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Communications.

*Prayer, a reasonable Duty.*

The obligation to perform this important duty, seems to grow out of the very relation in which a moral agent must necessarily stand to the Creator and Governor of the universe. It is, therefore, one of the earliest and highest duties incumbent on a dependent moral agent. Deny it; you annihilate dependence. There will then exist a moral being who *needs* nothing from God—who has no *want* to be supplied—who enjoys no bounty he would *wish* to be continued! Such a being must be independent!

The generic nature of prayer consists in a *sense of need, and desire of supply*. It has been invested with modifications of an adventitious character, arising out of particular emergencies. The attributes of prayer have been modified by the *fall*. It is essentially necessary to its acceptability, that it be in the *name of Christ*. This modification will, I conceive, continue through eternity. Confession of sins, is in the present state, a necessary concomitant of prayer. This will be unknown in the regions of glory. Thanksgiving unto God, for his *unspeakable gift*, and all the blessed results, now is, and will eternally continue, an ingredient of this *delightful duty*, so characteristic of the Christian.

If these premises be true, prayer will be a duty for ever incumbent

on, and for ever exercised by a saint in glory, as a necessary result of his moral dependence on the God who made him, and continues to be to him, the author of every good and of every perfect gift. A sense of need, and a desire for a supply, are perfectly compatible with our notions of a felicity competent to moral beings even of unsullied perfection. Had our first parents in the state of primeval innocence, never felt the painful sensation of hunger, they could never have experienced the pleasure arising from the gratification of this appetite. Indeed, in our present state, it is as hard to form an idea of *enjoyment*, without a previous sense of want, as to conceive a notion of a fine portrait, in which all were *light*, without one single *tinge of shade*! This principle is deeply inlaid in our constitution, and strongly evinced in the progressive development of the human character.

This idea, moreover, does perfectly coincide with that indefinite and progressive expansion of the human mind, which we are warranted to believe, will be going on in endless advances in perfection, in the mansions of glory. Now, in the order of nature, expansion must precede impletion, or the capacity must be enlarged, before there can be any void to be filled. But the very existence of a void will generate a sense of *want*. This sense of want, must of course be followed by a desire of enjoyment; and the very existence of this desire in a saint in

a future place of torment; but of a sense of guilt, arising from a consciousness of having violated a just and holy law; and of having offended against a kind and merciful God, who has an undeniable claim to the services of all his creatures. Hence, perceiving the justice of that sentence which the law pronounces upon all transgressors, he rejoices to be informed, in the gospel, that mercy and pardon may be obtained through the peace-speaking blood of Jesus Christ.

This information, when believed, will, no doubt, produce in his mind joy; but, in consequence of his mind being properly enlightened, and his feelings duly regulated, his joy will be orderly and temperate, not wild and extravagant.

This joy, produced in his mind by a right view of the scheme of gospel salvation, will naturally excite in his bosom love to God, who sent his Son into the world to redeem mankind; and also love and gratitude to Jesus Christ, who thus, on their behalf, presented himself a willing sacrifice. This love and gratitude will necessarily lead him to forsake sin, and to enter upon a new mode and course of action—which must be regarded as the true and natural results of his faith and repentance.

Thus would we have the feelings and emotions, which professors, in the school of Christianity, exhibit, traced to their source and tried by their fruits, before we would be disposed to denominate them the offspring of religion. Let every one, then, who has experienced such emotions and feelings, compare them carefully with that standard of truth which God has given us as a guide to our experience, that he may know whether the Spirit of God is really witnessing with his spirit that he is a child of God, or whether he may be under the influence merely of a heated and disordered imagination.

T. G. M'I.

### On Timothy and Ephesus.

The sacred scriptures, the genuineness and authenticity of which are supported by the most ample proofs, evince their divine authority by their spirituality, majesty, simplicity of style, by the accordance of the parts, the design of the whole, and their effects upon the consciences and lives of men. They give us the truths and precepts essential to faith and practice; but, without addition or diminution, they must be studied with diligence and humility. If the facts they exhibit concerning Timothy and Ephesus, afford "a pattern of the order of the primitive church in the times of the apostles,"\* the example must be of high obligation. But it unfortunately happens, that the example always supports the views, with which we enter upon the investigation.

To that writer, Timothy furnishes a pattern of a modern diocesan bishop; but to us, the thing is as defective as the name, and we find neither the one, nor the other, in the word of God.

If Timothy was as long resident at Ephesus, as this writer imagines; and ordained the original elders, that is, presbyters or bishops over that church, which we suppose; yet nothing was there accomplished by him different from "the work of an evangelist." His commission was given him before Paul had visited Ephesus; and without relation to the people of one place, more than another. It was in its nature universal, extending alike to the whole church, and conferring every power necessary to planting, watering and governing the church, wherever he should come, if not superseded by the presence of an apostle. If therefore he became fixed at Ephesus, it was either so far a repeal of that commission, which he had received, or an abandonment of the exercise of its powers.

\* The Christian Observer, republished in the Episcopal Magazine, March, 1821.

It is nevertheless desirable to know, with precision, the facts.

That Paul and Timothy were together at Ephesus, and that Paul left him there, when he went on some occasion into Macedonia, may be plainly inferred from 1 Tim. i. 3: "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia." The time, to which there is here an allusion, is the more easily ascertained, because the apostle is recorded to have been twice only at Ephesus; on the first occasion he merely called on his voyage from Corinth to Jerusalem, on the second, *he went from Ephesus into Macedonia.*

This writer assigns a later period, and supposes that Paul, when he landed at Miletus on a subsequent voyage to Jerusalem, left Timothy with the elders of the church at Ephesus, "to govern them in his absence." But nothing of the kind was spoken on the occasion, and instead of a temporary absence, Paul assured the elders, they should "see his face no more." In 1 Tim. i. 3. it is not said, *when I went to Jerusalem*, but expressly, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, *when I went into Macedonia.*" It is asserted that the apostle, having placed Timothy at Ephesus prior to his first imprisonment, "wrote both his epistles to Timothy while a prisoner at Rome." But Timothy was with Paul at Rome, during a part of the first imprisonment, for he is joined in the epistles to the Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. Salutations also might have been expected in the first epistle to Timothy, had it been written from Rome, as in those to the Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, the Hebrews, and the second to Timothy. He was indeed absent from Rome during a part of the time of the first imprisonment, but Paul expected his return (Heb. xiii. 23.), and so far was he from hoping to come unto Timothy, shortly, as expressed in 1st

Tim. iii. 14, he promises, if Timothy come shortly to Rome, with him to visit the Hebrews. Also it seems strange, if Timothy had been at Ephesus, when the epistle to the Ephesians was sent by Tychicus (Ephes. vi. 21.), that no notice whatever should have been taken of the beloved youth.

Another hypothesis is, that Paul, when the Jews deterred him from sailing from Corinth, and he determined to go through Macedonia to Jerusalem, besought Timothy to abide still at Ephesus: to which, when Timothy agreed, he went forward to Troas, with Aristarchus and the rest; and whilst waiting there for Paul, Timothy received the first epistle from the apostle, written in Macedonia. But this is a departure from the correct meaning of the passage, which implies, that Paul besought Timothy to *abide still* (*προσμῖναι*,\* *to continue, or remain,*) at the place where Timothy was, at the time he was thus entreated. Those, who went before with Timothy to Troas, are represented to have *accompanied* Paul into Asia. Acts xx. 4. This circumstance renders it an improbable supposition, that Paul should write so long and important a letter to his fellow traveller, whom he must overtake in a few days; and wholly unaccountable that he should say in the letter (ch. iii. 14, 15.) "these things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long," &c. That Paul should have thus purposed to come to Timothy unto Ephesus, but really at Troas; and in a few weeks afterwards, without any apparent cause for a change of views, should have

\* Προσμῖναι occurs only in Matt. xv. 32. Mark viii. 2. Acts xi. 23. xviii. 18. 1 Timothy, i. 3. v. 5. If Paul and Timothy had been both absent from Ephesus, when he besought him to abide still, &c. instead of προσμῖναι, he would have adopted προσμῖναι, and instead of saying *παρασώμενος εἰς Μακεδονίαν*, his language would have been *ερχόμενος*, &c.

said at Miletus to the elders of the church of Ephesus, "I know that ye all—shall see my face no more," (Acts xx. 25.) exhibits a fluctuation approximating versatility. If Timothy was on this occasion left with the officers of the church of Ephesus, and especially, if he was to become thenceforth their diocesan bishop, it is strange, that not a word of either of those circumstances should have been mentioned to those elders. But so far was the apostle from mentioning their subordination unto, or support of the authority of young Timothy, that he enjoins them: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (*ἐπιτροπεύουσιν*, bishops), to feed the church of God," &c. But as not a word is said of leaving Timothy at Miletus, so it is improbable, that he should have parted from Paul there, because we find him with that apostle, when he arrived at Rome, where he is joined with him in the letters which have been mentioned.

Others have supposed, that Paul visited Ephesus after his first imprisonment, left Timothy there, went into Macedonia, and from thence wrote to him his first letter. They build upon the circumstances, that whilst at Rome, he had written to Philemon to prepare him lodgings at Colosse; and that he had told the Philippians by letter, he trusted he should come shortly to them.

This opinion is much more respectable, than either of the former; and although several of the fathers have positively asserted, what is incompatible with it, that Paul went into Spain, after his first imprisonment, according to his purpose expressed, Rom. xv. 29.; yet, however credible these holy men were, the writings, which bear their names, deserve often but little regard. That Paul was at Philippi, after his imprisonment, is probable, because he left Erastus at Corinth. Also

he may have been at Colosse, if he left Trophimus at Miletus; but the place is uncertain. He entertained a purpose subsequent to those, of visiting Judea, with Timothy. Heb. xiii. 18, 19. This may have been previously accomplished, and Timothy left in the neighbourhood of Troas, where he remained till the second epistle was sent to him. But if these purposes were effectuated, which is matter of uncertainty, there is not a word to prove even an intention to visit Ephesus. The letter to the Ephesians neither mentions Timothy, nor any coming of Paul. But Tychicus, a faithful minister of the Lord, and companion of the apostle, was named as sent to them. To the presbyters of Ephesus Paul had said, that he *knew* they should "see his face no more," (Acts xx. 25.) and it is nowhere shown that they did. The supposition, that nevertheless Paul afterwards went to Ephesus with Timothy, left him there with a request to tarry till he should return to him, and then went into Macedonia, and wrote his first epistle to Timothy, is entirely gratuitous, and without the least reason appearing in any exigencies of the Ephesian church; who had had three years of Paul's labours, and had been more than five years afterwards blessed with the regular administration of ordinances by pastors of their own, and some help from Tychicus and perhaps others.

That Timothy was left at Ephesus, when Paul, expelled by the riot, went into Macedonia, is the opinion, which is most obvious, and best supported. Before he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia (ch. iv. 17.); but he himself remained in Asia for some time. Acts xix. 22. In the first letter to the Corinthians, which he wrote at Ephesus, and sent by Titus to Corinth, he mentioned his purpose of coming to them, but not immediately; of which Luke also

informs us (Acts xix. 21.), and desired them, if Timothy came to them (1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11.), to conduct him forth in peace, that he might come to Paul, then at Ephesus, for he looked for him, with the brethren. When he closed his first letter to the Corinthians, he was expecting Timothy's return; which that letter might also have hastened. Paul remained at Ephesus, on this occasion, the space of three years. Acts xx. 31. There is therefore no reason to suppose, that he was disappointed in his expectation of the arrival of Timothy from Corinth at Ephesus, before he went into Macedonia; and if so, he might have left him there, as he at some period certainly did. 1 Tim. i. 3. He had intended to go by Corinth into Macedonia (2 Cor. i. 15, 16.), but changed his mind, and went by Troas thither. 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13. Whilst in Macedonia, he wrote, we suppose, to Timothy his first letter (1 Tim. i. 3.), and proposed to him to remain at Ephesus, until he should call there on his way to Jerusalem. 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15. The words imply, that Paul might tarry some time; and that he was some time there before he went into Greece, is fairly implied in the expression, "And when he had *gone over those parts*, and had given them *much exhortation*, he came into Greece." Acts xx. 2. Timothy, who is nowhere represented as with him until he came into Macedonia, probably came to him there. After Paul had *besought him to abide still at Ephesus*, which gave him liberty to exercise his discretion, several motives must have influenced him to go to the apostle. The enemies at Ephesus were numerous and violent; Timothy was young; his affection for Paul ardent; the request of Paul that he should still abide at Ephesus was not peremptory; and Paul tarried a long time. Also Timothy had been, from their commencement, familiarly acquainted with the churches in Macedonia

and Greece. Accordingly we find him in Macedonia, when Paul wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians, ch. i. 1. The apostle went from Macedonia into Greece (Acts xx. 2.), as he had promised in that letter (ch. xiii. 1.), and abode there three months. Acts xx. 3. Timothy was with him at Corinth, for he sends his salutations to the Romans (Rom. xvi. 21.) in that famous epistle written from thence.\*

That it may be seen, that there was sufficient time for Paul to have written from Macedonia to Timothy at Ephesus, and for Timothy to have spent some months at Ephesus, before he came to Paul in Macedonia, it is necessary only to advert to 1 Cor. xvi. 8, where he mentions his purpose of remaining at Ephesus till Pentecost; of which, if Timothy did not leave Corinth before this letter reached the Corinthian church, he would receive information by the epistle itself. Luke tells us (Acts xx. 6.), that they sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread or Easter, and (ver. 16.) that Paul hoped to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, which were, at the least, of the following year. That Paul expected to spend so much time in Macedonia and Greece, may be collected from his intimation (1 Cor. xvi. 6.) that he might spend the winter with the Corinthian church. The apostle's purpose of sailing from Corinth was disappointed by the insidiousness of his own countrymen; he therefore went up into Macedonia, that he might pass over to Troas, with his companions. Timothy was among those who crossed first. Acts xx. 3—5. Paul wishing to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, did not call, as he had intended, at Ephesus (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.), but landed at Miletus, and sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus.

The directions of the apostle in

\* Compare Acts xviii. 2. with Rom. xvi. 3.

the third chapter of the first epistle to Timothy, fairly imply, that he had left the church at Ephesus, according to his usual practice, without officers; for he gives this evangelist, not a new commission (he already had power to ordain), but instructions as to the choice of bishops and deacons. These had been complied with before he landed at Miletus. Acts xx. 17. This record of the existence of elders at Ephesus, compared with the directions given to Timothy (ch. iii.) not only renders it probable, that Timothy had ordained them, but fortifies the presumption, *that the first epistle to Timothy was written in Macedonia, before this visit to Jerusalem, and consequently before his first imprisonment.*

The language of the first epistle (ch. i. 3.) "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia," did not form a permanent connexion between Timothy and Ephesus. The very greatest extent of the instructions given in this letter, was to continue only till Paul should come to him (*ὡς ἐρχομαι*). 1 Tim. iv. 13. iii. 14. But it is certain, that Timothy did not remain at Ephesus, even till Paul passed on his way to Jerusalem.

Timothy is nowhere called a bishop in the scriptures, he is exhorted to *do the work of an evangelist*, (2 Tim. iv. 5.) and every duty assigned him by the apostle was comprehended in his original commission. The office was like those of apostle and prophet, extraordinary, and unconnected with a particular church. Ephes. iv. 11. But in whatsoever church he preached, he could as evangelist ordain pastors, or bishops, or there was no propriety in the caution, "lay hands suddenly on no man." This office was superior to that of "pastors even teachers."\*

The writer in the Christian Observer speaks of *congregations*, but

\* *Τους ποιμένις καὶ διδασκάλους*, Ephes. iv. 11. denote the same officers.

we read only of a *church* at Ephesus. Acts xx. 17—28. 1 Tim. iii. 15. v. 16. Rev. ii. 1. The singular is often used for the universal church; in all other instances it denotes, in the New Testament, one congregation or assembly. Where more are intended the plural is adopted.† After the days of the apostles, when one church became in some instances too numerous to worship in one place, they became several congregations under the name of one church; but we know no proof that this impropriety had taken place in their days.

He appears to have been himself ordained to his high office by (*δια*) the hands of the apostle; and as this was done in the presence of some presbytery, we suppose at Lystra, they also united in the imposition of hands, and thus his ordination was with (*μετα*) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

Evangelists were not personally instructed and commissioned by Christ, nor had they the extraordinary gifts in equal extent; nor, except in writing, the unerring assistance, or inspiration of the apostles. But evangelists had greater advantages than the first bishops, the pastors of churches, because they were the companions of the apostles, in their travels.

The second epistle to Timothy will prove itself written by Paul, when a prisoner at Rome; and at least establishes the absence of the evangelist from his spiritual father, at the time it was written. But he was at Rome in the time of the first imprisonment, as has been proved by his having joined with Paul in the letters to the Colossians, Philipians and Philemon. Demas and

† See Acts ix. 31. xv. 41. xvi. 4, 16. 1 Cor. vii. 17. xi. 16. xiv. 33, 34. xvi. 1, 19. 2 Cor. viii. 1, 18, 19, 23, 24. xi. 8, 28. xii. 13. Gal. i. 2, 22. 1 Thess. ii. 14. 2 Thess. i. 4. Rev. i. 20, &c. The singular is intended of one congregation in 1 Cor. xi. 18, 22. xiv. 4, 5, 12, 19, 23, 28, 33, 34. 3 John 6, &c.

Mark were also there in the first imprisonment, but were absent when this letter was written.

It has been supposed to have been written before the epistles to the Colossians, Philippians and Philemon, which were during the first imprisonment. But in 2 Tim. iv. 20, Paul tells him, *Erastus abode at Corinth*, and this needed not to have been told to Timothy, if Paul meant that Erastus abode at Corinth, when he went to Jerusalem, and so to Rome, for Timothy was then with him, and must have known the circumstance, had it been so. In like manner he says, (*ibid.*) "Trophimus have I left at Miletus, sick;" but Trophimus was not left at Miletus, on the voyage to Jerusalem, for he was the occasion of the jealousies of the Jews. Acts xxi. 29.

These two facts, compared with this, which appears in the epistle, that it was written by Paul a prisoner at Rome, afford sufficient certainty, that there was a second imprisonment, and that this letter was then written.

But it by no means follows, that Timothy was at Ephesus when the second epistle was written. This ought not to be assumed, but shown. If Timothy was then at Ephesus, why should he have been told, "I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus?" 2 Tim. iv. 12. He must have arrived at that place before the letter, and the fact have been known. And Tychicus needed no introduction to Timothy. Had Timothy been at Ephesus, Paul would not have sent him one hundred and fifty miles to Troas, and three hundred out of his course\*, for a cloak. It appears

more probable that Timothy was, at the time the epistle was sent to him, at Troas, or in the neighbourhood of that place. The salutations will not establish the destination of the epistle. Onesiphorus resided in Asia, but the particular place of his abode is not shown. He helped Paul both at Ephesus, and Rome. Also Aquila, who had resided at Rome, at Corinth, at Ephesus, and again at Rome, was a native of Pontus, on the margin of the Euxine.

If Timothy was not at Ephesus, when the second letter was written to him, there is no evidence of his being in that city, after Paul's first imprisonment. But if he had been at that time at Ephesus, he must have then left it, the letter calling him to Rome; and the sacred records speak not of his return to that city.

If Paul constituted Timothy bishop of Ephesus, it is an affirmative and ought to be proved. But Paul tells the presbyters of Ephesus, at Miletus, that the Holy Ghost had made them bishops (*ἐπισκοπους*) of that church. Those general terms suppose the powers which were necessary to ordaining others, as Timothy well knew, for a similar presbytery had laid their hands on his head at his ordination. This circumstance will not prove, that a presbytery could have ordained an evangelist, if an apostle had not been present; because evangelists were extraordinary officers of a higher grade; but it must prove, that a presbytery have some authority to ordain. They were the highest fixed officers in a church, and the power of ordination was necessary to their succession. They could not have been appointed coadjutors to Timothy in the ordination of themselves. And if they were ordained before he was left at Ephesus, it ought to be shown. If there were no officers in that church, the direction to Timothy, who was an evangelist, to ordain pastors in Ephesus, was to do no more than his

\* The nearest and most frequented route was by Corinth to Rome. Aquila and Priscilla came from Rome to Corinth, and from thence to Ephesus. Apollos went from Ephesus to Corinth, and back again to Ephesus. Paul came once from Corinth to Ephesus, and would have repeated that voyage, but his enemies laid in wait for him, and he was obliged to pass circuitously by Macedonia and Troas.

duty; which, when accomplished in any church, gave such bishops or elders a power to continue the succession. If the presbyters, that is, the bishops of particular churches, had not the power of ordination, there has been no succession in the church of Christ, since the deaths of the apostles and evangelists, for their offices expired with them; and there were no bishops of a higher order. The office of Timothy was given him prior to his visiting Ephesus. The duty assigned him there was to do the work of an evangelist. His appointment to Ephesus was temporary, being limited at the farthest, to the time when Paul should come to him; but an earlier period of its termination was evidently left to his discretion, which he exercised by coming to Paul into Macedonia. Thus there was a disruption of the connexion, if any had been fixed; but none such was intended; the epistle was neither a commission nor an ordination, but a mere letter of instruction, directing him in the discharge of his high and important office of evangelist.

That Timothy returned to Ephesus, at any subsequent time, cannot be shown by the scriptures, unless the second epistle was sent to him there; but this wants proof; and many circumstances make against it, some of which have been shown.

If the second letter, was, nevertheless, directed to him there, which has been too generally assumed, it must have called him away to Rome, and the evangelist was no more bound to return to Ephesus, than to any other region.

But if we even suppose that he returned to Ephesus from Rome, of which there is not one syllable of proof in the scriptures; and if we add also the still further concession, that Timothy died at Ephesus, it will not establish that he ever exercised, or had any other office, than that of an evangelist.

J. P. WILSON.

### On Christ's speaking in Parables.

(Concluded from page 61.)

We refer to a special and very interesting occasion. The scene was lake Gennesareth. Thousands, from the neighbouring cities, stood on the shore; while Christ, sitting in a boat, preached to them "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." He dispensed these mysteries with profusion; but there was something not a little surprising in his manner. He veiled his instructions in the obscurity of parables; and dismissed his auditory without a word of explanation. How they were affected we are not informed; but his disciples appear to have been amazed. They themselves had not understood their Master; and if unintelligible to them, how much more so to the multitude? Being afterwards with him in private, they ventured to ask him his reason for adopting on this occasion so obscure a method of discourse.

Christ's reply to this request of his disciples, is the subject of these remarks.

This reply consists of two parts. In the first, which has been considered, he justifies his conduct by adverting to the sovereign will of the Supreme; which having ordained the spiritual illumination of the disciples, but not of the multitude, Christ, who as well knew the unrevealed purposes as the promulgated precepts of God, and always aimed at fulfilling both, used a method of instruction well adapted to accomplish. He had spoken in parables, "because," said he to the disciples, "unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is *not given*." Mat. xiii. 11.

PART II. In the second part, to which we now proceed, he shows the propriety of this mode of instruction on this occasion, on different ground. *The moral state or reprobate disposition of his hearers, concurring with the purpose of God re-*