

John Sutcliff & Andrew Fuller

THE CLIPSTON SERMONS: A KEY MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

EDITED BY
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History of Christian Missions

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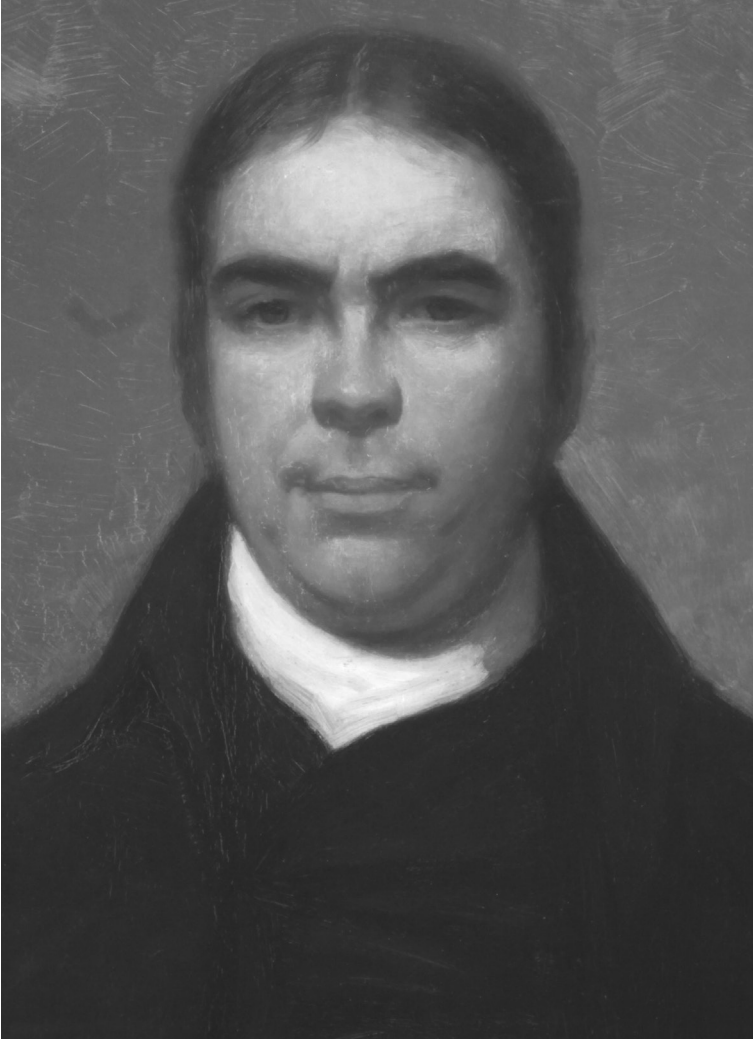
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Andrew Fuller (1754-1815)



INTRODUCTION

Michael A.G. Haykin

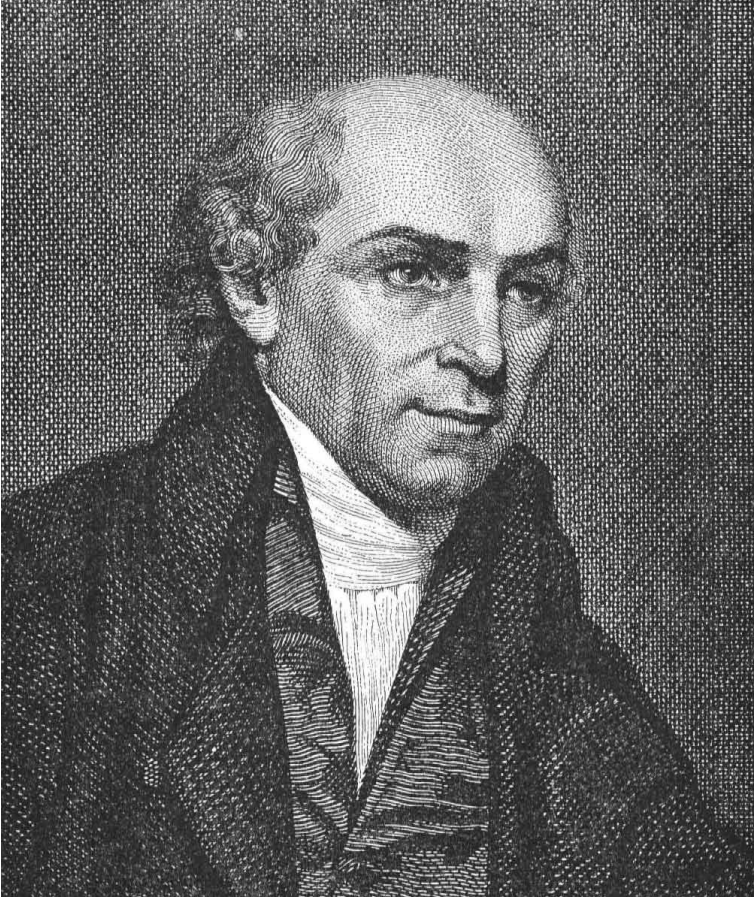
The globalization of the Christian Faith and the shift of its fulcrum from the west to the south and east are now such fundamental facts about Christianity that it is a surprise to recall how recent these events actually are. A little over two hundred years ago, when William Carey tabulated the earth's population in terms of religious orientation, he found that the vast majority of professing Christians lived in Europe and North America. If Carey were drawing up today the tables that occupy the third chapter of his classic apologetic for cross-cultural missions—*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (1792)—it would be a very different story. The reasons for this veritable explosion of the Christian faith worldwide are varied—the impact of the revivals of the eighteenth century, the rise of European political and cultural hegemony, and the senescence of Islam, the great competitor of Christianity for the best part of a millennium, during this period—but at the heart of it is the courageous faith of individuals like Carey, the cobbler from Paulerspury in the English East Midlands.

Now, William Carey's description as "the father of modern missions" has sometimes obscured the way in which mission-minded predecessors like the German pietists August Hermann Francke and Nikolaus von Zinzendorf and the English evangelicals Philip Doddridge and Methodist Thomas Coke all played a part in stimulating a missional consciousness and zeal among western Christians. And yet Carey's example of what he called his "plodding" in India for over forty years became *the* missionary template for many English-speaking Christians in the nineteenth century.

Moreover, what far too many of today's Christian readers of Carey's exploits

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forgets was that Carey's successes were accomplished in the context of a circle of friends. In India, Carey's circle of co-workers were his close friends William Ward and Joshua Marshman—the so-called Serampore Trio, who became a legendary band of brothers in their own day. In the British Isles, his close friends John Ryland, Jr., John Sutcliff, Samuel Pearce, Christopher Anderson, and above all, Andrew Fuller, stuck by Carey throughout the years of his mission in the Indian sub-continent.



William Carey (1761–1834)

Fuller's theology and activism

The friendship of Fuller was particularly important to Carey. Like Carey, Fuller's social background was that of the lower classes—his parents rented and worked a dairy farm in Cambridgeshire—and his formal education was minimal. William Wilberforce once told his sons that Fuller was “the very picture of a blacksmith.” Converted in a hyper-Calvinist milieu, common to many Baptist communities of the day, Fuller had to find his own way to a biblically-sound position with regard to salvation, piety, and preaching. He later compared his theological struggles to trying to find his way out of a labyrinth. But, though self-taught, he became by common admission the finest theologian that Baptists in the British Isles and America had throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. And his theology, deeply indebted to both the Puritan John Owen and the American evangelical Jonathan Edwards, was the heart and soul of William Carey's missionary vision.

His first major work, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, helped demolish hyper-Calvinism. A preliminary draft of it was written by 1778 (this first draft was recently discovered and is now housed in the archives of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary). Fuller had completed a second draft by 1781. Two editions of the work were published in Fuller's lifetime. A first edition was published in Northampton in 1785. The second edition, which appeared in 1801, was subtitled *The Duty of Sinners to Believe in Jesus Christ*, a subtitle which well expressed the overall theme of the book. There were substantial differences between the first and the second editions, which Fuller freely admitted and which primarily related to the doctrine of particular redemption. The work's major theme remained unaltered, however: “faith in Christ is the duty of all men who hear, or have opportunity to hear, the gospel.” This epoch-making book sought to be faithful to the central emphases of historic Calvinism while at the same time attempting to leave preachers with no alternative but to drive home to their hearers the universal obligations of repentance and faith.

Sutcliff's missionary sermon

From this book of Andrew Fuller to the realization of William Carey's passion to take the gospel to the four corners of the globe a couple of important steps had to be taken, both of which involved sermons. There was William Carey's famous sermon preached on May 30, 1792, which he summed up in two watchwords, “Ex-

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pect great things, attempt great things” and which Baptist tradition later expanded to “Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.” Often this is the only sermon recalled as a catalyst in the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society. But two sermons preached a year earlier by Andrew Fuller, in many ways Carey’s theological mentor, and by John Sutcliff, who had been Carey’s pastor, also need to be remembered.



Clipston Chapel

by Alison Pryce (Wikimedia Commons)

These two sermons were preached at a meeting of the pastors of the Northamptonshire Association on April 27, 1791, in the Baptist church at Clipston, Northamptonshire.¹ Of the many sermons that Sutcliff preached during his long ministry, the one that he gave that April morning is the only one to have survived in a complete form. Entitled *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, Sutcliff's sermon was based on 1 Kings 19:10, in particular Elijah's statement, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts." The subject of "divine jealousy" had long been on Sutcliff's mind. Ten years previously, on March 13, 1781, he had written a letter to Fuller in which he had expressed some of his thoughts on this subject, and had told Fuller that to him it was "a source of many reflections." The ministerial meeting in Clipston ten years later provided him with the perfect opportunity finally to gather together these reflections and share them with others.

Sutcliff first drew a distinction between jealousy for and jealousy of an object. While the latter is not at all a desirable sentiment, the former "implies love to and tender concern for" the object towards which it is directed. When Elijah therefore spoke of his being "very jealous for the Lord God of hosts," he was declaring that he was gripped by a love and concern for God's "honor and interest." Sutcliff then went on to detail three attitudes which are intimate companions of such jealousy for God: a reverent obedience to the Scriptures as an "infallible guide," "a spirit of universal benevolence," and an habitual concern for the cause of Christ. Particularly noteworthy are Sutcliff's remarks about the first and second of these attitudes. Sutcliff laid great stress on the vital importance of bringing the entirety of one's beliefs and life into conformity with the revealed will of God as found in the Scriptures. True jealousy for God is accompanied by unmitigated obedience to these ancient, yet ever new, texts. They are an "infallible guide" and "unerring rule," Sutcliff reminded his hearers, by means of which a believer can test the reality of his faith and the purity of his doctrine, experience, worship, and lifestyle. Sutcliff clearly regarded the Word of God as critical in transforming the lives and thoughts of sinful men and women. It is noteworthy that the English-speaking missionary movement began with men and women passionately committed to the

¹ A Baptist Chapel at Clipston had been built in 1778, though there is evidence that there were Baptists in the village as far back as 1718. This was the building in which Fuller preached his sermon. In 1803, when Francis Augustus Cox was the minister, this first church building was entirely torn down, and its brick and other salvageable materials used in the construction of the present church building. The front façade is Victorian, and was added in 1861. See details in Alison Collier and Jeremy Thompson, *Clipston: A Heritage* (2nd ed.; Leicester, England: Troubadour Publishing, 2009), 55–60. In Fuller's day, Clipston was spelt with a final "e."

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authority and inerrancy of the Bible.

Then, genuine jealousy for God is conscious of the needs of others—all others and not merely those of one's own circle of friends and intimate associates. Drawing upon Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 6:17, Sutcliff argued that Christians bear a resemblance to their Lord. Even as Christ shows benevolence to all of humanity, so "saints feel a similar temper." Their benevolence seeks the temporal and especially the eternal good of their neighbors. And, Sutcliff reminded his hearers that day, included among their neighbors were not only to be those of "your own society, or those enclosed in the small circle of your personal acquaintance," but "every member of the human race," wherever she or he may be found. For such love and benevolence "can embrace a globe. It can stretch its arms like seas, and grasp in all the habitable shores." Given the way in which Sutcliff developed his understanding of "a spirit of universal benevolence" as an inseparable corollary of jealousy for God, it is not at all surprising that, as he then sought to apply his remarks to his hearers' lives, he focused upon prayer and evangelism.

Those who are jealous for God, and who consequently possess "a spirit of universal benevolence," should give themselves to "fervent prayer for the outpouring of the divine Spirit" that they might "see the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom." Without the empowering of the Spirit of God, "the greatest human abilities labor in vain, and the noblest efforts fail of success." This deep reliance on the Holy Spirit is a key feature of the faith of those in the circle of believers around Sutcliff and Fuller. It is noteworthy that Zechariah 4:6 ("Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit") was the unofficial motto of the Baptist Missionary Society after its formation in 1792. Moreover, Sutcliff argued in his sermon, jealousy for God results in an evangelistic lifestyle. He described this lifestyle by means of Jesus' declaration in the Sermon on the Mount that the people of God are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Are they [i.e. God's people] not the salt of the earth? It is not proper that the salt should lie all in one heap. It should be scattered abroad. Are they not the light of the world? These taken collectively should, like the sun, endeavor to enlighten the whole earth. As all the rays, however, that each can emit, are limited in their extent, let them be dispersed, that thus the whole globe may be illuminated. Are they not witnesses for God? It is necessary they be distributed upon every hill, and every mountain, in order that their sound may go into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.

God's intention for the local congregation of believers is that it be an aggressive evangelistic body, seeking "to enlighten the whole earth."

In commending this balance of ardent prayer and vigorous evangelistic effort Sutcliff was not only describing what he regarded as characteristics of genuine Christianity, but he was also outlining measures he considered essential for the revival of the Calvinistic Baptist cause in England. When these marks of true jealousy for God are present, he concluded, "this will tend to promote the interests of religion in the world. The cause of Christ will prosper; he must increase; his kingdom shall come." Yes, he reiterated, when God's people pray and evangelize, "the empire of Jesus shall advance, his kingdom arise, and the crown flourish upon his head." If this sermon was typical of Sutcliff's preaching, it is a pity that none of his other sermons have survived.

Fuller's missionary sermon

The second sermon preached that day was that of Andrew Fuller. *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns* is the intriguing title that Andrew Fuller later gave to the sermon. His text was taken from the first chapter of the the minor prophet, Haggai: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time the Lord's house should be built" (1:2).

After sketching the historical context of this verse, namely, the refusal of the Israelites to get to work on the rebuilding of the Temple after their return from the Babylonian Exile, Fuller noted that the main problem which afflicted the Israelites was a "procrastinating spirit." It was not, however, a problem unique to them, but hampered both unbelievers and believers in his own day. With regard to the latter, it prevented them from "undertaking any great or good work for the cause of Christ, or the good of mankind." Thankfully, Fuller declared in an illustration of his point, Martin Luther, the great German Reformer, was free from this tendency. If he had not been, he and his fellow Reformers would never have undertaken "the glorious work of the Reformation" and the house of the Lord "might have lain waste to this day." Fuller was convinced that the ministry of the Reformers in word and print had been honored by the Spirit of God for the blessing of many in the sixteenth and later centuries. The example of Luther was thus an appropriate one to bring forward to encourage his hearers to break out of the grip of a "procrastinating spirit."

The Reformation was undoubtedly a watershed in the history of Christianity. The

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rise of what has been termed the modern missionary movement at the end of the eighteenth century—in which Fuller and Carey and their colleagues played a critical role—was certainly another. From our standpoint at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is fascinating to see these two events linked together as Fuller pressed home his point regarding the debilitating effect of procrastination on the church of his day immediately after he had mentioned the example of Luther.

His hearers should seriously ponder, he urged, whether it was this tendency to procrastinate which had resulted in “so few and so feeble efforts” being “made for the propagation of the gospel in the world.” According to Matthew 28:19–20 and Mark 16:15, Christ gave his apostolic band a command to evangelize the nations, something that they had sought to do with “assiduity and fidelity.” But, he continued, how different was the subsequent history of the church:

Since their days, we seem to sit down half contented that the greater part of the world should still remain in ignorance and idolatry. Some noble efforts have indeed been made; but they are small in number, when compared with the magnitude of the object. . . . We pray for the conversion and salvation of the world, and yet neglect the ordinary means by which those ends have been used to be accomplished. It pleased God, heretofore, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed; and there is reason to think it will still please God to work by that distinguished means. Ought we not then at least to try by some means to convey more of the good news of salvation to the world around us than has hitherto been conveyed?

By this time, Fuller had read Carey’s above-mentioned *Enquiry*, which gave him a fair idea of the size of the evangelistic task that still lay before the church, as well as a summary understanding of the history of missions. As this portion of his sermon indicates, he had obviously been deeply challenged by his reading of it, and his awareness of Matthew 28:19–20 as an evangelistic text firmly established.

Furthermore, since 1784, the entire Northamptonshire Association had been regularly praying for revival and the world-wide advance of the gospel. Were Fuller and his hearers in earnest when they prayed this request? If so, how could they continue to pray along these lines without giving serious thought to its fulfillment? If its fulfillment were to come, Fuller now contended, it would be through God’s time-honored method of planting churches and winning the lost: preaching. Fuller

was cognizant that Scripture gave preaching a place of primacy in evangelism. Immediately after the concluding question in the above quote he cited Romans 10:13–15a, in which the Apostle Paul shows that it is impossible for either Jew or Gentile to embrace Christ as Saviour without hearing the proclamation of the gospel. And, what was especially germane to Fuller’s argument, Paul asks how shall such preaching take place unless preachers be sent.

The impact of these sermons

After hearing these two sermons, those gathered in the Clipston meeting-house were sobered and deeply convicted. A member of the audience that day recalled the way that the meeting-house was pervaded with a deep solemnity and the entire congregation was overwhelmed by what it had heard. When the sermons had been preached, the pastors present met for a time of prayer and reflection, and William Carey asked them, in light of what had been said by Sutcliff and Fuller, whether the time was not right to send “the gospel into the heathen world.” Despite the determination expressed by Sutcliff and Fuller in their sermons, and the zeal evident in Carey’s query, the ministers agreed to first encourage Carey to publish a manuscript he had been working on, namely, his *Enquiry*.²

Seven weeks later, at the annual assembly of the Association in June 1791, it was announced that plans had been made to have the two sermons preached at Clipston printed. They were sent to London to be printed by William Button, who was a bookseller and printer in addition to being pastor of Dean Street Baptist Church. How many copies Button printed is not known, but one of them found its way into the hands of William Steadman, then pastor of the Baptist cause at Broughton, Hampshire. In a diary that Steadman kept, he recorded his reading of the Clipston sermons on November 22, 1792. Both of them “did me good,” he wrote. He noted that Fuller’s sermon, which closed with a warm appeal for the unconverted in the congregation to accept God’s offer of salvation in Christ “without delay,” was well calculated to eradicate “pernicious ideas” about the nature of saving faith.

By the time that Steadman wrote these words, a dozen or so pastors, including Fuller and Sutcliff, had founded what became known as the Baptist Missionary Society in October of 1792. With no friends in high places and virtually no financial reserves, this small group of men, believing God that their Christian faith was not meant for westerners alone, committed itself to sending Carey (and later others) to

² See below, p. 38, n. 9.

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William Steadman (1764–1837)

India and south-east Asia, and then, in the years that followed, yet others to the West Indies and West Africa. Fuller served as the secretary of this society from its inception till his death in 1815. And so began in earnest the globalization of the Christian Faith.

It would not be untrue to say that, humanly speaking, apart from Fuller, Carey would never have gone to India. But Carey did go to India, and the Clipston sermons by his faithful friends Sutcliff and Fuller were key steps in what has become an iconic missionary story.

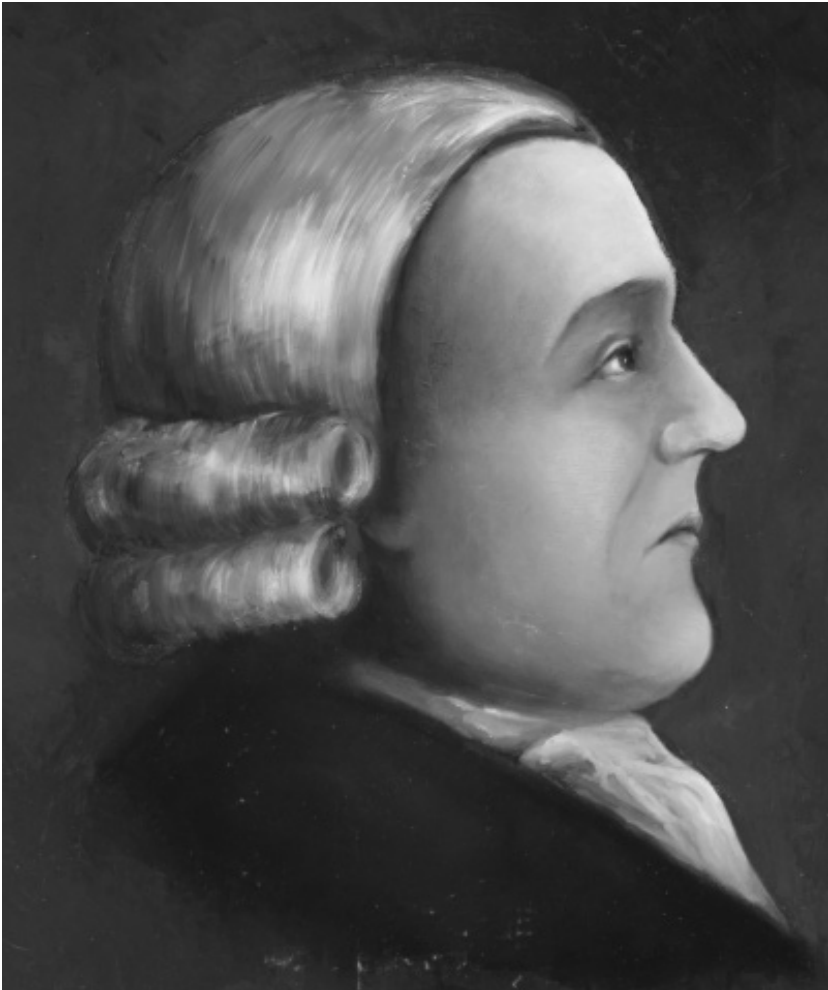
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TIMELINE

- 1784 Monthly prayer meetings for revival begin to be held in the Northamptonshire Association
- 1785 Andrew Fuller publishes *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (1st ed.)
- 1791, April 27 Clipston sermons preached
- 1792, May 30 William Carey preaches his sermon, “Expect great things [from God], attempt great things [for God]”
- 1792, October 2 Founding of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS)
- 1793 William Carey sails to India as the first missionary of the BMS



John Sutcliff (1752–1814)



JEALOUSY *for* THE LORD *of* HOSTS

John Sutcliff

“I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts.”

1 KINGS 19:10

The infinitely great and glorious Jehovah, in every period of time, has had some among the sons of men to appear on his behalf and oppose the spirit and conduct of a revolted world. Divine wisdom and goodness have been greatly displayed by properly qualifying such persons for the stations they were to occupy. In the front of this army of witnesses for God, Elijah stands distinguished above numbers. He lived in a period of great degeneracy. Corruption of manners awfully prevailed, even among the people of Israel. Ahab, a wicked, an idolatrous king, sat on the throne. Idolatry, practiced and patronized by the court, spread like a torrent through the land. In opposition to the overwhelming flood, Elijah appeared to stand alone. But boldness undaunted and firmness immovable seem, in general, to have been eminent features in his character. True, in the beginning of this chapter, we have one instance of cowardice left on record. Terrified by the daring threats of the bloody Jezebel, he fled for his life. This step, it should seem, he took without a divine warrant. For it he was called to account. The Lord said unto him, “What dost thou here, Elijah?”¹ What are the greatest and best of men when left unto themselves? By their conduct, let us take warning. Pertinent is the petition of the Psalmist, “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe”²; necessary the caution of the

¹ 1 Kings 19:9.

² Psalm 119:117.

Apostle, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."³

Our text, you observe, is part of the reply made by the Prophet in his own defence. In it, perhaps, something may be censured. His answer seems to indicate a degree of impatience under his trials and murmuring that his endeavors to promote the cause of God were unsuccessful. Unsuccessfulness in our ministerial work is indeed a heavy trial. It damps our ardor, dispirits our souls, and weakens our hands in the work of God. To publish our report from Sabbath to Sabbath, from year to year, and yet to be compelled to return lamenting, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"⁴ is distressing. Yet we must not murmur. Fidelity and zeal, prayer and watchfulness are our incumbent duties. Should we apparently labor in vain and spend our strength for nought, surely our judgment is with the Lord and our work with our God.

But though we conjecture that in the language and spirit of Elijah something may be censured, we assert there is much that ought to be commended. The temper he describes exceedingly becomes all who sustain a public character in the cause of Christ. Yet, let none imagine it should only be found in men immediately employed in sacred office; it enters deep into and is engrafted in the very soul of true Christianity. It is an essential part of that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."⁵

In handling this subject, let us explain what we mean by jealousy for God, add a few general observations, and point out some of the methods in which it will be discovered.

I. Our subject must be explained, the meaning of the term jealousy ascertained. It is introduced in the sacred Scriptures in various connections and does not always convey the same determinate idea. To be jealous for and of an object are exceedingly distinct. Jealousy of a person implies a suspicion of his fidelity, a suspicion that his character and conduct are not in reality what we expected or wished. But jealousy for God implies no unworthy suspicion of, but on the contrary, the highest degree of confidence in and esteem of him.

Jealousy for an object implies love to and tender concern for it, and includes a suspicion of some mischievous design formed against it. Thus Paul, in his second

³ 1 Corinthians 10:12.

⁴ Isaiah 53:1.

⁵ Hebrews 12:14.

epistle to the church at Corinth, writes, “I am jealous over [or upon account of] you with a godly jealousy.”⁶ And why? What was it that kindled jealousy in the bosom of the Apostle over these Corinthian converts? He was alarmed lest, as the serpent deceived Eve by his subtlety, so their minds should be corrupted from simplicity towards Christ⁷; he suspected they were in danger. He thought he perceived mischief hatching. Satan was their inveterate and politic foe. Well aware of his traitorous designs against these Christian converts, whose spiritual interests were so dear to his heart, Paul trembled lest he should gain an advantage over them. He was jealous over them with a godly jealousy.

When the Prophet uttered the language of our text, he seems to have had his eye principally upon the divine honor and interest in the world. Hence he adds, “the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thy altars and slain thy Prophets with the sword, and I, I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away.”⁸ He saw God’s name awfully profaned and his cause greatly reduced. Israel had acted in an unfaithful manner towards the Lord of Hosts and an unrighteous part towards his servants. Elijah saw idolatry spread, where formerly the pure worship of God had prevailed. The light of divine truth which had shone so beautifully in this benighted world appeared as if just about to be extinguished. This he knew would be the joy of the heathen, the triumph of hell. Alarming thought! This touched his feelings, roused his fears, thrilled through all the powers of his soul, kindled every spark of holy love into a flame of sacred zeal, made him all eye, all ear, all attention to objects so dear to his inmost soul. “I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts.”⁹

Surely the existence of this disposition is essential to the Christian character. It shone conspicuously in the conduct of an incarnate Jesus. Christianity consists in conformity to him as our great pattern. “He that saith he abideth in him, ought

⁶ 2 Corinthians 11:2.

⁷ See 2 Corinthians 11:3. Sutcliff has a footnote at this point in the sermon: “So Dr. Doddridge renders the passage. See his *Family Expositor* on the place. He adds, in a marginal note, “Simplicity towards Christ, implies an entire undivided devotedness to Christ, as the great Husband Christians should desire to please, and from whom they are to receive law; and is with peculiar propriety opposed to that mixture of Judaism, which some were endeavoring to bring in among the Christians.” See Philip Doddridge, *The Family Expositor* (London, 1753), 4:508, note d.

⁸ 1 Kings 19:10.

⁹ 1 Kings 19:10.

himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”¹⁰ Jealousy is the companion of love. Rather, it is the exercise of love in a particular mode. And however warm our professions, however splendid in the eyes of men our actions, an inspired Apostle has declared in the most positive terms that without love, we are nothing.¹¹ You who wear the name of Christians, have you Christian hearts? Where is your jealousy for Christ? The dignity of his character is condemned; the efficacy of his atoning sacrifice is ridiculed. Is not the former the object in which you glory? Is not the latter the foundation on which you build your hope? An attempt—though blessed be God it is in vain—yet an attempt to degrade the one and demolish the other must operate like an electric shock through all your souls. Instantly you will exclaim like men amazed, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?”¹²

II. HAVING THUS EXPLAINED WHAT WE UNDERSTAND BY JEALOUSY FOR GOD, WE NOW ADD A FEW GENERAL OBSERVATIONS UPON THE SUBJECT.

1. Jealousy for God will be regulated by an implicit regard to the Word of God. The inspired volume is the divine directory, the infallible guide, to which “you do well to take heed, as to a light that shineth in a dark place.”¹³ This is the code of royal laws, the book of unalterable statutes in the kingdom of Christ. Influenced by jealousy for God, you will consider Jesus as a teacher sent from above, you will sit at his feet and receive the law from his mouth. The Bible you will consider as the word of Christ; attachment to him, as the prophet, the great prophet of your profession, the founder and lawgiver of your holy religion, will engage you to hear him in all things. To the Bible you will adhere as the sacred Chest, containing the oracles of God, attending to which you may separate truth from error and so receive the former as the most salutary food, but reject the latter as the most deadly poison; as the Measuring Reed by which everything in the house and worship of God is to be exactly adjusted, that so Zion’s fair building may rise according to the pattern seen in the mount,¹⁴ while all the goings-out and comings-in of her highly favored inhabitants are divinely approved; as the Test by which every part of your

¹⁰ 1 John 2:6.

¹¹ See 1 Corinthians 13:2.

¹² Psalm 11:3.

¹³ 2 Peter 1:19.

¹⁴ See Exodus 25:40.

experience is to be examined, that so the pure gold and the worthless dross may be distinguished; and as the unerring Rule by which your conduct as it respects God, your neighbor, and yourselves, in things civil or sacred may be regulated, that so a conscience void of offence towards God and man may be in some happy degree enjoyed.

This divine directory, this infallible guide is complete; it stands in no need of any addition. To introduce articles of faith, or modes of worship, unauthorized by the sacred Word is one character of the son of perdition and one branch of the mystery of iniquity. Human innovations in matters of religion have kindled the fire of divine jealousy, the flames of which have burst forth and consumed the ring-leaders of such impious deeds. Witness the awful case of Nadab and Abihu. This event was designed to inculcate upon the minds of spectators and of succeeding generations to the close of time an implicit attention, in all matters of religion, to God's revealed will.¹⁵

As this divine rule has no defect, so it contains nothing superfluous or improper. Undoubtedly some things here enjoined, comparatively viewed, are of greater importance than others; yet, nothing that bears the stamp of royal authority, no edict that is issued out under the broad seal of Jehovah, should ever be considered as a trifling article or represented as a matter of indifference. While the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith are regarded according to their native importance, even paying tithe of mint, anise and cummin, so long as God enjoined them, must not be omitted. If, when some articles of faith, some modes of worship are represented as indifferent, no more is intended than that comparatively viewed they are not of equal importance with some others in certain cases, the fact will be allowed. But if this phrase means that such doctrines or parts of worship are of no importance, that the former may be believed or disbelieved, the latter practiced or neglected, without any offence in the sight of God, this is denied. Neutrality in religion is by Christ himself eternally excluded. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."¹⁶

¹⁵ Sutcliff has a footnote at this point: "It is a dangerous thing in the service of God, to decline from his own institutions; we have to do with a power which is wise to prescribe his own worship, just to require what he hath prescribed, powerful to revenge what he hath not required."—Bp. Hall's *Contemplations on Nadab and Abihu*." This citation is from Joseph Hall, *Contemplations on the Old Testament. Book VI. Contemplation II. Of Nadab and Abihu*. There were a number of editions available in the eighteenth century for Sutcliff to have used.

¹⁶ Matthew 12:30.

2. This holy jealousy is accompanied with a spirit of universal benevolence. Here love to God is always attended with the same towards our neighbor. Descending angels celebrated with rapturous songs the goodwill of heaven towards men. Saints feel a similar temper, and so far as this divine principle prevails, they exemplify it in all their actions. “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit” with him.¹⁷ Inspired, brethren, with this benevolent disposition, you will readily deny yourselves for a neighbor’s good and so copy his example who “pleased not himself”¹⁸; but, although he was rich, became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.¹⁹ You will tenderly sympathize with the afflicted and according to your ability, as occasion may require, manifest the compassionate heart, employ the consoling tongue, and stretch out the relieving hand. Cordially you will rejoice in the prosperity of a friend, nor envy his lot, though more favored than your own. Earnestly will you pray for the welfare of an enemy, nor meanly insult, though he may fall. In a word, cheerfully you will assist in promoting where you can the temporal, but especially the eternal interests of those around you. And as the temporal concerns of men, contrasted with those that are eternal, are infinitely lighter than a feather weighed in one scale against the ponderous globe we inhabit in the other, so your attention will be principally engaged by what relates to their immortal felicity. This will exercise your warmest feelings and alternately excite your most painful fears or most pleasing hopes.

Nor will this benevolent temper merely regard such as are of your own society or those enclosed in the small circle of your personal acquaintance. The heart of a true Christian exhibits a fair commentary on the second table of the moral law. The question was once proposed, “Who is my neighbor?”²⁰ By your neighbor, brethren, you do not simply mean the man who lives at the next door; you mean a fellow creature, a member of the human race, let him be found wherever he may. Let him be an ignorant negro, dwelling in the unexplored regions of Africa, or an untutored savage, wandering in the inhospitable forests of America, he is your fellow creature, he is your neighbor, he is your brother.²¹ He has a soul, a soul that will exist forever,

¹⁷ 1 Corinthians 6:17.

¹⁸ Romans 14:3.

¹⁹ See 2 Corinthians 8:9.

²⁰ Luke 10:29.

²¹ Sutcliff’s description of an African or the American Indian unconsciously reflects his British sense of cultural superiority, and despite Sutcliff’s godliness, bespeaks an element of racism. Yet, see Andrew Fuller’s explicit critique of the racist slave trade of the British Empire: below, 38.

a soul that has interests equally important with those of your own. And though the ability of your hand may be very limited, not so that of your heart. This possesses a power that approaches to a kind of infinity. Who can fix the bounds of those benevolent wishes that such a heart can breathe? It is enlarged, it expands, it heaves, it swells, it grows warmer and warmer. It can embrace a globe. It can stretch its arms like seas and grasp in all the habitable shores. And what is its language? What are the sentiments it utters? Listen, listen to the enchanting sound: "Let the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."²²

What a contrast is this to that fire of hell, to that spirit inhaled from beneath, which has brought thousands to die in forms the most painful and ignominious! Yet such characters have existed, who have committed the bodies of their fellow creatures to the flames and consigned their souls to eternal burnings, all under a pretence of zeal for God. Infinitely more amiable and becoming the spirit of Christianity was their conduct who submitted with patience to the cruel stroke, who never returned reviling for reviling, but contrariwise blessing for cursing. Such resemble Stephen, who closed his life praying for his murderers; they resemble Jesus, who employed some of his last moments, when enduring the agonies of death, in interceding for his crucifiers.²³

3. It includes in it a reigning, a superlative regard to the interest of Christ. He has a kingdom in this world. True believers are members of it, subjects of Jesus as king in Zion. These are loyal subjects. They have the interest of their prince and the prosperity of his kingdom at heart. Like the Psalmist, they will be ready to say, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem to my chief joy."²⁴

This regard for the interest of Christ must be a reigning, superlative one. It must have the ascendancy in the heart. Jesus admits of no rival in the breasts of his subjects. A union between God and Mammon, between Christ and the world, has often (but always in vain) been attempted. It stands enacted as an eternal law through his dominions that unless a man hate "his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be his

²² Habbakuk 2:14.

²³ See Luke 23:34 and Acts 7:59–60.

²⁴ Psalm 137:56.

disciple.”²⁵ The import of this language seems to be that if the possession of any one enjoyment, even life itself, shall become inconsistent with loyalty and fidelity to Jesus, even that must be sacrificed as a proof of the reality of our attachment to him.

Now while this temper is evidently essential to the Christian character, it is equally so to a holy jealousy for God’s honor. Those who are jealous for the Lord of Hosts will feel a tender concern for his interest and watch with keen attention every effort to injure his cause. Devoted to the service of the Redeemer, they will habitually study how they may promote the prosperity of his kingdom.

III. THIS LEADS US IN THE THIRD PLACE, TO POINT OUT SOME OF THE METHODS IN WHICH THIS TEMPER WILL DISCOVER ITSELF.

1. It will be seen in a serious attention to the interests of personal Christianity. Jealousy for God will be attended with jealousy over yourselves. You will seriously endeavor to prove all things that you may hold fast that, and only that, which is good.²⁶ You will examine the reality of your religion. You will be ready to ask yourselves, “While I have a name to live, am I not dead? Am I a possessor of a new heart? Am I born again? Am I translated from under the power of darkness into the kingdom of God’s dear Son? Do I positively bear those good fruits without which, like an unprofitable tree, I must be hewn down and cast into the fire? Are my evidences of personal Christianity carefully collected from and compared with the Scriptures? Have I the authority of God to rank myself among the number of his children?”

Farther, you will examine the purity of your religion; ‘tis an unhappiness when wood, hay and stubble are mingled with gold, silver and precious stones.²⁷ Convinced of this, you will look to the purity of your faith. Viewing the pernicious effects of error, you will enquire, “Are my ideas of truth conformable to those exhibited in the sacred volume? Do I in no instance receive for doctrines the commandments of men? Did I take up my religious creed as I received a name from my ancestors, or did I search the Scriptures, determined to buy the truth whatever it cost me and never to sell it, whatever price any might offer for it? Have I adopted no mistakes which ought to be renounced? Are there no farther views than what I have already attained, which ought to be embraced? Let me search the Scriptures,

²⁵ Cf. Luke 14:26.

²⁶ See 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

²⁷ See 1 Corinthians 3:12.

knowing “they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness,” in order, that like the “man of God I may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.”²⁸

You will look, brethren, to the purity of your experience. Deeply sensible of the danger of corrupt mixtures, the danger of pride and self-seeking being the real principles that influence your conduct, instead of a single eye to the divine honor, you will look well to yourselves. You will carefully inspect your hearts and examine with severity the springs of action that lie hid from every human eye. You will put the query home, “Is love, genuine love to God, an ingredient in my religion? Is the true beauty of his character the ground of my esteem, or do I only love him from some mean and selfish consideration? Do I love him for what he is in himself, as infinitely amiable in every discovery of his moral character, or only because I look upon him as my friend and consider myself as interested in his favor?” Brethren, beware of self love under the disguise of professed love to God. “If you love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?”²⁹

You will look into the purity of your worship. With profound reverence you will regard the divine precept: “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.”³⁰ With sacred awe you will consider how God has manifested on various occasions his most tremendous jealousy over positive institutions and punished in the most alarming manner deviations from his revealed will; deviations which in themselves appeared very small, but which acquired a magnitude beyond all conception, because they were departures from the express injunctions of the Most High. Affectionately desirous of approving yourselves as obedient children, whose fear towards God is not taught by the precept of men, you will ask your consciences, “What authority have I for the manner in which I worship God and observe his ordinances? Do I copy the example of the adorable Jesus, or have I in any instance departed from that blessed pattern? Have I studied with impartiality the instructions he has given me in his divine Word, or am I governed by the opinion and practice of those around me?” You should remember, brethren, that everything in religion is personal; that your conscience is accountable to no master but Christ; that nothing can be performed in faith, but what he has enjoined; and that nothing will be accepted by him, but

²⁸ Cf. 2 Timothy 3:16–17.

²⁹ Matthew 5:46.

³⁰ Deuteronomy 12:32.

what he has commanded.

You will look also to the purity of your walk. This is an article of the utmost consequence. It will be your concern to be “blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.”³¹ Here the credit of your profession is deeply interested. Convinced of this you will conscientiously regard the principles of justice and equity in all your civil affairs. You will attentively adhere to the golden rule, “all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”³² In a word, clearly convinced of the imperfection of your knowledge of yourselves and fully satisfied that in many cases you are improper judges of your own actions, yet beholding the equity and discerning the goodness of every divine requirement, you will be ready to say, “Search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”³³

2. It will be seen in fervent prayer for the outpouring of the divine Spirit. This is the grand promise of the New Testament, as the coming of Christ was of the Old. His influences are the soul, the great animating soul, of all religion. These withheld, divine ordinances are empty cisterns and spiritual graces are withering flowers. These suspended, the greatest human abilities labor in vain and the noblest efforts fail of success.

Look into the New Testament. There you find a Paul “brought up at the feet of Gamaliel”³⁴; an Apollos who possessed in an eminent degree the powers of oratory; a Peter whose heart burned with the zeal of a seraph; and a John whose soul was animated in every power by the Spirit of his divine master. Yet hear one of them, in the name of all the rest, when giving account of their labors, saying, “neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.”³⁵

Your observation and experience will perfectly harmonize with these sentiments. Anxious to see the advancement of the Redeemer’s kingdom, you will give vent to your fervent desires by warm addresses at a throne of grace. When you

³¹ Philippians 2:15–16.

³² Matthew 7:12.

³³ Psalm 139:23–24.

³⁴ Acts 22:2.

³⁵ 1 Corinthians 3:7.

hear the solemn charge, originally addressed more immediately to those who minister in sanctuary services, “ye that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give him no rest, until he establish, and until he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth,”³⁶ you will be ready to envy their employ, to wish for a kind of partnership in the business, and each say, “for Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”³⁷

Some who move in the lower orders of life, who find it difficult sometimes to provide things honest in the sight of all men, are often ready to say, “What can I do? I am so poor in the world I can do nothing, or I gladly would.” If you mean as you say, if you are thoroughly honest and do not secretly please yourselves with the thought that your circumstances are such that nothing can be expected from you, if you have really a mind to work, here is employ. You have as free access to the throne of grace as any. If you can do nothing for Zion, you may speak to the King on her behalf. In this way you may as effectually serve the interests of Christ by your prayers, as the rich with their purses. Take the hint. Go home. Put it into practice as an evidence of the truth of what you profess.

3. It will be seen in a diligent endeavor to promote the cause of Christ in the world. A cause divinely excellent! A cause which should warm the hearts and influence the conduct of the Redeemer’s followers. An attention to this is immediately, yet not merely, the work of ministers. While these take the lead, they ought to be seconded and supported by the vigorous efforts of all the friends of truth and holiness. Animated by the principle in our text, such will be ready to say to their ministers, as the men of Israel said to Ezra, when an important affair was to be undertaken, “Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee; we also will be with thee; be of good courage and do it.”³⁸

Having your souls enlivened by this disposition, you will each study your station and what can be done in it. You have each a place to occupy, a post to maintain. Fill up the place, make good the post where you are stationed. For instance, you who are heads of families, great is the truth reposed in your hands. Your children, your servants, claim your attention. Their health, their temporal concerns, lie near your hearts. The feelings of humanity, the dictates of natural affection, lead

³⁶ Isaiah 62:6–7.

³⁷ Isaiah 62:1.

³⁸ Ezra 10:4.

you thus far. But you profess to be Christians. And if your hearts are influenced by the principles of Christianity, your practice will correspond with your profession. So doing you will pay a due regard to the eternal interests of your domestics. The example of Abraham, approved by heaven, and recorded in the page of sacred history, will be admired and imitated. "I know," saith Jehovah, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment."³⁹

Were we to take a view of the numerous orders in human society and the distinct obligations of each in a religious view, we should carry the subject beyond the limits now assigned. Suffice it to remark that every one has a proper line in which he should walk and some peculiar privilege which should be improved. The part which every individual acts is of importance, as the smallest wheel, the minutest pin in a watch, is of consequence to the regular movement of the whole machine. Even you that are servants are repeatedly exhorted so to act "that you may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."⁴⁰

James addressed his epistle to those what were "scattered abroad."⁴¹ This is the common lot of God's people. Certainly it is to answer some wise end in the general plan of divine providence. Nor is it perhaps hard to determine what this may be. Are they not the salt of the earth?⁴² It is not proper that the salt should lie all in one heap. It should be scattered abroad. Are they not the light of the world?⁴³ These taken collectively should, like the sun, endeavor to enlighten the whole earth. As all the rays, however, that each can emit are limited in their extent, let them be dispersed that thus the whole globe may be illuminated. Are they not witnesses for God? It is necessary they be distributed upon every hill and every mountain, in order that their sound may go into all the earth and their words unto the ends of the world.⁴⁴

Brethren, is it not to the last degree desirable that these characters should be illustrated, that these ends should be accomplished? Nothing, nothing will prompt you on so to act like the divine passion, the celestial fire, that burned in the bosom

³⁹ Genesis 18:19.

⁴⁰ Titus 2:10.

⁴¹ James 1:1.

⁴² See Matthew 5:13

⁴³ See Matthew 5:14.

⁴⁴ See Psalm 19:4.

and blazed in the life of Elijah.

It is time to finish. A few minutes and I have done. How would such a temper tend to promote your own comfort, make happy all the friends of God around you, and promote the interests of religion! Yes, brethren, this divine temper would eminently tend to promote your own comfort. It will inspire your minds with a holy cheerfulness amidst all your labors and toils. Numerous discouragements that now damp your spirits would never be felt. Activity and pleasure would here be found united. The lukewarm professor may drag on, but like Pharaoh's chariots when the wheels were off, it will be heavily; while the vigorous, the active follower of Jesus, mounts upon the wings of eagles and, as he ascends, sings the songs of seraphs. It will tend to make happy all the friends of God around you. These beholding your heavenly ardor will be filled with holy joy. Rejoicing to see you come up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty,"⁴⁵ they will cheerfully give you the "right hand of fellowship."⁴⁶ These, like Barnabas, will be glad, when they thus see the grace of God.⁴⁷ Devils may hate, wicked men may laugh, formal professors may persecute, but these will open their arms, open their hearts to embrace you. In a word, this will tend to promote the interests of religion in the world.

The cause of Christ will prosper; he must increase; his kingdom shall come. But, though he is indebted to none, he kindly condescends to employ his people in accomplishing these glorious purposes. What love, what zeal, what activity become you when thus employed! Animated with jealousy for the Lord God of Hosts, you will be "like the sun, when he goeth forth in his strength,"⁴⁸ or "like an army terrible with banners."⁴⁹ Under the divine smile, Satan will fall before you like lightning from heaven,⁵⁰ his power be broken, his policy confounded; while the empire of Jesus shall advance, his kingdom arise, and the crown flourish upon his head. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."⁵¹

⁴⁵ Judges 5:23.

⁴⁶ Galatians 2:9.

⁴⁷ See Acts 11:23.

⁴⁸ Judges 5:31.

⁴⁹ Song of Songs 6:4, 10.

⁵⁰ See Luke 10:18.

⁵¹ 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts :
AND, THE
*Pernicious Influence of Delay in religious
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THE PERNICIOUS INFLUENCE *of* DELAY *in* RELIGIOUS CONCERNS¹

Andrew Fuller

“Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say,
The time is not come, the time that the Lord’s house should be built.”

HAGGAI 1:2

When the children of Judah were delivered from their captivity, and allowed, by the proclamation of Cyrus, to return to their own land, one of the principal things which attracted their attention was the rebuilding of the house of God, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. This was a work which Cyrus himself enjoined, and upon which the hearts of the people were fixed. It was not, however, to be accomplished at once; and as the worship of God was a matter of immediate and indispensable concern, they set up an altar, on which to offer sacrifices and offerings, till such time as the temple should be built.

In the second year after their return, the foundation of the Lord’s house was laid; but opposition being made to it, by the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin, the work ceased all the days of Cyrus, until the reign of Darius, commonly distinguished by the name of Darius Hystaspes.² During this period, which seems to have been about fourteen years, the people sunk into a spirit of indifference. At first they desisted from necessity; but afterwards, their attention being turned

¹ In the various editions of Fuller’s works that were published after his death, this sermon is often given the title *The instances, the evil nature, and the dangerous tendency of delay, in the concerns of religion.*

² Darius I Hystaspes (c.550–486 BC) was the third ruler of the Persian Empire. His father, who was also called Hystaspes, was a leading figure in the Persian Empire.

to the building and ornamenting of houses for themselves, they seemed very well contented that the house of the Lord should lie waste. For this their temper and conduct the land was smitten with barrenness; so that both the vintage and the harvest failed them. God also raised up Haggai and Zechariah to go and remonstrate against their supineness; and the efforts of these two prophets were the means of stirring up the people to resume the work.³

The argument which the people used against building the house of God was that the time was not come. It is possible they waited for a counter-order from the Persian court; if so, they might have waited long enough. A work of that nature ought to have been prosecuted of their own accord; at least they should have tried. It did not follow, because they were hindered once, that therefore they should never succeed. Or perhaps they meant to plead their present weakness and poverty. Something like this seems to be implied in the 4th verse, where they are reminded that they had strength enough to build and ornament houses for themselves. It looks as if they wished to build, and lay by fortunes for themselves and their families, and then, at some future time, they might contribute for the building of the house of God.

There is something of this procrastinating spirit that runs through a great part of our life, and is of great detriment to us in the work of God. We know of many things that should be done, and cannot in conscience directly oppose them; but still we find excuses for our inactivity. While we admit that many things should be done which are not done, we are apt to quiet ourselves with the thought that they need not be done just now: "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built."

In discoursing to you upon the subject, brethren, I shall take notice of a few of the most remarkable cases in which this spirit is discovered; and then endeavor to show its evil nature and dangerous tendency.

I. IN RESPECT TO THE CASES, OR INSTANCES, IN WHICH IT IS DISCOVERED.

A small degree of observation on mankind, and of reflection upon the workings of our own hearts, will furnish us with many of these; and convince us of its great influence on every description of men, in almost all their religious concerns.

1. It is by this plea that a great part of mankind are constantly deceiving themselves in respect to a serious attention to the concerns of their souls. These are,

³ Fuller has this footnote: See Ezra 3-5.

doubtless, of the last importance; and there are times in which most men not only acknowledge this truth, but, in some sort, feel the force of it. This is the case, especially, with those who have had a religious education, and have been used to attend upon the preaching of the gospel. They hear from the pulpit that men must be born again, must be converted, and become as little children, or never enter into the kingdom of God. Or the same things are impressed upon them by some threatening affliction or alarming providence. They feel themselves at those times very unhappy; and it is not unusual for them to resolve upon a sacrifice of their former sins, and a serious and close attention in future to the affairs of their souls. They think, while under these impressions, they will consider their ways, they will enter their closets, and shut to the door, and pray to the Lord that he would have mercy upon them; but, alas! no sooner do they retire from the house of God, or recover from their affliction, than the impression begins to subside, and then matters of this sort become less welcome to the mind. They must not be utterly rejected; but are let alone for the present. As conscience becomes less alarmed, and danger is viewed at a greater distance, the sinner, by degrees, recovers himself from his fright, and dismisses his religious concern, in some such manner as Felix did his reprover, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee."⁴

It is thus with the ardent youth; in the hour of serious reflection, he feels that religion is of importance; but his heart, still averse from what his conscience recommends, rises against the thought of sacrificing the prime of life to the gloomy duties of prayer and self-denial. He does not resolve never to attend to these things; but the time does not seem to be come. He hopes that the Almighty will excuse him a few years, at least, and impute his excesses to youthful folly and imbecility. It is thus with the man of business; there are times in which he is obliged to retire from the hurry of life; and, at those times, thoughts of another life may arrest his attention. Conscience at those intervals may smite him for his living without prayer, without reflection, without God in all his thoughts; and what is his remedy? Does he lament his sin, and implore mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ? No, nor so much as promise to forsake it immediately; but this he promises, that when this busy time is over, and that favorite point is gained, and those intricate affairs are terminated, then it shall be otherwise. It is thus with persons in single life: they will be better when they got settled in the world. It is

⁴ Acts 24:25.

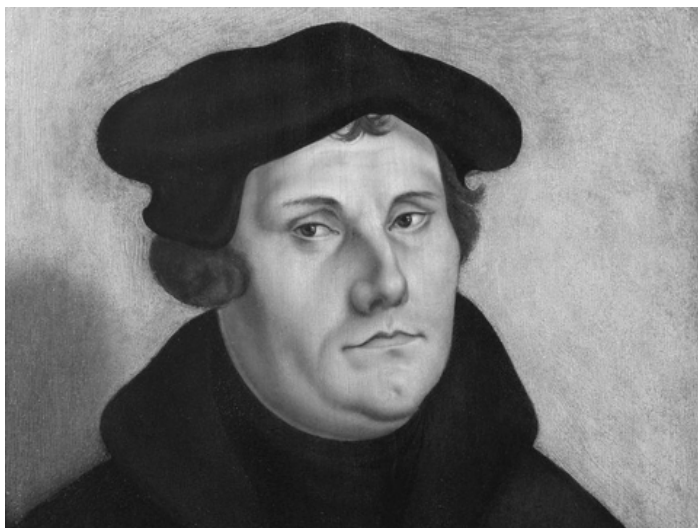
thus with the encumbered parent: she looks forward to the time when her family shall get off her hands. It is thus with the drunkard and the debauchee: wearied in their own way, they intend to lead a new life as soon as they can but shake off their old connections, In short, it is thus with great numbers in all our towns, and villages, and congregations: they put off the great concern to another time, and think they may venture at least a little longer, till all is over with them, and a dying hour just awakens them, like the virgins in the parable, to bitter reflection on their own fatal folly.

2. This plea not only affects the unconverted, but prevents us all from undertaking any great or good work for the cause of Christ, or the good of mankind. We see many things that should be done; but there are difficulties in the way, and we wait for the removal of these difficulties. We are very apt to indulge a kind of prudent caution, (as we call it), which foresees and magnifies difficulties beyond what they really are. It is granted there may be such things in the way of an undertaking as may render it impracticable; and, in that case, it is our duty for the present to stand still; but it becomes us to beware lest we account that impracticable which only requires such a degree of exertion as we are not inclined to give it. Perhaps the work requires expense; and Covetousness says, Wait a little longer, till I have gained so and so in trade, till I have rendered my circumstances respectable, and settled my children comfortably in the world. But is not this like ceiling our own houses, while the house of God lies waste? Perhaps it requires concurrence; and we wait for everybody to be of a mind, which is never to be expected. He who through a dread of opposition and reproach desists from known duty is in danger of being found among the “fearful, the unbelieving, and the abominable.”⁵

Had Luther and his contemporaries acted upon this principle, they had never gone about the glorious work of the Reformation.⁶ When he saw the abominations of popery, he might have said, “These things ought not to be; but what can I do? If the chief priests and rulers in different nations would but unite, something might be effected; but what can I do, an individual, and a poor man? I may render myself an object of persecution, or, which is worse, of universal contempt; and what good end will be answered by it?” Had Luther reasoned thus—had he fancied that, because princes and prelates were not the first to engage in the good work, therefore

⁵ Revelation 21:8. A reference to those who the text says will “have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.”

⁶ Here Fuller recalls Martin Luther’s pioneering role at the time of the Reformation in the recovery of biblical truth.



Martin Luther (1483–1546)

the time was not come to build the house of the Lord—the house of the Lord, for anything he had done, might have lain waste to this day.

Instead of waiting for the removal of difficulties, we ought, in many cases, to consider them as purposely laid in our way, in order to try the sincerity of our religion. He who had all power in heaven and earth could not only have sent forth his apostles into all the world, but have so ordered it that all the world should treat them with kindness, and aid them in their mission; but, instead of that, he told them to lay their accounts with persecution and the loss of all things. This was no doubt to try their sincerity; and the difficulties laid in our way are equally designed to try ours.

Let it be considered whether it is not owing to this principle that so few and so feeble efforts have been made for the propagation of the gospel in the world. When the Lord Jesus commissioned his apostles, he commanded them to go and teach “all nations,” to preach the gospel to “every creature;” and that notwithstanding the difficulties and oppositions that would be in the way.⁷ The apostles executed their commission with assiduity and fidelity; but, since their days, we seem to sit down

⁷ Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15.

half contented that the greater part of the world should still remain in ignorance and idolatry. Some noble efforts have indeed been made; but they are small in number, when compared with the magnitude of the object. And why is it so? Are the souls of men of less value than heretofore? No. Is Christianity less true or less important than in former ages? This will not be pretended. Are there no opportunities for societies, or individuals, in Christian nations, to convey the gospel to the heathens? This cannot be pleaded so long as opportunities are found to trade with them, yea, and (what is a disgrace to the name of Christians) to buy them, and sell them, and treat them with worse than savage barbarity! We have opportunities in abundance: the improvement of navigation, and the maritime and commercial turn of this country, furnish us with these; and it deserves to be considered whether this is not a circumstance that renders it a duty peculiarly binding on us.

The truth is, if I am not mistaken, we wait for we know not what; we seem to think “the time is not come, the time for the Spirit to be poured down from on high.”⁸ We pray for the conversion and salvation of the world, and yet neglect the ordinary means by which those ends have been used to be accomplished. It pleased God, heretofore, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believed; and there is reason to think it will still please God to work by that distinguished means. Ought we not then at least to try by some means to convey more of the good news of salvation to the world around us than has hitherto been conveyed? The encouragement to the heathen is still in force, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved: but how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?”⁹

Let it be further considered whether it is not owing to this principle that so few

⁸ A paraphrase of the sermon text, Haggai 1:2.

⁹ Romans 10:13–15. Fuller has this note at this point: “I hope shortly to see this subject more fully handled by my worthy friend the Rev. Mr. Carey, of Leicester, whose heart for some years has been much in it. It may not be amiss to inform the reader, that at the time of the above discourse being delivered, Mr. Carey was present. After worship, when the ministers were together, he moved the question, “Whether something might not be done in the way of sending the gospel into the heathen world?” It was well known at the same time that Mr. Carey had written a judicious piece upon the subject, which he had by him in manuscript, showing the duty of Christians in that matter, and the practicability of the undertaking. It was therefore agreed, as the first step proper to be taken, that Mr. Carey be requested to revise and print his manuscript. The piece is expected to be out in a few months, and the price will probably be about 1s.6d.” The manuscript to which Fuller is referring is, of course, Carey’s *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*.

and so feeble efforts are made for the propagation of the gospel in places within our reach. There are many dark places in our own land—places where priests and people, it is to be feared, are alike destitute of true religion, “all looking to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter.”¹⁰ Were every friend of Jesus Christ to avail himself of that liberty which the laws of his country allow him, and embrace every opportunity for the dissemination of evangelical principles, what effects might we hope to see? Were every true minister of the gospel to make a point of preaching as often as possible in the villages within his reach; and did those private Christians who are situated in such villages open their doors for preaching, and recommend the gospel by a holy and affectionate behavior, might we not hope to see the wilderness become as a fruitful field? Surely, in these matters, we are too negligent. And when we do preach to the unconverted, we do not feel as if we were to do any good. We are as if we knew not how to get at the hearts and consciences of people. We cast the net, without so much as expecting a draught. We are as those who cannot find their hands in the day of battle, who go forth not like men accustomed to conquest, but rather like those inured to defeat. Whence arises all this? Is it not owing, at least a considerable degree of it, to a notion we have that the time is not come for anything considerable to be effected?

3. It is this plea that keeps many from a public profession of religion by a practical acknowledgment of Christ. Christ requires of his followers that they confess his name before men; that they be baptized, and commemorate his dying love in the ordinance of the supper. Yet there are many who consider themselves as Christians, and are considered so by others, who still live in the neglect of these ordinances. I speak not now of those who consider themselves as having been baptized in their infancy, but of such as admit the immersion of believers to be the only true baptism, and yet do not practice it, nor hold communion with any particular church of Christ. It is painful to think there should be a description of professed Christians who live in the neglect of Christ’s commands. What can be the motives of such neglect? Probably they are various: there is one, however, that must have fallen under your observation; that is, the want of some powerful impression upon the mind, impelling them, as it were, to a compliance. Many persons wait for something of this sort; and because they go from year to year without it, conclude that the time is not come; or that it is not the mind of God that they should comply with those ordinances; at least, that they should comply with

¹⁰ Isaiah 56:11.

them at present. Impressions, it is allowed, are desirable, provided it be truth or duty that is impressed; otherwise they deserve no regard: but be they as desirable as they may, the want of them can never justify our living in the neglect of known duty. Nor are they at all adapted to show us what is duty, but merely to excite to the performance of that which may be proved to be duty without them. We might as well wait for impressions, and conclude, from the want of them, that the time is not come for the performance of other duties as those of baptism and the Lord's supper.

Some are kept from a public profession of Christ's name by mere mercenary motives. They have relations and friends that would be offended. The fear of being disinherited, or injured, in some sort, as to worldly circumstances, has made many a person keep his principles to himself, till such time as the party whose displeasure he fears shall be removed out of the way. This is wicked; as it amounts to a denial of Christ before men, and will, no doubt, expose the party, if he die without repentance for it, to be denied by Christ before his Father at the last day. "Lord," said one, "I will follow thee, but let me first go and bury my father." "Let me first go and bid them farewell who are at home," says another. "Jesus answered, 'Let the dead bury their dead, follow thou me.'" "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."¹¹

4. It is this plea that keeps us from a thorough self-examination and self-denial. The importance of being right in the sight of God, and our liability to err, even in the greatest of all concerns, render a close and frequent inquiry into our spiritual state absolutely necessary. It is a dangerous, as well as an uncomfortable life, to be always in suspense; not knowing what nor where we are, nor whither we are going. There are seasons, too, in which we feel the importance of such an inquiry, and think we will go about it, we will search and try our ways, and turn from our sins, and walk more closely with God. Such thoughts will occur when we hear matters urged home upon us from the pulpit, or when some affecting event draws off our attention from the present world, and causes us to reflect upon ourselves for our inordinate anxiety after it. We think of living otherwise than we have done; but when we come to put our thoughts into execution, we find a number of difficulties in the way, which too often deter us, at least for the present. Here is an undertaking that must first be accomplished, before I can have time; here is also a troublesome affair that I must get through, before I can be composed; and then here are such

¹¹ Luke 9:59-62.

temptations that I know not how to get over just now: if I wait a little longer, perhaps they may be removed. Alas! alas! thus we befool ourselves; thus we defer it to another time, till the impressions on our minds are effaced, and then we are less able to attend to those things than we were at first. As one who puts off the examination of his accounts, and the retrenchment of his expenses, till, all on a sudden, he is involved in a bankruptcy; so do multitudes, in the religious world, neglect a close inspection into the concerns of their souls, till, at length, either a departure from some of the great principles of the gospel, or some foul and open fall, is the consequence.

5. It is this principle that keeps us from preparedness for death, and thus being ready when our Lord shall come. There is nothing that Christ has more forcibly enjoined than this duty: "Be ye also ready, for at such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."¹² Why do we not immediately feel the force of these charges, and betake ourselves to habitual watchfulness, and prayer, and self-denial, and walking with God? Why are we not as men who wait for the coming of their Lord? Is it not from a secret thought that the time is not come? We know we must die, but we consider it as something at a distance; and thus, imagining that our Lord delayeth his coming, we delay to prepare to meet him, so that when he cometh he findeth us in confusion. Instead of our loins being girt, and our lights burning, we are engaged in a number of plans and pursuits, to the neglect of those things which, notwithstanding the necessary avocations of life, ought always to engross our supreme attention.

Let us next proceed to consider:

II. THE EVIL NATURE AND DANGEROUS TENDENCY OF THIS PROCRASTINATING TEMPER.

I need not say much to prove to you that it is a sin. The conscience of every one of you will assist me in that part of the work. It is proper, however, in order that you may feel it the more forcibly, that you should consider wherein its evil nature consists.

1. It is contrary to the tenor of all God's commandments. All through the Scriptures we are required to attend to divine things immediately, and without delay. "Work while it is called to-day; the night cometh when no man can work." "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." "While ye have light, believe

¹² Mark 13:37.

in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”¹³

God not only requires us, in general, to do what we do quickly, but calls us to serve him particularly under those temptations or auctions which we find placed in our way. The terms of discipleship are, “Deny thyself; take up thy cross, and follow me.”¹⁴ He does not call upon us to follow him barely when there are no troubles nor difficulties to encounter, nor allow us, when those difficulties occur, to wait a fairer opportunity; but to take our cross, as it were, upon our shoulders, and so follow him. It would be of use for us to consider every situation as a post in which God has placed us, and in which he calls upon us to serve and glorify him. If we are poor, we are required to glorify God by contentment; if afflicted, by patience; if bereaved, by submission; if persecuted, by firmness; if injured, by forgiveness; or if tempted, by denying ourselves for his sake. Nor can these duties be performed at other times; to put them off, therefore, to another opportunity, is the same thing, in effect, as refusing to comply with them at all.

2. To put off things to another time implies a lurking dislike to the things themselves. We do not ordinarily do so, except in things wherein we have no delight. Whatever our hearts are set upon, we are for losing no time till it is accomplished. If the people of Judah had “had a mind to work,” as is said of them on another occasion, they would not have pleaded that the time was not come.¹⁵ Sinful delay, therefore, arises from alienation of heart from God; than which nothing can be more offensive in his sight.

But, further, it is not only a sin, but a sin of dangerous tendency. This is manifest by the effects it produces. Precious time is thereby murdered, and valuable opportunities lost, and lost beyond recall!

That there are opportunities possessed, both by saints and sinners, is plain from the Scriptures. The former might do abundantly more for God than they do, and might enjoy much more of God and heaven than they actually enjoy; and no doubt it would be so, were it not for that idle, delaying temper, of which we have spoken. Like the Israelites, we are slothful to go up to possess the good land. Many are the opportunities, both of doing and enjoying good, that have already passed

¹³ John 9:4; Hebrews 3:15; 4:7; John 12:36; Ecclesiastes 9:10.

¹⁴ Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34.

¹⁵ Nehemiah 4:6.

by. Oh what Christians might we have been before now, had we but availed ourselves of all those advantages which the gospel dispensation and the free exercise of our religion afford us!

Sinners also, as long as life lasts, have opportunity of escaping from the wrath to come. Hence they are exhorted to “seek the Lord while he may be found,” and to “call upon him while he is near.”¹⁶ Hence, also, there is a “door” represented as being, at present, “open;” which “the master of the house will,” one day, “rise up and shut.”¹⁷ The “fountain” is described as being, at present, “open for sin and for uncleanness;” but there is a period approaching when it shall be said, “He that is filthy, let him be filthy still!”¹⁸ It seems scarcely in the power of language to express the danger of delay in terms more forcible and impressive than those which are used in the above passages. Nor is there anything in the idea that clashes with the Scripture doctrine of decrees. All allow that men have opportunity, in natural things, to do what they do not, and to obtain what they obtain not; and if this can be made to consist with a universal providence, which “performeth the things that are appointed for us,”¹⁹ why should not the other be allowed to consist with the purposes of Him who does nothing without a plan, but “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will?”²⁰ A price is in the hands of those who have no heart to get wisdom.

O thoughtless sinner! trifle no longer with the murder of time, so short and uncertain in its duration; the morning of your existence; the mold in which you receive an impression for eternity; the only period in which the Son of man has power to forgive sins! Should the remaining part of your life pass away in the same careless manner as that which has already elapsed, what bitter reflection must needs follow! How cutting it must be to look back on all the means of salvation as gone forever; the harvest past, the summer ended, and you not saved!

Suppose a company, at the time of low water, should take an excursion upon the sands near the sea-shore: suppose yourself of the company: suppose that, on a presumption of the tide’s not returning at present, you should all fall asleep: sup-

¹⁶ Isaiah 55:6.

¹⁷ Luke 13:25.

¹⁸ Revelation 22:11.

¹⁹ See Job 23:14.

²⁰ Ephesians 1:11.

pose all the company, except yourself, to awake out of their sleep, and, finding their danger, endeavor to awake you, and to persuade you to flee with them for your life; but you, like the sluggard, are for “a little more sleep, and a little more slumber”²¹ the consequence is, your companions escape, but you are left behind to perish in the waters, which, regardless of all your cries, rise and overwhelm you! What a situation would this be! How would you curse that love of sleep that made you refuse to be awaked, that delaying temper that wanted to indulge a little longer! But what is this situation compared with that of a lost soul? There will come a period when the bottom of the ocean would be deemed a refuge; when, to be crushed under falling rocks and mountains, instead of being viewed with terror as heretofore, will be earnestly desired! Yes, desired, but desired in vain! The sinner who has “neglected the great salvation “will not be able to “escape,” nor hide himself “from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne,” nor from “the wrath of the Lamb!”²²

My dear hearers! consider your condition without delay. God says to you, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. To-day may be the only day you have to live. Go home, enter the closet, and shut to the door; confess your sins; implore mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ; “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him!”²³

²¹ Proverbs 6:10; 24:33.

²² Hebrews 2:13; Revelation 6:16.

²³ Psalm 2:12.



STUDY QUESTIONS

1. John Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 19–20: Why, in Sutcliff’s mind, is Elijah an appropriate model for all Christians of his day to imitate?
2. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 20–22: What is essential to “the very soul of true Christianity” and “Christian character”?
3. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 20–21: According to Sutcliff, what does “jealousy for an object” signify?
4. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 22–23:
 - a. How does Sutcliff view the Bible?
 - b. What practical conclusion does he draw from biblical infallibility?
5. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 24–26: In addition to an obedience to the Word of God, how does zeal for God manifest itself?
6. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 26–29: What specific concerns should be uppermost in a Christian’s mind when he or she is zealous for God?
7. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 27–28: What does the paragraph on “the purity of your worship” assume about God’s revelation about worship in the New Testament?
8. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 28–29:
 - a. Why is prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit vital?
 - b. What does this passage tell you about Sutcliff’s piety?
9. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 29: What is the significance of the statement that promotion of the cause of Christ is “not merely the work of ministers”?
10. Sutcliff, *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, 31, final paragraph: As you read this final passage in Sutcliff’s sermon, can you discern what eschatological convictions inform this text?

STUDY QUESTIONS

11. Andrew Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 33–34: What immediate lesson does Fuller draw from Haggai 1?
12. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 34–36: What are the various ways that a “procrastinating spirit” affects the unconverted? Or to put it another way: how is the title of this sermon illustrated in this section of the sermon?
13. Read these two statements from Fuller’s sermon along with their immediate contexts: “living without prayer, without reflection, without God in all his thoughts...” (*The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 35) and “habitual watchfulness, and prayer, and self-denial, and walking with God” (*The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 41). What do these assertions tell you about Fuller’s understanding of genuine piety?
14. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 36: How does a “procrastinating spirit” affect believers?
15. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 36–37: What is Fuller’s point in introducing the example of “Luther and his contemporaries”?
16. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 37: Why does God not remove difficulties from the paths of his children?
17. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 37–38:
 - a. What gospel issue does Fuller now introduce in the third paragraph of the page?
 - b. From this paragraph alone, how would Fuller summarize the history of missions?
 - c. What does Fuller have in mind by the statement “a disgrace to the name of Christians”?
 - d. What are the circumstances that make overseas gospel propagation “a duty peculiarly binding on us”? Would you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
18. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 37–38: By what means is God going to bring about the “conversion and salvation of the world”?
19. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 38–39: To what does Fuller ascribe the “so few and so feeble efforts... [being] made for the propagation of the gospel in places within our reach,” that is within England?
20. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 39–40: How

STUDY QUESTIONS

has the “procrastinating spirit” that is the subject of this sermon impacted some Christians who regularly attend Baptist churches? What do you learn about Fuller’s view of baptism?

21. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 40–41: Why is “a close and frequent inquiry into our spiritual state absolutely necessary”?
22. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 41: In the context of this sermon, what are “those things which, notwithstanding the necessary avocations of life, ought always to engross our supreme attention”?
23. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 41–42: Why is procrastination in gospel issues a sin?
24. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 41–42: What is the root of “sinful delay”?
25. Fuller, *The Pernicious Influence of Delay in Religious Concerns*, 43–44:
 - a. What does Fuller mean by this statement: “Nor is there anything in the idea that clashes with the Scripture doctrine of decrees”?
 - b. How do Fuller’s concluding paragraphs support this statement?
 - c. How does Fuller understand Psalm 2:12?



WHAT NOW TO READ *of* ANDREW FULLER & JOHN SUTCLIFF?

Michael A.G. Haykin

The first text that I ever read by Andrew Fuller, in the mid-1980s, was his *The Promise of the Spirit the Grand Encouragement in Promoting the Gospel* (1810), a circular letter that he wrote for the Northamptonshire Baptist Association. Every year at its annual meeting the association, like other Baptist associations, would ask one of its pastors to pen a small tract that would then be printed and sent out to all of the church members in the association. This particular one is a fabulous little piece that introduces a number of themes dear to Fuller's heart: the world-wide spread of the Gospel, the necessity of the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and a concern on how to live with hope in the last days. It is one of a number of circular letters that Fuller wrote during his life for the association. They are an excellent introduction to Fuller's writing and thought. Other circular letters that should be read include his *Causes of Declension in Religion, and Means of Revival* (1785)—a helpful overview of the subject of revival—and *The Practical Uses of Christian Baptism* (1802)—a superb treatment of the meaning of baptism.

Then, a must-read is Fuller's *Memoirs of the late Rev. Samuel Pearce* (1800), whom Fuller's friend and biographer John Ryland, Jr., rightly called "the excellent and amiable Pearce." In this book we see the heart of Fuller's piety as he portrays what he calls Pearce's "holy love" for God and humanity. What is critical about this work is that it captures the central mark of the spiritual ambience of Fuller's circle of friends: Christian love. Above all else, these men were pastor-theologians of love.

Fuller's *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation* (1785, 1801) also should be read. This is a superb demolition of hyper-Calvinism and cogent presentation of the biblical grounding for a passionate preaching of the gospel to the lost. It is essential reading as it provided the theological rationale for William Carey's iconic mission to India and thus lies at the foundation of the modern missionary movement.

A second key work of apologetics is Fuller's *Strictures on Sandemanianism* (1810), in which Fuller responds to an intellectualist view of faith, what today is often described as easy-believism, that had particularly harmful spiritual effects. There were a number of major theological responses to the errors of Sandemanianism, but the Welsh preacher Martyn Lloyd-Jones believed that this work of Fuller was *the* key rebuttal of this system. Fuller's dependence on his mentor Jonathan Edwards is very evident in this work. Although Fuller became renowned in his day for his apologetics, he never lost his pastoral focus. This focus is clearly seen in his sermons—see especially his *The Nature and Importance of Walking by Faith* (1784), *The Qualifications and Encouragement of a Faithful Minister illustrated* (1787), and *The Nature and Importance of an Intimate Knowledge of Divine Truth* (1796). His dozen or more ordination sermons are also a superb delineation of how an eighteenth-century Calvinistic Baptist viewed the ministry.

All of these texts can be conveniently found in either a three-volume edition of his works—*The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, ed. Joseph Belcher (1845 ed.; repr. Harrisonburg, VA: Sprinkle Publications, 1988)—or the one-volume *The Works of Andrew Fuller* (1841 ed.; repr. Edinburgh/Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2007). The author's *The Armies of the Lamb: The Spirituality of Andrew Fuller* (Dundas, ON: Joshua Press, Inc., 2001) introduces Fuller's piety through a series of edited texts from his writings and letters.

With regard to secondary sources, the best Fuller biographies are those of Paul Brewster, *Andrew Fuller: Model Pastor-Theologian* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010) and Peter J. Morden, *The Life and Thought of Andrew Fuller (1754–1815)* (Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster, 2015). Finally, John Piper has an excellent lecture on Fuller at the *Desiring God* website: “Holy Faith, Worthy Gospel, World Vision: Andrew Fuller’s Broad­sides Against Sandemanianism, Hyper-Calvinism, and Global Unbelief” (2007; <http://www.desiringgod.org/biographies/holy-faith-worthy-gospel-world-vision>).

Although John Sutcliff preached at Olney and various other locales for nearly forty years from 1775 to 1814, his only extant sermon is the one in this booklet.

He also penned a number of the circular letters for the Northamptonshire Association. See *A View of the Doctrine of Divine Providence* (1779), *The Authority and Sanctification of the Lord's-Day Explained and Enforced* (1786), *The Divinity of the Christian Religion* (1797), *Qualifications for Church Fellowship* (1800), and *The Ordinance of the Supper Considered* (1803), *On obedience to Positive Institutions* (1808), and *On Reading the Word of God* (1813).

Comparatively little research has been done on the life or theology of John Sutcliff. There is a biographical sketch by Andrew Fuller attached to his funeral sermon for Sutcliff: "The Principles and Prospects of a Servant of Christ" in *Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, I, 342–356. Kenneth W.H. Howard, who was pastor of Sutcliff Baptist Church in Olney from 1949–1954, wrote a fine biographical piece: "John Sutcliff of Olney," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 14, (1951–1952): 304–309. And in 1994, the author's *One heart and one soul: John Sutcliff of Olney, his friends, and his times* was published by Evangelical Press.

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