

# THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

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FEBRUARY, 1834.

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## Religious Communications.

### A SACRAMENTAL SERMON.

#### *Christ the Believer's Peace.*

EPHESIANS ii. 14, first part.—“For he is our peace.”

These words, my brethren, point us to the Redeemer of the world. He who is called JESUS, because he saves his people from their sins; he who is called CHRIST, because he was anointed of the Father for this great purpose; he through whom all the manifestations of the divine mercy that were ever made to the children of men have been conveyed; he, of whom, the apostle affirms in the words which immediately follow the text, that he hath “broken down the middle wall of partition between the Gentile and the Jew, and hath made both one;” he of whom it is declared, in the verse which precedes the text, that “now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ”—HE is our peace; he alone is our peace; he is an unfailling peace-maker.

In discoursing on the words, I will endeavour, in reliance on divine aid, to illustrate them in the three following views:—

I. As referring to the method in which God was rendered reconcileable to fallen man.

II. As descriptive of the manner in which a convinced sinner first obtains solid peace of conscience.

III. As pointing out the source from which the real Christian derives all his consolations and comforts.

After this, a short improvement shall conclude the discourse.

First, then, let us consider the words as referring to the method in which God was rendered reconcileable to fallen man.

Before the birth of time, my brethren, even in the ages of eternity, when “the counsel of peace was between them both,” the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the foresight of the fall of man and the ruin of our race, engaged, to the eternal Father, in the covenant of redemption, to satisfy divine justice in behalf of his elect people, who were given to him in that high and mysterious transaction. Hence, when man had actually fallen, he was not, like the rebel angels, consigned to immediate and hopeless perdition, but received the early promise that “the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.” Hence too, the obedience and death of Christ became, by anticipation, the ground of all the favours conferred on a guilty world before his actual appear-

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"A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

We cannot survey the churches within our bounds, without emotions of melancholy interest. Dangers are gathering and standing thickly around them. This is especially true of those that are without pastors. With them we deeply sympathize; and we exhort them immediately to cry to God, to send them able, devout, orthodox and learned men, who shall feed the flock with knowledge and with understanding. And we finally advise, that the members of the churches under our care, be exhorted carefully and diligently to study the Scriptures, and to make them the man of their counsel, and the guide of their opinions and of their actions: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." We would pray that the Holy Spirit may descend upon us, not to communicate new truth, not to reveal new motives, but to "bring to our remembrance all things whatsoever Christ hath taught," and by his mighty power to sanctify us through his truth. We would humbly and earnestly implore him, soon to bring thousands around us into the church, who are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God."

ALEX. B. CORNING, *Moderator.*

E. C. BEACH, *Stated Clerk.*

*Session of Presbytery, Onondaga Hollow, }  
Oct. 16, 1833.*

#### EDITORIAL REMARKS.

In addition to what we have said as prefatory to this article, we remark, that the very same unsoundness in religious doctrine, may lead to directly opposite extremes; according to the different natural temperament, in connexion with some accidental circumstance, of the parties who severally imbibe it. With those of a *sanguine* temperament, in a time of religious excitement, it often produces the monstrous fanaticism of which the preceding article furnishes an example. It is probable that *Shakerism* will ultimately receive a considerable reinforcement, from those whom the presbytery of Onondaga describe; as it did, about thirty years ago, from the fanatics of Kentucky. But the opposite extreme of *Unitarianism*, which men of a phlegmatic temperament, joined with a love of speculation, elaborate from precisely the same materials, the identical false doctrines, that the fanatics begin with, will probably prevail far more extensively than its antipodes. The Presbyterian church, at present, is incubating on a large quantity of these Cockatrice eggs; and in time, and we think the time is not far distant, the brood of vipers will come forth, in all their goodly proportions and distinctive characters.

#### A CHARGE

*Delivered at the Installation of the REV. CORNELIUS C. CUYLER, D. D. as Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, January 14th, 1834, by ASHBEL GREEN, D. D.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

It is known to us all that you have, for a series of years, sustained the pastoral office in a beloved sister church, with acknowledged fide-

lity and a happy success. In addressing you, therefore, on the present occasion, I shall not speak to you in all respects, as I should to one who had had little or no acquaintance with pastoral duties. Still, it can never be improper for any of us, to call those duties to remembrance; our church order requires it at the installation of a pastor; and the apostle Paul did not think it superfluous to give a solemn charge to Timothy; who, though a young minister, was not without considerable practical knowledge of the demands of the sacred office, and to whose fidelity the apostle himself had borne decisive testimony.\*

I propose, therefore, to make a brief statement of pastoral duties; which, as they may properly be reviewed by every minister of the gospel present, so they are especially proper for your meditation, in the position which you now occupy, by the relation which has just been formally constituted between you and this beloved people. The inspired apostle shall be my guide in all I have to offer.

“Take heed unto thyself and to thy doctrine,” was the apostle’s direction to Timothy; and through him, it is the apostolic injunction, or rather that of the Holy Ghost, to every minister of Christ.

1. “Take heed unto thyself.” I do verily believe, my brother, that not only does the prospect of a minister’s usefulness in his sacred function almost entirely depend, under God, on his personal piety, but that the *measure* of his success, and the *measure* of his personal piety, will generally correspond—taking into view always, the rate of talent which is possessed by the parties severally concerned. Yes; and the want of more success in the ministry is, in a great degree, to be attributed to the difficulty of a minister’s keeping up in his own soul habitually, that impressive view of divine things, that holy intercourse with heaven, and that weighty sense of the value of immortal souls, which would give activity and energy, and the right *manner* also, to all his addresses, both from the pulpit and in private and personal interviews. Oh! when a minister has that sacred unction which is derived from much sweet communion with his God and Saviour, it renders every duty easy, it makes every affliction light, it gives him a delightful alacrity in all he does, it suggests the best thoughts and the best language, for all his sermons and for all his private conversations; and it imparts to his very countenance, and to all his speaking and acting, *a something* which every body feels, but which it is not easy to describe. When a man of God is in this frame, he can even reprove and rebuke, in a way which will not be offensive; except it be to those abandoned wretches that our Saviour himself calls *swine*—May you, brother, know much, very much, of this anointing from the Spirit of all grace: and if you do, you will need no other guide, in taking heed to all your conduct. You will be “an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

2. “Take heed unto thy doctrine.” You are aware that we have fallen on evil times in this country—times in which sound doctrine is no longer taught, in some places where once nothing else would have been endured. It has, therefore, become peculiarly incumbent on those who would approve themselves faithful as the ministers of Christ, “to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.” In doing this, I would by no means recommend that the general strain of your preaching should be controversial. Far from this—There may be occasions, indeed, in which important litigated points may, with

\* See Philippians ii. 20.

propriety, be treated in a controversial manner, in the pulpit: but when so treated in the sacred desk, it should always be with much of "the meekness of wisdom." But in general, I hold it to be far better, to establish the truth from scripture, reason, and experience, and in the same way to answer objections, without directly referring to controversy at all: for if truth be well established and illustrated before the people, error will of course be rejected, and its influence and prevalence prevented. But while, in all our preaching, we are to be careful to "speak the things that become sound doctrine," and never to speak equivocally and ambiguously, but to use "sound speech that cannot be condemned," we must also remember, that we are bound to declare "the whole counsel of God." The entire revealed system, at least in all its great and distinguishing features, must be brought into view by the faithful minister of Christ, whose connexion with a people is of sufficient continuance to enable him to do it.

Rightly to proportion the time and attention which we give to the several points of theology, in our public preaching, I hold to be an important duty, and yet I know it is one of considerable difficulty. The great practical truths of the gospel—regeneration by the Holy Ghost, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, a good hope through grace, supreme love to God, love also to our fellow men—both friends and enemies, saints and sinners—the indispensable necessity of a life of holy obedience to all God's commandments, comprehending the whole system of moral duties, as the evidence and fruit, and the only satisfactory evidence and fruit of a new nature—death, judgment, and eternity—Here certainly are the vastly interesting topics on which we are most frequently to dwell, and an attention to which we are most importunately to urge. Yet there may be intermixed, and even connected with these, something of the history, and biography, and devotional sentiments, of the sacred volume—conveying much instruction, as well as giving much interest, to the main subject of discussion. Every class of hearers is to receive due attention. Unsanctified sinners are to be addressed, in an alarming, and yet an affectionate manner; and to be urged, without delay, to flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them: Sensible and inquiring sinners are to be directed to an all-sufficient and inviting Saviour: God's own dear people are to be fed with the bread of life—the precious truths, promises, and consolations of the gospel. The feeble-minded are to be comforted, and the doubting to be resolved.

"Jesus Christ and him crucified," you know, was the sum and substance of the preaching of holy Paul; and so let it be of yours. It has been grievous, very grievous to me, to observe how little of Christ there is, both in the preaching and writing, of too many theologians in our land, and in our church. Brother, be it your care, and I think it will, to hang, if I may so speak, all your doctrines on the cross of Christ: and while your preaching is, and ought to be, characteristically *doctrinal preaching*, still let it all point and lead to Calvary; to "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

3. The apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders, that he had not only "taught them publicly," but "from house to house." Every minister of Christ ought, so far as his circumstances will permit, to imitate this apostolic example. Ministerial visitation, next to the public preaching of the word, is probably the most important, and the most useful service, that a pastor in the church of Christ can render to the flock committed to his charge. It brings him acquainted with the

peculiar circumstances of the individuals placed under his ministerial supervision; it gives him such a hold on their affections, and such an influence over them, as he can seldom, if ever, otherwise obtain; it will often furnish him with the most proper and profitable subject for a public discourse; it will enable him to know and sympathize with the sorrows of the afflicted; it will take him to the bed-side of the sick and the dying; it will cause him to mingle his tears with the bereaved and mourning; it will bring to his knowledge the state of labouring minds, that he would never otherwise know; it will give him many an opportunity to cherish the first motions of serious attention to religion, that might else become extinct; it will enable him to come nearer to the consciences of individuals, by personally addressing them, than he could do by public preaching; it will often put it in his power to become a peacemaker among contending members of his charge; and when any of the professing members of the church that he serves, are walking disorderly, or beginning to backslide, private visitation, rightly conducted, will be likely to have more influence in reclaiming and restoring them, than every thing beside. Private intercourse with his people, will also give a pastor the best opportunity to become acquainted with, and to gain the affections of the lambs of his flock; to tenderly admonish them of their duty to God, as well as to their parents; and to make arrangements, and use arguments, both with them and with those who have the charge of them, to be attentive to Sabbath schools and Bible classes, and by no means to neglect the catechisms of our church. As I shall not make a distinct head of a minister's duty, in regard to catechetical instruction, and its usual accompaniments in our day, I will now say, summarily, that I do verily believe that *here* is a field for usefulness, of the most promising kind; and that the pastor who does not cultivate it diligently and carefully, neglects an important part of his duty.

But after all, I must distinctly remark, before I leave this particular, that a good deal of sound discretion, and some resolution too, are necessary to direct a minister in the apportioning of his time, and of his attention to the various duties which are incumbent on him. If a *young* minister of the gospel does not spend the greater part of his time in his study, in careful theological reading, in studying the Holy Scriptures in the original tongues, and in a laborious preparation of sermons, he will, invariably and forever, remain a superficial man. And whatever be a minister's age and standing, he must take a portion of every week to prepare for the Sabbath, if he expects to perform his pulpit work, which is his main work, in a suitable manner—in a manner that will show him to be “approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” The people of a congregation ought to be well apprized of what I here state, and to make the proper allowance for their minister, in the article of personal and private visitations; and the lay officers of the church, and other discreet and well-informed members, both male and female, ought to take a great part of the important business of Sabbath school and catechetical instruction off the hands of their minister, that he may have the more time to give to those duties which are exclusively official.

It is greatly in your favour, my dear brother, and greatly in favour of this people, that you come to them after more than twenty years of ministerial labour and experience; and also, by the blessing of God, with a firm and uninjured constitution. Thus prepared, you will be able, and I doubt not you will be as willing as you are able, to devote a large part of your time to the service of your charge, in the way I

have cursorily mentioned in speaking of pastoral visitation: and let me say to you, that you will find that *the interests of the Presbyterian church at large*—interests which, from the existing state of this church, must be attended to in this city—will make a demand on your time, to no inconsiderable amount, and yet it will be time well employed.

4. The apostle Paul told Timothy, that the intention of a part of his epistle was, (to use his own words) “that thou mayest know, how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The context of these words shows, that they refer to the discipline and government of the church. A few remarks on these topics, therefore, will bring me to the close of what I have to say on this occasion. It has often been remarked, that a church without discipline, is like a garden without a fence: And truly, my brother, this seems to me to be but too just an emblem, at the present time, of the Presbyterian church, into which you have now entered. But there are yet some in this church, who remember when discipline did exist, and was faithfully administered; and they have some hope, that such a time will yet return. So far as your co-operation can have influence, in bringing about this desirable event, I greatly mistake if we may not safely calculate upon you.

In the administration of discipline, whether it be in a church session, having for its objects the erring individuals of a congregation, or whether it be in the higher judicatories of the church, with reference to immoralities or heresies there to be adjudicated upon, the inspired injunction is, that we “do nothing by partiality.” The most candid and impartial treatment of every individual, and every case, of whatever kind, that can come before any church court, is of the last importance, to secure the great and only ends of discipline,—the reformation of offenders; or failing in that, the freeing of the church from the dishonour and scandal of protecting and fostering transgressors. According to my observation, the first of these objects—the reformation of offenders, is, for the most part, to be hoped for from private, faithful, tender, and solemn remonstrance and admonition. This has often a salutary effect. But when once a regular process is commenced, although the reformation of the offender is still to be sought, it is, I think, but rarely witnessed—To preserve the purity and credit of the church, and to free it from the reproaches of its enemies, is commonly the most that can then be expected.

In regard to the solemn and important concern of ordaining ministers of the gospel, the express command of the apostle to Timothy is—“Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens’ sins; keep thyself pure.” I confess there is something that strikes me in this injunction as peculiarly impressive, I had almost said, as exceedingly awful. It is, that whoever takes part in ordaining to the gospel ministry an unsound or immoral man, is a partaker with him, and with those who plead for his ordination, in the sin which he may commit, and cause others to commit, by preaching false doctrine, or by an unholy life. Therefore, brother, if you are not satisfied with a man’s fitness for the sacred office, no matter what may be the consequences of rejection to him, no matter what your fellow presbyters may think or wish, do not lay your hand upon him in an ordination service—“keep thyself pure.”

In sustaining the government of the church, it seems, at the present time, to be particularly necessary and important, to keep in mind what

that government is. It is not Episcopal government; it is not Independent or Congregational government. It is *Presbyterian* church government; to the support of which every minister, and every session, in the Presbyterian church are sacredly pledged. I need not tell you in detail, what Presbyterian government is—That it is, from beginning to end, a government by *representation*; that a congregation choose their pastor and their elders, and commit to them the management of all their *spiritual* concerns; that presbyteries and synods are bodies representative of churches; that the General Assembly is a representation of all the presbyteries, and through them, of all the churches and congregations in our connexion; that each of these bodies has its duties and its limits, clearly defined in a written and printed constitution; and that no judicatory can either transgress its appropriate duties or limits, or permit them to be transgressed, (so far as it has power to prevent the transgression) without a violation—a criminal violation—of that constitution which every officer of our church courts is, by a solemn engagement, bound to sustain. You will, therefore, my dear sir, be watchful, that in this congregation, strict Presbyterian church government shall be observed; and happy will you be, if you shall have an instrumentality in restoring it to the church at large, of which you have become a member.

Thus I have finished what I proposed, in the delineation of ministerial and pastoral duty—Of the trials and consolations of this sacred office, which you, brother, hold in common with your co-presbyters, I need not speak. You know them all; you have, I am sure, often experimentally proved the most of them. I shall only say, in the words of Paul to Timothy—“Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” You take charge of a people who, you know, are peculiarly dear to me; and you know that I rejoice to see them committed to your charge: and I do earnestly pray, that your labours among them may be more successful than mine ever were. And O! with you, and with those converted to God by your instrumentality, or by my own, or by any of our predecessors in the ministry of this church, let us hope—yes, we will hope—to rejoice together, in the day when God shall make up his jewels, and judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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*For the Christian Advocate.*

## THE NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT.

### No. II.

Having shown that the view of the atonement to which our attention has been directed, is entirely inadequate and inadmissible, we shall proceed,

II. To show from the Scriptures, what its *true* nature is—If we clearly understand its *nature*, we shall have very little difficulty about its *extent* and *application*. In order to arrive at a scriptural knowledge of this, I remark in the

1st place, That our race is both sinful and guilty—we are also taught that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission.” The reason of this is, because the forfeiture of life is the penalty for transgression—“In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”—“The soul that sinneth it shall die.” For this state of things God has provided a remedy in “the seed of the woman,” his “only begotten son.”

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