52
Hc42a
(4)
vault

Iowa College July

Dear Bro. Herron

Your response to the Com. was rec'd in time for us to present to the trustees at their annual meeting, in connection with the Com'. communication to you. Your response was rec'd. with special satisfaction & hope because it assured them of the correction of some of the features of your work heretofore which have seemed to them & to the christian public as most hinderance of the proper work & influence of the Chair of applied Christianity. They gave due consideration also to your criticisms of their position regarding your work & their duty & wisest action or non action in the premises. Of all of wh. Pres. G. has informed you more fully. With our report to the trustees the work of the Com. ended, but as an individual member of the ~~trustees~~ Com. & in my private capacity. I am constrained to write you upon the same subject. to correct a seeming error in your interpretation of the com. & to express the mind of the com & trustees more fully, as seems to me to be necessary & called for by your response.

1. You say, "Your complaint, as I understand it, is not against the teaching itself, but against some of the methods I use in presenting &

applying it". This, I think, falls very far short of an expression of the spirit or letter of the report of the Com. to you - They express agreement with much in your teaching + the underlying principle that all men are bound to observe + obey Christs Law in all the relations of life, but they add - "in some of your inferences + interpretations of Scrip: + teachings you seem to them to distort the truth + compel them to regard your teachings as not justified but harmful + fitted to defeat rather than advance the purposes for wh. the Chair was established". Method has had much to do with bringing you there, but none the less do we think your interpretations + teachings are erroneous (fr. 4.) + being so regarded by the christian public have resulted in damage to the College in all its interests - Hence the exhortation, hope + prayer of the College is for a more radical reformation than that of method, of doctrine + teaching also - Of course we are aware that a small colony of like mind with yourself will urge continuance in the same teaching, but the trustees believe they are unwise advisers for you + the College. I have observed during your residence among us that you seem to have little counsel with men whom the churches regard as specially fitted by natural gifts, education + experience for advisers + teachers - as the nature of your chair would seem to anticipate. There is an apparent alienation which I think you should carefully consider + explain to your own mind, giving due credit to each of the parties to the alienation. I have observed also that some who walked in ardent fellowship with you at first have ceased to so walk. Did they find teachings which they shrunk from endorsing or tendencies they could not follow further?

So I am led to believe - Hence I am sure the trustees desire you to review your teaching in all respects in the light of their conception of the teachings wh. should characterise the chair of applied Christianity - I am sure a wide discrepancy will appear -

You speak of the auspicies under which you have lectured, Of those the com. was aware, but included also the many invitations wh had come + could not be accepted, it was said + were told by authority they were not at liberty to doubt, that probably a majority were such as they described. The point of the Com. was that the reputation of the work of the Chair of Applied Xinity. in Do. Coll. was such as to be coveted by the enemies rather than the friends of the Cong.l Chh. its special constituency. The error is not in presenting the gospel to sinners, but winning their applause with a pseudo-gospel wh the disciples repudiate - a characture - It is for you to judge of the significance of such a fact. if it is a fact. When the Sermon on the Mount is made a political document rather than religious, there is room for calling the teaching in question. But to enter into specification would require too much time. I can but think there is a mysticism about your use of language which puts your teaching at a disadvantage. While so much is said about sacrifice I doubt if one in ten receives a correct idea of your meaning. Hence many seem to think it meritorious to seek opportunities to deny or afflict themselves for Christs sake, making sacrifice akin to the catholic teaching of penance, a doctrine of works. So there is a prevalent feeling that the doctrines of grace which our churches hold to be essential + foremost are accepted only partially or so obscured as not to be

recognized in their environment - Hence the question often heard what does the teacher believe? Is the Chair building on the same foundation as the churches or vitiating their teachings? The Chair it seems to me should give no uncertain sound, nor leave room for question as to its breadth or solidity of foundation nor of its relation to the evangelistic mission of the churches which foster it.

The method of the times seems to be an argument by assertion + reiteration of favorite theories as if they were already proved - as in the case of the theory of evolution (in regard to which I do not know your opinion) which is thrust upon us as undoubted fact by its advocates upon all occasions, in season + out of season. While it is a mere fledgeling yet to prove its fitness to survive. So in sociology - which seems to be a synonyme of applied Christianity with some. Its theories do not wait on proof but are thrust to the fore as truths not to be questioned, demanding acceptance. This fault is the ~~book~~ to lie against your teaching - It is not strange that it arouses opposition.