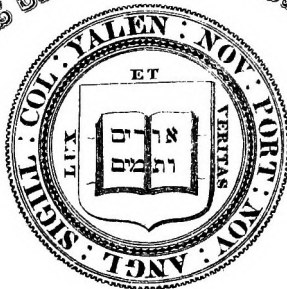


THE TWO SACRAMENTS.

BOARDMAN.

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The Two Sacraments.

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A BRIEF EXAMINATION

OF THE

VIEWS ENTERTAINED

BY

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

RESPECTING

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY, BAPTISM, AND  
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

BY

HENRY A. BOARDMAN, D. D.

PHILADELPHIA:

PARRY AND McMILLAN.

1857.

## PREFATORY NOTE.

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It fell in my way, some months since, in the ordinary discharge of my pastoral duty, to deliver a series of Lectures on the interview between our SAVIOUR and the Woman of Samaria. The following Lecture was the third one of the course. I have reason to believe that it was useful to some of my own congregation, and to others with whom I have no personal acquaintance. It has been repeatedly borrowed for the perusal of members of the Society of FRIENDS, and, in certain instances, returned with expressions of interest and even of approval, which have been peculiarly gratifying to me.

This circumstance has had no little weight with me, in deciding to send the manuscript to the press. I am conscious of no other motive in publishing it, than a desire to do good. To the Society whose sentiments are here briefly controverted (I hope in the *spirit* in which Mr. Gurney and others have controverted *our* sentiments), I am bound by ties both of respect and of consanguinity; and I have, from my childhood, had among them some valued personal friends. I feel that I am a "debtor" to them; and this Lecture is submitted to their candid perusal

in the hope that some of those into whose hands it shall fall, may be induced to re-examine the questions here presented, by the sure light of God's HOLY WORD. To his blessing I commend this humble tract; with the prayer that he may send the Spirit of truth to guide us all into the truth.

PHILADELPHIA, April 13, 1857.

## LECTURE.

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“GOD IS A SPIRIT; AND THEY THAT WORSHIP HIM MUST WORSHIP HIM IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH.”—JOHN IV. 24.

WE have considered this passage in its bearing upon that style of worship, which has so multiplied rites and ceremonies as to assimilate Christian churches to the Jewish temple. There is an opposite extreme against which it is also necessary to guard. No sentence in the New Testament has been more relied upon to show that the New Dispensation discountenances and even forbids “*all* typical rites in the worship of God,” the reference being especially to Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. With these ordinances the customary services of the Sanctuary, regarded as stated or habitual services, are associated as being in alleged contravention of the whole spirit of the Gospel. Because God requires a spiritual worship, no baptism is to be recognized except the baptism of the Spirit. The Lord’s Supper is spiritual

communion with Christ. An official ministry, with a fixed routine of services, consisting of prayer and the reading of the Scriptures and preaching, is incompatible with the true design of the Gospel, which precludes some of these exercises altogether, and allows the rest only on occasions when they are prompted by a distinct impulse of the Holy Spirit. "No verbal administrations properly consist with worship, but those which spring simply and immediately from the influence of the Holy Spirit."\*

These few points may suffice to indicate the ground assumed by those who repudiate all religious rites. That such views should be promulgated by any society professing to acknowledge the authority of the New Testament, is even more remarkable than that efforts should be made to re-impose Levitical ceremonies upon the Church.

It is surely most inconclusive reasoning, to argue that God will not sanction *any* rites in the public worship offered him, because he will be worshipped *in spirit and in truth*; and to contend that inasmuch as he abolished the Jewish ritual, he thereby forbade *all* forms in the Christian church. Where has he presented it as the only alternative, "an imposing

\* Gurney's "Peculiarities of the Society of Friends," Chap. v.

ceremonial like that of the Hebrews, or a purely spiritual worship?" The theory that we are examining, virtually assumes that there could have been no spiritual worship under the Mosaic economy. But no serious-minded person would utter so injurious a charge against the ancient saints.

That the old system as distinguished from the new, was characteristically a ceremonial system, is conceded on all hands. Equally certain is it that that system has been "done away." But on what authority is it asserted that, in abrogating the Levitical rites, the Saviour determined to organize the church without *any* rites?

It has been alleged, that baptism was practised among the Jews before the advent; and also that the breaking of bread and the pouring forth of wine, with the giving of thanks, was a part of their ritual order in celebrating the Passover; and hence, the inference has been drawn, that baptism and the Eucharist were actually *included in that Levitical scheme* which the Saviour annulled. It is difficult to speak of a representation like this without using strong expressions. For one can hardly conceive how an ingenuous person, intent only upon learning the truth, could seriously propound a speculation so palpably at variance with the facts. On the same

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night on which he was betrayed, Jesus instituted the supper with the utmost solemnity, and enjoined upon his disciples the *perpetual* observance of it. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till he come*" (1 Cor. xi. 26). This was not the paschal service. It was after that service. He ordained it now for the first time. His disciples had never celebrated it before. He bids them celebrate it till he should return. And yet, on the very slender pretext that there was a somewhat similar use of bread and wine in the Passover ceremonial, the Lord's supper is claimed to have been one of the Levitical rites, which the Saviour himself abolished! So, again, as to baptism. The last command he gave to his disciples as they stood around him upon Mount Olivet at the moment of his ascension, was, to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And yet, because the Jews had been in the habit of baptizing proselytes, baptism with water (it is alleged) was essentially a Mosaic rite, and as such the Saviour designed to abrogate it.

Such opinions have their refutation in the simple narrative of the evangelists.

If the attempt to show that water baptism was

a purely *Levitical rite* has failed, no better success has attended the effort to prove that the only baptism recognized in the New Testament is *the baptism of the Spirit*. Of course we all hold to the reality and the necessity of *this* baptism. But we cannot admit that it was simply this baptism the Saviour had in view when he uttered the parting command just quoted. Nor did his Apostles so understand him. They certainly may be supposed, after they themselves had been baptized with the Holy Ghost, to have been qualified to put a proper interpretation upon his words. And it is clear to demonstration that they understood him as directing them to baptize their converts with water. Not to enter into the discussion of this question at large, look at the case of Cornelius (Acts x.). While Peter is preaching to him and his household, the *Holy Ghost* falls on them. This, according to the system I am controverting, was all they required—all that the new dispensation admits—the baptism of the Spirit. But how did the Apostle judge? “Then answered Peter, Can any man *forbid water* that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” In other words, perceiving that they had been baptized with the Spirit, he makes this a

reason for baptizing them with water. They gave evidence of being born again; therefore, they were entitled to be baptized, and so, formally admitted into the visible church.

Again, when Philip and the Ethiopian treasurer were studying the Scriptures together in the chariot, the latter said to Philip: "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" How would a "Friend" have answered this question? How *must* he have answered it in consistency with his principles? "Thou needest no baptism with water; all thou requirest is to be baptized with the Spirit." But what was Philip's answer? "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"—which was equivalent to his saying: "If thou hast received the baptism of the Spirit, thou mayest be baptized with water." He instantly professed his faith in Christ, and thereupon the chariot was stopped, and "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him" (Acts. viii.).

These and other cases of the kind are so unequivocally stated in the New Testament, that there is only one method in which the argument they supply can be met, viz., by denying that the example of the apostles is binding upon us. This ground is boldly taken. The apostles, it is argued, continued to be

infected with Jewish prejudices; they retained various Levitical customs; and having been familiar with circumcision and with baptism prior to their conversion, "baptism was very naturally considered by them as appropriate to the specific purposes of their own ministry," and "they would, *as a matter of course*, persevere in the practice of baptizing their converts in water."\* To this it is added, by way of depreciating this ordinance still further, and showing that it is of no binding force upon us, that the Saviour himself did not baptize, and that Paul avows that *he* was sent "not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

In respect to this last argument, the practice of the Saviour is altogether foreign from the question at issue. The inquiry is not, whether He baptized, but whether he commanded his followers to baptize. It would be easy to suggest reasons which may have led him to abstain from administering the ordinance, if it were worth while to discuss a point which does not properly belong to the subject in hand.

The example of Paul may be fairly quoted as against those who magnify baptism above the preaching of the Word and prayer, and who even make it

\* Gurney.

the specific and exclusive instrument of regeneration. It is quite conclusive in dealing with these parties to quote his declaration: "Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the Gospel." But it can avail nothing to those who object to water baptism altogether, for it is certain that he did sometimes administer this ordinance (1 Cor. i. 14-16), and equally certain that where he did not baptize his converts, they were baptized by other ministers under his sanction.

The other argument, that the example of the Apostles is not binding upon us, proceeds upon very dangerous ground. The question is, "*Did the Saviour institute baptism with water as a permanent ordinance in his church?*" In support of the affirmative of this question, we cite his last command to his Apostles, and show by their practice how they understood it. On the opposite side it is contended, that when he directed the twelve to baptize the nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, he had no reference to water baptism, but simply to the baptism of the Spirit. That it must require some nerve even to suggest a construction of these words, which does so much violence to them, will be conceded by all who are accustomed to read the Saviour's teachings without considering

how they are to tell upon favorite theories. Allowing that the whole Jewish ritual was now to be replaced by a spiritual worship; that the word baptism, with its derivatives frequently occurs in the New Testament in a sense purely metaphorical; that there is no mention made of water in this passage; and that Jesus had himself contrasted the baptism of the Spirit, the privilege of his own followers, with the water baptism of John:\* of what weight are these considerations, to set aside the clear, obvious import of this command? The simple meaning of baptize is to wash with water. There is not the slightest intimation that the Saviour used the word here in a figurative sense. The presumption that he did so use it, is a sheer gratuity, proceeding upon principles of interpretation, which, if generally applied, must destroy the Bible as a rule of faith and practice, by making it the oracle of whatever sentiments it may suit the interests of individuals and sects to have it utter.

The example here presented is, indeed, a very significant one. For we not only have the Saviour's language, but the interpretation his Apostles put upon it. It is not denied that they understood him

\* *Vide* Gurney.

to refer to water baptism; and that they went forth in every direction, baptizing all their converts with water. The adverse scheme, then, is loaded with these *four assumptions*.

1. It assumes that our Saviour did not intend that his disciples should baptize with water, although he gave them no hint that he referred to any other baptism.

2. It assumes that his disciples and followers *were clothed with power to baptize with the Holy Ghost*. If he did not command them to baptize with water, of course he commanded them to baptize with the Holy Ghost. It is the common faith of the readers of the New Testament—certainly of all evangelical Christians, of whatever name—that it is a DIVINE prerogative to dispense the Holy Ghost. It was the grand distinction between the baptism of Christ and that of John the Baptist, as stated by the latter, “I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you *with the Holy Ghost* and with fire.” And accordingly, he said to the Apostles after his resurrection, “Ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost*, not many days hence.” Where is the scriptural proof that this baptism could be conferred by one mortal upon another? The very idea is revolting to every sentiment of the renewed heart. And among all the flagrant impieties

of those corrupt churches which have lorded it over the consciences of men, there are few things more odious than the claim that they are empowered to confer the Holy Ghost.

To elude this difficulty, it is urged that the followers of Christ are here instructed to baptize with the Holy Ghost, since it would be through their *mediation* or *instrumentality* that this baptism should be administered, even as they would be the *instruments* of converting sinners by the preaching of the Gospel. But this will not avail. There is a wide and palpable difference between preaching the word or using any mere means, and bestowing the Holy Ghost. The one must, from the nature of the case, be performed by a creature, except, in those rare instances, where Jehovah may see fit to become himself a messenger to one of his creatures. The other, no less from the nature of the case, *must* proceed directly from the Deity. The Holy Spirit is, by pre-eminence, his gift. And when we consider *who the Spirit is*, the incongruity of a sinful creature being clothed with the prerogative of bestowing him upon other sinners, cannot but strike every mind imbued with the least reverence for the Supreme Being. It is, therefore, a fatal objection to the doctrine that we are examining, that it assumes that the disciples of



Christ were clothed with power to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

3. A third assumption chargeable upon this doctrine is, that the Apostles, to whom the last commission was addressed, and who received it immediately from their Master's lips, *were not so competent to understand its import as persons living eighteen centuries afterward*, and that they did actually mistake its meaning. For it is not denied that they understood him to refer to water baptism. And this was their interpretation of his language subsequent to the day of Pentecost, and when they were anointed with the Holy Spirit. It was after the "Spirit of Truth" had come upon them, who was to "guide them into all truth," that they fell into this grave error, and set up water-baptism as the initiatory rite of the Christian church. Is not this dangerous ground? Is it not impeaching the inspiration of the Apostles, or impugning the accuracy of the New Testament writers? Can those who espouse these views seriously believe that the twelve were "filled with the Holy Ghost" when they so grievously mistook their Master's teaching on a point of great and lasting moment to the church? If they erred here, why may they not have erred elsewhere? What is Divine in the New Testament, and what human? By what tests are we to discri-

minate between the true and the false? What certainty attaches to anything pertaining to the Gospel of Christ?

It is with a painful reluctance I give utterance to these sentiments. I have every reason which personal friendships and even hereditary descent can supply, to cherish an unfeigned respect for a society which bears on its roll of members names like those of Wm. Penn, and Elizabeth Fry, and Joseph John Gurney. But in studying the sacred Scriptures, I can know no man after the flesh. Men, it is well known, are often better than their speculative opinions; and what is still more apposite here, serious, useful, devout men may adopt erroneous and hurtful principles of interpreting the Bible, without following out those principles to their legitimate consequences. With every disposition to come to a different conclusion, I find myself shut up to the conviction that the method of interpreting the word of God, of which specimens have just been presented, is adapted to strip it of all certainty and all authority. If we may assume that the Apostles erred in explaining their Master's doctrines, what confidence can we place in their competency? And of what value are their writings to us?

Nor is this all. If *they* erred, who amongst *us* can

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possibly attain to any certainty in religion? We have, it is true, the promise of the Spirit to illuminate us. But we have surer evidence that *they* were "filled with the Holy Ghost," than we can have, in any given case, that *we* are under his plenary guidance. If he left them to mistake the meaning of a simple command, couched in the plainest terms, and relating to a point of great practical importance, with what reason or modesty can we hope to be preserved from error?

In truth, is there not something strangely presuming and visionary in the assumption, that we are better qualified to expound such a command—addressed, let it be remembered, directly to them—than they were themselves? Suppose it were possible to recall Peter, and John, and Paul (who, though not with them on Olivet, received a similar commission from the Saviour's lips); if we could bring these three illustrious men back to the world again for a little, can you imagine a scene more curious than that of a man of this nineteenth century, no matter of what country, tongue, or sect, standing up before them and saying: "You entirely misapprehended the meaning of your Master in his parting injunction to you. You understood him to send you forth to disciple the nations and baptize them with *water*;

whereas, what he meant was, that you should not use water at all, but baptize them with the Holy Ghost." Can you imagine, I say, anything more curious, I might almost say more ludicrous, than a scene like this? And yet we have the substance of the thing whenever the claim is advanced by any set of men and for whatever end, that *they* understand the utterances of Christ better than the Apostles did.

4. The fourth assumption alluded to as involved in the scheme is, that *the example of the Apostles in this matter is not of necessity binding upon us*; and the fact of their baptizing with water, does not establish our obligation to conform to this usage. That the Apostles might have observed some customs which are not obligatory upon us, may be conceded without affecting the present question. This question is as specific as it is important. Our Saviour gave a command respecting baptism, which, it is admitted by all, is of perpetual obligation. Did he, in this command, contemplate water baptism? We examine, in the first place, the proper meaning of the words and phrases he employs, and are satisfied that what he enjoined was water baptism. We turn, then, to those upon whom he laid the command, and who had a deeper stake in ascertaining its import than any other human beings; and we find that they and their

contemporaries, without exception (in so far as the annals of that day have come down to us), interpreted his words of water baptism. Under these circumstances, and contemplating their example in this aspect, we maintain that we *are* bound to conform to the usage they initiated, that we must interpret and obey the command as they did.

And here we rest the argument, to show that our Saviour instituted baptism with water as an ordinance of perpetual obligation in his church; and that no man nor sect may lawfully annul, disparage, or neglect it, on the ground that the present is a spiritual dispensation, and that God will be worshipped "in spirit and in truth."

The same train of argument so obviously applies to the command respecting the *Eucharist*, that it would be superfluous to traverse the ground a second time in presenting it. There is one fact, however, of too much significance to be omitted here. These two ordinances, it is claimed, were part and parcel of the Mosaic economy, and, as such, were not designed to be perpetuated under the Christian dispensation. And yet, the institution of the Lord's Supper was made the subject of a special revelation to the apostle Paul, *after the Saviour's ascension*. (See 1 Cor. xi. 23.) "For *I have received of the Lord* that

which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread," &c. It will not be denied that the new dispensation had commenced some time before this communication was made. How inexplicable, then, on the theory we are opposing, that the Saviour should have revealed to his apostle all these particulars respecting the institution of a rite which was not intended to be handed down to after-times: and how mysterious that this very apostle should have been left under the *illusion* that the churches were on no account to *neglect* the due observance of this ordinance; and that he must carefully instruct them how to celebrate it. Can any one believe that this *was* an "illusion?" and if so, can you assign any motive for the revelation?

To urge, in reply to all this, that living, as we do, under a spiritual dispensation, we *do not need the aid* of these ordinances, is a plea altogether inadmissible. Where GOD has spoken, as He has in this case, there is an end to argument and speculation. However undesigned, there is great presumption in saying that we do not *require* rites which HE has seen fit to prescribe for our observance. We could have no right to take this ground, even though we might not be able to trace the connection between these ordi-

nances and the ends proposed to be accomplished by them. The veneration we owe to the Deity imposes it upon us as of prime obligation that we should believe all his measures to be dictated by the highest wisdom, however inexplicable they may be to us. In the present case, there is scarcely room to invoke this principle; for the existing arrangement is shrouded in no such mystery. To a few minds peculiarly constituted or trained in a certain way, positive religious ordinances may seem to be a superfluity, having no proper adaptation to promote the spiritual growth and comfort of the soul. It is equally certain that the great mass of the race, in so far as they have been brought under the sway of Christianity, have found these ordinances eminently suited to their moral necessities, and *invaluable* as "means of grace." The allegation, then, that they are "not needful," is open to two grave objections: 1. It assumes that God is less competent than man to pronounce on what may be the best method of training a sinful race for heaven; and 2. It conflicts with the common experience of mankind.

It would require too much time to examine the other particulars in which (it is contended) the ordinary worship of the Christian denominations contravenes the command to worship God "in spirit and in

truth." But a few words may be allowed on the subject of the *ministry*.

Every one must be aware of the strong disapprobation with which those we are now arguing with regard the institution of an official, permanent ministry in the church. They hold that it is highly improper to *educate* men for the ministry, to *ordain* them, to *install* them, or to *support* them. "The faculty of the Christian ministry (it is maintained), is a gift of the Spirit, which cannot be rightly exercised otherwise than under the direct and immediate influence of that Spirit." If it is the will of the Spirit that an individual should address his brethren, he will manifest it to him *at the time* by a secret and powerful impression on his mind, instructing him not only when he is to speak, but what he is to say. When, as he patiently waits before God, "he apprehends that the secret command has gone forth towards him, *vocally* to address either the congregation in preaching or the Almighty in prayer; he obeys the mandate of his Lord, and speaks as the Spirit gives him utterance."\* It is only in this way and under these circumstances that either preaching or praying is proper as a part of public worship. The spiritu-

\* Gurney.



ality of the New Dispensation involves the plenary presence of the Holy Spirit as a *Revealer* and an *Inspirer*,\* equally as in the days of the Apostles. God prepares ministers now precisely as he did then. They only may preach whom he *inspires* to preach. And whether one is thus inspired or not, he must judge for himself by his own inward exercises.

On these principles there can, of course, be no regular and successive ministry. A theological education, or any education, prosecuted *with a view* to the ministry, is not simply inexpedient, but unwarrantable—an invasion of the Spirit's prerogative. Any one, male or female, may be called by the Spirit to exercise the gifts of ministry at any moment, and on his conviction that he is so called, his brethren must defer to him as one who is taught of God, and charged with a Divine message to them.

If it were proposed to *discuss* this topic, it would be obvious to suggest how liable individuals must be to mistake their own feelings for the inspiration of the Spirit. A theory held by so many intelligent and devout believers, should be treated with respect. But even they cannot fail to have observed that the

\* I use these terms because I know of no others which express with the same precision what is intended by them.

principle on which it rests, of immediate inspiration and revelation, has been the heart and core of that fanaticism whose disastrous effects, in various ages and countries, *they* have been among the foremost to deplore and censure. The most august and solemn character in which a fellow mortal can approach me is that of a legate from God, intrusted with a message to me. My instant and urgent demand is, "*Show me your credentials.*" When this requisition was addressed to the Apostles, they could point to the signs and wonders wrought through their instrumentality. Let the pretended messenger from heaven authenticate his commission in a similar way, and I will acknowledge him—provided there be nothing in his communication incompatible with the written revelation God has already given us; for "He cannot deny Himself." Or, if a miracle be not wrought, let there be some other evidence equally unequivocal, that he who stands before me is "a man sent from God." Of what force would it be for him to say: "I have a full conviction that God has instructed me to speak to you; the *impression* on my mind to that effect is irresistible, and I *must* deliver my message." The natural and conclusive reply would be, "Your impressions and convictions may satisfy you, and you may do right to endeavor to

obey them. But they can be of no weight with me. Men have had an equally strong persuasion that they ought to propagate the most pernicious doctrines, or to do the most atrocious things. If God has commissioned you to come with a message to me, he must have given you some credentials less equivocal than your own "impressions." Produce them, and I will hear you.

This demand, it strikes me, would be perfectly reasonable; and I see no way in which it could be met. It appears to me to furnish a very conclusive argument against the theory with which we are dealing.

"But may not the argument be turned with equal effect against the common doctrine of the ministry?" Certainly not; at least, so far as the Protestant churches are concerned. For the ministry set up no claim to inspiration. They make no pretensions to new and direct revelations from God. All they attempt is to explain and enforce the written word; to preach what is there recorded, and expound what every one has in his possession. Not only so, but they send every hearer to the Bible, to examine for himself, as the Bereans did, whether the teaching of the Sanctuary accords with the law and the testimony, and to receive or reject it on his own respon-

sibility to God. This is a widely different thing from making every one who essays to exercise the ministry, an *inspired* teacher.

Aside from this, the question whether our Saviour instituted a perpetual ministry in the church is a simple question of fact. Turning to the record, we find it stated that in his last command to his disciples, already quoted, he directed them to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;" adding, for their encouragement, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto *the end of the world.*" The Apostles, as soon as they were anointed by the Spirit, began to "preach the Gospel." They organized churches, and appointed men, styled indifferently "elders" and "bishops," to preach the Gospel to them. These officers were instructed to ordain others to succeed them in the exercise of their preaching and governing functions. These historical facts are too notorious to be denied. We have, then, the clear, palpable authority of the Saviour's command, and the example and teachings of the Apostles, to show that there was a permanent, official ministry in the church.

We dare not claim for this ministry the awful prerogatives ascribed to *their* ministers by the Society whose views have been noticed in this lecture. We do not believe ministers are inspired. We do not

regard them as standing on the same ground with the Apostles. Our ideas of the ministry, in its legitimate sphere and proper functions, fall far below the lofty range of this theory. But we believe the office to rest upon a scriptural warrant, as we certainly feel it to be vital to the true prosperity of the church.

That unworthy men, who have no Divine call, often assume this office, no one will deny. But the counterfeit does not disprove the existence of genuine coin.

In respect to the *pecuniary support* of the ministry, it was observed, a moment or two since, that the advocates of an exclusively spiritual dispensation, discard this idea from their system. Theoretically they do, but practically they do not.

The obligation of the church on this point is so explicitly laid down in the New Testament, not by way of inference or recommendation, but by positive rule, that all argument may be waived here except the *denominational* one. Let it suffice that our entire doctrine is conceded in statements like the following: "We freely acknowledge, that there is an obligation upon such to whom God sends, or among whom he raiseth up a minister, that, if need be, they minister to his necessities; and that it is lawful for him to receive

what is necessary and convenient.”\* “If at any time the ministers we plead for be called of God, so as the work of the Lord hinder them from the use of their trades, they take what is freely given them by such to whom they have communicated spirituals; and having food and raiment, are therewith content.”\* “The general rule is to be admitted, that the preacher of the Gospel, during the periods *when his time is exclusively devoted to his ministerial functions*, may properly derive his sustenance from those among whom he is thus engaged.”† And again, as to the usage of the society, “When they (ministers) are travelling from place to place, and when *their whole time* is thus exclusively devoted to the work of the Gospel, the necessary supply of their outward wants is not withheld from them.”† This is not only reasonable and scriptural, but it is the identical doctrine and practice of our own and other churches. The principle is, that when men, who are “called of God” devote their whole time to the work of the ministry, they are entitled to a support from the people among whom they labor. So we preach, and so we practise. So they preach, and so they practise. They find the principle not incompatible with a spiritual

\* Robert Barclay.

† Gurney.

economy and spiritual worship. Why, then, inveigh against the principle as incorporated in *our* system, as one which must necessarily vitiate our religion and our worship? That the principle is liable to abuse in all societies is very certain. But the objection is made to the principle itself, not to the mere abuse of it. And we must in candor say, it is not made with a due regard to consistency.

To allege that in the one case there is only an "*occasional*" and "*temporary*" appropriation to meet the expenses of ministers while on a journey, or, in any event, while they are devoting all their time to spiritual things; and in the other, a stated, uniform stipend designed to carry them through the entire year, is of no force, unless it can be shown that in the latter case they are not occupied "for the entire year" with their spiritual functions. Our system presumes them to be thus occupied. It requires that they give themselves *wholly* to their work. And for the most part they do this. They forego all secular avocations, that their time and powers may be dedicated to religious purposes. On what ground are they to be excluded from the operation of the principle, that "the preacher of the Gospel is entitled to a subsistence during the periods when his time is exclusively devoted to his ministerial functions?" And if the pre-

sence of a minister who is supported *for the time being* by the people among whom he is laboring, does not prejudice the spirituality of Divine worship; how should such worship be injured by the ministrations of one who, devoting his *whole* time to the spiritual well being of the people, receives from them his entire support?

Will it be said that "the principle, as conceded, does not go beyond the point of 'a *subsistence*;' whereas, in many instances, among other denominations it is carried to the verge of extravagance and luxury?" Those whom it concerns may respond to this argument. It is answered in so far as the churches in this country are implicated, by stating that the great body of the ministers, whether pastors or missionaries, receive *less* than will suffice to maintain them.

Under these circumstances the whole objection falls to the ground; since the practice of the different denominations is shown to be quite within the scope of the rule which has been prescribed on the opposite side as just and proper.

These are topics not very often introduced into our pulpits, and still less attractive to the ministry than to their people. But we seem to owe something



to that large, intelligent, and influential body of people around us, who claim that their worship is spiritual and scriptural, while that of the other Christian sects is disfigured with Levitical rites. It is due to them, and to their numerous descendants and kinsmen who are mingled with our congregations, that we should occasionally set forth the grounds on which we believe certain *forms* and *ordinances* in public worship, to be of universal and perpetual obligation. We would not invade their Christian liberty. But neither are we willing that even the humblest individual amongst us should be left to suppose that we must discard all positive ordinances, if we would worship God "in spirit and in truth." We have not so learned Christ; and of our friends who differ from us, we have only to say, as regards this matter of worship, we would that they were both almost and altogether, such as we are.

I have thus, at greater length than was intended, noticed the two opposite systems which seem to contravene the true purport of the utterance that "God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth;" the system which would revive in the Christian church the obsolete rites of Judaism, and the system which would suppress even

the ceremonies and ordinances expressly instituted by the Saviour.

Our own beloved church occupies a middle ground between these two extremes. It retains those rites, and those only, which are authorized by Christ and his Apostles. And it continually admonishes all who participate in its services, that however simple and scriptural the forms they use, no worship can be acceptable to God unless they worship him "*in spirit and in truth.*"

Be it *our* care thus to worship. Let us seek above all things to have our hearts imbued with the spirit of real devotion; for, with forms or without forms, there is, in GOD'S esteem, no true worship except that which flows from the heart.

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