

This event has often been used as an illustration of the
spiritual state of men & of the means used for their
salvation. Had any man but a prophet gone to preach
to dry bones, the enterprise would have been regarded
not merely as hopeless, but as absurd. It may ^{however} without
exaggeration be said that the task of those who preach
to sinners without a divine message & a divine mission
is not less hopeless. If a Hebrew prophet addressed himself
to men long dead, such preachers address themselves
to those whom the immutable law of God has already
condemned to death. Without authority, to exhort such
to live, is to exhort them to escape from the presence
of the Omnipresent, from the power of the Omnipotent,
or to change him who is unchangeable. If the Hebrew
prophet addressed those who had no ears to hear,
or power to obey; such teachers address those who are
dead in trespasses & sin, who tho' they ^{have} ears they hear
not, and are no more likely ~~that they will~~ ^{to} turn unto
God alive, than ~~that~~ ^{if} dead by their own power, leave their
graves. Notwithstanding the hopelessness of this task, it
is one which men are constantly disposed to undertake.
To secure the forgiveness of sin, & restoration to the favour
of God may be said to be the great object to which
the ^{mind} ~~interest~~ of man has ever been directed. The fact

Rom. 1:16. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also the Greek.

When the Spirit led the prophet into the valley covered with bones exceeding dry, and commanded him to preach to them, it was to all appearance a hopeless task, yet as he preached, they lived, and stood up an exceeding great army. Not less hopeless ~~to all appearance~~, and not less effectual, in fact, is the preaching of the gospel to those who are dead in trespasses and sin. If the Hebrew prophet addressed himself to men long dead; the Christian preacher must address those who are dead in law; those whom the righteousness & consequently the innumerable law of God, has already condemned. To an enlightened ^{unacquainted with the gospel} reason, the exhortation to such men to live; is equivalent to an exhortation to escape the power & presence of God, or to effect a change in him ^{who is unchangeable} ~~unchangeable~~. Men moreover are not only legally, but ^{divine} spiritually dead. They are as devoid of ~~spiritual~~ ^{divine} life, as the ~~dry~~ ^{devoid} bone to which the prophet spoke, were of animal life. ~~They are~~ There is moreover as little ground of hope that they will of themselves arise and live, as that the dead will spontaneously leave their graves. It is not

a matter of wonder therefore that all the means of man's devising for the accomplishment of this object, ^{in all ages} have ~~failed & must forever fail~~. To rescue a sinner from the sentence of God's holy law, ^{to} restore him to the favour of his maker & to ~~release~~ ^{re-raise} upon his soul the divine image, may be said to the object to which in all ages, the minds of all men have ~~been directed~~. The fact that we have lost the favour of God, that we need forgiveness & ~~purification~~ ^{renovation}, is ~~too~~ ^{too} deeply graven on ^{the} ~~our~~ ^{of men.} common consciousness, to escape the knowledge or acknowledgment of any set of men; and the necessity ~~importance~~ ^{importance} of this fact is too obvious & too absorbing to allow it to be a matter of indifference. How a man can be just with God, and how a clean thing can be brought out of an unclean; in other words, how he is to escape the punishment due to him for sin, & how he is to be prepared for the presence of God, is the great problem ^{the solution of} to which all religions, all systems of philosophy, ^{all minds} and ~~much~~ human legislation, have ever been directed.

It may be said that ^{this} statement is much too strong, since there are many men who give themselves little concern about their relation to God, or their condition in a future world. Even if the fact were so, it would hardly require any modification in what has

just been said. The fact that there ^{are} many ^{in the} "idiot"
^{word} is no evidence that reason is not an attribute
of our nature; neither is the concern of some
men, any proof that the race as a race is
not burdened with a sense of sin, and anx-
ious for redemption. But ^{the} fact that un-
concern exists to any great extent may
fairly be questioned. In many cases indif-
ference is mere affectation; in more it is
the effect of delusion as to what is necessary
for their future well-being. ~~It is not that~~
~~they~~ ^{do not} deny that they are sinners, but ~~it is~~
that they think pardon may be easily pro-
cured, and hence their apparent unconcern. The
most irreligious men, have a religion of their
own. They are irreligious because they reject
the true religion, but they do homage to the
Satan by devising some scheme for accomplish-
ing the very end, which the gospel is designed
to effect. It is therefore as a general fact
true that pardon & renovation are felt to be the
great necessities of our fallen nature; and it is
no less true that to meet these necessities
has been the great subject of study since the
apostasy of our race. To this end have the sacrifices,
the ablutions, the prayers, the pilgrimages, the
penances, of all religions been directed. To effect
the reunion of the soul with God has been the
proposed object of all philosophy. For this pur-

pass she has carried her flickering lamp, in to
every dark recess in hopes of discovering some
clue by which to guide her steps to peace &
happiness. But the world by wisdom knew not God.
The ~~extraneous~~ ^{extraneous} calculations of an evil heart have ever dim-
med or ~~extinguished~~ ^{extinguished} the glimmering light
which burns in the human ~~breast~~ ^{Men}. ~~So that~~ ^{Men}
~~while~~ professing themselves: to be wise, became
fools, exchanged ^{for} glory for the incorruptible
glory, ~~for~~ ^{for} the image of corruptible man, and
of birds, & four footed beasts & creeping things, & wor-
shipped & served the creature ~~rather~~ ^{rather} than
the creator. The universe ~~could~~ ^{can} hardly be-
sent to the eyes of angels a more gloomy spec-
tacle than the race of man, conscious of its
necessities, aware that it was not beyond the
reach of mercy, yet ever trying some ineffec-
tual means of restoration, & ever wandering
farther from the truth.

There is no one fact more fully establish-
ed by the history of the world, than ~~that~~ the inef-
ficacy of all the means devised by human wis-
dom to save the human soul. But what is impossi-
ble with men, is possible with God; what human
wisdom has in vain attempted, that it is the
peculiar province of the gospel to accomplish.
It is the power of God unto salvation.

By power is of course meant the ability or
efficiency for the production of a certain effect; and

the gospel is powerful in accomplishing the salvation of men. It is however the power of God, its efficacy is derived from him; It is the means which he employs to which he renders effectual to that end. -

~~As the attainment of eternal life is for every man the most important of all personal interests; and ~~the~~ promoting the salvation of others the most important of all social duties, it is absolutely necessary that we should understand & properly employ the means which God has ordained for this end. If we mistake the means, as thousands do, we shall certainly lose our own souls & minister to the perdition of our fellow men.] -~~

By the gospel of Christ we are to understand the message of God ~~to men~~ concerning his purpose of saving men through Jesus Christ. It includes all the doctrines, promises & precepts communicated by Ch.^t in reference to the plan of salvation. It is called the gospel of God in reference to its author; the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the kingdom, ^{the gospel of salvation} in reference to its subject. It is therefore the revelation which God has made concerning his Son, his person, offices, work & kingdom, which is declared to be the ~~power of God~~ great and only efficacious means of salvation.

The truth of this declaration might be established in various ways. It might be shown in the first place that natural religion, a that

knowledge of good & duty which men derive from the words of good & from the constitution of their own nature, is insufficient to lead them to discover any adequate means to secure either the forgiveness of sin or the renovation of the heart. This fact is expressly asserted in Scripture. Those who are destitute of the gospel, are declared to be without God, without hope, without a mediator, aliens & strangers. It is declared, that the world by wisdom knew not God; but on the contrary, through the vanity of their minds, they became blind to the manifestation of his eternal power & goodness made in his works. The Scriptures also assert that the moral character of all who are left to their own guidance is corrupt; that the religion taught by the wisdom of men is ineffectual to purify the heart & regulate the life. They say with regard to all such there is none righteous no not one, there is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good no not one.

The truth of these declarations is abundantly confirmed by observation. It is a fact that beyond the limits enlightened by a revelation from God, no adequate knowledge of the divine character has ever been found among men; nor do we ever find that holiness of heart & life which he requires.

The same remarks may be made with regard to the insufficiency of human knowledge, of science or

philosophy, or in their application, of education to accomplish the salvation of men. This means has been variously tried in every age of the world, & always with the same disastrous result. Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. The wisdom of men is foolishness with God. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.

The same thing is true of the rites, ceremonies, the bodily exercises, with which men vainly endeavour to propitiate God, appease their conscience, or subdue their sins. These means have, ^{also} been tried & tried in vain, wherever men exist. -

But, in the second place, besides this negative proof, we have abundant positive evidence of the truth that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. We find the apostle expressly discarding reliance on all other means for accomplishing the object of his mission. Christ sent him to preach the gospel. This he did simply, lest the Cross of Christ sh^d become of no effect; for it was the purpose of God thro' the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe. Though this means was despised by the Greeks & an offence to the Jews, he declared it to be the power of God & the wisdom of God, & he therefore determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ & him crucified. He placed his confidence in nothing but the Cross of Christ. He every where presented himself as a minister of the gospel declaring it to be his mission to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. He uniformly

ascribes all his success in bringing sinner to God & holiness, not to any skill or wisdom of his own, but to the power of the gospel. He claims the Corinthians as his children, because he had begotten them through the gospel; he reminds them they received fr. him the gospel in which the blood by which also they were saved. If that gospel was hid, it was only to those whose eyes the God of this world had blinded, lest ~~it~~ its glorious light sh^d shine unto them. The Ephesians had been made fellow heirs & partakers of the promise of God by the gospel. He gives thanks that God had called the Thessalonians by the gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Saviour he says has abolished death & brought light & immortality to light through the gospel, for wh. I am made a preacher, an ~~apostle~~ apostle, & a teacher of the gentiles. He pronounces accursed any ^{even tho' an angel} who should preach any other gospel. Apostasy fr. y^e gospel he declares to be a deadly sin, leaving the apostate in a condition in which he has nothing to expect but the judgment & fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. Hence the great anxiety of the apostles for the purity of the gospel; hence their exhortations to continue steadfast in the faith of the gospel; hence their indefatigable labours for its extension. In every possible way do they assert & teach that it was by the gospel & by the gospel alone that they hoped to be saved themselves, or to promise the salvation of others.

This doctrine of the Scripture that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, is abundantly

confirmed by the history of the world. The progress of the gospel is just as discernible as the progress of the sun. There is as marked a difference between those places where the gospel is faithfully preached & those in which it is unknown as between day & night. Neither the fact nor the cause of the difference can be called in question. Whether ever the gospel is there is the knowledge of God; there is peace & sense of the divine favour; there is also holiness of heart & life. These effects always, to a greater or less extent, attend the preaching of the gospel. They decline when it declines, they disappear when it disappears; they revive when it revives.—

were it possible millions of witnesses would arise to bear their individual testimony to the doctrine of the text; and I doubt not, ^{many} such witnesses can be found in this audience. Men who can say from their own experience that the gospel is indeed the power of God unto salvation; that it has delivered them who through all their life was subject to bondage; that it has given them peace with God & peace in their bosoms; that it has introduced them into the glorious liberty of the children of God, enabled them to rejoice in hope of his glory; that it has subdued the power of Satan & given them in multitudes of cases the victory over sin, & is the source of all their spiritual strength & of all their hopes & joys.

II. The fact therefore that the gospel is thus efficacious in saving men, cannot be doubted. It may however be of use to inquire for a few minutes into the sources of its power.

1. It might be enough to say that it is a matter of divine appointment. This is the ultimate reason of the efficiency of any cause ~~for the production of its effect~~. The will of God has determined that one event should produce another; and if ~~has~~ it has pleased him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, or to make the gospel ~~powerful unto~~ the channel of his power in saving men, we have the most satisfactory solution of the question; as to the source of the efficacy of the gospel.

2. But as God adopts means ~~in their own nature~~ fitted to the end wh. they are intended to serve, it may be remarked further that the gospel is adapted to secure the salvation of men, because it, in the first place, reveals a righteousness suited to their necessities, ~~and available~~ to their justification before God. This is the reason which the apostle himself assigns. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation because therein is revealed the righteousness of God. It is plain from other passages in his epistles that by "righteousness of God," he means a righteousness which is from God, which he gives, and which is available at his tribunal. It is opposed to our

own righteousness & declared to be his gift. The
gospel therefore is effectual to salvation be-
cause it makes known, offers, and confers a
righteousness which secures our justification
& reconciliation with God. This is the grand
source of its power, without which all other
excellencies would be of ^{no} little avail. If it left
us still under the curse of the law; if it dis-
closed no method by which we ~~could~~ can ob-
tain the forgiveness of sins ~~restoration to the~~
~~divine favour~~ it could ^{not} be effectual to the
salvation of sinners. Its disclosures of the infinite
holiness & justice of God; of the spiritualty & extent
of his law; of the necessity of perfect obedience in
order to justification, would but ~~repel us from~~
~~this promise~~ & drive us to despair. But revealing
as it does a method by which God can be just
& yet justify the ungodly; it is exactly suited to
our necessities. The righteousness which it presents
~~for our acceptance~~ is absolutely perfect, and it meets
& answers all the demands of the law ~~which we~~
~~have broken~~; it, ~~therefore~~ ^{fully} satisfies the justice of God;
it satisfies ~~appears~~ the demands of conscience;
it satisfies all the interests of the moral gov-
ernment of God, and instead of endangering the
welfare of other holy beings it in the highest de-
gree exalts their blessedness by its display of the mani-
fold grace & wisdom of God. It is with unspeakable
delight that the sinner sensible of his guilt acqui-
esces in a plan of salvation which thus honours God

; which thus sustains the divine law, & which
while it humbles & saves himself, ministers to the
blessedness of all holy beings. He sees that ^{there} is now
no reason why the believing sinner should be
punished. All the ends of punishment are an-
swered far more effectually by the atoning
righteousness of Christ, than they could ever
have been by his own perdition. Being justified
by faith he has peace with God, through the
Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall lay any thing to the
charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies, who is
he that condemns. It is Christ that died, yea
rather that has risen again, who is even at the
right hand of God, who also makes intercession
for us. There is no condemnation to him that is
in Christ Jesus. To such a man there can be no
rational source of disquiet. God has forgiven him,
his Saviour ever lives to intercede for him, and
by that intercession to secure him from all fatal
evil to the enjoyment of all necessary good.

Here then is the first great necessity of the sin-
ner fully met & satisfied by the gospel. It secures
the full & final remission of his sins & restoration
to the favour of God. It is this that gives it its di-
vine power.

But in the second place, as we need sanctifica-
tion, no less than justification, the gospel to
be effectual to our salvation, must provide for
the former as well for the latter. And this it does

abundantly & effectually. It is according to the consubstantial
divine nature that the favour of God should
itself produce holiness. His favour is the life of the
soul. Whatever therefore brings the soul into favour
with God, secures its sanctification. It involves a
contradiction to suppose that the divine Being
should be propitious towards a rational crea-
ture, ~~communicating to it~~ ^{ing} ~~with~~ ^{it} in the fellow-
ship of love, without that creature being made
a partaker of the divine nature. As the sun
calls from the bosom of the earth its ~~beauties~~ ^{fragrance}
beauties, so does the light of God's countenance
call from all intelligent creatures the exercises
of holiness. Of therefore the gospel by revealing a
righteousness which meets all the demands of God, se-
cures our reconciliation with our heavenly Father.
It does thereby secure our sanctification. You may
search the universe in ~~vain~~ ^{vain} for a single spirit living
in the enjoyment of the love of God, who is not ~~thence~~
at the same divine love. This fact is ^{true} ~~not to be account-~~ ^{owned}
~~ed for, merely saying that God loves none but the~~
~~holy; this indeed is true,~~ but because his love pro-
duces holiness. We love him because he first loved
us; is the causal relation asserted by the apostle
himself. Hence it is so important a part of the
office of the Holy Spirit to shed abroad the love of
God in the heart; to witness with our spirit that we
are the sons of God. This is what Paul speaks when he
says, that it being made under the law, redeemed those

who were under the law, that we might be received
in adoption sons, because we are born, i. e. susceptible
to fall, he sends forth the Spirit of his Son into our
hearts crying Abba, Father; that is, assures us of the
divine favour, in order to produce in us the filial
feelings of love, reverence, & desire to obey. The
love of God is like the oil of gladness on Aaron's head
that went down to the skirts of his garments; or as the
dew of Hermon, ~~the~~ ^{or the} dew that descended on the crown
of Zion. — ~~The gospel therefore~~ ^{It is by} placing the soul
under the light of God's countenance, ~~is~~ ^{that the gospel} ~~secure~~
its sanctification.

But again, it secures this ~~same~~ end by teaching the
true method of sanctification. It does, ^{not} send ^{us} ~~down~~ ^{to}
the schools of the moral philosopher, to learn the ^{means}
of promoting virtue. The rules derived from ^{that} ~~these~~ ^{source}
as far as they have any value, are themselves in-
cluded in the scripture, but ~~at~~ such rules them-
selves have never been effectual to the purification
of a single heart. They relate to ~~the regulation of the~~
external conduct, or to the government of the heart,
not to its regeneration. They tell us how ^{to regulate}
the principles of a fallen nature, but ~~give us~~
^{create new principles} ~~no insight into the source from which~~ ^{new princi-}
ples are to be obtained. They can ~~do~~ at best
heal the wounds of the soul slightly, ^{they} ~~but~~ ^{cannot}
reach the ~~root~~ seat source of the evil. — ^{neither} ~~the~~ ^{does}
^{the gospel} ~~it~~ direct us to those means of improvement wh.
fanaticism in all ages has so zealously inculcated.
It does not prescribe retirement from the world; nor

make bodily pain a panacea for the diseases of the
soul. All that is right & reasonable in this form of
self discipline, it prescribes in requiring self denial,
self control, & moderation in all things; but it ~~does~~
~~not~~ neither drives us into asceticism, nor does it
give the primary place, to what is at most a sub-
ordinate auxiliary to ^{holiness} holy living. Much less does
it countenance those means of purification
which superstition enjoys. It has no rites of mys-
tic or magic influence; It has no sacred gorges
whose water cleanses ~~the soul~~. It has no holy places
whose presents protect from sin. It ^{has no} formulas of incanta-
tion to expel the ~~evil~~ spirit of evil from the heart. It
leads us to God; to the fountain which he has ~~open~~
ed for sin & uncleanness. It teaches us that the de-
sign of Christ's ~~work~~ & death was not only to se-
cure pardon but purity; that he gave himself for
his church that she might sanctify and cleanse
it; that ^{he is} it not less our sanctification than our
righteousness; that by acquiescing in the plan of salva-
tion ~~which it proposes~~, we become interested in that
covenant, the great design of which is to deliver us
from all sin; that those who are in Christ & ~~his~~ are
made partakers of his Spirit, which dwells in them,
fashioning ^{them} ~~now~~ ^{after} ~~into~~ conformity to the image
of God. It directs them, therefore, to apply to Christ by faith
for strength & divine influence to enable ^{them} to resist sin,
and to become holy. It warns them against grieving,
quenching or resisting that Spirit which dwells in them

as in a temple. It assures them that in their own strength they can do nothing, but that through ~~it~~ ^{the} strength they can do all things; & that our heavenly Father is more willing to give the H. S. to them than ask them than parents are to give food to their children while it thus inculcates a simple reliance on the influence of the Spirit vouchsafed & promised by Christ, it at the same ~~time~~ ^{time}, enjoins the faithful discharge of all religious & social duties, & the assiduous use of all those means which God has appointed for our growth in grace. Thus ^{the} gospel is ~~the~~ ^{the} power of God unto salvation, because it teaches what human wisdom never could discover, the only true & effectual means of recovering the lost image of God, & of becoming prepared for the joys of his presence.

But again, the gospel is itself of all means the most effectual in promoting holiness; It not only teaches the way to holiness, but it is the source of it. We are born by the ~~the~~ truth we are sanctified by the truth! our hope alone & faith all find their appropriate objects in the word of God; ^{it} ~~this~~ is the source of light ~~to direct us~~ ^{to direct us} ~~steps~~, of strength, of patience, of joy. It is the sword of the Spirit. By its exceeding great & precious promises we are made partakers of the divine nature.

With regard to this sanctifying power of ^{the} God there are different opinions. Some would refer it

all to the natural power of the Truth which it reveals, & deny that there is any spiritual influence attending it. Others going to an opposite extreme, assign a magic influence to the word; ~~as if~~ ^{analogous} to that which they suppose to belong to water in baptism, & to ~~the~~ elements in the Eucharist. They assume that by the ordination of God the word has inherently a supernatural power, distinct, on the one hand from its moral influence, ~~as truth~~, & on the other from the power of the Spirit ~~by which it is accompanied~~, by which it is accompanied. But though the scriptures ascribe great efficacy to the word of God in sanctification, that power, is most properly referred either to ^{its} attributes as divine & authoritative Truth, or to the energy of the H. S. who works with ~~by~~ the Truth upon our hearts. —

That the Holy Spirit does employ the Truth in the regeneration, sanctification & consolation of his people is proved by the passage already referred, & is a familiar & admitted truth among Christians; But and as far as is known, he never operates on the mind, in his ordinary sanctifying influence, otherwise than with or through the Truth. But besides this divine power which attends the ~~power~~ ^{truth} word, ~~which~~ ^{which} prepares the soul for its reception, there is in the word itself every thing which can give power to Truth. There is a relation between the rational soul & Truth, established by God, which makes the latter the appropriate food of the former; ~~and~~ ~~which~~ and hence the moral character of man is always determined by the system of opinions which

They really believe & with which their minds are
in constant communion. This is the solution of
the fact that error is always & productive of
evil, & that all truth tends to produce holiness.
This being the case, the fact that the gospel
reveals the highest, purest, and most import-
ant truths within the compass of human know-
ledge, must give ^{it} a power for good which be-
longs to no other means for the sanctification
of men. There we have the sublime concep-
tion of God, ^{a personal} infinite, eternal
& unchangeable in his being and perfections.
There is nothing in the whole range of human con-
^{ceptions} ~~positions, ancient or modern~~, that can for one mo-
ment be compared ~~as to importance~~ with this
single truth: ~~which~~ either as to its importance
or its power. It must enlarge, and purify, & govern
every mind just in proportion as it is rightly
apprehended & duly contemplated. The gospel
somewhat reveals the perfect character of Jesus Christ;
combining in ~~one~~ mysterious & harmonious union
all divine & human excellence. How many hearts
has that character subdued & reclaimed; how many
wavering minds has it fixed with confidence;
into how many obedient ears has ^{it secured} ~~it secured~~ a
ready acquiescence to the command, ye believe in God,
believe also in me. To thousands and to mil-
lions, it has been the resting place of faith
and hope, when all things else seemed to be

driven from their nothings. The very last sentiment
that dies in the heart of the reprobate is confi-
dence in Christ; and ~~if first step towards~~
~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~sinners~~ ~~towards~~ ~~God~~ ~~&~~ ~~himself~~ ~~is~~
reverence for the pure holy Jesus; an assurance that
all that he ~~has~~ ^{and that all he commands is right.} said is true. Besides ~~all~~ ~~the~~
~~sustaining~~, ~~guiding~~ ~~consoling~~ power which eman-
ates from the character of the Saviour, we have
in the gospel the history of his work as our Re-
deemer, and an exhibition of the offices which
he sustains towards us as our prophet, priest
& king. Power of these truths arises partly from their
inherent excellence ~~importance~~ and partly from
their ~~intimate~~ relation to our selves. They are
not only sublime exhibitions of ~~the~~ wisdom, love,
~~power~~, such as angels gaze at with wonder,
but they are exhibitions of wisdom, love & power ex-
ercised in our behalf, to recover us from sin &
to bring us to the enjoyment of eternal life.

The gospel moreover contains a perfect rule of duty.
It is hard for us who have always been accus-
tomed to this perfect exhibition of what is right in
all our relations to God ^{below} our creatures, to es-
timate the importance of the knowledge thus
communicated. Contrast however the Christian code
of morals, with that of any heathen nation, and the
difference is seen to be immense. This perfect law not
only concerns our outward conduct, but the ~~secret~~
~~secret~~ operations of the heart. Think therefore of the

light which it sheds not only without, but within.
I saw it in lightless conscience, ~~and by the~~ ~~power~~
and guides that mysterious power in ~~its~~ ^{the} ~~exercise~~ ^{of its} authority
~~power~~ How it reveals to us our own
character necessities, & forces us from inadequate
~~and~~ means of reformation & salvation. We had not known sin, but by the law.
And the law is our school master to lead us
to Christ. There are therefore in one important sense
indebted to the law for our salvation, & to it the
gospel owes much of its sanctifying power.

Again, the power of the gospel may be traced
to revelation which it makes of the destiny of
man. It brings life immortality to light. It shows
us that we are not creatures of a day; that an
endless track of existence lies before us. It discloses
the whole spiritual world; the things not seen
eternal, of which we are ~~seen~~ a part & with
which we are in constant communion. Think
of this in contrast with the kind of transmigration
seen, from bird to beast, & from beast to reptile,
or with Mohammedan paradise of ~~delicious~~ ^{sensual enjoyment.}
~~delicious~~. The wonder is that those who have the
gospel, do not so live in heaven as to be entirely
neglectful of the earth, & all that it contains.

If the truths contained in the gospel are
of all others the best adapted to make us holy; so
the motives which it presents to live to God are
the highest & strongest that can operate on a
rational

beings. They are derived fr. the character of God
such relations to him; from the character of VT
ever indebtedness to him; from the largest views
of what is right, & conducive to our well being
throughout eternity. They flow from the commands
the promises & threatenings of God. They address them
selves to all the innocent principles of our na-
ture. They constrain by the power of love, by the autho-
rity of right, by the instinct of self regard.

Another consideration to wh. the power of the gospel is to be
attributed, is its divine authority. It does not come to us with
a faltering & a stammering tongue ~~of one delirious or
uncertain tongue~~; nor does it speak as a man to his equals
~~man~~, but it speaks ^{in the voice of God} as one having authority. It is not the word
of man, but the word of God, declaring his own character &
purposes, making known our duty & destiny; setting forth
the way of life, & commanding us to walk in it. It penetr-
ates ~~through~~ the soul, ^{It} is sharper than a two edged
sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul & spirit & of
joints & marrow as a discerner of thoughts & intents of the heart.
It carries with ^{it} the evidence of its divine origin; making the wicked trem-
ble with a certain looking for of judgment, & the saints rejoice in
its assurance that the word of promise standeth sure. ~~It is not the
word of man, but the word of God, declaring his own character &
purposes, making known our duty & destiny; setting forth
the way of life, & commanding us to walk in it. It penetr-
ates through the soul, it is sharper than a two edged
sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul & spirit & of
joints & marrow as a discerner of thoughts & intents of the heart.
It carries with it the evidence of its divine origin; making the wicked trem-
ble with a certain looking for of judgment, & the saints rejoice in
its assurance that the word of promise standeth sure.~~
~~That if the authority of the bible were the mere authority of
man, if they were as uncertain as the testimony of a witness, they
would be despised of their strength.~~ It is this certainty ^{& truth} which
gives ~~the~~ power ^{to the gospel} over the heart, & authority over the conscience. Tho'
heaven & earth pass away, one jot or tittle of the word of God shall
not fail. The ~~secret~~ ^{things} which it reveals, the things not

seen external, are in fact the realities, ~~compared to which~~
the external world is but a show; for the things that
~~do appear~~ ^{are made} ~~are all to be shaken,~~ ^{to be remained} but the things which
cannot be shaken may remain. The gospel therefore draws
aside the veil which hides the substantial & eternal, & lets
in upon us the presence of the world to come. It is not a cunning
devised fable, but the word of God which liveth & abideth for ever.
The word of man reveals what is in man, & is the instrument by which he instructs & in-
fluences his fellow men; so the word of God reveals what is in God & is the instru-
ment by which he instructs & moulds his people as he wills. —

When we think of these things; when we consider that the gospel reveals the righteousness of God by which we are justified, and by which we obtain the adoption of sons; that it makes known a God who is reconciling the world unto himself not imputing unto men their iniquities; that it points us to a fountain of living water, that it reveals the being & perfections of God, the character & offices of Christ, that it ~~teaches~~ ^{teaches} plainly with divine authority the rule of duty & the way of life, that it brings to bear upon us motives derived from his goodness & authority, & the terrors of God, from his love of us, & his throne of heaven, it is indeed a wonder that it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone, but that it does not wherever known at once transform all who hear it into the image of God; as ⁱⁿ the beginning our beautiful world rose responsive to his voice of its maker. ~~Of all~~
~~proofs of that men are dead in sin, their insensibility to the gospel,~~
^{surely} ~~is the strongest.~~

It would be useless to state the practical inferences which might be legitimately
deduced from this subject. It may suffice to indicate a few of the most important.
1. If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, then let the gospel be preserved
and pure. Do not adulterate it. Do not keep back its truths. Do not dare
to substitute for it, your figures of rhetoric, your metaphysical speculations,
or your commandments of men. Let it be the gospel, simple & entire. There
is power in nothing else. Beware of heresy. Remember what Paul said of
those who pervert the gospel of Christ. If we or an angel from heaven preach unto
you any other gospel, let him be accursed. This anathema falls on
all who so pervert the truth as to present some other ground
of confidence towards God, than that which he has revealed in
his word.

2. If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, then in all our at-
tempts to save men, our sole reliance must be, under God, upon
the gospel. As the wisdom of men is foolishness with God, so the wisdom
of God, is too apt to be regarded as foolishness by men. They are con-
stantly

disposed therefore to substitute something for γ means which he has appointed for saving men. This tendency is so strong that even with γ Bible in γ hands we see men recommending first one scheme & then another for the accomplishment of this object. ~~Some~~ ~~times~~ it is ~~known~~ education, sometimes philosophy, sometimes external rites, ~~sometimes~~ All these things are worldly, except so far as they are subordinate to the gospel & prepare the way for its reception. If we wish to make men better, if we wish to correct their vices, to bring them to repentance, to restore them to God, we must use the means which he has put into our hands, and not rely upon those, however plausible, wh. men w^d have us to adopt. —

3. If γ gospel is γ power of God to salvation, then it should be as extensive propagated as possible. If nothing else can save men, surely this only effectual means should not be withheld. How shall we answer it to God, if we knowing the power of the gospel, fail to do what in us lies, to make it known to our fellow men. Woe is me, said Paul, if I preach not γ gospel.

4. Ministers of γ gospel fill an office of unspeakable importance & responsibility. To them is committed the instrumentality by wh. God saves men. If they are faithful, they may save themselves & those who hear them. If they are unfaithful, they destroy many souls. They are always a saviour of life unto life, or of death unto death. And who is sufficient for these things. It is a solemn thing to be put in trust with that on wh. the salvation of men depends. Though responsible, it is a delightful office to those who are content to be but earthen vessels to contain & bear about this divine treasure. It is a grace to be allowed to preach the

unsearchable riches of St. & to make all men see what is the full
lawship of the mystery, wh. fr. y^e beginning of y^e world had been hid in
God, but is now revealed unto his holy apostles & prophets by the
Spirit. †

5. In seeking our own salvation let us remember that it is
attainable only by y^e gospel; that neither justification nor sanc-
tification can be secured or procured except in the way
of word of God points out. Instead of going about to establish our
own righteousness we must submit to y^e righteousness of God.
Instead of attempting to live by our own strength, we must
allow it to live in us, & the life wh. we now live must
be by faith in the Son of God who loved us & gave himself
for us.

6. We see why it will be more tolerable in y^e day of judgment
for Tyre & Sidon, for Sodom & Gomorrah than for those who re-
ject the gospel. This is y^e condemnation, that light is come into
y^e world & men love darkness rather than light because their
deeds are evil. In the gospel every thing necessary for their salva-
tion is presented, offered & urged upon them; if they would
but accept it, it would be to them as effectual as it has been
to others. Over such Jesus wept, and said Oh that men had
known in this the day of their visitation, the things wh. belong
unto my peace, but now they are hid from their eyes. -

Preached in y^e Chapel Nov. 20. 1842.

Painceon Church July 38.^m 1844.

Chapel January 1.^o 1854.