

purpose. What was that purpose? The perfecting of the Saints.

I would ask the learned divines of the present day, have the Saints need, in this age, of anything to perfect them? Or are they already sufficiently perfected to enter into the presence of the Father? If they need perfecting, and none can deny that they do, then Apostles are needed now, Prophets are needed now, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are needed now. "Well," says one, "we will allow that evangelists, pastors and teachers are needed now; we have not done them away, we have abundance of teachers and pastors, but we do not believe in Apostles and Prophets now." Why not? Did not the same Apostle tell us in the same verse, that Apostles and Prophets, as well as evangelists, pastors and teachers, were given, when Jesus ascended on high, for the perfecting of the Saints? Why, then, do you separate them, and say, that the two first-named are not now necessary, and that the other three are so? Why do you do this? In order to be consistent with the unreasonableness of this generation, and to comply with their traditions. You have not got Apostles, you have not got Prophets, and you must have some excuse in order to do them away, and your excuse is, that they are not needed now. Prove it, you cannot, it is beyond your power. You have no evidence, no testimony whatever by which you can prove it. With all the testimony in favor of your position which you can bring forward, I can prove that pastors, evangelists, teachers, Bishops, deacons, Elders and every other officer of the Church of Christ, which you believe in are not needed now, as easily as you can prove that Apostles and Pro-

phets are not needed now. Just as much evidence can be adduced in favor of one position as the other; and the fact is, there is no evidence for either. They were all given for the perfecting of the Saints and the work of the ministry, and they were to continue until the day of perfection arrived; and the moment you say they are not necessary, you virtually say the work of the ministry is not necessary; and why, then, do you administer? They were given not only for the perfecting of the Saints and the work of the ministry, but for the edifying of the body of Christ, which is the Church. Take away Apostles, inspired of God, take away Prophets who foretell future events, and you take away the means which God has ordained for the edification of his body—his Church, and that body or Church cannot be perfected.

Another object, Paul informs us, for which these gifts were given, was that the Saints might come to the unity of the faith, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Take away these gifts, and what is your condition? You are in the same condition which Paul speaks of in the very next verse—"carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of man, by cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait, to deceive." The gifts were given to prevent the people from being carried about by every wind of doctrine. Take away these gifts—the gift of revelation, prophecy and miracles, which were enjoyed by the Saints in ancient days, and the people are liable to be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine that may be sounded in their ears. Why? Because they are entirely governed by the opinions of men. One man has his opinion,