

baptize, until the day of his death if God had not given a new revelation to that effect. Timothy never could have acted and baptized, until the day of his death, without being ordained by the spirit of prophecy and by the laying on of hands, as we are informed in the New Testament. Barnabas never could have gone forth among the people as an apostle—for he was an apostle, though not one of the Twelve—and acted in connection with the apostle Paul, unless the Holy Ghost had said, “Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work of the ministry unto which I have called them.” It required new revelation. And if no man could act even in the days of the apostles on the old commission given to the eleven, how much less can people act upon it who live 1,500 or 1,800 years after who undertake to pick it up, and say we are authorized to preach under this commission because those eleven men were authorized.

What would you think, Americans—citizens of this great Republic, if some man in Great Britain should take it into his head to come over here, to this country of ours to represent the inhabitants of Great Britain; and when you ask him for his authority, “Oh,” says he, “I have received no new commission. My government did not commission me to come to America to act as Minister Plenipotentiary.” We again ask him, by what authority then do you present yourself before this great Republic? You must, of course, pretend to some authority? “Oh, yes,” says he, “but I have no new commission; I have an old one given to one of my predecessors—one given to a man dead and gone. I happened to have access to his writings and papers, and finding his commission I put it into my pocket and came here to act as Minister.”

Now would you not think he had

left his country because he was insane? Would you acknowledge his authority? No. Would God acknowledge the authority of a man who assumed to act under an old commission given to people who have laid in their graves some eighteen centuries? No. If we act in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in administering the great and sacred ordinance of baptism, we must be commissioned by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to do this work, or else it would be blasphemy and wickedness in the extreme, not only in those who administer, but in those who suffer themselves to be deceived and receive the ordinance from their hands.

It is a testimony then to us when both the Catholics, and the Protestants in all the various sects, rise up and tell us that the canon of scripture is full and closed, and when they present us with their articles of faith, and say here are sixty-six books in the Old and New Testaments, and you must not receive revelation from God only as it is contained in these sixty-six books. There has been no new revelation since, no new commission, no new authority, no voice of angels, no voice of God, no inspiration, no calling by new revelation; but we act only upon the old commission. When they tell us this, if we are reflecting people, we find ourselves totally unprepared to receive the gospel at their hands.

As to the gospel being in the world, the letter of it is here, to be sure; but where is the authority to administer? Where is there a man, among the Catholics or Protestants, among Christians, or Pagans, or Mahommedans, or elsewhere, who could have ministered the gospel to any of our forefathers who lived before the present century? Nowhere could you or I have received the gospel, forty years