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A
S E R M O N,

DELIVERED IN

TRINITY CHURCH,

On the 11th DAY of OCTOBER, 1791,

BEFORE THE

C O N V E N T I O N

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

IN THE STATE OF

N E W - Y O R K.

By the Rev. RICHARD C. MOORE,
RECTOR OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, STATEN-ISLAND.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Rom. i. 16.

I do not frustrate the Grace of God, for if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain. Gal. ii. 21.

N E W - Y O R K :

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—1791.—

*THE following Sermon, delivered in
the City of New-York, on Tuesday the
11th inst. before the Convention of the
Protestant Episcopal Church, is, with
great respect and affection, dedicated to
the Wardens, Vestry, and Members of St.
Andrew's Church, in the County of
Richmond,*

By their sincere Friend,

And Pastor,

The AUTHOR.

NEW-YORK, October 20, 1791.





A S E R M O N, &c.

II. TIMOTHY, iv. 2.

“ *Preach the Word.* ”

WHEN we read with attention that Epistle from which I have selected the *important theme* of our present meditation, we discover the virtues of the great Apostle shining with peculiar lustre. As a Father of the Church, he exhorts his beloved Timothy to preserve inviolate the dignity of his sacred office; and as an inducement for him to proceed undaunted in the midst of difficulty, he directs his attention to the realms of everlasting bliss—to that inexhaustible source of comfort and consolation, from whence every good and perfect gift proceedeth. He was sensible, that through the weakness of human nature his tenderly beloved son might shrink back at the appearance of calamity, and perhaps be dismayed and cast down, when his exertions in behalf of the gospel should be most indispensibly necessary. With a heart, therefore, teeming with parental tenderness, he bids him recollect those distresses to which he had submitted, and under the pressure of which he had been succoured and supported by the God of Sion himself—“ *Thou hast fully known (says he) my doctrine, manner of life, what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me.* ” The disciple, perhaps for a moment, might have comforted himself

himself with the idea of being more successful in the administration of his office, than his spiritual father; but in order to nip a presumption of that nature in the bud, and to remove from his breast so flattering a hope, he assured him, that such was the *nature* and *disposition* of the world, that every true and faithful witness of a crucified Redeemer, should meet with trials—“*Yea, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*” Yet, notwithstanding the path of ministerial duty was obstructed by evils so alarming, the Apostle urged his disciple to the most animated discharge of his important office. He had taken a glimpse within the veil, and had tasted of the water of the river of life. Every ray of fear was therefore dissipated, by the refulgent beams of JEHOVAH’s countenance; “*being confident, that his light affliction, which should be but for a moment, would work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*” In addition, therefore, to the advice he had already given him, he now calls forth his attention, in the most solemn and affecting manner—“*I charge thee before God, (exclaims the aged and venerable Apostle) and the Lord Jesus Christ, PREACH THE WORD.*” The prosperity of Sion engrossed his sole attention; it was his meat and his drink to do the will of his heavenly Father; he knew that the day was approaching, in which there would be a departure from the *glorious simplicity* of the gospel of Christ; he therefore called upon Timothy to be instant in season and out of season; “*for the time will come, (says he) when they will not endure sound doctrine, for they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables; but watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy MINISTRY.*” This solemn injunction conveys to the mind of the *sericus teacher of religion*, the importance of his office; he knows that he is

sent forth to proclaim the truths of the gospel in the ears of a *carnal, sensual world*, and that however opposed his fellow creatures may be to the reception of his important message, that he is to deliver it in its native simplicity, not with *fleshly words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of Power.*" Actuated, therefore, by the same unerring Spirit, what a comfort and satisfaction must arise in our minds, when we consider that attention which was paid to the *doctrines of the gospel* by our venerable reformers? Touched with a ray of celestial ardor, they marked well the bulwarks of our Sion, and have guarded against every error, by comprehending the great truths of Christianity in her glorious *articles and liturgy*. Shielded and defended by them, we may bid defiance to the kingdom of Antichrist: they serve as an ensign to convey to surrounding churches, the purity of her principles; they preach Christ, and Christ crucified; they proclaim him the *Alpha and Omega* of all our hopes; they point out to admiring multitudes the fulness of *redeeming love*; they humble the aspiring passions of the human mind, and charge her ministering children, who are placed upon her celestial walls, to exclaim in never-ceasing accents, "*Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!*" Bound, therefore, as we are by every tie of virtue and sincerity, to sound the trumpet of evangelic truth, let us who wait at her altar, "PREACH THE WORD"—let us not be ashamed of the gospel of Christ, but exert our united voices in disseminating the truths of religion, to the honour of God, and the salvation of immortal souls. Linked together by an indissoluble chain of affection, success shall mark and distinguish our labours. Built upon the rock Christ Jesus, the gates of hell shall ne'er prevail against us—*Infidelity and Error* shall flee before the prevailing rays of *Truth*; and *Orthodoxy*, like
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the Ark of old, ride *gloriously* triumphant. At an opportunity, therefore, like the present, when the watchmen from the borders of our Sion are *convened*, for the purpose of deliberating upon such measures as may have a tendency to establish *her interest and happiness*, it may not be improper seriously to enquire into some of those important truths inculcated by Christ and his disciples, and what was particularly implied by the Apostle, when he charged his beloved Timothy to “PREACH THE WORD.”—In the prosecution of this momentous object, I shall proceed with caution: but though I advance with trembling steps, yet, as the servant of the meek and lowly *Jesus*, I esteem it my duty to speak with freedom; and may that God who filleth immensity with his presence, remove the veil of prejudice from our *breasts*, and, by the illuminating power of his Spirit, lead us into all truth.

ONE of the most leading points in that holy and undefiled religion we profess, and which it is particularly necessary to *proclaim*, is our unhappy fall in Adam; by which we are deprived of that spiritual power with which man was first created, and are involved in sin and wickedness. That this is the case is clearly evident from the general tenor of revelation. “Behold, (says the Psalmist) *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.*” The Apostle Paul, who was taught by the same unerring Spirit, has declared, that “*in Adam all died:*” likewise, that “*by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners;*” thereby avowing his belief in the imputation of original sin, and the depravity and corruption of our fallen nature. And does not our own experience convince us that this is really the case? Cast your eye into the world, and observe the conduct of our fellow creatures; examine with attention the first efforts of the

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the infant *mind*—How susceptible are our children of every impression of *vice*? How readily do they imbibe a love of the *world*? and with what reluctance do they in general receive religious instruction? How frequently do we observe the tender parent defeated in all his wishes? He sows the seed of piety in the breast of his beloved offspring, and endeavours to train up his child in the way he should go; but, while un sanctified by the Spirit of the Almighty, he turns a deaf ear to the warm remonstrances of parental love, and instead of walking in the commandments of God, tramples upon the blood of Christ, and gives up the reins to his detested *passions*. It is supposed by *those* who are *wise above what is written*, that the mind of man, at his first entrance upon this stage of action, is un tinctured with depravity, and that, like yon *pliant ozier*, it may be inclined either to good or evil: but this idea is not only repugnant to those declarations of scripture which have just been quoted, but is immediately opposed to the principles of our Church, who in her ninth article expressly asserts, that “*original sin standeth not in the following or imitation of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk, but it is the fault and corruption of every man who naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit.*” It is from that bitter fountain of original depravity that all our imperfections flow—it renders the human mind at enmity with God, and prevents us from treading in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Jesus. It was from a conviction of this important truth, that the Apostle informed his Corinthian converts, that “*the natural or unconverted man careth not for the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.*” Our Saviour like-

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wife, who knew that the human mind was corrupt by nature, declared to Nicodemus, *a master in Israel*, that “ *except a man was born again, he could not see the kingdom of God.*” The Jewish teacher was indeed astonished at the doctrine, and asked in a degree of surprise, How can these things be? Our blessed Lord assigned him the *reason*, and opened to his view the real cause, by telling him, that “ *that which is born of the flesh, is flesh.*” This declaration, independent of every other, is amply sufficient to convince us of our insufficiency, and the absolute necessity of conversion, in order to enable us to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart: for if man possesses sufficient power by *nature* to enable him to practise holiness in the fear of God, it certainly would be useless for him to be born *again*: if, therefore, it is necessary for him to be born again, a moral insufficiency is implied. This, in the opinion of the Church, is indeed the case; for in her tenth article, wherein she is discoursing upon the freedom of the *human will*, she expressly and without the least disguise asserts, that we cannot of ourselves do any thing pleasing to God;— “ *for the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.*”

SINCE, therefore, such is the imperfect state of man, from what source is he to expect that assistance which will enable him to cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the celestial armour of light?—The sacred scriptures again reveal to our view the most effectual relief in the person and offices of the *Holy Ghost the Comforter*. It is through his sacred influences that the

the adorable Jesus is manifested to our souls—It is to him that the Spirit of the Almighty leads the repenting sinner for *support* and *consolation*. Though enemies to the cross by nature, yet when the light of the Divine Spirit is reflected upon our *minds*, we are made to “*hunger and thirst after righteousness* ;”—we hear the Almighty exclaiming in language of affection, “*Seek ye my face!*” and with a heart melted and subdued, we cheerfully answer, “*Thy face, Lord, will we seek.*” It is then that the glories of immortality become conspicuous: it is then that we experience the true meaning of those sacred prophetic declarations,—“*I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.*” And again—“*I will give you a new heart also, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh; and I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*” It is upon authority of this *incontrovertible nature*, that our holy Church, in her *seventeenth article*, explains to her children the glorious doctrine of *converting grace*—“*They are called (says she) according to God’s purpose, by his spirit working in due season—they through grace obey the calling.*” Indeed, throughout the whole of our incomparable liturgy, we find the ascription of *praise* continually arising to the Almighty, as incense from the glowing altar. In the daily service of the Church, in language *humble* and *affecting*, we approach the Throne of Heaven, *confessing our sins*; and instead of presuming upon the least power inherent in us by nature, we acknowledge our unwor-

things, and confels that “ *there is no health in us.*” From an experience of this truth, we are led to the feet of the throne for *divine assistance*, and beseech that God to enable us to perform his will, “ from whom *all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed.*” The insufficiency, therefore, of man being a truth so fully revealed in holy writ, and so abundantly enforced in our service, it cannot fail of appearing necessary for us, who are sent forth as Ambassadors of God, to proclaim it without reserve, and to deliver it as a part of that *word*, or gospel of Christ, which we are delegated to preach.—From this view that we have taken of the doctrines of the gospel, with respect to original depravity, and the necessity of converting grace, in order to turn us from darkness into light, it remains now to consider whether we are justified in the sight of God, through that *obedience*, which by his grace we are enabled to perform, or whether our salvation is *effected* through the alone merits of redeeming love. There is a principle in the breast of every man, that naturally leads him to the works of the law for salvation, and which prompts him to seek an admission into the abodes of everlasting bliss, by a partial conformity to its sacred *injunctions*, although the scriptures, so far from promising him the least security, *declare*, that “ *curst is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.*” But the gospel of peace, those “ *glad tidings of great joy,*” instead of conducting the *awakened sinner* to mount Sinai for safety, directs his attention to the cross of the compassionate Jesus: we there behold him suffering for our sins, that we *who believe* may be made the *righteousness of God* in him: the sacrifice of his body impresses our souls with awe, and while from a knowledge of our unworthiness

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we are weeping around the *atoning victim*, we hear him in accents of affection cautioning us from any dependence short of himself alone, and declaring, that “*by grace ye are saved through faith,*” and that “*not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.*” This truth was *particularly*, and with more than *common* energy, inculcated by St. Paul. He was jealous of the mediatorial dignity of his sacred master, and ascribed the glory of *salvation* to him alone. Even in his time, *error* had begun to insinuate *itself* in the Church of Christ: there were those who depended upon their own works, and who thought them of sufficient importance to purchase for them eternal bliss; but when speaking of them, *like a wise master builder* he mentions the impropriety of their system, and supplicates the Almighty to influence their *minds* by the effusions of his holy Spirit; “*for I bear them record, (says the Apostle) that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge; for they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*” In his Epistle to the Phillippians, he disclaims the least pretension to *merit* on account of his own works, in this strong and decisive language:—“*I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered all things, and do count them but dung. That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having (mark the distinction) mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith.*”

AND when we descend from the Apostles down to a later period, we discover the same truths inculcated *by those*, who for purity of *life* and *conversation* have been ever esteemed as some of the *brightest jewels* in the crown of the reformation; “they knew that no other foundation can any man lay, than that is *laid*, which is *Jesus Christ*;” they therefore have represented him to our view as the *truth* and the *life*,—not only as the *Redeemer*, but also as the *watchful* shepherd of his sheep. In one of the homilies of the Church of England, where salvation by *Christ alone* is the subject treated of, it is declared, that “we are justified by God’s *free mercy*, and the merits of the Redeemer only, and by no virtue or good works of our own, that *is in us*, or that we can be able to have, or *to do*, for to deserve the same, Christ himself *only* being the cause meritorious thereof.”—Bishop Beveridge, whose piety and exemplary manners ever distinguished him, when discoursing upon the same important subject, stepped forth with holy zeal, and like a faithful witness of a crucified Jesus, plead the hallowed cause of righteousness imputed—“For how is it possible, (says the learned prelate) that I should be justified by good works, when I can do no good works at all before I be justified? My works cannot be accepted as good till my person be so; nor can any person be accepted by *God*, till first engrafted into Christ; before which engrafting into the true vine, ’tis impossible I should bring forth good fruit: for the plowing of the wicked is sin, says Solomon, yea, the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.”—These are evidences so powerful, authorities so decided, that they cannot fail of carrying conviction with them, especially as they so immediately harmonize with the *professed principles* of our holy Church,
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who in her eleventh article **boldly** and evangelically asserts—“*We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings, wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.*”

THESE, my much respected brethren, being some of the fundamental principles of that gospel committed to our charge, it certainly is a duty incumbent upon us, to deliver them without *reserve*. They are indeed the pillars of *Protestantism*—pillars upon which the glorious *fabric* of Salvation is erected.—Let us, therefore, as faithful servants of Christ Jesus, be *instant in season and out of season* in preaching them. While engaged in a cause so *truly noble*, what have we to fear?—Intrusted with a commission so conducive to the welfare of immortal souls, what have we to apprehend?—The smiles of a beneficent Saviour will accompany us through this vale of tears—If involved in difficulty, if opposed by those for whom we *labour*, and for whom we *pray*, the blessed Jesus will support and comfort us by his Spirit; he will speak the language of *affection* to our souls—“*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*” Under the most adverse circumstances, the importance of our office must be impressed upon our minds. Remember that we are set as a city on a hill, which cannot be hid: our doctrine, therefore, must be drawn from the fountain of unerring truth; we must preach, *not ourselves*, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and endeavour to convince a benighted world, that unless they possess an interest in redeeming love, their souls will be sentenced to eternal pain. It is not upon our own works, either in whole or in part, that we are to trust

trust to for justification. A *deist*, or any other infidel, may be a moralist; but, agreeable to revelation, the door of Salvation is closed against him; for "*he only that believeth, shall be saved.*" By preaching Christ, and Christ crucified, we shall therefore bring the *proud* and *presumptuous legalist* to the cross of redeeming love. By informing him that there is no other name under Heaven whereby he can be saved, but the name of Jesus, he will, through divine grace, stop his needless and alarming pursuit, and instead of confiding in himself, will fall low at the feet of the Redeemer, and exclaim in contrition, "*Jesus, master, have mercy upon me!*"—As a friend, therefore, to mankind, I beseech you to *blow the trumpet of evangelic truth*. Though younger in years than some of you now before me, yet, intrusted as I am with the ministry of the gospel, I even charge you, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, "PREACH THE WORD"—Trim the celestial Lamp of Salvation through faith—take heed that ye touch not the Ark of the Almighty with unhallowed hands, and be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. With this solemn advice I now bid you adieu, and shall conclude with a short address to the lay members of this convention.

From your immediate situation in life, you have it much in your power to forward and promote the interest of religion: it is to you that we are sent the joyful bearers of celestial tidings: it is from you that we in general derive our support, and upon whom, *under God*, we depend for the united exertions of benevolence and sincerity. Let your attention be therefore directed to the good of Sion; walk worthy of your important vocation, and let the celestial light of virtue *gild* and distinguish all your actions; remember that
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the cause of religion is the **cause** of a crucified Jesus; acquit yourselves therefore with becoming zeal; let your counsel be ever weighed in the balance of the sanctuary; and be determined with the Apostle to know nothing but *Christ*, and him crucified. Under conduct so auspicious, our united labours will meet with the blessing of the Lord our *God*: sweet peace shall attend us on our journey home: when we are called from this our earthly tabernacle, the presence of **JEHOVAH** shall sustain and comfort us; and we shall be received into the arms of our divine master with “WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANTS, ENTER YE INTO THE JOY OF YOUR LORD.”—*Now to God the Father, &c.*

F I N I S.
