

an *energetic*, as well as an honest and devoted ministry. And hence, the necessity of looking into the intellectual, as well as the moral and religious character of the ministry. The enlightened age in which we live, and the general intelligence which is disseminated among all orders and conditions of men, obviously require an intellectual as well as a pious and devoted ministry. It is absurd to suppose that a man who possesses a rude and uncultivated mind is properly qualified to preach the gospel with success, to polished, intellectual, and intelligent congregations, merely because he is truly pious. Pious he may be; but if his talents and learning are not sufficiently commanding to gain and fix the attention of his audience, he can be the means of doing them but little good. There seems to be a great absurdity in giving our children a polite and polished education, and then doom them to hear an uneducated ministry. Where education is widely diffused and disseminated among all classes of the community, as in this country, the ministry should all be educated, in order that they may become competent and useful teachers of the Christian religion. And if the church duly respect herself, and have a proper regard for the glory and honor of God, she will, with a proper feeling, insist on those qualifications in the ministry, which are essential in rendering them useful as pastors.

That God has ordained an able as well as a devoted ministry for his church, is clearly manifest from the *precepts of the Bible*. *The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.* These precepts speak a language clear, plain, and decisive; language that cannot be misunderstood. And, in accordance with these positive precepts, there are also individual expressions of the Divine will. *The same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others. For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.* It is said of Paul, that his letters were *weighty and powerful*. And speaking of himself, he testifies, *though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge.* It is also said of Apollos,

in the way of commendation, that *he was an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures; that he spake boldly in the synagague, and mightily convinced the Jews.* From these Scripture testimonies it is plainly evident that it is well pleasing to God to have a ministry of a vigorous and well cultivated mind, as well as of a pious and devoted heart; of a high intellectual, as well as of a religious character; able to teach and instruct the ignorant and those who are out of the way; of sound speech that cannot be condemned; well furnished with all the qualities for making a deep, vivid, and lasting impression upon the public mind.

That an able ministry is ordained of God as a blessing to his church, is also evident from the fact, that *all the most important movements in the church, have taken place under the instrumentality of such a ministry.* Why were Moses and Aaron selected to rescue Israel from bondage, to instruct them in their journey to Canaan, and to arrange for them a splendid system of civil and religious polity? Why, but for their peculiar qualifications? the one being learned in all the wisdom of the age, as well as divinely inspired, and the other, a man of ready and commanding address. Who have displayed noble powers, a superior genius, a higher and more commanding eloquence, than David and some of the prophets? But why were not men of inferior capacity selected to be thus honored of God, if talents and intellectual power are of no account with him? In moral as well as physical results, the means must be adapted to the end. *Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.*

So, also, in the gospel age, the chief actors in establishing the Christian religion have not been less illustrious. The twelve disciples, who were selected as the chief instruments in planting the gospel among the nations of the earth, although taken from men in the humble walks of life, were not sent forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ till thoroughly trained, and fully qualified for the most wise and powerful action. The Apostle Paul, was the most eminent man of the age. He had great mental capacity; he had a quick and penetrating perception; he had a warm and lively imagination; he had genius; he had a well cultivated and dis-