

# OUR BANNER.

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## THE MISSION OF OUR CHURCH.\*

BY THE REV. DAVID M'FALL, BOSTON.

The general mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is contained in her commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Her special mission is to inculcate the doctrine of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the nations, until that doctrine is practically accepted by the nations, until they recognize Him as their Sovereign and bow in submission to His will as their supreme law. The subject assigned me is, "The present mission of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, but with special reference to evangelistic work." At first sight this might appear to be a third mission, differing from both of the other two, but a little reflection will show that it belongs under the first. "Evangelistic work" is the work of an evangelist, and, "Do the work of an evangelist," is a command binding on us all; and it is quite significant that it is so closely connected with, "Make full proof of thy ministry;" as if the Apostle meant to say, Without such work, such proof cannot be had. Where there is no evangelistic work, there is no evidence of a genuine Christian ministry.

What is the work of an evangelist? In the days of the Apostles, an evangelist was a laborer at large, not stationed like the Presbyters, or later Bishops, at particular posts, but who traveled about freely wherever his services were required. They were employed by the Apostles as messengers for various purposes to all points in their vast field; now to carry letters; now to visit, inspect, and strengthen congregations already established; and now for the further propagation of the Gospel. This latter was their chief work,—to preach the Gospel to nations yet unconverted.

This statement of their work shows the chief stress to lie on preaching to the unconverted. In our modern use of the word, we have

\* Substance of a paper read before the New York Presbytery, at its late meeting in Brooklyn, and published by request.

4th. That by greatly multiplying the wealth of Christians, and by raising up a spiritual agency all over the world, God now gives His people the means, and calls upon them to multiply missionary work tenfold.

The question now is, Shall Christians by the consecration of their talents and wealth, with faith and prayer, show their loyalty to their Lord's last command; or will they, like the rich man in the parable, go on "heaping up treasure for the last days?"

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### THE SACRAMENTAL FEAST.

BY THE REV. J. M. FOSTER, CINCINNATI

"With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." When the guests gathered for this feast, a cup of wine mixed with water was taken. The table was then spread,—the dishes being bitter salad, unleavened bread, roast lamb and thick sauce. The last was the dish in which the treacherous Judas dipped with our Lord, and likewise emblematic, it is said, of the clay with which the Israelites made brick in the land of Egypt. Then all the plates were removed, and presently brought back again. This was to excite inquiry on the part of the children, that an opportunity might be had to instruct them as to the meaning of the feast. Then a second cup of wine mingled with water was taken. After this the feast came. It was followed by a third cup of wine. Before going, a fourth cup was taken. These were alternated with washings, thanksgivings, expositions and praises. The fourth cup seems to have been the one used by the Saviour in instituting the Lord's Supper. In taking it, He abolished the old and inaugurated the new Sacramental Feast.

I. *It is a divinely appointed feast.* The Saviour instituted it the same night in which He was betrayed. The Apostle has given us the words of institution as he received them from the Lord. It were a small matter had the feast been devised by man's own heart. But it is the arrangement, appointment and contrivance of heaven for us. In observing the feast of the Passover, or Pentecost, or new moon, they knew they were approved of God, because He had ordained them. Christians are assured that in keeping this sacramental feast "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," they are pleasing God, because He has commanded it. "This do in remembrance of me."

II. *It is a commemorative feast.* The Passover commemorated the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, the feast of Pentecost the delivery of the law at Sinai. Our Fourth of July celebration commemorates the breaking of the British yoke in 1776. The sacramental feast commemorates the death of Christ, by which we are delivered from sin and Satan, and brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "This do in remembrance of me." When the waters of the Jordan had been divided before the priests hearing the ark, the elders were required to take from the bed of the river one stone.

one for each tribe, and with them to make a heap, that in time to come, when their children should ask, What mean ye by these stones? they might know the waters of Jordan were parted and the people passed over dry shod. They were a remembrancer of the miracle of Jordan. The sacramental feast is a remembrancer of the infinite love of Christ in taking upon Him our nature, and suffering to the death that we might live. It is interesting to note that the two great ordinances of our religion are associated with the word, "remember." The Sabbath is essential to the maintenance of the new life in the soul; and it is prefaced by the word, "remember." "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The Lord's Supper is necessary to the growth of the believer in grace; and that is connected with the command to remember. "This do in remembrance of me." This does not mean simply that the facts are to be kept in mind. It means *heart memory*, such as the Holy Spirit imparts when He brings to our remembrance all things whatsoever Christ has said unto us. We are to remember Him in faith, and surrender our souls to Him cheerfully and absolutely as Saviour and Lord. We are to remember Him in love; for He is the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely.

III. *It is a most significant and confirming feast.* It is a sign and seal of the covenant of redemption. Circumcision was to Abraham a sign of the covenant which God made with him. God calls it "the token of the covenant." The children of Israel were to sprinkle the blood of the pascal lamb on the lintel and two side-posts, and God said, "The blood shall be a token unto you." The sacramental feast is a token of the new covenant. The Jews were familiar with the use of the sign. When Gideon was called to go out against the Midianites, he asked a sign. Let there be dew on the fleece and none upon the ground, and again dew upon the ground and none upon the fleece. This was a sign to him. David inquired of God when he went out against the Philistines, and God said, When thou shalt hear a sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, then thou shalt go out to battle, for God is gone forth before thee. When Isaiah went to Hezekiah to assure him of his recovery, he asked a sign. Let the shadow go backward ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz; and it was so. This feast is a sign from God, that Christ has died for us, and of the conveyance of the blessings of His purchase to us. It is likewise a seal of the covenant. Circumcision was to Abraham a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had. A seal separates and distinguishes. The hundred and forty-four thousand have the seal of God in their foreheads and in their right hand. They are marked as the property of the Redeemer. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." A seal ratifies and confirms. God has given us His promise and confirmed it with an oath. "That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation," and these *two title-deeds* are ratified and confirmed by the seal of the sacra-

mental feast. "The foundation of God standeth sure, the Lord knoweth them that are His." All the attributes of God are pledged to man's redemption. But the pledge is reciprocal. His people then ratify and confirm their vows of loyalty. The word sacrament means an oath. When the Roman soldiers enlisted they took the sacrament, *i. e.*, they swore to obey all the commands of their officers. God's people here take oath to be faithful to King Jesus. They virtually say, We would deserve to have our bodies broken as this bread, and our blood shed as this wine, if we prove disloyal to Him. There is a mutual pledge between God and His people.

IV. *It is a soul nourishing feast.* "I am come into my garden my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honey comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees well refined." Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for the marriage supper of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Every possible form of soul hunger and thirst is satisfied at this feast of the King. It is the summit of the mount. It is the holy of holies. It is His banqueting house. His banner over us is love. We sit down under His shadow with great delight and His fruit is sweet to our taste

V. *It is a fellowship feast.* The members of the home have the highest form of fellowship around the family board. So with the family of God. In this feast there is fellowship between Him who ordained the Supper and the communicants, between the blessings received and the receivers, and between themselves. We have fellowship with the Father in His love, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." "Whom have I in the heavens high, but Thee O Lord alone, and in the earth whom I desire, besides thee there is none." We have fellowship with Christ in His grace. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? The cup which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man open unto me, I will come in and sup with him and he with me." We have fellowship with the Spirit in His illuminating and transforming power. "He shall dwell with you and shall be in you." We have fellowship with the saints. "These things we have declared unto you, that ye might have fellowship with us." We have fellowship with the whole family of God in heaven and earth. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus." What a glorious presence! "How dreadful is this place! It is none other than the house of God, it is the very gate of heaven."

VI. *It is an exhibiting feast.* "Ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." The words, show forth, are emphatic. They signify to announce or proclaim publicly. We exhibit the death of Christ before God as the ground of our hope of acceptance with Him; before our own conscience as the ground of our peace; before the world as the reason of our separation from them; and before Satan as the instrument of victory over his kingdom. "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." It is the great gospel sermon of the Church.

VII. *It is a perpetual feast.* "Till He come." It belongs to the gospel dispensation. It will be observed from His ascension until He come again without sin unto salvation.

Improvement. 1. God has commanded us to observe this feast. "Do this," an injunction as obligatory as the command to keep the Sabbath, to pray, or to love our enemies. 2. The honor of Christ is concerned in it. "If so much as a beast touched the mount, he was to be stoned or thrust through with a dart." "On the top of the mountain, the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy." In Scotland formerly, an aged elder arose just before the table was spread and said, "Let all remember that holy hands must handle holy things." 3. Our personal interests are concerned. "Let a man examine *himself* and so let him eat." Some are deterred from coming because they find sin in themselves. That discovery is the best possible preparation. The publican is justified before God. 4. The interests of our fellow Christians are involved. The whole body by joints and bands has nourishment ministered. 5. It is a duty we owe to the world. In it the gospel is preached by object lessons. It is preaching by action. It is a sermon with nothing but Christ in it, a sermon which all are engaged in, a sermon which cannot be misunderstood, a sermon that goes directly to the heart.

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## Church News.

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### CHURCH REGISTER FOR 1886.

THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS.—*First year:* Robert James Dodds, Robert John Gault, John Knox Reed and Thomas H. Walker. *Second year:* S. G. Connor, G. R. McBurney, A. W. McClurkin, T. A. McElwain, E. M. Milligan, R. C. Reed, W. L. C. Samson and J. S. Thompson. *Third year:* E. M. Coleman, S. D. Johnston, W. A. Pinkerton and J. S. Stewart. *Fourth year:* J. C. B. French, J. M. McElhinney, O. B. Milligan, James Patton, E. M. Smith and H. W. Temple.

J. H. Echols and J. A. McKelvey of the third year, are not in attendance this winter. S. Montgomery of the second year, has joined the United Presbyterians, and is attending their Seminary in Allegheny. Total number of students, 24, of whom 22 are now in attendance at the Seminary. Eight are sons of ministers.

LICENTIATES.—*James M. McElhinney* was licensed by Iowa Presbytery, on April 7, 1886; *James Patton* was licensed by Illinois Presbytery, April 14, 1886;