

REVELATION
THE
FOUNDATION OF FAITH,
A SERMON,

PREACHED BY

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In St. Luke's Church, Salisbury, N. C.

AT THE ORDINATION OF THE REV. PHILIP B. WILEY,

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SERMON.

ROM. CHAP. 10, VER. 14, AND PART OF 15.

“How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear, without a Preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?”

In this series of questions, it appears to be the Apostle's object to shew, that Revelation is the only foundation, on which Religion can be, either required of, or practised by, fallen creatures; and as it is of the highest importance to the interests of our souls, my hearers, that men should be fully convinced of this primary truth—I shall endeavour to explain and confirm it, by shewing,

First—That discoveries are made in the Gospel of Christ, which were otherwise impossible to men.

Secondly.—That these discoveries are adapted to a state or condition of the world, from which it was desirable to be delivered.

Thirdly.—That the preaching of the word is the regular appointed means for making known to the world, the methods of God's Grace, in the salvation of sinners.—“How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear, without a preacher?”

Fourthly.—That as the discoveries of the Gospel are of Divine Revelation—so is the preaching of the word and the administration of the Gospel, by a Divine Commission—“And how shall they preach, except they be sent?”

First.—I am to shew that discoveries are made in the Gospel of Christ, which were otherwise impossible to men.

To those who are acquainted with that Gospel, this proposition would seem to require no proof. But on a little more consideration, we shall find, that the actual condition of the religious world, renders it both necessary and proper, to vindicate the claims of Revealed Religion, against Religion in the general, or abstract notion, of the unbelieving indifference of too many, in this latter day state of the Gospel. It is a part of our weakness, my brethren, against which we should be steadily on our guard, that admitted truths, however high their importance, lose by length of time, that relish and impression, which the freshness of discovery imparts to them. Hence, though the acknowledgment is general, in all Christian lands, of those truths, which by Revelation are made our own—and though the awful consequences which depend upon them, are just the same now, as at the beginning—yet it is past all contradiction true, that they are not listened to, with that reverence and attention—they do not occupy, and fill the minds of men, with that deep and serious interest—which so tremendous an alternative, as salvation, or damnation, must present to every reflecting mind. Having been so long

in possession, we are apt to overlook the source, from whence we derive them—to consider them as antiquated, and far distant, in their application; when nevertheless in their vital influence upon the heart, they are to this day, and will be to the end of days, as new and as fresh, as when first promulgated.

To this cause it is owing, that experimental Religion is so little sought after—that so many are satisfied with the knowledge of the truth—and are careless about the effect—that numbers rest contented with the form, while they are strangers to the power, of Godliness—forgetting, “that the letter killeth”—that mere acquaintance with Religious Truth, possesses no saving power—being equally in reach of the worst, and of the best of men—and not bearing in mind, “that the Spirit giveth Life,” in the saving application of truth to the heart, and from thence to the conversation of every believer.

To this cause also, I am disposed to refer that trait in the free-thinking philosophy of the present day, which boldly assumes as its own, the deep things of God, deals with them, as with mere natural verities, and putting in the back ground, the only source of truth and wisdom, presumptuously speculates on the condition of man, and on the purposes of God respecting him, as if the councils of him, who is perfect in knowledge, were within the grasp of a finite and fallen creature. Hence much of that indifference, not to say deadness, to the Religion of the Gospel, which marks men of literary pretensions in the present, as well as in primitive times. Full of the wisdom of the world, but empty of that wisdom, which cometh down from above, they overlook the never to be shaken truth, that but for the page of Revelation, the boasted powers of human reason could never have advanced a single step, in the science of salvation. “The World by wisdom, never knew God.” To this also, I doubt not, it is owing, that “not many wise, not many noble, are now called”—“Because that, though they profess to know God, they glorify him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened,” so that God permits strong delusion to lay hold of them—even to believing the impossible lie, that they can be their own Saviours. And was this evil confined to this description of persons—though deeply to be deplored, it might be submitted to; but unhappily the example is spreading among the rising hope of future days, in the young men of this generation—who are caught by the glitter of false learning, and seduced by the great swelling words of vanity, according to the description of the Apostle, wherewith they promise them liberty, from what they are pleased to call the trammels of superstition—and whereby they are seduced, to doubt, and to deny, the Truth, “which is according to Godliness.”

But was the Revelation of the Gospel fairly considered, what it is that it brings to our knowledge, with what it proposes to our attainment—it could not fail, I think, to interest and engage, even the commanding and commendable acquirements of literature, unreservedly in its behalf. For it meets us, with its soul cheering discoveries—exactly where the powers of human reason come to a full stop. When observations and experience, introduce us fully to that confusion and disorder, which pervade equally the natural and the moral world—they can go no farther; and just at this point, the discoveries of Revelation step

in to save us, from the gloomy conclusions of Fate and Necessity,—of Chance Creation, and Atheism.

One single example out of many may serve, my hearers, to confirm this remark. How are we to account for the origin and existence of evil, either natural or moral, in the creation of a perfectly good, wise, and omnipotent Being. Can reason and philosophy account for this? Alas, it is powerless. We may conjecture and speculate, and build up theory upon theory, till we lose ourselves in thought---but still we have only the miserable certainty, that evil is present with us. To Revelation alone, therefore, are we indebted for this discovery.

But admitting for the moment, that it is possible to be satisfied on this point, without the aid of Revelation. Let me ask, what are we the better for it? Can this knowledge, however attained, furnish a remedy for, or arrest, the mortal malady under which the world labours? No, not at all—Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of the living---the depth saith it is not in me, and the sea saith it is not with me. But God understandeth the way thereof,” and hath shewed unto us, in the Gospel of his Son, “the place where wisdom may be found”—That wisdom, compared with which, all the wisdom of the world is foolishness. That truth, in the light of which, the wisest systems of human contrivance vanish into their original darkness—That truth, which shall endure, and shine brighter and brighter, when this world, with all its wisdom and philosophy, “shall pass away with a great noise,” and be no more seen for ever.

To the Gospel then, my brethren and hearers, and to the Gospel alone, must we look, for the solution of every difficulty, and of every doubt, which attends our present condition—To that also must we come, and, thanks be to God for the blessed privilege, to that may we freely come, for help and deliverance, for comfort and consolation, for grace and truth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Man, the favoured creature of Almighty God, made in the image of his Creator, and amply provided with all that was needful to his happiness, by wilful disobedience, drew down upon himself, and upon creation, the curse of God. Hence the origin of that sin and misery, which prevails in this world. But mercy, in the person of Jesus Christ, the eternal and only begotten Son of God, interposed in behalf of the condemned criminal, arrested the uplifted stroke of infinite justice, by the substitution of himself, and thereby converted the present life, with all its load of guilt and suffering, of sorrow and disappointment, into a state of renewed trial and probation, for the attainment of Eternal Life, on the condition of faith and renewed obedience.

To satisfy the demands of infinite justice, purity, and holiness, invaded by the presence of sin—to bear the punishment, which the broken law inexorably demanded, and without which no propitiation could be effected; for “without shedding of blood, there is no remission”—To teach us authoritatively, the will of God, and to set before us an example of all holiness, humility and patience, in the very nature, which had sinned—the Son of God took our nature upon him, became the representative of the human race, paid with his own spotless life, the ransom of their forfeited lives, and ratified in the blood of his cross, a new covenant of grace and mercy, between God and man, in which repentance

is accepted, and made available to the pardon of sin, through faith in the atoning virtue of his blood, poured out upon the cross, for the sins of the whole world. And the sincere, though imperfect obedience of sinful creatures, is accepted before God, through his mediation and intercession. This, my brethren, is the Gospel of the ever blessed God. The glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. To the blessings and benefits of which state of salvation, it hath pleased God to call you, my friends. This is the wisdom of God in a mystery—the Revelation of “the hidden mystery, which was kept secret since the world began; but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets according to the commandment of the everlasting God, is made to all nations, for the obedience of faith.” These are the high discoveries, which the Gospel makes to our faith, and which nothing but infinite love and wisdom, could have so adapted to our wants and wishes, that in the fulness and freeness of Gospel grace, there is a sufficiency, even for the chief of sinners. “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” Sin condemned and atoned for, by the same act—The law satisfied, its rigour relaxed, and the righteousness which is of faith established—Life and immortality brought to light, by the clear and full discovery of another life after this. A judgment day declared, and the very manner of that judgment represented, wherein all who have ever lived, shall give account of themselves to God, and be rewarded or punished everlastingly, according to the deeds done in the body.

Now let me ask, in what wilderness of thought, could the wisdom of the world have stumbled on such discoveries as these, and so put them together, as to harmonize with the perfections of God, and the imperfections of his fallen, sinful creature, as is manifested in the glorious plan of our redemption, by Jesus Christ? O ye disputers of this world, who vainly strive to bolster up the misgivings of your own hearts, by an affectation of doubt, on the Revelation of the Gospel—but in the hour of danger, give the lie to your own vain talkings, and flee to the consolations and hopes, which that alone can give—why do you thus sin against your own souls? Is there any thing disgraceful in accepting mercy or receiving favour at the hand of Almighty God? Is there any thing low or unbecoming, in humbling yourselves to submit to the righteousness of God, that he may save you, by a way you know not of? Come on now, bring your boasted reason to the trial, and let us see what you can substitute, for “that grace of God, which bringeth salvation”—Suit yourselves every way, so that no earthly objection shall be found against your method of salvation—and what then! Alas, yourselves dare not trust it—It is of man, the production of a perishing creature—and must go, with its author, to a tribunal that is eternal. For it is written, “As I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”

Secondly.—I am to shew, that these discoveries are adapted to a state or condition of the world, from which it was desirable to be delivered.

The condition of man as a sinner, and consequently liable to wrath and punishment, and conscious that he is thus liable—is demonstrated, by all that has hitherto been discovered concerning him. Wherever he is found, whether civilized or savage, a sense of guilt cleaving to

him, is manifested; and Religion, in some shape or other, is the refuge to which he flees, for relief and comfort. Conscious that he is under the control and within the power of an invisible and omnipotent Being, with whom he is at variance, and whom it is both his duty and his interest to propitiate, every device, which ignorance and fear can prompt superstition to invent, has been resorted to, to appease the wrath and avert the indignation of that Supreme Being, who is thus ignorantly worshipped. In this universal worship, there is one circumstance, my brethren, which is common to all the shapes and forms, with which it has been invested: which is this—The vicarious substitution of man, or animal, as a sacrifice, to avert wrath from the worshipper himself. Wherever man is found, even in the most degraded and brutal state, in which recent discovery has represented him to our notice, where no other trace of Religion is to be seen, the victim bleeds, and life is offered up to appease and propitiate. An experience thus general, my hearers, is with me a most conclusive argument for the truth of Revelation, for it is not to be accounted for, that such should be the universal impression and practice, but from the identity of the human race, the community of guilt, and the tradition of that sacrifice which was instituted upon the entrance of sin, as a type of that great sin offering, presented on Calvary, “which taketh away the sins of the world.”

The great volume of nature, my Brethren, unquestionably points the creature to the Creator, and as God, it is his first duty, to honour and to worship *Him*, who giveth to all his creatures, life and breath and all things. But alas, the power of sin hath so weakened and corrupted his faculties, that this grand and universally legible record of God, is a sealed book to him, as to himself. Amid the beauties and bounties of nature, man sees and feels the effects of the curse, and shrinks in terror and dismay from that awful Being, who rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm. If he reflects at all, he perceives, that himself is nothing, even here, where he is lord of all below. And if an anxious thought should burst the barrier of sensible things, and enquire beyond the grave, nature has no sweet discovery, wherewith to relieve the anxious soul, which pants for immortality. If he has advanced to the supreme and eternal cause of all being, by the study of his works, he beholds God in all the plenitude of his incommunicable attributes—he beholds himself, without any claim to his notice and regard, but what he has in common with every other creature, to whom life is given. Nature’s volume contains no record of sympathy and compassion for deceived and ruined mortals. Yet something within him would claim a nearer relationship—the immortal aspiring principle, which God breathed into him, with the breath of life, would soar to its original kindred in the Heavens.—But guilt, the guilt of sin, hath put a bar between them, which nature cannot remove. No, dear brethren—without the Gospel, there is neither help nor hope for sinners.

Thus surrounded by a power which he cannot escape; conscious of a guilt, which he cannot remove; desirous to propitiate, but ignorant of what will be acceptable; exposed to the evil which sin hath entailed upon the present life; death sooner or later; certain and inevitable; another state of being, after this, shrouded from his view, in all the uncertainty of unrevealed conjecture, yet nevertheless, what gives shape and sub-

stance to all his fears—what is there in such a condition desirable? or rather, my friends, what is there in it, from which it is not above all things desirable to be delivered? And, thanks be to God, by the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, we are delivered from this dark and dismal state of doubt and dismay. It is our unspeakable blessing, my dear hearers, to know the gracious purpose of Almighty God, in permitting that mixed state of moral and natural evil, which this present world presents to our notice. It is ours to know, that his power and providence stand engaged to make it work together, for his glory and our good. It is ours to look up to him with reverence and love, as our reconciled father in Christ Jesus. It is ours to know the propitiation, which is always acceptable in his sight, even the blood of his only begotten Son, “which cleanseth from all sin.” It is ours to know his will, and to have power to do it, through the grace given us in Christ Jesus. It is ours to look beyond the grave, to a never-ending existence, in which the awful sanctions of religion shall be applied to the deeds done in this body, by the righteous judgment of God, in the rewards and punishments of eternity. And it is our high privilege, my brethren in the Lord, by virtue of the victory given us over death, Hell, and the grave, through the resurrection of Christ, to look forward with humble yet joyful hope, with lively and assured faith, “to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away,” reserved in Heaven for us.

These are the discoveries of the Gospel, and of the Gospel alone.—These are the otherwise impossible discoveries, made to mankind by revelation, adapted to that destitute and helpless condition, in which sin had sunk the world; from which it was surely most desirable to be delivered, and which God hath “commanded to be preached among all nations for the obedience of faith”—which brings me to what was proposed as the third head of this discourse.

Thirdly.—I am to shew, that the preaching of the word, is the regular appointed means for making known to the world, the methods of God’s grace in the salvation of sinners.

To our habits of thought and action, my hearers, the proposition stands in need of no proof. “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,” is the commission of the author of our religion to his ministers:—But to impress upon you more deeply, the great importance of the appointment, and to point out the benefits which in every age of the world, mankind have derived, and will yet derive from a preached Gospel, it will be necessary to consider more at large, the fitness of the means to the end.

It is certainly not for us to say, by what various methods, the wisdom and the power of Almighty God might have provided for the spread of the Gospel in the world. But this we may say—that unless by resorting once more to the already abortive channel of tradition—or by the intervention of a perpetual miracle, the appointment he hath been pleased to make of public preaching of the Gospel, is the wisest and best, because best adapted to the nature and condition of those, for whom it is designed.

For, had it pleased God, that this revelation of his will should have been made to all men, in every place and in every age of the world—to every generation of men, and to every individual in each generation—

we cannot comprehend how this could be done, without involving a standing miracle; which circumstance, independent of the infringement it would be, of that freedom which alone constitutes us moral agents, must soon cease, from the very nature of things, to be miraculous to us—for to apprehensions such as ours, a perpetual miracle involves a contradiction. Besides, on the plan of a perpetually renewed revelation, “must Christ often have suffered since the foundation of the world.”

On the other hand, had tradition again been resorted to, for the spread and continuance in the world, of the revelation made by the son of God, all experience went to prove, that however high and holy the deposit—however express the command, to transmit it down from generation to generation, it would speedily have been corrupted, and become as impure, as the channel through which it flowed, as uncertain, and inefficient, as any other legend.

But now, my brethren—by a fixed Revelation of his will, attested and verified, with a precision which renders criminal the obstinacy that will not receive it as the truth of God—and by the appointment of public preaching of the word, by persons having his commission therefor—God hath graciously removed every difficulty, and wisely provided, that every generation, as it comes forward on the great theatre of life—shall, in this respect, be equal—and that, to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, that dwell on the face of the whole earth,” the word of this salvation shall thus be sent, and all mankind be furnished with the high discoveries and holy hope of the Gospel of Christ. That high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, as they all stand in the same relation to God, may alike be partakers of the riches of his grace—and of the means, and of the hope of eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

But not only to make known the terms and conditions of the Gospel for salvation to sinners, is the preaching of the word appointed—But to keep alive also, the impressions of divine grace—to convey and confer that grace, in the sacraments of salvation, and to further and help, to instruct and build up the disciples of Christ, in the most holy faith, is the office and duty, of those, “who are put in trust with the Gospel.” As it also is, to call sinners to repentance, to warn the unruly, to reprove the disobedient, to rebuke the rebellious—to encourage the timid, to strengthen the feeble minded, and to comfort the mourner—“warning every man, (says the Apostle,) and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect, in Christ Jesus.”

With so high and holy a purpose, dependent on this provision of the wisdom of God, for our salvation, the interest we all have, that it should be encouraged and promoted, is exactly equal to the consequences which are connected with it. And as these are infinite and eternal—most presumptuously do those offend against God, and sin against their own souls—who needlessly absent themselves from the public appointments of Religion, or attend upon them without reverence. When we consider, moreover, my friends, that faith itself cometh by hearing, and that God hath specially promised the light and comfort of his holy spirit to the devout and reverent hearing of his word preached, it might serve to convince many, who are negligent in this respect, what a risk they run,

of never coming to the knowledge of the truth, that they may be saved; and how foolish, and even impious, it is, to expect God's blessing, while they neglect the very means he has appointed, for obtaining it.

But let me not be misunderstood, as if I confined our duty, under the blessing of God's word, to the mere hearing of it preached. No, my brethren; what is preached according to the mind of the spirit, must be retained and acted upon. Nor yet, that I confine the influences of the holy spirit, to the word preached. No, my hearers; reading the scriptures, with meditation and prayer, is an excellent and fruitful means of Grace. Neither our private, nor our public religious duties, are substitutes, the one for the other. When they go hand in hand together—when, like the Bereans of primitive times, we search the scriptures, to see whether what we hear preached is the truth of God, and as such receive it, then it is, that the full benefit of the Gospel, is most surely to be expected, and is most generally found.

Fourthly.—That as the discoveries of the Gospel are of Divine Revelation—so is the preaching of the word and the administration of the Gospel, by a Divine Commission—“And how shall they preach, except they be sent?”

On this point, but little would be required to be said, was it not for the operation of those dissensions and divisions in Christianity, which by length of time, and established habits of thought, and the power of prejudice, and the pertinacity of party feeling, and I may add, the apathy and indifference of an unbelieving age, have fulfilled the predictions of the author and finisher of our faith, defaced the beauty and simplicity of the Gospel, and cut the nerves of Revealed Religion.

Yet, my hearers, in this, as in all other the appointments of Heaven for our good, God hath not left himself without witness, or placed his creatures under any necessity of erring from his way, or of defeating the comfort and assurance derived from the Gospel, by reason of uncertainty in the administration of the word of his truth, and the means of his grace. By an undeniable appointment of the first preachers of the Gospel, certainty and assurance was given to the first converts to Christianity, that their faith was not built on a cunningly devised fable, the contrivance of human wisdom, but on the power of God, certified to their senses by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost. On this foundation the Church of Christ was planted and built up, and on this foundation it must continue to the end of the world, or cease to be the church of the living God. For, while faith shall continue to be the essence of Religion, it must be derived from the same source; while Revelation shall continue to be the only ground of faith, it must be derived from the word of God; while the word of God shall continue supreme for the direction of man in his spiritual concerns, it must be certified to his senses, as the standard of all duty and of all hope; and, while it shall continue to be preached to all nations for the obedience of faith, it must be accompanied with the same Divine commission and authority, by which it was verified at the beginning, as the truth of God, for man's salvation. Now as faith, considered as a religious principle, is inseparable from Divine operation and Divine warrant for what is believed, not only is the Revelation itself, but all other ministrations connected with the Religion thus established, dependant for certainty and effect,

on the same principle. As it is competent to no man to declare the will of God without Revelation, so neither is it competent for any, to administer the affairs of Christ's kingdom, except he be sent—that is, as the Apostle evidently means, except he be duly authorized thereto—a conclusion so clear and so reasonable, and at the same time so wise, and so profitable to creatures dependent on the use of means for spiritual attainment, as to create wonder, that it should ever have been, or yet continue to be, overlooked and disregarded by Christian people.

Hence is derived the importance of all the services here to be performed this day—The worship of God—His law proclaimed—His word preached—His sacraments administered—and his commission transferred to an approved servant, professing to be moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him this office and ministry, but outwardly commissioned for the assurance of those to whom he shall minister—What, my brethren and hearers, would they all be worth, separate from the Divine authority, whereby they are certified as the appointments of God for your salvation? “How shall they preach except they be sent?”

Such, my brethren and friends, being the Gospel of the ever blessed God, which hath reached so far as even unto us, bringing with it, the grand and profitable discovery of our wants, and of God's mercies—and such the appointment of his wisdom, for continuing the knowledge of his will and the help of his grace, among men, by the ministry of the word—what becomes us, who are so highly favoured, and so richly provided for, in our greatest interest? Shall it be a dead letter to us through neglect, or life and power unto salvation, through attention? This question, it is your part to answer—and “I beseech you by the mercies of God,” to lay it near your heart. Every thing will depend on the temper and spirit with which you consider it. For the Apostle tells us, that in the preaching of the Gospel, the ministers of Christ, “are a savour of life, or a savour of death,” according as “the word preached, is mixed with faith in them that hear it.” I have met you to-day, my brethren and hearers, in the simplicity of that Gospel, in which you stand, and have laid it before you, in its first lines, as it were—Shall I then be the savour of life, or of death to you, or any of you? This also will depend greatly on yourselves; and I pray to God, to help you to a right understanding, of what may turn, perhaps, on the choice of this hour—even your future and eternal condition. The Gospel is your salvation or condemnation, as you receive or reject it—you cannot escape from that fixed rule, by which you must be judged and sentenced, everlastingly. But a little while, my friends, and “he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.” He comes to take account of his servants, according to what he hath committed unto each man's trust. At your hands, he will demand an improvement of Gospel light, Gospel privileges, and Gospel grace—and nothing short of improvement will answer. The unprofitable servant, remember, returned his Lord's talent safe and uninjured, but was consigned to outer darkness, because he had not made an increase of it. What then must be the portion of those, who not only have not improved, but have abused, wasted and dissipated, profaned and despised, this richest gift of God's love? And think me not your enemy, my friends, because I thus speak—No: God knoweth, that for your souls I would spend, and be spent—and O that I had a tongue of fire, that I

might consume every opposing thought, and bring every soul now before me, to know the Gospel of Christ to be the power of God unto salvation. You are here, my brethren, this day, in the house of God, and as the people of God. The everlasting Gospel is proposed to you; and what hindereth, that you should not close in with its most gracious offers. "All things are now ready, come to the marriage." O begin not with one consent to make excuse, and go away, one to his farm, another to his merchandise, and another to his profession—For there is an awful threat in this very Gospel, that those who make such excuses, shall not taste of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

O it is a fearful thought, my brethren and hearers, to reflect on the heedlessness and inadvertence of redeemed sinners, under this rich provision of the love of God in Christ Jesus for their salvation. It is a heart-sinking prospect to behold the thousands of accountable immortals, who, Gallio like, care for none of these things, but follow the carnal mind, in its rejection of God, and preference of the world. Yet if we have hearts awakened for ourselves, they must feel for the sin deceived multitudes, who madly put away from them the words of eternal life—and what they thus feel, they must manifest, for there is no middle ground on which we can contemplate man in any moment of his existence, than as in the favour, or under the curse of his maker. This, my brethren of the clergy, is the anxious, oppressive thought, which weighs down the spirit of the ministers of Christ, under the apathy and indifference, wherewith the Gospel is received. But whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, necessity is laid upon us; yea, woe be to us if we preach not the Gospel. Arm yourself, therefore, my brother, who will this day be invested with Christ's commission: to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments of the grace of God—Arm yourself with a steadfast mind, fully and faithfully to administer the trust committed you. You have to go forth among this heedless and unconcerned race of fallen creatures—you have to rouse them from the lethargy of unbelief—to awaken them from the dream of mortality, and point their thoughts, their anxieties, their exertions, to the realities of another being—and to apply the sanctions of eternity to the pursuits and occupations of time. You profess to be called of God to this great work—Believing this, we this day clothe you with Christ's commission, derived from his holy Apostles, to call sinners to repentance. Commending you to the grace of God, and exhorting you to make full proof of your ministry, and to bear in mind that you have to account for immortal souls—We bid you God speed, and may he who hath the remainder of the spirit, and who alone giveth the increase, be with you in your work, to the advancement of his glory, the good of his church, the safety, honour and welfare of his people.

Now unto God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—the only living and true God, be all honour and glory—now and forever.