

the first century of the Christian era. Hence we find in the 13th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that there were certain prophets in the Christian church at Antioch—do not be astonished, professed Christians, that there were prophets in the Christian church at Antioch—“And the Holy Ghost said unto them,” prepare yourselves for hearing a new revelation—“separate unto me Barnabas and Saul unto the work of the ministry to which I have called them.” Here then was a new revelation for Barnabas and Saul in relation to their ministry and calling. But could they undertake their ministry by virtue of some old commission given prior to their calling? No. Timothy, who lived contemporary with the ancient Apostles, was not called by virtue of a commission given to the eleven, neither was he called by virtue of a commission given to Paul and Barnabas; but he was called as the Apostle Paul has declared in his epistle to Timothy—“Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by the spirit of prophecy, and by the laying on of the hands.” What! Did Timothy live in the day of Prophets, and when Prophets could find out in relation to his calling, and lay their hands upon him and set him apart to the work of the ministry unto which God had called him? Yes, and so with all the rest, and no man can take this honor to himself, save he be called of God, as was Aaron.

God is a very consistent being; he does not do things at haphazard, but he is very orderly in his work, and everything in his kingdom is consistent and according to law. That is the way the Lord works. He is far more consistent than the political governments of our day; and even they, with all their imperfections, would never be so unwise as to re-

ceive a foreign minister simply because some other foreign minister had been called. Supposing that a man from Great Britain should go to Washington, and should declare to the President of the United States, and to the various authorities of the government there—“I am a minister plenipotentiary, I have authority from the British Government to transact whatever business it may have to transact with the Government of the United States.” “Very well,” say the President and those associated with him at the head of the Government, “let us see your credentials.” “My credentials!” says this man. “Bless you, I have not any new commission. The authorities of Great Britain have not said anything to me about being sent to represent them in the United States, but nevertheless I have authority to act as their minister.” “Well, what is the nature of your authority? Pray tell us.” “Why,” says he, “having access to some old documents I found, in searching them over, that there was a man called about fifty or sixty years ago to act in this nation as minister plenipotentiary for Great Britain.” “What has that to do with you?” say those who are questioning him. Says he—“I did not suppose that I needed any new commission, so I just took this old document and put it in my pocket, I thought it would authorize me to act as minister because one that is dead and gone acted by virtue of the authority it conferred.” What do you suppose our Government would think of such a minister? Don’t you think they would regard him as a little insane, or beside himself? They certainly would. Do you suppose that God has less wisdom than our general Government? Do you suppose that he lets things run at random? Or does he have a