation of Christ's commission has been, and must remain, the practice of Christ's Church until the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; for to maintain the Divine standard of right and wrong and to drive wrongdoing out of the Church must ever be the work of the Church militant. We must not let drunkenness, gambling, and Sabbath-breaking alone; but, guided by the Holy Ghost, and armed with the truth, prevail against them till they are vanquished. So, in like manner, lying, slandering, fraud, and robbery must be vanquished. For if we let these things alone, they will be permitted, to the present and everlasting destruction of human happiness. The work thus indicated in our Lord's commission, and recognized by His apostles, is still the supreme difficulty of our missionaries in heathen lands, where no true standard of moral right and wrong exists. Hence the question of polygamy in Africa, which baffled the united wisdom of our bishops at the Lambeth Conference in 1888. Not, therefore, the pardoning of sin, but the identification and extermination of sin, are the duties imposed by this commission, when rightly translated, and interpreted according to apostolic practice. And this will best promote the happiness of men, in time as well as in eternity. For it is necessary not only to create a deep love of truth, producing an intense hatred of error, but you must keep these alive in the soul, if men are to be saved from the evil that is in the world. Look, for a moment, at the contrast between the apostolic practice and the system of modern priestcraft. Priestcraft encourages sin by remitting the penal consequences thereof, and thereby weakening man's sense of its enormity; but the apostles go to the root of all evil-doing—error, and destroy it with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Priestcraft, usurping the place of God, comes between God and the sinner; but the apostles sought to present every man perfect in Christ, by whom we all have access to the Father. Priestcraft offers salvation for money and merits, while the apostles said: "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Priestcraft puts a specific price on all sins, which the sinner must pay; while the apostles teach that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and that His blood cleanseth us from all sin. This apostolic interpretation of Christ's commission was too much lost sight of in the subsequent ages, while an ambitious

priesthood was arrogating to itself Divine prerogatives. In the Jewish Church this assumption on the part of man was regarded as blasphemy. And Christ approved this view of the case, vindicating His own right to say "Thy sins be forgiven thee" by working a physical miracle, which appealed to the eyes of the onlookers, and proved that He was God, and therefore, according to their own teaching, had the Divine right and power to forgive sins, Matt. ix. 1-7. Thus Judaism and Christianity, in the person of Christ, teach that God alone can forgive sin, and that it is blasphemy on the part of mortal man to presume to do so. The translation in our Authorized Version, and its common interpretation, contradict this teaching; whereas the translation and interpretation here given are in perfect accord with the teaching of Judaism, Christ, and His apostles. It takes away all apparent Divine sanction of priestly assumptions, and establishes the right of all mankind to freedom of access to God through Christ, who alone can forgive sin. Who, for a moment, looking the matter squarely in the face, can imagine that God created and Christ redeemed the race of man, and then placed their eternal salvation in the hands of a few of their fellow-sinners, liable to all the ignorance, prejudice, and partiality of fallen humanity? Such a preposterous idea, if established, is enough to damn the whole Christian system, and to afford grounds for impugning the character of God Himself.

This commission, thus translated and interpreted, is in perfect accord with the teaching of Christ and His apostles, and it places simple, practical, and important duties before the Church in all lands: to identify sin; not let it alone, but prevail against it until it is vanquished. The weapons to be employed in this warfare are the Pentecostal tongues of fire, so powerful in apostolic times, when no blasphemous assumptions marred the simplicity of the Gospel, or hindered the onward march of the Church; whose great work was then, and is now, "To open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me," Acts xxvi. 18. This will indeed be "proclaiming liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," Isai. lxi. 1, and the most practical way of carrying out the commission of the risen Lord: "Whose soever sins ye let alone, they are permitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye prevail against, they are vanquished."

This is humbly submitted to the honest criticism of all lovers of the truth, with the earnest prayer that the Holy Ghost may guide us into all truth.



