

## **TRACT DISTRIBUTORS TAKE NOTICE.**

The Constitution of the United States guarantees every one the right to distribute money or tracts or papers of any sort, to any desiring to take them, – provided they contain neither obscene nor incendiary matter. Any city or state law, such as is mentioned in a letter from New Orleans, attempting to interfere with this privilege, is unconstitutional and cannot be sustained. The sidewalks are public property, and one man has as much right to walk thereon as another. No one has a right to blockade the way, or to trespass upon enclosures, or to attempt a distribution of anything in the yard or vestibule of a place of meeting; and no one who has clear, true ideas of justice and the *rights of others* would attempt such an intrusion, even if no human law forbade. The royal law of Love and respect for the rights of others, would quickly settle this point.

Let us clearly divide and distinguish, however, on this subject, and if chief priests and elders attempt to interfere with you in distributing tracts and papers on the public highways, do not easily permit that. They have no more right to interfere with your preaching by tracts, etc., quietly and unobtrusively, to those who want to read what you have to give, than you would have to interfere with people who desire to hear their oral preaching. Both you and they are preachers, each according to his conviction, though you employ different methods of reaching the people. Neither has a right to interfere with the other's methods.

If some shall claim that it is *unkind* for you to attempt to feed his sheep, just remember that they are misstating the case; for the sheep are not *theirs*, but Christ's. When seeking to feed Christ's sheep, in any manner that does not intrude upon the *private* property or rights of others, you are certainly doing the Lord's sheep, who alone have a

relish for such food, a great kindness. If the chief priests and elders consider our food poisonous, let them analyze it and show it to be so; if they cannot do this, and the sheep who feed upon it enjoy it and grow spiritually stronger upon it, who has a *right* to feel that you did an unkind act in offering the food.

The same sort of argument that would prove your act of unobtrusive tract distribution unkind, could be used to prove that it would be unkind and unloving to interfere with the plans of robbers. Kindness in such a case would have to draw a line between the wishes of the robbers and the robbed. And just so, true kindness must choose between the rights and needs of the poor starved sheep of Christ and those who in the name of the Chief Shepherd seek to enslave his sheep as their own, in the bondage of sectarianism and errors.

