

**A.R. Wentz Library
Lutheran Theological Seminary
66 Seminary Ridge
Gettysburg, PA 17325**

Reasons, why the world should assist in spreading the Gospel

The subject which is before us for speculation and which has been assigned me for an elucidation of its truth connects with itself nothing less important than the interests of Everlasting Life. This day is well calculated to prepare us for a consideration of it which I know is of a magnitude well deserving the efforts of an abler pen, but for a mind already convinced of its importance as I hope we are, this humble attempt may mature some of those pleasing reflections which are the Christians joy. The theme is one of those sacredly interesting kind which never fails to wake in the mind of the lover of souls a strong and animating impression. It proceeds from the fount of Truth & Life whence he derives draughts of refreshment to cheer his own soul and fit it for a communion with the God of all grace and consolation. How then can the Christian reject its admission to ^{the} immediate study of his mind whilst it harmonises with all his feelings. It is a communication from Heaven which speaks to him with the force of an angelic voice to direct him in the path of Wisdom. He acknowledges its truth and bows to its behests in obedience and Faith.—

The Gospel is that scheme of redemption elaborated in the Courts of Heaven for the salvation of man, thence has it been so often termed the Gospel of Salvation or in the emphatic terms of the Apostle the Gospel of Peace. Our Divine Redeemer purchased this in our nature in his own body upon the tree & thus prepared our restoration to the favour of God. Upon his triumphant ascension from the grave, that prediction of the Most High was fulfilled, that "the head of the serpent should be bruised" by Christ the son of God overcoming the power of sin.

This glorious era in our time then happened when Immortality and Eternal Life shone through the gloom of darkness & superstition. Then our Saviour announced the joyful tidings of Salvation to the world and evinced their power & efficacy by an attestation of them upon the dispositions of mankind.

Further, that the world might have abundant evidence of the Divinity of his nature, he confirmed his mission by miracles. Even this poor man "proud of his authority" has ventured to gainsay; Infidelity would fain discover an error in the precepts of the Gospel, but forever uncontaminated by its breath will its truths stand through the lapses of remotest time.

That such a Gospel should be proclaimed unto all men can have no room for doubt in any reflecting mind: some illustration therefore of the "Reasons" which may be adduced to show "why the world should as-

- sist in spreading this Gospel will be attempted now.
1. Reason - It was the command of Christ to his dis-
-ciples "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gos-
-pel to every creature". Upon receiving this ~~last~~
token of the Saviours Benevolence that not only they
but all were invited to ~~come~~ receive this Gospel
what one need fear that he is not doing Gods service
when he beckons the wandering sinner from error ground
into the straight and narrow path of Religion displayed
in the word of God. The command of the Saviour was
enforced without any exceptions, which shows that this Gos-
-pel was not for the benefit of Jew only but also for the
Gentile. A few faithful disciples were chosen for this
ministerial office who had witnessed the humble Life, death
& Resurrection of the Lord. Though their faith sometimes wa-
-vered yet it was confirmed, though Thomas was blamed for his
unbelief, his heart was pierced with conviction when he uttered
that strong exclamation "My Lord and my God". To these
the humble instruments of his care he committed the words
of Eternal Life not to proclaim them to one but to all
nations. From this declaration of the Saviour we can
see the basis on which it rests & find also the hopes &
assurances of his disciples fixed upon it, buoyed up
by the consolation from his ~~own~~ lips "Lo! I am with

"you always even unto the end of the world".
From these words of the Saviour none can free themselves
from the obligation to spread this Gospel, neither can
enthusiasm be justly aspersed upon any who benevolent-
ly offer their assistance.

Further - Mankind the creatures of Gods Provid-
-ence are bound to fulfill that command which he has
said our instrumentality can be capable of effecting.
If any say as the Atheist, "there is no God" let him look
at his power as displayed in the works of his hands, their gra-
-deur, consistency and design, then survey the complex nature
of his own body, study the intricacies of every organ, their or-
-appropriate functions, and no longer be deluded under the
-idea that it is the effect of Chance. If any say as the
-Deist that the Religion of Jesus Christ is a mere
-chimera terms without meaning he can turn to Chris-
-tendom he can turn to Christendom and see whether it
-does not bear the marks of supernatural agency, then he
-can believe unless he is the willing subject of delusion
-and to the arts of ~~deceiving~~ credulity. Laying aside the unfound-
-ed asseverations of those who act in opposition to the Gos-
-pel we receive it as a Truth conveying the joyful tid-
-ings of Immortality and Eternal Life. Our connection
-with God the source of all happiness, should lead us to ad-
-mire his goodness, should constrain us to be the devoted servants
-of his good pleasure, should animate us to spread this glorious
-Gospel to which he hath annexed the blessings of pre-
-sent and future Life: he is our Creator and constant
-Benefactor, he continually supplies us from the treasures of
-his bounty, he has borne long with our rebellions, and
-above all he has not forgotten our perishing state by

transgression and disobedience, but hath freely given his
only begotten and well-beloved son for our Redemption.
With this in our view, frail and mortal man should be the
last of all the creatures of God to array himself in the
might of his insignificance, and fight against God and
his own soul; instead of this he should be bowed in the
posture of adoration and praise, should be the faithful
follower of the Lamb of God whose blood atones ^{should be} for
his sins: his constant desire, his sole and total wish,
to seek the Kingdom of God in his own heart, to be enga-
ged in diffusing it throughout the world, and scatter-
ing the ~~fruits~~ embryos-fruits of Eternal Life —
But it is not only our duty to God which should induce
us to assist in spreading the Gospel but also our duty
to Man. It speaks peace to the whole world; the perse-
cuted have laid hold on it as their strong consolation; the
martyr of Jesus has made it as a balm of peace
to his soul, when minging its flight from the midst of
flames into the bosom of its God. This hath every
Christian clasped to his breast as the soul-exciting prin-
ciple ~~to~~ to instil joy and peace. The Gospel is a picture
which often meets his view in which is portrayed the aton-
ing sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Redeemer of mankind.
What Reasons then O Christian can I urge more forcibly
upon you than ~~be~~ what the Benevolence of that Religion
should teach you: If it was condescension and Love in
the son of God toward mankind, that brought him from
the Heavenly Courts to suffer for our transgression, it
would be nothing more than a love and gratitude to
this Saviour would teach us, to aid in spreading

the blessings of his atonement. Certainly we should have reason enough to be constantly employed in the service of our Creator, and not rest contented to pay a heedless disregard to all the precepts urged upon ^{us} from his word. Our Saviour never could say that he had nothing to attend to, nor he was always engaged in the work of his mediocrity, he was never ceased to confer benefits whenever he had an opportunity, he diffused blessings of every kind and thus formed for the imitation of his followers a model of true Benevolence. Love to him and love to our fellow-man and his promise to accompany our labor with the blessing of his Holy-Spirit is a great cause in which we should be engaged and not be unto us if after all we have done nothing. It is absurd to suppose that our state does not stand in need of the Gospel; such a reflection if indulged would be our ruin and sending to the sympathies of the angels in Heaven. The evil of sin has been spreading and has poisoned every heart that has been since the time of our ^{progenitor Adam} ~~father~~: Human nature has had its continuation in wickedness, and rebellion against the Almighty from generation to generation descends to posterity. We have a Capernaum which is exalted into Heaven in privilege, a Sodom too which is laying low in spiritual slumber unconcerned about the volume of iniquity which is recorded for their account. Amongst the distinguished parts of our Land where the light of Truth hath brightened the prospects of Life often here do we find much space where the Gospel is seldom

or never heard: such stand on an eminence in the world and the hope that these prepared, and civilized spots will be revived are long is increasing with the rapid progress of the Gospel throughout the world. But then for a moment let us consider the shortness of human existence and what cause there is for immediate exertion from all Christians - down to extend the Gospel "before the number of those immortal souls shall that depart for an Eternal world shall continue to sink together into the vengeful flames of the wrath of God. Now for a greater survey I would strive to direct my thoughts to the region and shadow of death "where not only the Gospel but all the blessings of a happy life are never found: to this dreary region of general darkness which is every where surrounding us, painful as the consideration is, I would ~~forever~~ ^{fore} dwell upon it to awaken a feeling of lively sympathy in my bosom, and to call into exercise a greater degree of Love & Gratitude to the merciful disposer of our lives: O ^{with} ~~to~~ every one could these reflections be indulged; it would not only stir us up to exert ourselves in the cause of God for the benefit of the world but would cause us to set more value upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ: It is painful to Christian feelings to consider how many Countries are buried in ignorance and idolatry and shut out as it were by the hand of God from blessings which others are continually enjoying: but this seeming barrier according to the prophecy of inspiration will crumble at last to a common level with ~~all~~ ^{beginning to} mankind & all reap the fruits of the happiness ^{which} ~~is~~ ^{in the} world of sorrow. Let us then strive to hasten this grand

epoch by our exertion: Here is a vast field for labour
Millions of perishing souls sunk in ignorance without
any knowledge of their Creator God, wandering in a mil-
-derness of sin, seeking for that light which has ^{hitherto} been denied
them; Others carried away from the truth find fixing their
consolation on the continued precepts of Idolatry. But
what alternative have they, the dictates of Reason con-
-vince them that their destination lays beyond the grave in
the unseen stages of Eternity and their own notions of Reli-
-gion tell them of a Great Spirit whose favour they
must procure by some expiatory sacrifice. But O!
what horror then! Language cannot give an adequate
description of the soul-rending spectacle; Imagination ^{recalls} at
an approach to review the funeral-piles, the burial places
whiptered with human bones, and the wheels of that trem-
-endous car by which the spirits have been transferred from
time to Eternity horrible with the ~~striking~~ signals of
death. This and far more frightful is the character which
some countries bear which are destitute of that blessed
Gospel which we enjoy. What then more forcible reasons
can be alleged why ~~the world~~ should assist in spread-
-ing this Gospel than that Mankind generally are desper-
-ately in need of it; that it is the same which a Cru-
-cified Jesus, the Redeemer of the world gained at the ob-
-lation of his own body for the iniquities of the world. It bears
on the hearts of countless multitudes the everlasting memorial
of its efficacy; it will at last triumph over the batteries
of Infidelity, and all the assaults of Satan's influence.

But there is still a Reason remaining which should animate for labour in this work. There is a reward, awarded to the faithful assistance of those who engage with hearts devoted to the cause. They accumulate treasure in Heaven which will be given as a crown of glory, to them at the great and general judgement of God and before the congregated universe. Though our offering be small and apparently inefficient, if in the name of the Lord though it may not exceed the "widow's mite" in value yet the Great God who "views with equal eye as God of all"

"the lark perish or the sparrow fall" calculates not according to mortal measures, neither regards the nature of our offering but the motives by which we are actuated. Mankind may assist in many respects to carry on the redemption of the human race, by encouraging the various means which are employed and which God hath blessed to the propagation of his Gospel through. If with these in view if our interest is enlisted in this benevolent work our labour will stand approved in the sight of Heaven — The world is the field over which the Gospel is spreading in various ways: Theological Institutions, Missionary Bible and Tract societies form one Grand Fountain of Religion from which issue streams continually to revive to emancipate the earth from the thralldom of sin. O this let Infidelity look and be confounded for the Genius of Christianity has commenced its flight in the heavens and is winging its way to the uttermost regions of the world whilst people of ^{almost} every clime are sounding the joyful

response "Glory to God in the Highest"
Again, The Benefits of the Gospel — As an illustration of this reason it would not be relevant to speak of the Influence of Christianity in general, but merely the intrinsic excellence of the Gospel: No system of Religion that hath ever been formed can claim a parallel to this Philosophy and Science in various ages of the world, refined as they may have proved their labours in other respects in this one point have failed of coming up to the true standard of mans duty & moral obligation or of being successful in developing the hidden arcana of his destination beyond the grave. They have gone as far as the light of nature could have carried them, but their attempts have been a confirmation of the truth that "the world by wisdom knew not God". But the Gospel which hath brought "life and Immortality to light" has swept away the baseless fabric of unenlightened Reason which she reared to convey the sight through the "dark unknown" of a future world. All was a train of doubt and gloomy foreboding — what mans state was by nature, what he had forfeited by transgression and how he was to be reinstated into the favour of an offended God — Reason alone was unable to develop, but the lamp of Revelation hath discovered it. The doctrines of the Gospel are pure and benevolent mark

-ed with the impress of Divine Youth & conveying
to mortal man tidings of peace and Salvation. With
the knowledge of this, nations have been translated from
the gloom of superstition & the horror which reigns over
Idolatry into the peaceful & happy enjoyment of the
benign Religion of Jesus Christ therein displayed.
The abodes of sin have been transformed into habitations of
tranquillity and peace & the earth to the moral vision in
many places presents a scenery of fair fields of virtue
maturing the fruits of moral excellence. Multitudes
have hailed the Gospel as the star of Bethlehem lighting up
the chambers of death and expanding the glories of
Eternity; as a beacon to shine along the precarious
path that leads to Heaven and Happiness.