



The Gospel Ministry

An Address to Ministers and Students of Theology (1864)

by John Brown of Haddington

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

ADDRESS

- 1. See That Ye Be Real Christians Yourselves.
- <u>2. Ponder Much, as Before God, What Proper Furniture You Have for the Ministerial Work, and Labor to Increase It.</u>
- 3. Take Heed That Your Call from Christ and His Spirit to Your Ministerial Work Be Not Only Real but Evident.
- <u>4. See That Your End, in Entering Into or Executing Your Office, Be Single and Disinterested.</u>
- 5. See That Your Minds Be Deeply Impressed with the Nature, Extent, and Importance of Your Ministerial Work.
- 6. See That Ye Take Heed to Your Spirits, That Ye Deal Not Treacherously with the Lord.

- <u>7. See That Ye, as Workmen Who Need Not Be Ashamed, Earnestly Labor Rightly to Divide the Word of Truth.</u>
- 8. You Have Stated Yourselves Public Witnesses for Jesus Christ.
- 9. Always Improve and Live on That Blessed Encouragement Which Is Offered to You, as Christians and Ministers, in the Gospel.

An exhortation to ministers and those who desire the office of elder.

PREFACE

I first read *The Address to Students of Divinity* by Rev. John Brown of Haddington some forty years ago, not many years after my ordination. Even then, I regarded it as the most illuminating and weighty appeal on the subject—one that, in the highest degree, deserves the study of every minister and every candidate for the sacred office.

How often I have revisited this work and meditated upon its teachings, I do not know. But as I near the close of my ministry, I am thankful that my attention has once again been drawn to this *Address* by a Reverend Brother who proposes its republication. I need not say that I have perused it once more with deep and serious attention, for I defy anyone whose conscience is not seared and whose heart is not hardened through the deceitfulness of sin to read it without being profoundly moved—stirred from the very depths of his soul.

Being, in one respect, such a one as Paul, the aged (Philemon 1:9, "Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."), it has been suggested that my testimony may carry some weight with younger brethren in the ministry and with those preparing for the great work. Let me then briefly say this: I know of no treatise comparable to it for its clear, simple, and sublime—indeed, Scriptural—presentation of the Gospel Ministry. Its direct and piercing appeals to the conscience, its solemn, tender, and overwhelming exhortations to the heart, make it a work of unparalleled impact. Indeed, I pity the minister who can read it without trembling—who does not, with tearful eyes, look upward, pleading for forgiveness for past failures and, by God's grace, renewing his vows to be more faithful in the time to come.

May the Divine Head of the Church abundantly bless this little volume to all whom, in His providence, He leads to ponder upon its pages.

B. P. AYDELOTT

Cincinnati, August 18, 1864

ADDRESS

My dear pupils:

For my assistance in instructing you, this *Compendious View of Natural and Revealed Religion* was compiled. To satisfy the request of many among you, it is now published. Since it was designed not to make you read, but to make you think deeply, it may now appear dry and meager, being stripped of its additional remarks. No doubt, some expressions may admit a sense I never intended.

To equip you to be mighty in the Scriptures—readily able to support the articles of our holy religion by the self-evidencing and conscience-commanding testimony of the Holy Ghost, and accustomed to express the things of God in His own language—a multitude of texts are ordinarily quoted, which I have labored to impress upon your memories. To manifest the extensive connection of divine truths, some leading doctrines concerning the perfections of God, the person of Christ, and related subjects are traced through many others, in a manner that may perhaps be considered a digression. Few insignificant, local, or dormant controversies have been introduced. I do not know where the enemies of the truth have been unfairly represented or indiscreetly answered in other works.

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. (James 1:20)

While I have been engaged in instructing you, your consciences must bear witness that my principal concern has been to impress your minds with the great things of God. Now, as I am gradually stepping into the eternal state, to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, permit me to beseech you, as you desire to promote His honor and the eternal salvation of your own souls and those of your hearers:

1. See That Ye Be Real Christians Yourselves.

I now more and more see that nothing less than real, real Christianity is fit to die with and make an appearance before God. Are ye then indeed born again, born from above, born of the Spirit? Created in Christ Jesus unto good works? New creatures in Christ Jesus, having all old things passed away, and all things become new? (John 3:3, 5, 6; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15).

Are ye indeed the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, habitually reading, meditating, praying, preaching, conversing with your hearts under the influence of the Holy Ghost? Have you no confidence in the flesh, no confidence in your self-righteousness, your learning, your address, your care and diligence, your gifts and graces; but being emptied of self in every form, are poor in spirit, less than the least of all saints, and the least of all God's mercies; nay, the very chief of sinners in your own sight? (*Philippians 3:3; Matthew 5:3; 16:24; Ephesians 3:8; Genesis 32:10; 1 Timothy 1:15*).

Has it pleased God to reveal His Son in you? And to instruct you with a strong hand, to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ your Lord, and to count them but dung, that you may win Him, and be found in Him, not having your own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith, and to know the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His

sufferings, and to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? (Galatians 1:15-16; Philippians 3:7-14).

If you be or become either graceless preachers or ministers of the Gospel, how terrible is your condition! If you open your Bible, the sentence of your redoubled damnation flashes into your conscience from every page. When you compose your sermon, you but draw up a tremendous indictment against yourselves. If you argue against, or reprove other men's sins, you but aggravate your own.

When you publish the holy law of God, you but add to your rebellion against it, and make it an awful witness against your treacherous dissimulation. If you announce its threatenings, and mention hell with all its insupportable torments, you but end yourselves in it, and serve yourselves heirs to it, as the inheritance appointed you by the Almighty.

When you speak of Christ and His excellences, fullness, love, and labors, it is but to trample Him under your feet. If you take His covenant and Gospel into your mouth, it is but to profane them and cast them forth to be trodden under foot of men. If you talk of spiritual experiences, you but do despite to the Spirit of grace.

When you commend the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and invite sinners to new-covenant fellowship with them, you but treacherously stab them under the fifth rib, betray them with a kiss, and from your heart cry, "This is the heir, the God; come, let us kill him."

While you hold up the glass of God's law or Gospel to others, you turn its back to yourselves. The Gospel, which ye preach to others, is

hid—is a savor of death unto death to you, the veil remaining on your hearts, and the god of this world having blinded your minds.

Without the saving, the heart-transforming knowledge of Christ and Him crucified, all your knowledge is but an accursed puffer-up, and the murderer of your own souls; and unless the grace of God make an uncommon stretch to save you, how desperate is your condition!

Perhaps no person under heaven bids more unlikely to be saved than a graceless minister—his conscience is so overcharged with guilt, so seared as with a hot iron, and his heart so hardened by the abuse of the Gospel.

Alas! My dear pupils, must all my instructions, all the strivings of the Holy Ghost, all your reading, all your meditations, all your sermons, all your evangelical principles, all your professions, all your prayers, as traps and snares, take and bind any of you, hand and foot, that, as unprofitable servants, you may be cast into utter darkness?

With all the contents of your Bible and other books, all your gifts and apparent-like graces, as it were, inlaid in your conscience, that, like fuel or oil, they may forever feed the flames of God's wrath upon your souls!

After being set for a time at the gate of heaven, to point others into it; after prophesying in Christ's name, and wasting yourselves to show others the way of salvation, and to light up the friends of our Redeemer to their heavenly rest, must your own lamp go out in everlasting darkness, and ye be bidden, "Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity?"

Must I—must all the Churches behold you at last brought forth and condemned as arch-traitors to our Redeemer?

Must you, in the most tremendous manner, forever sink into the bottomless pit under the weight of the blood of the great God, our Savior—under the weight of murdered truths, murdered convictions, murdered gifts, murdered ministrations of the Gospel, and murdered souls of men?

2. Ponder Much, as Before God, What Proper Furniture You Have for the Ministerial Work, and Labor to Increase It.

To him that hath shall be given. (Matthew 13:12, 22, 52).

Has Jesus bestowed on you the Holy Ghost? (John 20:22).

What distinct knowledge have you of the mysteries of the kingdom? What aptness have you to teach, bringing out of the good treasure of your own heart things new and old? (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:2).

What ability to make the deep mysteries of the Gospel plain to persons of weak capacities, and to represent things delightful or terrible in a proper and affecting manner?

What proper quickness in conceiving divine things; and what rooted inclination to study them, as persons devoted to matters of infinite importance? What peculiar fitness have you for the pulpit, qualifying

you, in a plain, serious, orderly, and earnest manner, to press the truths of God into the consciences of your hearers? (*Isaiah 50:4*; 49:2).

With what stock of self-experienced truths and texts of inspiration did, or do you enter on the ministerial work? Of what truths, relative to the law of God, or relative to sin, Satan, or the desertions and terrors of God, has your soul not only seen the evidence but felt the power?

What declarations, promises, offers, and invitations of the glorious Gospel have ye, with joy and rejoicing of heart, found and eaten, and therein tasted and seen that God is good? (*Jeremiah 15:16*).

Of what inspired truths and texts can you say, "Even so we have believed, and therefore we speak: what we have seen and heard with the Father, and tasted and handled of the Word of Life, that we declare unto you." (2 Corinthians 4:13; 1 John 1:1-3).

Thrice happy preacher, whose deeply-experienced heart is, next to his Bible, his principal note-book! (John 8:34).

3. Take Heed That Your Call from Christ and His Spirit to Your Ministerial Work Be Not Only Real but Evident.

Without this, you can neither be duly excited nor encouraged to your work; nor hope nor pray for divine success in it; nor bear up aright under the difficulties you must encounter if you attempt to be faithful. (Jeremiah 23:21-22; 32; Isaiah 49:1-2; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 2-3, 33).

If you run unsent by Jesus Christ and His Spirit, notwithstanding the utmost external regularity in your license, call, and ordination, you, in the whole of your ministrations, must act the part of a sacrilegious thief and robber, a pretended and treacherous ambassador for Christ and His Father, and a murderer of men's souls, not profiting them at all. (*Matthew 10*; *Luke 6, 10*; *John 10*; *Acts 1*; *Hebrews 5:4*).

What direction—what support—what assistance—what encouragement—what reward can you then expect? Ponder, therefore, as before God: Have you taken this honor to yourselves? Or, were ye called of God as was Aaron? (Romans 10:15; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 9:16).

Has Jesus Christ sent you to preach the Gospel, and laid upon you a delightful and awful necessity to preach it? While He powerfully determined you to follow Providence, and avoid every selfish and irregular step toward entrance into the office as a means of eating a piece of bread, or enjoying carnal ease or honor, did He breathe on you and cause you to receive the Holy Ghost—filling you with deep compassion to the perishing souls of men, and a deep sense of your unfitness for such arduous work, and fervent desire that if the Lord were willing to use you as instruments of winning souls, He would sanctify you and make you meet for His work? (Acts 26:17-18; Isaiah 6:8-9).

Perhaps, providentially shut out from other callings to which you or your parents inclined, did you, in your education, go up, bound in the Spirit, by the love of Christ burning in your hearts, and constraining you cheerfully to surrender yourselves to poverty, reproach, and hatred of men, for promoting His name and honor, and the salvation of men in the world?

What oracles of God, powerfully impressed on your soul, have directed and encouraged you to His work? Know you in what form Jesus Christ gave you your commission? Whether to open the eyes of the Gentiles, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God—that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith in Him—or to go make the heart of this people fat, their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes?

4. See That Your End, in Entering Into or Executing Your Office, Be Single and Disinterested.

Dare you appeal to Him, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and who searches the hearts and tries the reins, to give to every man according to his works, that you never inclined to be put into the priest's office, that you might eat a piece of bread, and look every one for his gain from his quarter? (*Jeremiah 45:5; 1 Samuel 12:3; Acts 20:33; Isaiah 56:11*).

That ye seek not great things for yourselves: that ye covet no man's silver, gold, or apparel; that ye seek not men's property, but themselves, that you may win them to Christ for their eternal

welfare? (2 Timothy 4:10; 1 Corinthians 9:12, 16; 2 Corinthians 7:2; 11:9; 12:13-14; 6:4-19).

That ye seek not your own honor, ease, or temporal advantage, but the things of Christ and His people; that ye seek not honor or glory of men, but the honor of Christ or His Father, in the eternal salvation of souls, and have determined to prosecute this end through whatever distress or danger the Lord may be pleased to lay in your way? (*Philippians 2:21; 1 Thessalonians 2:4-9; John 7:18*).

5. See That Your Minds Be Deeply Impressed with the Nature, Extent, and Importance of Your Ministerial Work.

That therein it is required of you, as ambassadors for Christ, as stewards of the mysteries and manifold grace of God—to be faithful—to serve the Lord with your spirit and with much humility in the Gospel of His Son—to testify repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, not keeping back or shunning to declare every part of the counsel of God, or any profitable instruction, reproof, or encouragement; and not moved with any reproach, persecution, hunger, or nakedness—to be ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, in order to finish your course with joy. (Ezekiel 2:7; 3:9, 17-21; 33:7-9; Isaiah 58:1; Jeremiah 1:17-18; 15:19-20; Micah 3:8; Malachi 2:6-7; Acts 20:18-35; 24:10; 26:10-23; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, 9, 12-13; 2 Corinthians 2-6, 10-13; Galatians 1:8-16; 4:19; Ephesians 3:7-9; 4:11-15; 6:19-20).

Bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and striving together in prayer, that the Word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, and your messages provided by God, and made acceptable to your hearers, you must labor with much fear and trembling, determined to know, to glory in, and make known, nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified—preaching the Gospel, not with enticing words of man's wisdom, as men-pleasers, but with great plainness of speech, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power; speaking the things which are freely given you by God, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but in words which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; as having the mind of Christ, always triumphing in Him; and making manifest the savor of the knowledge of Him in every place, that you may be a sweet savor of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish. (Matthew 10:10-39; 19:28-29; 20:25-28; 23:3-12; 24:42-51; 28:18-20; Acts 18:24-28; Romans 1:9, 16; 9:1-2; 10:1; 12:15; Philippians 2:21).

As of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, speaking in Christ, and through the mercy of God, not fainting, but renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, or corrupting the truth, but manifesting the truth to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God; not preaching yourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and yourselves servants to the Church for His sake, always bearing about His dying, that His life may be manifested in you; and knowing the terror of the Lord, and deeply impressed with the account which you and your hearers must give to Him of your whole conduct in the day of judgment—awed by His infinite authority, constrained and inflamed by His love, you must persuade men, beseeching them to be reconciled unto God, and making yourselves manifest to God and to their conscience. (1 Corinthians 1-5; 9; 12-14; Colossians 4:7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 2:3-5; 1 Timothy 3-6; 2 Timothy 1-3).

And, as their edification requires, changing your voice and turning yourselves every way, and becoming all things to all men, in order to gain them to Christ; jealous over them with a godly jealousy, in order to espouse them to Him as chaste virgins; travailing in birth till He be formed in their hearts. (*Hebrews 13:7, 17-18; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 5:1-4; Jude 22-23*).

You must take heed to your ministry, which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it; stir up the gifts which were given you; give yourselves wholly to reading, exhortation, and doctrine; and perseveringly take heed to yourselves and to the doctrine which you preach, that you may save yourselves and them that hear you; watching for their souls as they who do, and must, give an account for them to God; rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and giving every man his portion in due season; faithfully warning every man with tears, night and day, teaching every man, particularly young ones, and laboring to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 1:7-9).

And warring, not after the flesh, nor with carnal weapons, but with such as are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds and casting down imaginations, and subduing every thought and affection to the obedience of Christ. Having Him for the end of your conversation, and holding fast the form of sound words, in faith in and love to Him; not entangling yourselves with the affairs of this life, nor ashamed of the Lord, or of His cause or prisoners, but ready to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain salvation with eternal glory. (Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Timothy 2:1-10; Hebrews 11:32-40).

Ye must go forth without the camp, bearing His reproach, and, exposed as spectacles of sufferings to angels and men, must not faint under your tribulations, but feed the flock of God which He has purchased with His own blood, and over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers; preaching the Word in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine; taking the oversight of your people, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre of worldly gain, or larger stipends, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock. (Hebrews 13:12-14; Revelation 2-3; 11:3-7; 14:6-11).

Exercising yourselves to have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man; having a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly; exercised to godliness; kindly affectioned, disinterested, holy, just, and unblamable; prudent examples of the believers, in conversation, in charity, in faith, and purity. (1 Timothy 4:12-16; 6:11-16).

Fleeing youthful lusts, and following after righteousness, peace, faith, charity; not striving, but being gentle unto all men; in meekness, instructing them who oppose themselves, avoiding foolish and unlearned questions, and old wives' fables; fleeing from perverse disputings and worldly-mindedness, as most dangerous snares; and following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. (2 Timothy 2:22-25; Titus 3:9-11).

Fighting the good fight of faith, and laying hold on eternal life; keeping your trust of Gospel truth and ministerial office, and, without partiality or precipitancy, committing the same to faithful men who may be able to teach others. (1 Timothy 6:12-14; 2 Timothy 2:1-2).

And, in fine, faithfully laboring in the Lord, to try and confute and censure false teachers, publicly rebuke or excommunicate open transgressors, restore such as have been overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness; and having compassion on them, to pull them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh, and never conniving at, or partaking with any in their sins. (*Jude 22-23*).

6. See That Ye Take Heed to Your Spirits, That Ye Deal Not Treacherously with the Lord.

In approaching to, or executing the ministerial office, keep your hearts with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of eternal life, or death, to yourselves and others. (*Proverbs 4:23*).

Building up yourselves in your most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (*Jude 20-21*).

If you do not ardently love Christ, how can you faithfully and diligently feed His lambs—His sheep? (John 21:15-17).

Alas! How many precious sermons, exhortations, and instructions are quite marred and poisoned by coming through the cold, carnal, and careless heart of the preacher, and being attended with his imprudent, untender, and lukewarm life?

If you have not a deep-felt experience of the terrors of the Lord; of the bitterness of sin, vanity of this world, and importance of eternity; and of the conscience-quieting and heart-captivating virtue of Jesus' bleeding love, how can you be duly serious and hearty in preaching the Gospel? (2 Corinthians 5:11; Psalm 34:8).

If, all influenced by a predominant love to Christ, your heart be not fixed on everlasting things, and powerfully animated to an eager following of peace and holiness, how can you, without the most abominable treachery, declare to men their chief happiness and the true method of obtaining it? (*Hebrews 12:14*).

If your graces be not kept lively, your loins girt, and your lamps burning, all enkindled by the heart-constraining love of Christ, how cold, how carnal and blasted must your sacred ministrations be? (Luke 12:35; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

If your work, as ambassadors of Christ, be to transact matters of everlasting importance between an infinite God, and immortal but perishing souls of men; if the honors and privileges of it be so invaluable, what inexpressible need have you of habitual dependence on Christ by a lively faith? (2 Corinthians 5:20; John 15:5).

What self-denial, what ardent love to Christ and His Father, what disinterested regard to His honor, what compassion to souls, what prudence, what faithfulness and diligence, what humility and holy zeal, what spirituality of mind and conversation, what order, what plainness, what fervor, what just temperature of mildness and severity, is necessary in every part of it! (1 Corinthians 9:19-27; 1 Timothy 4:12-16).

If, while you minister in holy things, your lusts prevail and are indulged, you have less of real or lively Christianity than the most weak and uncircumspect saints under your charge; if your evil heart of unbelief fearfully carries you off from the living God, and you can live unconcerned while the powerful and sanctifying presence of God

is withheld from yourselves or your flocks—how sad is your and their case? (*Hebrews 3:12; Psalm 51:11*).

If your indwelling pride be allowed to choose your company, your dress, your victuals, nay, your text, your subject, your order, your language; if it be allowed to incite your thoughts, and, to the reproach and blasting of the Gospel of Christ, to deck your sermon with tawdry ornaments and fancies, as if it were a stage-play, to blunt and muffle up His sharp arrows with silken smoothness and swollen bombast; if it be allowed to kindle your fervor, and form your looks, your tone, your action; or to render you enraptured or self-conceited, because of subsequent applause; or sad and provoked, because your labors are contemned—how dreadful is your danger and that of your hearers! (Galatians 1:10; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; Philippians 2:3).

How can ministerial labors, originating in pride, spurred on by the fame of learning, diligence, or holiness, hurt the interests of Satan, from whose influence they proceed? (*James 3:13-18*).

If pride be allowed to cause you to envy or wound the characters of such as differ from, or outshine you, or to make you reluctant to Christian reproof from your inferiors, how fearful is your guilt and danger! Pride indulged is no more consistent with a Christian character than drunkenness and whoredom. (*Proverbs 16:18; 1 Corinthians 10:12*).

If you take up, or cleave to any principle or practice in religion, in the way of factious contention, how abominable to God is the sower of discord among brethren! (*Proverbs 6:16-19; Romans 16:17*).

If you undervalue the peace and prosperity of the Church of Christ, and are not afflicted with her in all her afflictions, how cruel and un-Christ-like your conduct! (*Nehemiah 1:4; 2 Corinthians 11:28*).

If, in justly proving your opponents deceivers and blasphemers, you, by your angry manner, plead the cause of the devil, will God accept it as an offering at your hands? (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

If you are slothful in studying, or declaring the truths of Christ; if, to save labor or expense, you are inactive or averse to help such as have no fixed ministrations, or to contrive or prosecute projects for advancing the kingdom of Christ, and promoting the salvation of men, how great is your baseness, how dreadful your hazard! (Romans 12:11; Matthew 9:37-38).

Think, as before God, did Jesus Christ furnish you for, and put you into the ministry, that you might idle away, or prostitute your devoted time, tear His Church, conceal or mangle His truths, betray His interests, or starve and murder the souls of men? (*John 21:15-17; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2*).

Are not your people the flock of God which He purchased with His own blood? Will you, then, dare to destroy His peculiar property and portion, and attempt to frustrate the end of His death? (Acts 20:28).

Did Jesus die for men's souls? And will you grudge a small labor or expense to promote His honor in their eternal salvation? (2 Corinthians 5:15).

If the Son of God was crucified for men—crucified for you—will you refuse, through His Spirit, to crucify your selfishness, your pride, your sloth, your worldly and covetous disposition, in order to save yourselves and them that hear you? (Galatians 2:20; 1 Timothy 4:16).

While your own salvation, and the salvation of multitudes, are so deeply connected with your faithfulness and diligence; while the powers of hell and earth so set themselves in opposition to your work, that, in your falls, they may triumph over Christ, your Master, and His Church; while so many eyes, of God, angels, and men, are upon you, why do you ever think, or speak of eternal things, of heaven and hell, of Jesus' person, offices, righteousness, love, and free salvation, without the most serious and deep impression of their importance? (1 Timothy 4:16; Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:9).

While, perhaps, you preach your last sermon, and have before you, and on every hand of you, scores or hundreds of perishing souls, suspended over hell by the frail thread of mortal life, not knowing what a day or an hour may bring forth—souls already in the hands of the devil, and, as it were, just departing to be with him in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone—souls already slain by the Gospel of our salvation, blasted and cursed to them, partly by your means; why do not tears of deep concern mingle themselves with every point you study, every sentence you publish in the name of Christ? (James 4:14; Revelation 20:15; Ezekiel 33:7-9).

When multitudes of your hearers, some of them never to hear you more, and just leaping off into the depths of hell, are, in respect of their needs, crying with an exceeding bitter cry, "Minister, help, help, we pray—we utterly perish—pluck the brand out of the burning fiery furnace!" why spend your devoted time in idle visits, unedifying converse, useless reading, or unnecessary sleep? (Zechariah 3:2; Amos 6:1; Matthew 9:36-38).

What if, while you are so employed, some of your hearers drop into eternal flames, and begin their everlasting cursing of you for not doing more to promote their salvation? When Jesus arises to require their blood at your hand, how accursed will that knowledge appear which was not improved for His honor who bestowed it! That ease,

which issued in the damnation of multitudes! That conformity to the world, which permitted, or that unedifying converse which encouraged your hearers to sleep into hell in their sins! (Ezekiel 3:17-19; Acts 20:26-27; 1 Peter 5:8).

Since, my dear pupils, all the truths of God, all the ordinances and privileges of His Church; the eternal salvation of multitudes, and the infinitely precious honor of Jesus Christ and His Father, as connected with the present and future ages of time, are entrusted to you, how necessary, that, like Jesus your Master, you should be faithful in all things to Him who appointed you! (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Hebrews 3:1-2; Matthew 24:45-47).

If you do the work of our Lord deceitfully—in what tremendous manner will all the privileges you have abused rise up against you as witnesses in the day of the Lord! All the gifts which were bestowed upon you—all the thoughts, words, and works of God, in the redemption of men-all the oracles, commands, promises, and threatenings of God, which direct, inculcate, or enforce your duty all the examples of Jesus Christ, and all His apostles, prophets, and faithful ministers—all the leaves of your Bible—all the books of your closet—all the engagements you have come under—all the sermons which you preach—all the instructions which you tender to others all the discipline which you exercise—all the maintenance which you receive—all the honors which you enjoy or expect—all the testimonies which you give against the negligence of parents, masters, ministers, or magistrates—all the vows and resolutions which you have made to reform—and all the prayers which you have presented to God for assistance or success-shall rise up against you as witnesses in the day of the Lord! (Jeremiah 48:10; Luke 12:47-48; Matthew 12:36-37).

7. See That Ye, as Workmen Who Need Not Be Ashamed, Earnestly Labor Rightly to Divide the Word of Truth.

According to the capacities, necessities, and particular occasions of your hearers, give every one of them their portion in due season. (2 *Timothy 2:15; Luke 12:42*).

Never make your own ease, your inclination, or honor, but the need of souls, and the glory of Christ, the regulator in your choice of subjects. (1 Corinthians 9:16-17).

Labor chiefly on the principal points of religion; to bring down the fundamental mysteries of the Gospel to the capacities of your hearers, and inculcate on their consciences the great points of union to and fellowship with Christ, regeneration, justification, and sanctification; these will require all your grace, learning, and labor. (John 3:3-7; Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

Never aim at tickling the ears or pleasing the fancies of your hearers, but at convincing their consciences, enlightening their minds, attracting their affections, and renewing their wills, that they may be persuaded and enabled to embrace and improve Jesus Christ as freely offered to them in the Gospel, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 2 Timothy 4:2-4).

Labor to preach the law as a broken covenant—the Gospel of salvation—and the law as a rule of life—not only in their extensive matter but also in their proper order and connection. It is only when

they are properly connected, that the precious truths of God appear in their true luster and glory. (Galatians 3:10-14; Romans 8:1-4; James 1:25).

It is at your infinite hazard, and the infinite hazard of them that hear you, if you, even by negligence, either blend or put asunder that Law and Gospel which Jesus Christ has so delightfully joined together. (Romans 3:31; Galatians 2:19-21).

Nowhere is it more necessary to take heed than in preaching up the duties of holiness. Let all be founded in union to and communion with Christ; all enforced by the pattern, love, righteousness, and benefits of Christ. (*Ephesians 4-6; Colossians 3-4; 1 Peter 3-4*).

8. You Have Stated Yourselves Public Witnesses for Jesus Christ.

You profess to adhere to and propagate His injured truths—and to commemorate with thankfulness the remarkable mercies which He has bestowed on our Church and nation—and to testify against, and mourn over, our own and our fathers' fearful backslidings from that covenanted work of reformation once attained in our land: see that ye be judicious, upright, constant, and faithful in your profession. (Psalm 78:5-7; Proverbs 23:23; 2 Corinthians 4:1-2).

I now approach death, heartily satisfied with the doctrines and form of Church Government which I have professed and maintained, and cordially adhering to these Covenants, by which our fathers solemnly bound themselves and their posterity, to profess the doctrines and practice the duties therein contained. (2 Timothy 4:6-8; Hebrews 10:23; Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

I look upon our cause as indeed the cause of God, but sadly mismanaged and dishonored by myself and others. Alas! for that pride, passion, selfishness, and unconcern for the glory of Christ, and the spiritual edification of souls, which has so often prevailed! (Romans 7:18-19; 1 Corinthians 10:12; James 3:13-16).

Alas! for our want of due meekness, gentleness, holy zeal, self-denial, hearty grief for sin, and compassion to souls in immediate connection with us, or left in the established Church, which became distinguished witnesses for Christ. (2 Timothy 2:24-25; Galatians 6:1; Philippians 2:3-4).

Alas! that we did not chiefly strive to pray better, preach better, and live better than our neighbors. (Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12; Colossians 4:5-6).

Study to see everything with your own eyes, but never indulge an itch after novelties. Most of those which are now esteemed such are nothing but old errors, which were long ago justly refuted, varnished over with some new expressions. (*Ecclesiastes 1:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Galatians 1:6-9*).

Never, by your peevishness, contentious spirit, eagerness about worldly things, or the like, make others think lightly of the cause of God in your hands. (1 Timothy 6:6-12; James 1:19-20; Romans 14:16-17).

If I mistake not, the Churches are entering into a fearful cloud of apostasy and trouble. But he that endures to the end, shall be saved. (Matthew 24:12-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; Revelation 3:10-11).

Be ye faithful unto death, and Christ shall give you a crown of life. But if any man draw back, God's soul shall have no pleasure in him. (Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 10:38-39).

9. Always Improve and Live on That Blessed Encouragement Which Is Offered to You, as Christians and Ministers, in the Gospel.

Let all your wants be on Christ. My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:19).

Cast all your cares on Him, for He careth for you. Cast all your burdens on Him, and He will sustain you. (1 Peter 5:7; Psalm 55:22).

If your holy services, through your mismanagement, occasion your uncommon guilt, His blood cleanseth from all sin. You have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for your sins. (1 John 1:7; 1 John 2:1-2).

If you often find it difficult how to act, He hath said, The meek will He guide in judgment: the meek will He teach His way. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye set upon thee. I will lead the blind in a way which they know not. (Psalm 25:9; Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 42:16).

If you be much discouraged, because of your rough way and your want of strength, He has said, When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will

hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places. Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee: I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Fear not, worm of Jacob—I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, and thou shalt thresh the mountains. (Isaiah 41:17-18; Isaiah 41:10; Isaiah 41:13-15).

My grace shall be sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. As thy days are, so shall thy strength be. (2 Corinthians 12:9; Deuteronomy 33:25).

If your troubles be many, He hath said, When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee—the rivers shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, nor shall the flame kindle upon thee. (Isaiah 43:2).

If your incomes be small and pinching, Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. He shall see His seed, the travail of His soul, and be satisfied: and He has promised, I will abundantly bless her provision, and satisfy her poor with bread. I will satiate the soul of her priests with fatness. (2 Corinthians 8:9; Isaiah 53:11; Psalm 132:15-16).

A salary of remarkable fellowship with Christ, and of success in winning souls, is the most delightful and enriching. (John 4:36; 1 Corinthians 9:22-23).

If your labors appear to have little success, be more diligent and dependent on Christ. Never mourn as they that have no hope. Let not the eunuch say, I am a dry tree. Jesus hath said, I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground. I will pour my

Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring. A seed shall serve Him. The whole earth shall be filled with His glory. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. (Isaiah 56:3; Isaiah 44:3; Psalm 22:30; Habakkuk 2:14; Revelation 11:15).

Believe it on the testimony of God Himself; believe it on the testimony of all His faithful servants; and, if mine were of any avail, I should add it. That there is no master so kind as Christ; no service so pleasant and profitable as that of Christ; and no reward so full, satisfying, and permanent as that of Christ. (Matthew 11:28-30; Psalm 16:11; Hebrews 6:10).

Let us, therefore, begin all things from Christ; carry on all things with and through Christ; and let all things aim at and end in Christ. (Colossians 3:17; Hebrews 12:2; Romans 11:36).

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