

The Duties, Difficulties and Reward of the faithful Minister.

A S E R M O N,

Preached at the **I N S T A L L A T I O N** of the
REVD. Mr. JOHN TODD, A. B. into the Pastoral
 Charge of the *Presbyterian Congregation*, in and a-
 bout the upper Part of *Hanover County in Virginia*,
 Nov. 12. 1752:

With an **A P P E N D I X**, containing the **F O R M** of
I N S T A L L A T I O N, &c.

Published at the *Desire* of the Hearers;

And

Humbly Dedicated to the **REVD. CLERGY** of the
 Established Church in *Virginia*.

BY **S. DAVIES, V. D. M.**

Ὁσος πρεσβύτερος ἐστὶ τῷ ὄντι τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ διακονοῦς ἀληθῆς τῆς
 τοῦ Θεοῦ βουλήσεως. ἴαν ποιεῖ καὶ διδασκῆτα τοῦ Κυρίου καὶ ἐνταῖθα ἐπι-
 φῆς προτοκαθιδρία μὴ τιμηθῆ, ἐν τοῖς εἰκοσὶ καὶ τέσσαρσι καθιδικταῖ
 ἔργοις ——— *Ueni. Alex. Strom. lib. 6.*

Ἰκατὴ παραμυθία τῶν πονῶν, καὶ πάντων μείζων, ἐστὶν ἑαυτοῦς ἀνευθίνας
 δυναθῆαι πρὸς ἀρεσκίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ρυθμίζων τὴν διδασκαλίαν.

Chryf. de Sacred. lib. 5. Sect. 7.

G L A S G O W :

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THE DEDICATION
TO THE REV. D. CLERGY
of the Established Church in *Virginia*.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,



S Meekness and Lowliness are endearing Ingredients in the amiable and imitable Character of your Divine *Master*; I flatter myself this affectionate Address to you from one of the *meanest* of the *Sacred* Order, will obtain an *easy* Pardon; especially when presented in the *humble* Form of a *Dedication*.

You might justly resent it, Gentlemen, should I insult you by arrogating the Province of your *Instructor*; or pollute my Pen with *Calumny* and *Reproach*. A just sense of my own *Inferiority* sufficiently restrains me from the *one*; and a Regard for our *common* Christianity, and a Veneration for the Religious *Establishment* of my Country, from the *other*. If I am conscious of my own Temper, I can solemnly assure you, I write with all the *pacifical Calmness* of an unprejudiced Heart, sensible of the *Divine Inspection*, and cautious of writing a word that will not *stand the Test* before the supreme Tribunal; where I *certainly believe* the Matter will be publicly tried.

A 2

You might judge it, *Gentlemen*, a needless and improper Application, if I should beg your *Patronage* of the following *Sermon*. If its *Contents* are the *Truths of God*, they are safe under the Shelter of *Divine Authority*, without the Sanction of *human Approbation*: But if they are the *little Peculiarities of a Party*, it cannot be expected you should *patronize* them; and indeed they would not *deserve* it.

But without *Arrogance*, I may presume to be your *Informer* in what I cannot but know better than you; I mean the *Doctrines* that have been preached among the *Dissenters* in these *Parts* by my *Brethren* and myself. *These*, *Gentlemen*, some of you have thought yourselves *concerned* to form a *judgment* about; and, I persuade myself, you think yourselves as much concerned to *know* them, as to *judge* of them. And you will no doubt grant, that you may receive *more certain Information* from one that must to be sure *know* them, than by unattested *Hear-says*.

In the following *Sermon* and the *Appendix*, *Gentlemen*, You may be informed of our Sentiments concerning the *Nature*, *Design*, and various *Duties* of the *ministerial Office*. If our Sentiments are *just*, and our Conduct agreeable to them, we claim a *share* in the Honour of being *accounted Ministers of Christ*, and *stewards of the Mysteries of God*; and, we presume, you will *allow* our Claim, not-
with-

withstanding the *Difference* betwixt *Episcopal* and *Presbyterian* Ordination, and in the *Formalities* of our respective Ministrations; which, to be sure, cannot be deemed a *sufficient* Ground to *monopolize* the Character to *either* Party, except by *high-flying Bigots*; who lay more stress upon the *circumstantial* Differences, than upon the *essential* Agreements between the Churches of *England* and *Scotland*; and who invest their Conscience with the Office of *Conscience-general* to mankind; as tho' they were to stand the *Representative* of their *Species* at the supreme Tribunal; and *everyone* were not to give an *Account* of *HIMSELF* to *GOD*, but were to be judged by *Proxy*.

The following Sermon will also inform you, *Gentlemen*, what is the *Substance* of the Doctrines we generally preach: whether they are the *rigid Peculiarities* of *Presbyterianism*; or the generous Truths of *Catholic Christianity*: whether they are the raw *Innovations* of *New-Lights*; or the *good old Doctrines* of the *Church of England*, of the *Reformation*, and (to say all in a Word) of the *Bible*: whether they are calculated to bring the *established Church* and *Clergy* into *Contempt*, and to *ensnare graceless Profelytes* to a Party; or to bring our *common Christianity*, and consequently its faithful *Ministers* of *every* Denomination, into *Reputation*, and to turn *Sinners* to *Righteousness*.

The

The Bounds of *one Sermon*, tho' sufficiently long when first delivered, and now presented to the *Public* with considerable *Enlargements*, * would not admit of a *complete Enumeration* of *evangelical Doctrines*. But *those* which I have *particularized*, will naturally lead to the most of the *rest*, as their *Principles* or *Consequences*. e. g. The *Doctrine* of the *Trinity*, that glorious *Peculiarity* of *Revealed Religion*, is evidently presupposed, in the *View* I have given of the scheme of *Redemption*; and the *Doctrine* of the *Resurrection* follows from it. Besides the *Truths* and *Duties* that are purely *evangelical*, or peculiar to *Revealed Religion*; and those that may be reduced under the *Head* of *Natural Religion*; there are many *others* which are of a *mixt Nature*; partly *discovered* by the *Light of Nature*, and more fully *improved* and *illustrated* by *supernatural Revelation*; and *these* we will no doubt often insist upon, if we declare the *whole Counsel* of *God*. But to *enumerate all these*, would be to write a *System* of *Ethics* and a *Body* of *Divinity*; and therefore you cannot expect a *complete Enumeration* of them in the ensuing *Discourse*. The *Doctrines* I have *particularized* are intended only as a *Specimen* of what we conceive should be the *principal materials* of our

* The *Enlargements* do not consist in the *Addition* of any *new Heads*, but in *Amplifications* and *further Illustrations* of those that were publicly insisted upon.

our public Discourses: and they are *sufficient* for *this Purpose*: Nay, I may add, they may serve as a *complete Enumeration* of those Doctrines we generally preach, which some, I hope without Reason, have pronounced *peculiar to us*: and if *those* obtain your *approbation*, or incur but a *mild Censure*; I am confident the *other ordinary subjects* of our Sermons will not incur the *Severities* of your Displeasure.

If you would know, *Revd. Sirs*, what has been that *strange Charm*, that has *enchanted* People in these Parts to leave the *stated Communion* of the *Established Church*, and *profess* themselves *Dissenters*; we can solemnly assure you, and our *Hearers* of every Denomination are our *Witnesses*, That it has not been any public or private *Artifice* of ours, to *expose* the *Liturgy* and *Clergy* of the Church of *England*; but the *plain peaceable Preaching* of such Doctrines as are mentioned in the following Sermon, in *Weakness*, and in *Fear*, and in *much trembling*. And if we may believe the *united Testimony* of our Adherents; it was an *eager Thirst* after *these Doctrines*, rather than a *Dissatisfaction* with the *peculiar Modes* of Worship in *that Church*, which *first* induced them to *dissent*.

Or if you would know, *Gentlemen*, by *what means* a Number of careless sinners have been *hopefully reformed* to the Practice of *evangelical Holiness*, (which is a matter of *infinitely greater Importance* than the *Change* of their

their *Denomination*; and which, were you to view their *past* and *present* Conduct in Contrast, you could *hardly deny* to be Matter of *Fact*;) *these* are the happy *Doctrines* that have been *instrumental* to produce the glorious *Change*: and I am daily *more* and *more* confirmed in the Persuasion, that (as I observe in the Sermon) *these* will *always* be found the *only faithful Expedients* to reform a degenerate World.

And while I entertain *this persuasion*, I cannot but heartily wish, that *these Doctrines* may be preached with *more Clearness*, Power and zeal by my *Fathers* and *Brethren* among the *Dissenters*: and that *You*, Revd. Gentlemen, may take the *Alarm* from *their success*, and the *Growth* of the *Dissenting* Interest by Means of their *Doctrines*; and inspired with *holy Emulation*, may preach the *same* glorious Truths in a *more* clear, solemn and pathetic Manner; and so claim the Honour of the success to your *own Church*, and thus *weaken* the *Dissenters*, by *extolling* them in preaching *those Doctrines* which People now flock after *them* to hear. *Whatever Denomination* increases by *this* means, shall increase with my hearty *Congratulations*.

It has afforded me no small satisfaction, *Gentlemen*, that *some* of your Fraternity, who have had the *best* Opportunity of observing our Conduct and Doctrine, and whose *moral* Character and *intellectual* Abilities you need
not

not be ashamed of, have of late *softned* in their Resentments; and treated us, not only as Creatures of the *same Species*, but as their *Fellow-labourers*, and sincere *Promoters* of the Cause of our *common Lord*, tho' of a *different* Sentiment from them in *some Things*. Had I Nothing *nobler* in view than the Advancement of a *Party*, instead of the *common Salvation*, it would be *Policy* in me to wish, that you might *convince* your People that you are *destitute* of the *Spirit and Genius* of Christianity, by the *Severities* of your Censure upon me: But as I can *honestly* declare my *sincere* Desire is to promote the *noble Religion* of Jesus, and to see it *flourish* in all the Churches of Christ; and as I know that *Uncharitableness* and *Animosities* among its Ministers and Professors are an *infernal Expedient* for that Purpose; I must declare, that the *extensive Prevalency* of a Spirit of *Candour* and *Moderation*, would very much *heighten* my *Satisfaction*. For my Part, I now acknowledge the most *sacred Obligations* to the *Public*, and to *you*, to maintain and cultivate *such a Spirit*, and dare not expect your Mercy, if I should *wilfully* violate them. And *You*, Gentlemen, may perhaps judge from the following Sermon, whether the *Difference* between us in Sentiments, and our *Obligations* to promote our *Respective Churches* be *such*, as to admit of no good *Neighbourhood*, no friendly *Correspondence* between us, as *Men*, as *Scholars*, and as *Professors* of the *same Christianity*; but that we must be at
B implacable

The DEDICATION. to the Clergy

implacable *Hostility*, like *Jews* and *Samaritans*, till the one Party retract his Sentiments, and betray the interests of the Society to which he belongs.

Here, *Revd. Sirs*, let me insert an *Extract* from a Letter of mine to the late *Revd.* and *Hon. Dr. Dawson*, for whose Memory I have a sincere Veneration, written at *his Motion*, to give *him*, and the other Gentlemen of the Council (to whom he promised to communicate it) an *impartial Account* of the Circumstances of the Dissenters here: and what *he* was pleased to request, I may, I hope, inoffensively present to you.

“ I am not fond, Sir, of disseminating *Se-*
 “ *dition* and *Schism*: I have no Ambition to
 “ *presbyterianize* the Colony. But I hope I
 “ may declare, without suspicion of *Ostenta-*
 “ *tion*, or wilful *Falsification*, that I have a
 “ *sincere* zeal, however *languid* and *impotent*,
 “ to propagate the catholic Religion of *Jesus*
 “ in its Life and Power; tho’ I feel but *little*
 “ Anxiety about the *Denomination* its genuine
 “ Subjects assume. The *Profession* of *Christia-*
 “ *nity* is *universal* in this Colony: but alas!
 “ *Sir*, if the Religion of the *Bible* be the
 “ *Test* of Mens Characters, and the *Standard*
 “ of their final Doom, *Multitudes*, *Multitudes*
 “ are in a perishing Condition! Their
 “ Ignorance, their Negligence, their wrong
 “ Notions of vital Christianity, their habitual
 “ Neglect of its known Duties, their vicious
 “ Practice

“ Practice proclaim it aloud : and he that can
 “ persuade himself of the *contrary*, in spite of
 “ Evidence, is possessed of a *Charity* under no
 “ *rational* or *scriptural* Regulations. For
 “ my Part, Sir, should I believe that Religion
 “ is in a *flourishing* State in this Colony, I
 “ must *renounce the Bible*, disbelieve my *Eyes*,
 “ and my *Ears*, and rush into *universal Scep-*
 “ *ticism*. Could I indulge the *pleasing Dream*,
 “ my Life below the Skies would be an
 “ *Anticipation* of Heaven ——— I do not
 “ conclude religion is in so *lamentable* a State,
 “ because I see the Generality *pray by Form*,
 “ receive the Sacrament *kneeling*, &c. or in
 “ a Word, because they *conform* to the *de-*
 “ *bated Peculiarities* of the established Church:
 “ no, Sir; I freely grant, *these things* are not
 “ the *Test* of men’s Characters; *these* may be
 “ so far from *hindering*, that for what I know,
 “ they may *promote* living Religion, in such
 “ as have *no Scruples* about them; tho’ the
 “ Case would be *otherwise* with others: But
 “ the unwelcome *Evidences* that *force* this
 “ Conclusion upon me, are, the general *Ne-*
 “ *glect*, and stupid *Unconcernedness* about
 “ Religion, the habitual *Omission* of its Duties,
 “ and the vicious *Practices* that glare upon
 “ me around; and which are utterly *incon-*
 “ *sistent* with *true Religion* in any Denomi-
 “ nation,” [in a *Presbyterian*, as well as a
 “ *Church-Man*.] ——— “ I pretend to no *su-*
 “ *perior Sanctity* above the established Clergy,
 “ who are *piously* aiming at the great end of
 “ their Office; and I allow myself the plea-
 “ sure

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“ sure of hoping there are *such* in *Virginia*,
 “ I pretend to no *Apostolic* Powers and Pri-
 “ vileges, Immediate Revelations and impul-
 “ ses; but *renounce* the Claim as *presumptu-*
 “ *ous* and *enthusiastical*. I am as *mean* and
 “ *insignificant* a Creature, as you can well
 “ conceive me to be. -- But I *dare profess*,
 “ Sir, that *even* a Heart so insensible as *mine*,
 “ is at Times *dissolved* into Compassions
 “ and *racked* with Agonies of Zeal, when so
 “ *dismal* a Scene opens around me: I *dare*
 “ *profess*, I cannot stand an *unconcerned*, *in-*
 “ *active Spectator* of the Ruin of my Fellow-
 “ sinners; but would *very gladly spend* and
 “ *be spent* for them, tho’ the more abundantly
 “ I love them, the less I should be loved: I
 “ am *bold* to *avow* so much *pious Humanity*,
 “ as that I would *exert* myself to the utmost,
 “ in my *little Sphere*, for their *Recovery*:
 “ and since I am *disabled*, by some *conscien-*
 “ *tious* scruples, to attempt it in the *Communi-*
 “ *cion* of the established Church; I humbly
 “ conceive, I am warranted to attempt it in a
 “ *separate* Communion. *This*, Sir, is my
 “ *only* Design; and (as I told you in Conver-
 “ sation) I Think it would be no *great*
 “ *stretch* of Charity to suppose, that *even* a
 “ *Dissenter* may be *more* distressed to see
 “ *Multitudes* rushing on in a thoughtless Ca-
 “ reer to *Ruin*, than to see them conform to
 “ the Church of *England*; and *more* zealous to
 “ convert them from *Sin* to *Holiness*, than
 “ from *Party* to *Party*.” —

This

This Account of my Conduct and Designs, Gentlemen, I have seen no Reason to retract, and my Procedure, since it was written, which was about a year ago, has not been inconsistent with it. And, till my Practice be proven inconsistent with it, these unreserved Declarations of my Design must be deemed sincere, and worthy to be credited; unless Mortals can produce authentic Credentials to warrant their assuming the Prerogative of Omniscience, and judging the Secrets of the Heart.

It would really afford me no *small Uneasiness*, if the Design of this Dedication should be *misapprehended*: and therefore permit me Gentlemen, repeatedly to assure you, that to *aspersion* your Characters by so much as the most *disguised* Insinuation or *oblique* Hints; or to assume the *Air* of your Instructor, is as far from my Heart as you can wish it to be: but that my sole Design is, to give you an *impartial* Account of the Doctrines with which we entertain our Hearers; that you may judge, how far we deserve to be censured and opposed as *Innovators*, *Disturbers* of the Peace of the Church, *sowers* of *Heresies* and *Sedition*, &c. And if the following Sermon answer this End, the Design of its Publication with Respect to you, is fully obtained. But if I should be so unhappy as to be disappointed in this, I must support myself by reflecting upon the *Inoffensiveness* and *Integrity* of my Intention: and (as *Chrystome* observes in the

Quotation

Quotation from him in the Title-page) "*It is a sufficient Relief under all his Labours, and more than an Equivalent for them all, when One can be conscious to himself, that he regulates his Doctrine to the Approbation of the Deity.*" And (to translate my first Motto from Clemens of Alexandria) "*He is in Reality a Presbyter of the Church, and a true Minister of the Will of God, who teaches the Doctrines of the Lord Jesus, and practices accordingly: and though he be not honoured with the first Seat upon Earth; he shall be enthroned in heaven,*" &c——To that state, of perfect Uniformity in Sentiment, and everlasting Friendship, may you be conducted, when you have served your Generation according to the Will of God! And there may Divine Grace afford some humble Place, among the Myriads of glorified Immortals, to the unworthy Mortal, who is, and therefore desires to be esteemed,

REVEREND SIRS,

Your affectionate Brother,

heartly well-Wisher,

and

humble Servant.

SAMUEL DAVIES.

Hanover

Jan. 9, 1753

AN ADDRESS to the People under the
Revd. Mr. Todd's ministerial Care.

My Dear Friends and Brethren,

I most earnestly and affectionately *intreat* you, and (since the Importance of the matter requires it) I solemnly *charge* you, frequently to *review* and *peruse* the following *Sermon* and *Appendix*; that you may be often *reminded* of the *Transactions* of that solemn *Day*, upon which it was delivered. Nothing can tend more to your Advantage, than the faithful and persevering *Performance* of the *Obligations* you then undertook towards your *Minister*; and *this* you cannot do, without frequently *recollecting* them. To *remind* you of them, this *Sermon* is now published; and for *this* End, I hope you will *use* it, and keep it by you, as a *memorial* of the *Vows* of *GOD*, which are upon you.

Language cannot express the *ardent* *Wishes* of my Heart, that the *word* of the *Lord* may have *free* *Course*, and be glorified among you; that *laying* *aside* all *malice*, and all *Guile* and *Hypocrisy*, you may, as *new-born* *Babes*, desire the *sincere* *Milk* of the *Word*, that you may grow thereby, and taste that the *Lord* is *gracious*; that your *worthy* *Pastor* may be long continued an extensive *Blessing* among you; that his *Bow* may abide in *Strength*, and his *Arms* be made *strong*, by the *Hands* of the mighty *GOD* of *Jacob*;
Gen.

An Address to Mr. Todd's People.

(Gen. 49. 24.) and that he may be the joyful Father of many spiritual Children among you.—This is my heart's Desire and Prayer to God for you; and in Return, I beg the Benefit of your Intercessions at the Throne of Grace, for,

My Dear Friends,

The most affectionate Well-Wisher

of your immortal Souls;

S. Davies

A Sermon of the Author's on *Isai. 62. 1.* preached last *October* in *Pennsylvania* at the Opening of the *Presbytery*, was sent to the Press in *Philadelphia*, by Order of *Presbytery*, and may by this Time be published; in which there are sundry Sentiments the same with some in the following Sermon, especially under the *third Head*. If both should fall into the Reader's Hands, it may be observed as an Apology for the Publication of both; that they were published at the Request of different Persons at a great Distance; that but few who may have Opportunity of perusing the one, will ever see the other; and that by far the greatest Part of this Discourse is entirely different from that.

The PSALM sung before Sermon, (*Psal. 132. 4, 5, 7, 8, 15.—17.* Dr. *Watts's* Version.)

—4. Arise, O King of Grace, arise,
And enter to Thy Rest;
Lo! Thy Church waits with longing Eyes
Thus to be own'd and blest.

5. Enter with all Thy glorious Train,
Thy Spirit and Thy word:
All that the Ark did once contain
Could no such Grace afford.

6. Here, mighty God, accept our Vows;
Here let Thy Praise be spread:
Bless the Provisions of Thy House,
And fill Thy Poor with Bread.

G

7 Here

The PSALM sung before Sermon.

7 Here let the Son of *David* reign,
Let God's Anointed shine :
Justice and Truth His Court maintain,
With Love and Pow'r Divine.

8 Here let Him hold a lasting Throne ;
And as His Kingdom grows,
Fresh Honours shall adorn His Crown,
And shame confound His Foes.

The Duties, Difficulties and Reward of the faithful Minister.

A S E R M O N, &c.

ACTS XX. 24.

BUT none of these Things move me, neither count I my Life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with Joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.

IT is fit in itself, my Brethren, and authorized by many scripture-Precedents, as well as by the Practice of all Nations, that important Offices and new Relations should be undertaken with *Ceremonies of peculiar Solemnity*: and when such *Formalities* are observed, not for the sake of *Ostentation and Parade*, but to give the Parties concerned *suitable Impressions* of their Undertaking; it may produce very happy Consequences—Now of all the offices that can be sustained by Mortals, that of the *Ministry* of the Gospel is the most *weighty* and *solemn*; and the Relation between a *Minister* and his *People* is the most *awful* and *important* that can subsist among Mankind. Other Offices and Relations, from the *Sovereign* to the *Slave*, have a *primary* Reference to the *little Affairs* of the present transitory World: but the ministerial

2 *The Settlement of a Minister should be attended with*

sterial Function has an *immediate* and *principal* Reference to the vast Concerns of *Eternity*; — *Eternity!* that tremendous Attribute! which might add *infinite* Importance even to Things, that if *temporary*, would be but insignificant Trifles. And when People receive a Minister by their own Election, they do not chuse a Physician for their *Bodies*, or a *Guardian* of their civil Property, Liberty and Life; 2 Cor. 5. but, which is infinitely more important, they 20. receive an *Ambassador of Christ*, to negotiate with them *in His stead*: they chuse a *spiritual Guide*, to conduct them thro' the Intricacies of this Wilderness into *Immanuel's Land*: they Heb. 13. place themselves under the care of a *Shepherd*, 17. who must *watch for their Souls*, as one that must give Account: they employ a *spiritual Physician*, whose Applications will not be *indifferent*; but will prove a *Savour of Life* 2 Cor. 2. unto Life, or a *Savour of Death unto Death*, 16. to every Individual under his care. A most important, and tremendous Trust! neither to be *reposed* by the one Party, nor *assumed* by the other, without the most *awful Solemnity*. And therefore it is fit that *this Occasion*, on which the weighty Affair is to be transacted, should be *distinguished* with peculiar Solemnity; and particularly, that you should be entertained with a *Discourse* adapted to it.

And as this Province is assigned to me by the Revd. *Presbytery*, I would fain speak, and I hope, my Dear Brethren, you will honestly endeavour to hear with that passionate
Solemnity

Solemnity and deep Concern which becomes us at *Parting*. We have had many solemn Interviews together in the house of God: but now the happy Opportunity, so long sought for, is come, when I may relieve myself from a Charge, which, however dear, and intimately united to my Heart, was so much too *extensive* for me. Now I cheerfully resign you to the pastoral Charge of Another, who, Phil. 2, 20. I doubt not, will naturally care for your *state*. Henceforth we shall not probably have many Interviews, till, in very different Circumstances, and for very different purposes, we meet and mingle with the assembled Universe, before the dread Tribunal of that venerable Majesty, whose gentle Name, as a *Saviour*, has been so often proclaimed in our Ears. There we must give an Account of our Fidelity in our respective *Stewardships*. There we must give an Account of all the 2 Cor. 5. Deeds done in the Body; and particularly of 10. the Improvement we have made of the religious Privileges we have enjoyed together—And may we this Day *anticipate* something of that *dread Solemnity*, which will then seize the most trifling and thoughtless mind among us! May every Heart *catch* something of that sacred Fire of passionate Zeal, and feel those solemn and tender impressions, with which *this Discourse* where my *Text* lies, was delivered and heard!

This Discourse is the *Farewel-Sermon* of 2 Cor. 11. Paul the Aged, Paul the Chief of the Apostles, Phil. v. 9. and 2.

and the most successful Propagator of Christianity, to a venerable Assembly of the *Ephesian* Ministers, called to meet him at *Miletus*, to receive the last Advice and Charge of their *spiritual Father*. His Sermon was preached and heard with floods of Tears. And indeed the pathetic Address of the accomplished *Orator*, animated with the affectionate Ardor of the Zealous Christian, is so irresistibly striking, that he must be a stranger to the tender Passions, who can read it, even at this Distance, without sensible Emotions.

v. 22.

St. Paul was now upon his last Journey to *Jerusalem*, to relieve the poor Saints in *Judea* with the charitable Contributions of the *Gentile* Churches, and to refresh them with the acceptable News of the Success of the Gospel among the Heathen. He knew not the *particular* Trials that were before him: but he was assured in *general*, by prophetic Intimations which he received in every City on his way, that Bonds and *Afflictions* awaited him.

v. 23.

The Text contains his *noble Resolution*, upon the Foresight of these severe Trials, which might issue in the loss of his Liberty, and even of his Life, as they at length actually did. *Notwithstanding the shocking Prospect

* A few Days after St. Paul's Arrival at *Jerusalem*, we find him mobbed by the Jews, (Acts 21. 27, &c.) and when he is rescued from their Outrages by the Chief Captain, he is bound with two Chains, and committed to Prison. (v. 33-34.)
After

spect, he sets his Face resolutely to go to *Jerusalem*, like the *Captain of his Salvation*, in 51. like Circumstances; and pursues his Journey with an undaunted Bravery, becoming a *good Soldier of Jesus Christ*. He implicitly resigns 2 Tim. himself to the Conduct of the Holy Spirit; and 2; 3. will tread the darkest Path at his command. *None of these Things move me*, says he, *neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.*

The Apostle considers the present *Life*, and the Services required of him as a *Man* and a *Christian*, under the significant Metaphor, of a *Course* or a *Race*, assigned him to run for a *Prize*; probably with an Allusion to the celebrated *Olympic Games*. This metaphor intimates the necessity of the most vigorous *Exertion* of all our Powers, and the most unwearied *Activity*, in the Duties of the Christian Life. To run Heb. 12. this *Race with Patience*, and *Alacrity*, and to 1. finish

After this, he passed thro' a Series of Abuses, and was dragged from Court to Court, (Ch. 22. 30. and 23. 30. and 25. 6. and 25. 23.) and never released from Prison, but to be brought like a *Griminal* in Chains to the Barr, for above two Years. (Ch. 24. 27.) At length he was obliged to put himself beyond their Power, and bring the Matter to a speedy Issue, by appealing to the *Roman Emperor*; (Ch. 25. 11.) and having suffered the Hardships of a Shipwreck in his Voyage to *Rome* (Ch. 27.) he is there kept in *looser* Custody for two Years; (Ch. 28. 16. 30.) at length more *close*ly confined, and at last put to *Death* by *Nero*, that Butcher of Mankind.

6 St. Paul's great Progress in the Christian Race ;

finish this Course with Joy, was the principal Business, the most vigorous Effort of his Life. And when, in the near Approach of Death, he reviews his past Conduct, we find him in the serene Enjoyment of that satisfaction, he here so ardently wishes for— I have (says he, using the same agonistic style ; I have) finished my Course ; — Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown (not of fading Laurel, like that given to the Conquerors in the Olympic Games, to which there is a manifold Allusion here ; but a Crown) of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me.— Thus we find vigorous Resolutions, put into Practice, shall not fail of the Prize in View ; which may animate us so to run that we may obtain.

1 Cor. 9.

24

Besides his *private Christian Course*, the Apostle had his *public Ministerial Course*, to run: and he was no less solicitous to *finish this with joy*. He was Zealous not only to *save himself*, but also *those that heard him* ; and to *finish his Ministry*, as well as the *personal Duties* of the Christian Life.

1 Tim. 4.

16

1 Cor. 15

10.

2 Cor. 11.

23.

The Apostle had at this Time made *no small Progress* in his *Christian and Ministerial Course*. His Attainments in *personal Holiness*, were so eminent, that but few, if any of the *Saints* in any Age of the Church, have equalled him. In *apostolic Labours and sufferings* he was *more abundant than all the Apostles*. He had braved the Dangers of Sea and Land, and travelled many Countries to propagate the joyful News of Salvation to perishing Multitudes

tudes. He had founded Hundreds of Churches, and been the happy Instrument of turning many Thousands from Darkness to Light. In short, Few have left the Earth, in the most advanced Period of Life, who have gone thro' such a Series of successful Labours and generous Sufferings, for the divine Honour, and the Weal of Mankind, as St. Paul had at this Time, when *scarcely* Years of his extensive Usefulness were yet remaining. † But his unbounded Zeal is not satisfied with all this Proficiency. He knew that *Perseverance is the Test of Fidelity*; and that none but he that finally overcomes shall wear the Crown. He is therefore as anxious to finish his Course, to finish his Ministry, with Joy, as if he had wasted all his former Days in Idleness, or useless Activity. What he has done well in the Service of his Lord, he humbly rejoices in, and ascribes all the Glory to free-Grace. I Cor. 15. But oh! all this is not enough, all this is No-thing, when compared with the unbounded

Rev. 2.
26—3. 11
—21

D Aims

† Chronologers generally suppose, St. Paul was converted A. D. 35, that he took his Journey to Jerusalem A. D. 60, and that he suffered Martyrdom at Rome A. D. 67. (Vid. *Whitby's Chron. Index to the N. T.*) so that this Interview with the Ministers of Ephesus at Miletus was in the 25th. Year after his Conversion, and seven Years before his Death. After this, he wrote his immortal Epistles to the Philip. to Philem. to the Coloss. to the Ephes. to the Heb. to Tim. and Tit. probably in the Order here mentioned: for in all these he gives some Intimations of his Imprisonment. After this, his Desire of imparting some spiritual Gift to the Roman Church, (Rom. 1. 11.) was no doubt accomplished; and during his Custody, his

Aims of his *pious Ambition*, and his immense *Obligations* to the blessed *Jesus*. He will devote the *Remnant* of his venerable Years to the same Service: he will wear out the *Remains* of his strength, just *exhausted* already with the glorious *Toils* of his Office, in *indefatigable Endeavours* to diffuse Holiness and Happiness through a degenerate, miserable World.—— He had hitherto *acted his part* well, on the private and public *stage* of Life: but the most important Part is yet to come: he has not yet made his *Exit*: and now he is anxious that *that* may be as *graceful* and *triumphant* as possible. His Heart was *always full* of this noble Concern; and when he was honoured with bonds and imprisonments for the sake of *Jesus*, he is *not advanced above* it: even *then* he was not *content* with all that he had done and suffered; but eagerly aspires after *higher Attainments*: for in his Epistle to the *Philippians*, written during his Confinement at *Rome*, he has these remarkable Words; *Brethren, I count not myself as yet to have apprehended the Prize; but this one Thing I do*, as the principal Concern of my Life;

Philip. 3.
13, 14.

his Labours were not without Success among the *Roman Courtiers* in *Caesar's Palace*; (Phil. 1. 13. and 4. 22.) and his Magnanimity and Joy under all his Sufferings for so glorious a Cause, animated his *Brethren in the Lord* with much more *Boldness* to speak the Word without Fear, (Phil. 1. 14) —Glorious old Age! thus consumed in generous Labours, and sufferings for the Honour of his divine Master, and the best interest of an ungrateful World, which conspired to reward him with Torments and Death!

Life; in *this one thing* all my most vigorous Endeavours center; forgetting those Things which are behind, in my spiritual Race, and reaching forth unto these things that are before; I strain and press toward the Mark, for the glorious Prize conspicuous at the Goal.

He foresaw that *Bonds and Afflictions* lay in his Way; and that his *Difficulties* would encrease with his *Progress* in his spiritual Course. But he stands firm and intrepid as a Rock, and nobly insensible of the shock. *None of these Things move me*, says he: *I make no Account of these Things*: nay, *I MAKE ACCOUNT OF NOTHING*. * *I do not hold my very Life Dear to myself*, if I may but finish my Ministry with Joy. This he had at Heart above all other Things: for *this* he would willingly part with Life, and all its Enjoyments, as *Trifles*; yea, as *Incumbrances*, if they came in Competition with it: from the Pursuits of *this* no Difficulties could discourage him, no Dissuaves restrain him. Who, without tender Emotions, can read his Answer to the weeping Importunities of his friends, dissuading him from going to *Jerusalem*, "What mean ye to weep, and to break mine Heart? Act. 21, for I am ready not to be bound only, but also 13. to die at Jerusalem, for the Name of the Lord Jesus.

D 2

* This is an exact, literal Translation of the Original, *οὐδενος λόγου ποιούμεναι*. and is more emphatical than our common Version.

Jesus. Let *Persecution* discharge all her *Artillery* against him; let *Martyrdom* appear in the most *shocking* shapes of *Torture*; he is *calm* and *undaunted*. His *Life* is at his *Lord's* *Disposal*; and if he can but *review* his *Course* at *last*, and say in his *Master's* *Language*, "*It is finished*;" with *quiet Resignation*, or rather with *joyful Rapture*, he will give up the *Ghost*, tho' it should be in *Flames*, or upon a *Rack*. O noble *Bravery*! worthy a *good Soldier of the Captain of our Salvation!*

John 19.
30.

The *Consideration* of the *End* and *Business* of his *Office*, and of the *Person* who had *invested* him with it, did not a little *enflame* his *Zeal* and *Courage* faithfully to *discharge* it.

The important *End* and *pleasing Business* of his *Office* was, to *testify the Gospel of the Grace of God*; or (as the *Original* imports) *solemnly and clearly to publish and attest the good News of the Grace of God.** Not *Crowns* and *Empires* and all the *Pleasures* of the *Earth*, could afford so noble a *satisfaction* to a *generous Heart*, as to *wander* over this *wretched World*, like a *Pilgrim*, with the *beneficent Powers* of *relieving Captives* from the *Yoke of Bondage*, *restoring Health* and
Ease

* I cannot, without this *periphrastic Translation*, fully express the *Import* and *Emphasis* of the *Original*, διαμαρτυρασθαι το' Ευαγγελιον της χαριτος του ΟΙΟΥ. It is a familiar *Criticism* that
Ευαγγελιον

Ease to the Languishing or Agonizing, delivering the Poor from Famine and Hardships, and diffusing Happiness around. But these are but *temporal* Blessings, and dwindle into *Trifles* when placed in Contrast with the *immortal* Blessings of the Gospel; and therefore the *Business* and *Design* of the *Ministry* is incomparably more *benevolent*, *noble* and *delightful*. To be the *Messenger* of *everlasting Salvation* to Millions of perishing Immortals; to be the *Herald* of the *Most High*, to proclaim RECONCILIATION! RECONCILIATION! to a rebel World, devoted to universal Ruin; to *bear the happy Tidings* of Pardon and Life to the numerous *Gentile Nations*, who had long lain in a stupid *Neglect* of the Concerns of Eternity; or anxiously enquired with *Balak*, (but to little purpose, for
Want

Εὐαγγέλιον signifies *Good News*; and so the *Name* is a concise Definition of the *Thing*. To *testifie*, is too languid a Word to convey the *Emphasis* of διαμαρτυρασαι. Pastor renders διαμαρτυρομαι etiam atque etiam obtestor, valde testor. It is used to signify the *passionate Vehemence* and *clear Reasoning* with which *St. Paul* demonstrated that *Jesus* was the *Messiah*, at *Corinth*, when in a *peculiar Agony* of pious *Zeal*. (Acts 18. 5.) Sometimes it signifies to *adjure*, or *charge* with the *Solemnity* of an *Oath*. So it is rendered 1 Tim. 5. 21. By this Verb the LXX translate the Heb. הִגִּיד *Heguid* which sometimes signifies to *give Warning*, (Jer. 6. 10.) sometimes *solemnly to protest*, (Gen. 43. 3.) and sometimes to *witness* and *confirm*. (Jer. 32. 25. Exod. 21. 19.) In all these senses it may be here understood; and emphatically point out the *Manner* in which the Gospel should be preached.

Mic. 6. 6. Want of farther Information) *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? &c.* and to be honoured with this Employ, *not by the bye or upon particular Occasions; but statedly as the principal, the only Business of Life; while Persons in other Stations are obliged, even in Duty, to spend the greater Part of their Time about their secular affairs; how distinguishing an Honour is such an Office. How vehement must be the Zeal of a Soul inspired with such benevolent Sentiments as St. Paul's, to perform a Work of such extensive Beneficence. And what refined generous Pleasure must intermingle with and lighten all the oppressive Labours attending it!—Especially when*

He was invested with this beneficent Office by so endeared a Person as the Lord Jesus. This he mentions with *delightful Emphasis*—that merciful Jesus, who seized me by his Grace, in the furious Career of my persecuting Zeal; who struck me down a humble Suppliant at His Feet, with an *almighty Exposition, Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?* instead of striking me to Hell with *the Thunder of His Power;*—that condescending Jesus, who raised a prostrate Rebel, formed him into a *chosen Vessel, to bear His Name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel;* and gave him the Honour of *suffering great Things for his Name's Sake:*—that compassionate Jesus, the sincere Friend of *Publicans and Sinners,* who cheerfully laboured thro' all the Difficulties of the ministerial Office with which he has honoured me

Act. 9. 5.
Joh. 26.
14.

Act. 9. 15,
16.

I will not live to myself, nor die to myself; Rom. 14. but whether I live, I will live unto my Lord; 7, 8. and whether I die, I will die unto my Lord; Phil. 1. 20. that he may be magnified in my body, whether it be by Life, or by Death.

I have been the more full, My Brethren, in representing to you the excellent Spirit of St. Paul, as discovered in my Text, because I think it peculiarly instructive, moving, and imitable; oh! that it may animate all of the sacred Character!—I am now ready to consider some of the principal Subjects, adapted to this Occasion, which the Text suggests to us: particularly I shall,

I. Show what is implied in the great Design and Business of the Ministerial Office, “TESTIFYING THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD.”

II. Shew what is implied in “FINISHING THE MINISTRY.”

III. Point out “THE PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTIES,” that usually attend the faithful Discharge of it. And

IV. Shew that “THE JOY RESULTING AT LAST from the faithful Discharge of it, is a sufficient Encouragement to break thro’ all the Difficulties attending it.

I. I am to shew You, What is implied in the great Design and Business of the ministerial Office,

Office, "TESTIFYING THE GOSPEL OF THE
"GRACE OF GOD."

It is evident at first sight, that it implies,
"That the Ministers of the Gospel should
"principally insist on those Doctrines
"that are purely evangelical, or pecu-
"liar to the Gospel, in such a Manner
"as tends to display the rich and free
"Grace of GOD, and advance its Ho-
"nour."

The Substance of evangelical Doctrines is
contained in that apostolic Definition, to wit,
That GOD was in Christ reconciling the world
2 Cor. 5. unto Himself, not imputing their Trespases unto
19. them. And therefore all our Ministrations
must center and terminate in the mediatorial
Scheme of Reconciliation.

We must indeed at proper Seasons, and in
a suitable Proportion, explain and inculcate
the great Truths and Duties of Natural Reli-
gion and Morality, as suggested by the Light
of Reason, and more fully and clearly disco-
vered by supernatural Revelation, in the Sacred
Writings; for these are not excluded in the
System of the Gospel, but supposed and perfected
by it. But the Knowledge of these alone is not
sufficient to restore a guilty World into the
divine Favours, and form them for a holy and
happy Immortality: Otherwise the Religion
of Jesus had been a Superfluity. If any of
Gál. 2. the apostate Sons of Adam could obtain Right-
21. eousness by the Deeds of the Law of Nature,
then

Natural Religion should be seasonably, but not principally insisted on; 15

then *Christ is dead in vain*: and if any of Gal.2.21. them seek to be justified by this Law, *Christ is become of no Effect to them; they are fallen from Grace.* This is as true with Respect to the Law of Nature, as the Law of Moses, concerning which it is directly asserted: for the moral Law being a principal Part of the latter, the former must be included in it. We must therefore lead you farther than the Doctrines and Duties of *Natural Religion and Morality*, if we would conduct you to everlasting Life, and approve ourselves *Ministers of the New Testament*, and not *Heathen Mor-* 2Cor,3.6. *lists.*— Besides; you do not equally need our Instructions upon these Points; for they are written upon your Hearts, and suggested to you by your *natural Reason*; so that you may obtain a competent Knowledge of them with much more *Ease* and Readiness. But the glorious *Peculiarities of the Gospel*, are Matters of pure *supernatural Revelation*; Matters which *unassisted Reason*, in our present degenerate state, could not so much as form any probable *Conjectures* about: nay, till divinely illuminated, it mistakes them for *Foolishness* 1Cor.1.18 and *Nonsense.* *Flesh and Blood*, and all the Powers of Nature cannot reveal these deep Things of GOD. Hence the Gospel is so often called a *Mystery*; a *Mystery which hath been hid from Ages and Generations*; Eph. 1. 9. a *mystic Wisdom*, which none of the Princes of this World knew. In this sense are these

E Words

16 *Because our Reason helps to the Knowledge of it,
not of the Gospel.*

Col. 2. 2. Words to be understood as quoted by the
—4. 3. Apostle, tho' often beautifully accommoda-
Mat. 13. ted to another Purpose, "Eye hath not
11. "seen, nor Ear heard, neither have enter-
1Cor. 4. 1. "ed into the Heart of Man, the Things
Col. 12. 6. "which GOD hath prepared for them that
1Cor. 2. 7. "love Him." Hence you stand in need of
8, 9. much more frequent and clear Instructions
in the supernatural Doctrines peculiar to
Christianity, than in those of natural Religi-
on; as the Light of Nature conducts you in-
to the Knowledge of the one, but not of the
other; and therefore we must insist princi-
pally upon these evangelical Subjects.

We must expose, in all its naked Deformi-
ty and Horror, the universal Depravity of
Mankind, and their Liableness to the divine
Displeasure. A Conviction very unacceptable
to a self-flattering World; but absolutely ne-
cessary to bring them to a suitable sense of
their extreme Need of the mediatorial Scheme
of Salvation; without which they can never
comply with it. They that conceit themselves
well, will not make Application to a Physician.
Mat. 9 12. Prodigals must find themselves ready to perish,
Luke 15 before they will think in earnest of a Return
27. to their Father's House. The Redeemer's
beneficent Design into this guilty World,
was not to deal with Innocents, of which there
are none among the Sons of Men; or with
self-righteous Creatures, and imaginary Per-
fectionists; who, while such, cannot possibly
entertain Him in His mediatorial Character:
but

but His Business is, to *heal the broken-heart*. Luke 4. 18
ed, to *set at Liberty them that are bruised* Isa. 61. 2.
under the heavy Load of Guilt and Cor- Matt. 11.
ruption; to *comfort all that mourn* in ingenu- 28.
ous Repentance; and to *give Rest to the*
Weary and heavy laden. These are the Cha-
racters of such as are the *prepared immediate*
Objects of His Mediation; and such alone
will give him a *suitable Reception* as a Savi-
our. But that general, *superficial Conviction*
that *they are Sinners*, which Conscience *for-*
ces upon the most of Mankind, and which
they often entertain and express with serene
Stupidity and trifling *Levity*, is not sufficient
to render them *such*: it must be a *particular*
impressive, heart-affecting Conviction. And
to produce such a Conviction, the Ministers of
Jesus must *flush* upon the minds of a secure
World the disagreeable Evidences of their
Guilt, their *Corruption and Danger*. We must
cry aloud, and not spare; we must *lift up*
our Voices like a Trumpet, to shew Men their Isa. 28. 1:
Transgressions and Sins.—We must alarm
them with an impartial View of the *state in*
which they now enter into the World; that they
were shapen in Iniquity, and conceived in sin: P.
that as they are *born of the Flesh, they are* 1. 51. 5:
but Flesh; that is, (as the Term generally John 3. 8:
signifies in the Language of the New Testa-
ment) *degenerate and corrupt*; and that in
their *Flesh there dwelleth no good Thing*: that Rom. 7.
they are all by Nature *Children of Wrath*; as 18
by the *Disobedience of Adam*, their common Eph. 2. 3
Father and federal Representative, they were
all

Rom. 5. *all judiciously constituted* * Sinners; and by
 18.—19. *his Offence Judgment came upon them all to
 Condemnation.*—But we must especially labour to convict them of their *actual Sins*, and the *inherent* habitual *Wickedness* of their Hearts. And *this* can admit of *no reasonable Debate*; as Nothing but the grossest Ignorance or Self-flattery can hinder their *confessing Guilt*. There we may easily put them upon the *Rack* of irresistible *Evidence*, and *extort a Confession* from the most Reserved and Reluctant. A common Auditory may soon be bewildered and lost in the Intricacies of the Controversy about *Original Sin*; as the *Sick* may be easily *puzzled* to give an Account *how* they contracted their Disorder. But alas! that we *are in fact degenerate*; that we *are in fact* indisposed; and even averse to Holiness, and prone to Evil, is as evident, as that there is such a Disease as a *Fever*, or a *Consumption*, incident to the human Body. This is not an *abstract Speculation*, or a *precarious Hypothesis* not founded upon *Facts*; but it is a Matter of *Sensation* and *daily Experience*, as really as any *bodily Disease*. Turn your Eyes *inward*, my Brethren, upon the natural Temper of your Hearts; turn them *backward* on your past life; look *round* you on the Conduct of the World; sure you *must* see the melancholly Symptoms of the universal Corruption of Mankind in their present Race. Corrupt you *are in fact*, however you *became* so: And

I

* καταστάθησαν αμαρτολοι,

I would advise you, rather to exert yourselves for the *Reparation* of your Nature, which now *certainly* lies in Ruins, than to be *perplexing* yourselves and others, and flinging injurious *Reflections* upon the great GOD, upon the Account of that *Constitution*, which was undoubtedly *just, wise and good*, by the Violation of which this dreadful *Consequence* has followed: and do not, like *Ahab*, hate the Messengers of God, because they prophecy *no Good*, while you are in your natural State, but only *Evil*. If you would receive spiritual Benefit by our Ministry, suffer us honestly to tell you that you are justly called *Transgressors from the Womb*; that you are *estranged from God and Holiness, from the Womb, and went astray as soon as you were born, speaking Lies*, or committing some other Iniquity, as soon as you were capable of acting: that every *Imagination of the Thoughts of your Heart has been only evil, and that continually from your Youth up*: that while unregenerate, you are *Haters of GOD*: that your *Minds while carnal, or the natural Relish of your Flesh,* is Enmity against Him*; and that you have shewn yourselves His *Enemies by wicked Works*: that you are *willingly ignorant of Him*; do not like to retain Him in your *Knowledge*; but practically say unto the Almighty, "*Depart from us; we desire not the Knowledge of Thy Ways*:" in short, that there is none *Righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth; there is none that*

seeketh

1 Kings
22. 8.

Isa. 48. 8.

Pf. 58. 3-

Gen. 6.5.

—8.21.

Rom.1.30

—8. 7.

Col.1.21.

2 Pet.3.5.

Rom1.28.

Job21.14.

* το φρονημα της σαρκος

20 *Ministers should preach the preceptive Part of the Law.*

Pl. 14.2. *seeketh after GOD: they are all gone out of Rom. 3.10. the Way; they are altogether become filthy and v. 11 18. unprofitable; there is none that doeth Good, no — 9. not one.—there is no Fear of God before their — 9 Eyes. Thus we must prove, after the apostolic Example, that Jews and Gentiles are all — 19 under Sin; that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World convicted as guilty before GOD.*

And for this End, we must preach the divine Law; for by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.— The Precepts of it must be represented in their — 3. 20. eternal Obligations, their Extent and Spirituality, and closely applied to the Conscience: for it Rom. 7. is only by a close Application of this eternal 7, 14. Rule of Righteousness, that Sinners can be convinced of their Aberrations from it, and especially of the secret Lustings of Sin in their Hearts— We must also display the penal Sanction of the Law, in all its Terrors, to alarm them with a sense of their dreadful Danger, and — 4. 15. the destructive Consequences of their Breaches of the Precept: for the Law in this View wrketh Wrath; i. e. a sense of Divine Wrath. We must ring that shocking Peal of Gal 3.10. the Thunder of Sinai in their Ears, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them.* We must reveal the Wrath of GOD Rom. 1. 18. from Heaven against all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness; and proclaim Tribulation and Wrath, Indignation and anguish against every — 2. 8, 9. Soul of Man that doth Evil. We must point up to the thickening Clouds of divine Vengeance,

ance, gathering over their Heads, ready to burst upon them in Volleys of destructive Thunder; and *point down* to the burning Gulph below, yawning tremendous to swallow them.

And now we may suppose *the Sinners in Zion afraid; Fearfulness surprizes the Hypocrites.* Now the thoughtless *Impenitent*, who hitherto *dreamed* away his Life in carnal Security and delusive Hopes, anxiously enquires, *What shall I do to be saved?* Now his *Hopes* and *Fears* are alarmed, and inspire him with *Earnestness* unknown before in his religious Endeavours. He forsakes his vicious Practices; he renounces the Society of Profligates and Triflers; he reads and hears with eager Attention and deep Solicitude; he becomes solemn and serious; and *behold he prayeth!* he exerts all his Vigour in earnest Importunities for Mercy.—All this is his *Duty*; and it is only in the *Use* of such Means that he has any ground to *expect* the Divine Mercy. But *still* there is *Danger*; a *Danger* of a *different* Kind than formerly. *Formerly* he was in *Danger* of perishing by the *Neglect* of the Duties of Religion; but *now* by a *proud Confidence* in the Performance of them; and this is a *more pernicious*, because a *more plausible* Ground of Hope. While he goes about to *establish his own Righteousness*, he will not submit himself to the *Righteousness of GOD*; and tho' from this legal Principle, he may earnestly follow after *Righteousness*; he never

Isa. 33. 14

Act. 2. 37.
—16. 30.

—191.

Rom. 10.
3.

—9. 31.

22 *The awakened Sinner in Danger of Self-Righteousness.*

Rom. 10. ver can obtain it, because he seeks it not by
32. Faith, but as it were by the Deeds of the Law.
St. Paul was so sensible how dangerous and
plausible a Mistake this is, that he wrote *two*
whole Epistles principally with a View to ex-
pose it, viz. those to the *Romans* and *Gala-*
tians.

Therefore, in this Juncture, when the Sin-
ner is *congratulating* himself upon his happy
Reformation, and just ready to relapse into
Security, thro' a self-flattering Presumption of
the Safety of his present Condition, the Mini-
sters of *Jesus* must *surprize* him with unex-
pected Alarms of his *continued Danger*. We
must pursue him with the Conviction of his
utter Inability to relieve himself; and of the
Insufficiency of his best Endeavours to make
Atonement for his Sin, to procure him a Title to
the heavenly Inheritance, to render him meet
for it, or to purchase Divine Grace for these
Purposes; and consequently that he is *not yet*
safe, till he obtain a special Interest in the
Righteousness of *Christ*, by a genuine Com-
pliance with the Terms of the Gospel. He
must be informed, that he must *win Christ*,
and be found in *Him*, not having his own
Righteousness, but the Righteousness of *Christ*
alone; that for the Sake of this, he must
count all Things but Less, his own Righteous-
nesses as filthy Rags, and put no Confidence
in the *Flesh*. We must labour to bring
down his haughty Heart to admit the mort-
tying

Col. 1. 1

Phil. 3. 9.

8

3

Isa. 64. 6.

*Must be convinced of its Insufficiency, and brought to 23
trust in Christ's.*

mortifying Conviction, that he has destroyed Hof. 13. 9.
himself, and that in GOD alone is his Help;
that Jesus is the only Way into the Divine Joh. 14. 6.
Favour, and that no Man can come to the
Father but by him; that there is no Salvation Act. 4. 12.
in any other; for there is no other Name un-
der Heaven given among Men, whereby we
must be saved; and consequently; that all
the self-righteous Measures of the awakened
Sinner to save himself, are utterly vain—
Thus we must, according to the Apostle's
emphatical expression, SHUT HIM UP to the
Faith, as the only Method of Salvation, and
leave him no other Refuge. Gal. 3. 23.

And when we have reduced him to this hap-
py, dreadful Dilemma, that he must either
submit to Christ, or irrecoverably perish, let us
exhibit the Almighty Redeemer full to his View,
in the Medium of Gospel Light. Let us preach
Remission of Sins thro' His Name to Sinners
of the first Magnitude, to Sinners of Jerusa- Luke 24.
lem—Let us display the infinite Dignity of His 47.
Divinity, the perfect Innocence of His Huma-
nity; and the compleat Sufficiency of the O-
bedience to the Precept and Penalty of the
Law, yielded by an IMMANUEL, an incar-
nate GOD, as the Surety of believing Peni-
tents—Let us melt all their mourning
Passions (with the deep Tragedy of His suf-
ferings, and cheer them by Turns with a
View of their gracious Design. Let us
exhibit Him to a wondering World strug-
gling thro' all the Difficulties of three and

F

thirty

Zech. 13. 7

thirty Year's Labour, Temptations, Poverty Ignominy and Persecution. Let us lead them trembling and aghast to *Gethsemane*, to survey the *Man that is GOD's Fellow*, solitary and sad beneath the Gloom of Midnight, prostrate on the cold Ground, groaning out the ardent, but *submissive Deprecations* of His innocent, yet *passible Humanity*; agonizing under the Burden that forced a preternatural Sweat of clotted Gore thro' all the Pores of His sacred Body: and all this He endured to answer the rigid Demands of Justice, to propitiate an incensed Deity, and heave the Mountain from a sinking World.* For *this* beneficent End, He patiently submitted Himself a Victim to the confederate Rage of Earth and Hell. For *this*, He permitted a Crew of feeble Malignants to bind his *almighty Hands*, which could have commanded the Artillery of Heaven to his Rescue; and to lead Him *like a Lamb to the slaughter*. For *this* He endured the Pain and Indignity of *cruel Mockings*, of the Scourge, of the crown of Thorns, of Buffeting and Spitting. For *this*, His Hands, so often employed to extend Blessings to an ungrateful World; and His Feet, so swift to Beneficence, were torn and mangled with cruel Nails; and all His Frame racked upon the accursed Tree. For *this*, He suffered all the peculiar Tortures of Crucifixion: and oh! for *this* He felt the Eclipse of

Isa. 53. 7.

of

* "Oh what a Groan was there! A Groan, not His. He seized *our* dreadful Right; *our* Load sustain'd; And heav'd the Mountain from a guilty World. A thousand Worlds so bought, were bought *too Dear*."

Night Thoughts. No. 4.

of his Father's Face; which, notwithstanding His *invincible* Patience till then, extorted from Him that loud, lamenting, expostulatory Cry, which extinguished the Sun, rent the Rocks, struck the Earth with a Panic, and cast universal Nature into a trembling Con-
 sternation; *My God! my God! Why hast Thou forsaken Me!*—To this agonizing, Redeemer, the great *Anti-Type* of the *brazen Serpent*, hanging conspicuous on the Cross, we must point; that a dying World may look unto Him, and be saved. We must direct their Eyes to Him, *lifted up from the Earth*, as the resistless *Magnet to draw all Men to Him*—The *Meritorious Cause* of His sufferings must also be particularly explained; that *He was wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities*; and that the Lord made the *Iniquities of all His People to center upon Him*; that He suffered the *Curse of the Law to redeem us* from it; and was *cut off, not for himself but for us*: in short, that he suffered as our *Surety, in our Stead*, to make *Satisfaction* for our Sins.—By the frequent Inculcation of this, Sinners, even in our Age, may be brought to *mourn for Him* as one whom *THEY have pierced*; and instead of transferring all the Guilt of His Murder upon the *Jews*, to turn *Self Accusers*, and cry out, *We are very guilty concerning our Saviour*. This will also help them to conceive of the *Method* in which they may obtain an *Interest* in the Merit of His Suffering, viz. by *legal Imputation*. They may be made the *Righteousness of God in him*, in the same manner

Mat. 27.
46.

Joh. 3. 14

Isa. 45. 22

John 12.
32.

Isa. 53. 5.
6

Gal. 3. 13.
Dan. 9. 26.

Zech. 12.
10.

Gen. 42.
21.

2Cor. 10.
21.

F 2

that

that *He was made Sin for them.* And as *their Guilt* was charged to *His Account*, and *He* suffered for it, as tho' it had been *His own*, so *His Righteousness* may be imputed to *them*, and they justified and saved by it, as tho' it was *their own*.

This naturally introduces the joyful Tidings, that *GOD is reconcilable*, that *He is well pleased for His Righteousness Sake*, who hath magnified the Law and made it honourable: that now *He can illustrate His Justice*, in justifying all that believe in *Jesus*: and therefore that *whosoever believe in him*, without Exception of the most abandoned Sinner, shall not perish, but have everlasting Life—

We must also represent the *Willingness* of the gracious Redeemer to receive returning Penitents. A sense of Guilt is naturally *timorous*, and casts the *Presumptuous and Confident* into trembling *Diffidence* and *Despondency*. We must therefore *encourage* their Applications to Him by the *Meekness and Gentleness of Christ*; and allay their anxious Fears with the gracious Assurance of His own blessed Lips, that *him that cometh unto Him*, *He will in no wise cast out*. We must lay open the *Tenderness of His Heart*, the *sounding of His Bowels*, and *His Mercies towards them*. And when they begin to bemoan themselves, in penitent Strains, we must represent Him as *ecchoing back their Complaints* in the tenderest strains of paternal affection; *Is not the mourning Penitent my Son, my dear*

dear Son? Is he not a pleasant Child? for Jer.31.18. since I spake against him, I do earnestly re-
 member him still: therefore my Bowels are
 troubled for him; I will surely have Mercy
 upon him, saith the Lord. The anxious Sin-
 ner, now under the Influence of a self-
 righteous Spirit, must be relieved from his
 fruitless Toil, in working out a Righteousness
 of his own, to ingratiate him with the Re-
 deemer; and this endearing, evangelical Truth,
 the only Support of desponding Souls in e-
 very Age, must be inculcated upon him,
 That Christ does not expect that he should
 come to Him recommended with a Righte-
 ousness of his own, but is ready to receive
 him miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,
 and that a hearty Willingness to receive Him
 freely, as a Saviour, according to the terms of
 the Gospel, without Money and without Price,
 is the only Prerequisite to obtain an Interest
 in Him.

Rev. 3.17.
 —22.17.

This will immediately lead us to the delight-
 ful Exercise of the Ministry of Reconciliation,
 in beseeching Sinners, in Christ's stead, to be
 reconciled to GOD. This will naturally in-
 troduce the Inculcation of Faith in Christ,
 as the grand Condition of the Gospel. This
 the Gospel insists upon above all other Things,
 as the Root of all living Religion; because all
 the other Parts will naturally grow from it.
 This was the principal Subject the Apostles
 insisted upon, testifying to the Jews, and al-
 so to the Greeks, Repentance towards GOD,
 and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.
 This

2 Cor. 5.
 19, 20.

Acts 20.
 21.

This Answer was always Ready upon their Tongues, as the most pertinent to all Enquirers after Salvation, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. And to this their Commission led them; Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature; i. e. Declare to them, that he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned—

'Tis true, there might be some Peculiarities in the Mode and Design of preaching Faith in Christ, in the apostolic Age, which cannot be practised and intended in the same Latitude, in our Age and Country. The Jews in general did not believe in Christ as the Messiah; and the unhappy Gentiles had no previous Knowledge of Him. It was therefore necessary to demonstrate His divine Mission at large, and to overcome their ignorant Prejudices with resistless Evidence, that they might yield a rational Faith to it. And tho' it may be expedient, even among us, to reason at Proper Seasons, upon this fundamental Article of the Christian religion; especially since the Crew of Deists have been cursed with so much Success in ensnaring Profelytes to their System of modern Heathenism: yet, as it is generally professed and speculatively believed in our Country, it is not necessary to insist as largely upon it now, as in the apostolic Age, when Infidelity was so generally avowed. But the general Profession of Christianity in our Day, does not at all render it needless, to urge Men to believe in Christ, in the principal Sense of saving Faith.

Faith

Faith in Christ, as it was preached by the Apostles, implied *more than a speculative Belief* that Jesus was the *Messiah*: it implied a *cordial submission* to him, and a *humble Trust* in him as the only Saviour, giving him that affectionate and dutiful *Entertainment*, which His *Mediatorial Character* demands from perishing *Sinners*. This was the *principal Idea* included in *Faith* in Christ, even *there*; and in *this Sense* we must *still* exhort Sinners to believe. For without this, their *speculative Belief* of Christ's *divine Mission*, and the *Truth* of Christianity, will be so far from *saving* them, that it will but *aggravate* their *Condemnation*. And no *Fact* can be more notorious, than that *Multitudes* who *profess Christianity*, and yield a *speculative Assent* to this fundamental Article, are far from deserving the Character of *true Believers*, in its *principal Sense*, and full Latitude, as used in the *Gospel**—Let us therefore explain the *Nature*, and urge the *Necessity* of Faith: and let us *exhaust* the rich *Topics* of *Persuasion* to this *great evangelical Duty*, which the *Gospel* furnishes us with; and never desist from our *Importunities*, till we have

* These Hints are intended to expose a strange Notion of the learned and judicious Dr. *Whitby*, espoused by some, that it is absurd and unaccountable "that Ministers in their Sermons should be so zealous to exhort Christians (i. e. the Professors of Christianity) to believe in Christ; and be so full of Motives to persuade them so to do." (See *Whitby's Pref.* to the *Eph.* and to the *Gal.*)---This is no proper Place to discuss the Matter; otherwise this *Form of Preaching* might be proven *proper evangelical* and indeed *necessary* to bring Men to a genuine Compliance with the *Gospel*.

have gained this important Point; for if we fail in *this*, all our Labours must be *unsuccessful*; and whatever else we gain, is lost.

Thus from the Representation of the *ruin-Condition* of Mankind in their fallen State, we naturally ascend to open the *glorious Method of recovery thro' Christ*. When we have *preached Repentance towards GOD*, by exposing the universal Corruption of the Unregenerate, and the horrid Deformity and destructive Consequences of Sin; we proceed, by natural Gradation, to *preach Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*.

And by an *equally natural and easy Gradation*, we may proceed from exposing the present *Degeneracy* of human Nature, to shew the *Nature and Necessity of a supernatural Change* of our *innate corrupt Dispositions*, as well as a *Reformation of our Lives*. This Change we still dare to call *Regeneration*, or *the New Birth*, in spite of Contempt; while we are sheltered by divine Authority; and if any of you *cannot understand* this Doctrine, I am *sorry* for you; for all the *Saints* have learned it by *Experience*. *Marvel not that I say unto You, Ye MUST be born again*. You would have *more Reason* to wonder, if any should tell you, that this Change is *needless*; or (which is much the same) if they should *explain it away* into a *meer external Rite*. That Creatures so *corrupt*, so destitute of a delightful Relish for the Exercises of Devotion,

Joh. 3. 7.

on, and so enslaved to imperious Propensities to Sin, should be *capable, without* an entire Change of Heart, of *relishing* the refined Pleasures of *Heaven*, which consist in the Perfection of *Holiness*, and implacable Aversion and compleat *Freedom* from all *Sin*; *this* would be *strange* Doctrine indeed; shocking to *Common Sense*. *This* would be as strange and absurd, as if one should take it in his Head to affirm, that a person *languishing* under a *consumptive Illness*, is capable of the *Labours* and *Fatigues* of active Life; or that one whose *Taste* is entirely *vitiated* by *sickness*, can *relish* the *Entertainments* of a *sumptuous Feast*, without any *Alteration* in his *Habit of Body*. But it requires *no laboured Demonstration* to *Common Sense*, that our *Disaffection* to *Holiness* must be *subdued*, before we can enjoy a *whole Heaven* of *Happiness* in the *Perfection* of it; and that our natural *Love to Sin* must be *extinguished*, and the strongest *Aversion* to it *enflamed*, before we can count it the highest *Privilege* to be *free* from it; in short, that our *innate Dispositions* must be *entirely changed*, and made *quite the Reverse* of what they are by *Nature*. No *superficial external Amendment* is *sufficient* for this; much less a *meer outward Rite*, which tho' of *divine Appointment*, has not *heart-changing Grace* *inseparably* annexed to it. It is therefore *astonishing*, that the *Nature* of the Thing, our own *Experience* and *Observation*, and the plain *Descriptions* of this Change in the *Sacred Scriptures*, have not yet banished the *Fiction* of *Baptismal*

mal Regeneration from the Churches.* But alas! it is hard to rectify the mistaken Notions of Men about this important Point; and therefore Ministers must frequently and largely insist upon it. We must solemnly assure our Hearers, that except they are born again

Joh. 3. 3. of the Spirit, they cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: that if any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature; old Things are passed away; and behold, all things are become new: that in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth

* I freely own that some great and good Divines have affected this Manner of Speaking, and contended that Regeneration in the Scripture Sense, may be properly predicated concerning all that are baptized, whatever their moral Character be. But then they grant, under other Terms, the Necessity of that Change of Heart, which others chuse to call Regeneration. founded upon their Exposition of John 3. 5. the one of Water; the other of the Spirit; and frankly confess the Insufficiency of the former without the latter. When they thus explain themselves, they cannot be charged with false Doctrine, but only with an Impropriety in Language. And a very gross and ensnaring Impropriety, I humbly conceive, it is: for (as the candid and judicious Dr. Doddridge, a Favourite of all Denominations, well observes) “ they who vigorously contend for this Manner of speaking, (for after all it is but a Dispute about a Word) acknowledge expressly, that a Man may be saved without what they call Regeneration, and that he may perish with it. And tho’ Persons are taught to speak of their State in Consequence of Baptism, in very high, and I fear, dangerous Terms; it evidently appears, that many of whom they are used, are so in a State of Salvation, as to be daily obnoxious to Damnation; so the Children of God, as also to be the Children of the Devil; and so Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven, as to be Children of Wrath, and on the Brink of Hell. Serm. on Regen. page 18.

vaieth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but the new Creature; i. e. (as these Terms generally signifie in the apostolic Writings) a Conformity to the Rites and Externals of the Jewish or Christian Religion, does not avail any Thing to Salvation, without such an Infusion of new supernatural Dispositions, as may not improperly be called a new Creation. We must flash upon reluctant. Minds the unwelcome Conviction, that till they are thus renewed in the Spirit of their Minds, and endowed with gracious principles of Action, their best works are not truly and formally good, and cannot procure the divine Acceptance; that while they are in the Flesh, i. e. in their natural State, they cannot please Him: that we cannot walk in good Works, till we are His Workmanship created in Christ Jesus to them; that a new Heart must be given us, and a new Spirit put within us, before we can keep the statutes of God, and do them: 26.

Or, in the memorable Words of the 13th Article of the Church of England, That "Works done before the Grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of His Spirit, are not pleasing to GOD; for as much as they do not spring from Faith in Jesus Christ: neither do they make Men meet to receive Grace.—And because they are not done as GOD hath commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin."—The Graces of Christianity, and even the refined Virtues of Morality will not grow and flourish in the unfriendly Soil

Eph.4.28

Rom.1.8.

Eph.2.10

Ezek. 36. 26.

of an *unregenerate* Heart: and therefore we must inculcate *regeneration* as the *Foundati-*
 Mat. 12. *on* of all practical Religion: for the *Tree* must
 33. be *made good*, before the *Fruit* can be *so*.
 And it is because *this Method* is not generally taken to reform the World, that *Vice flourish-*
es like a luxuriant Weed, and *Religion with-*
ers like a tender Plant in an unnatural Soil.

But this *Renovation* of the whole Man is so difficult a Work, that it is *entirely beyond* the *Power* of *degenerate* human Nature. We set Sinners upon a *desperate* Attempt, when we urge them to *create themselves anew* in their own strength: and however well pleased they may be with a *self begotten* Religion, and however much they may idolize the *Work of their own Hands*; it is far short of that *supernatural, Heaven-born* Religion, which will *grow up* and ripen into eternal Glory. We must therefore *lead them to the Holy Spirit*, as the great *Fountain* of divine *Influences* for the *Reparation* of their ruined Nature. We must inform them, that they
 2Cor. 3. 5. *are not sufficient of themselves to think any*
 Joh. 15. 3. *Thing as of themselves; but that their Suf-*
 Phil. 1. 13 *ficiency is of GOD: that without Him they*
can do nothing; but that they can do all
 Joh. 3. 3, *Things thro' Christ strengthening them: that*
 4, 1, 12 13. *to be born again, is to be born of the Spirit;*
and that when they become the Sons of GOD,
they are born not of Blood, nor of the Will
of the Flesh, nor of the will of Man, but of
 GOD:

GOD: that all the Graces of Christianity must be wrought in them by *divine Agency*: that all the Prospect of their *Repenting* in an evangelical Manner, depends upon the happy *Peradventure* that GOD will give them *Repentance*; and all their Encouragement to hope for it, results from Christ's being *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to bestow it*: that *Faith* also is the *Gift of GOD*, and not of themselves; that it is of the *Operation of God*, and an illustrious *Exploit of His exceeding great and mighty power*; that it is He that *circumcises our Hearts to love Him*: and *sheds abroad His Love in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost*: that it is He that not only *begins a good Work* in us, but must *perform it unto the Day of Christ*, if ever it be brought to *Perfection*: In short; that our only Encouragement to *work out our Salvation* is this, that it is *GOD who worketh in us both to Will and to Do*; and that the *working our Hearts into Fitness for the heavenly Mansions*, is a *Work that becomes a God*, and requires the *Exertion of His almighty Power*. We must therefore daily make the most importunate Applications to Him, for the Influence of His Spirit to *help our Infirmities*, and to *work all our works in us*. And He has given us Reason humbly to hope that our Importunities shall prevail; for thus the Blessed *Jesus* condescends to reason from the Principle of *paternal Affection* still remaining in the human Breast, amid the Ruins of our *Apostacy*: *If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will*

1 Tim. 2.
16.

Act. 5. 31.
Eph. 2. 8.
Col. 2. 12.
Eph. 1. 19
20.
Dcut. 30.
6.

Rom. 5. 5.

Phl. 1. 6.

2. 12, 12.

2Cor. 5. 5.

Rom 8. 29
Isa. 26. 12,

Luke 11. will he give him a stone?—If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

By the Inculcation of the great Truths of the Gospel in this Order and Connection, we may humbly expect, thro' the divine Blessing upon our Ministry, that *some unthinking Creatures will be made truly Religious.* And then our next Care must be, to *root and build them up in Christ, and establish them in the Faith; and to promote their Growth in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*—Here, I must pass over the great Variety of proper Measures for this Purpose prescribed in the Sacred Writings, and only hint at one or two Things.

Let us *adapt our Discourses to the various Cases of the Saints; as rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of GOD, or trembling and perplexed with Jealousies and Fears: as growing in Grace, or as languishing under Spiritual Relapses and Decays.* Let us delineate what is generally distinguished by the Name of *Experimental Religion*; and insist much upon the *various Exercises* of pious Souls. Let us not think it beneath us, to endeavour to remove their *Scruples* and rectify their Mistakes, however *causeless* and *absurd* some of them may be. The most *Learned* and *Rational* among us stand in need of the like *Condescension* from
our

our divine *Prophet*, and therefore we should not disdain to shew it to the *weakest* of His Disciples under our Tuition. Discourses of this strain may be deemed the *Cant of Fanaticism*, by Proud *Wits* and affected *Rationalists*; and we may be censured as mistaking the *Whims* of a *melancholy Imagination* for serious *Cases of Conscience*: but *such* Discourses are most agreeable and useful to the *Generality* of sincere *Christians*, who are tenderly exercised about divine Things: and the *Few* who are so happy as to be raised above these *little Scruples* and *Perplexities* of weaker Minds, by larger natural Capacities, and superior Degrees of supernatural Illumination, will readily pardon, or rather approve our *Condescension* to the feeble *Lambs* of Christ's Flock.

Joh. 21. 15
Isa. 40. 11.

Finally; Let us urge them that have believed in GOD, to be careful to maintain good Works.

Tit. 3. 8,
11.

Let us guard them against turning the Grace of GOD into Lasciviousness, and sinning that Grace may abound. Let us teach them, that

Jude v. 4.
Rom. 6. 1.

their being under Grace is so far from giving them Encouragement in Sin, that it is the strongest Reason possible why it should not have Dominion over them. Let us assure

----- 14.

them, that the same Grace which bringeth Salvation to them, does also teach them to deny Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live righteously, soberly and godly in the World.

Tit. 2. 12.
----- 13.

And when we inculcate the Duties of Religion and Morality, let us do it in an evangelical Manner, as Ministers of the New Testament, and

and not as *Heathen Moralists*. Let us inculcate them with a *direct Reference to Jesus*, and the *mediatorial Scheme*, as the only *Source* of our *strength* to perform them, and the only *Ground* of their *Acceptance* with GOD.

This is a brief *Summary* of the *Gospel of the Grace of GOD*: And when we make *these Doctrines* the *principal Subjects* of our *Sermons*, then *we testify the Gospel* in such a manner as tends to *illustrate the Grace of GOD*.— These *humble Doctrines* are indeed disagreeable to the *modern Taste*, and not very fashionable in some Places. *This Foolishness of Preaching* is deemed the *Reverse of Enthusiasm*; a sordid Entertainment, at best fit but for the unpolished *Vulgar*. These *glorious Peculiarities of the Religion of Jesus*, in their primitive simplicity, are *nauseated*; and languid *Harangues* upon *moral Virtue*, or ingenious *Dissertations*, or various *Speculations*, *usurp their Place*. But these *humble neglected Doctrines of the Cross* will be found, in the Issue, the *only successful Expedient* to recover the apostate Sons of Men to real Holiness, and the Favour of GOD: and *after that the Wisdom of the World* with all its most vigorous and ingenious Efforts, has *toiled in vain* to reform Mankind, it *pleases GOD by this Foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe*. These *almighty Doctrines* were the *Weapons* with which the Apostles demolished the *strong Holds of Satan* and brought the Nations into a willing Captivity to the *Obedience of Christ*. And *thee Doctrines*

Doctrines without the *modern Refinements*, or rather *Adulterations*, are still crowned with *Success*, and sealed by the Holy Spirit as genuine and true, wherever they are preached in their *original Purity*: And let us rather be counted *Fools for Christ's Sake*, than affect to be in the *Mode*, by renouncing them. Let the *Terror* of that apostolic *Imprecation*, repeated with such dreadful *Emphases*, and extended even to the *ministers of Heaven*, deter us from so dangerous a *Compliance* with the *depraved Taste* of the Age; *Tho' we, or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any Man preach any other Gospel unto You, than that which ye have received, let them be accursed.* Let baptized *Jews* among us, if they will, *ask a sign*; and modern *Greeks*, nauseating the humble entertainments of the Gospel, *seek after Wisdom*: We will not *humour* their vitiated Taste; we will *preach Christ crucified*, tho' to the one He should be a *stumbling-Block*, and to the other *Foolishness*. And, Blessed be the Lord God of *Sabbaoth*, He has still left us a small *Remnant under various Denominations*, who will *relish* this Entertainment; for to them that are effectually called, whether *Jews or Greeks*, whether unlearned or learned, however *different* the prejudices of their Education have been, and however *different* their *Sentiments* about the disputable *Circumstantials* of Christianity; to them universally, *Christ is the Power of GOD, and the Wisdom of GOD*. And it is in vain for conceited *human Wisdom*

1 Cor. 4.
18.

Gal. 1:8,
—————9.

2 Cor. 1.
22.

—————23,
Rom. 9.

IIa. 1 9.

1 Cor. 1.
24.

H dom

dom to affect to improve upon the Divine Constitution, or to erect another of its own as better adapted to the End; for the Foolishness of GOD, is wiser than Men, and the Weakness of GOD is stronger than Men.

1 Cor. 1. 25

Having thus pointed out the principal Materials of our public Discourses; I beg your Patience a little longer under this Head while I offer two or three Remarks upon the Manner in which we should preach the Gospel of the Grace of GOD.—Now we should preach.—with “particular Application;—with affectionate Solemnity;”—and with “a peaceable Spirit.”

1. Let us preach the great Doctrines of the Gospel with “a particular Application” to our Hearers, according to their sundry Cases.

The Gospel cannot rationally operate upon the Minds of Men any other Way than by bringing them to the Knowledge of themselves; and it is the great Design of the Ministry to give them this most useful Branch of Knowledge. § But, they cannot discover it themselves, and see it adapted to their Cases in particular. And consequently, Ministers should adapt their Discourses to their respective Cases, and cast them into such a pungent, distinguishing

§ --- Coelo descendit, γωδ: σικυρον.

Figendum et memori tractandum Pectore---. Juv. Sat. 11.

ing Form, as to lay their Hearers under a happy Necessity of applying them to themselves, and seeing their particular Concern in them: 1 Cor. 4.1, Ministers are frequently called Stewards: 2. And we know it belongs to that Office, to Tit. 1.7. distribute to every one in the Family his proper Portion in due Season. And if the Luke 12. Stewards of GOD's House do not rightly divide 42. the Word of Truth, applying to all their Portion, according to their respective Characters, and separating the Holy from the vile, they Jer. 15.9. are Workmen that need to be ashamed, as the 2 Tim. 2. Apostle more than intimates. When we ad- 15. dress our Hearers promiscuously, in abstract, undistinguishing Harangues, they are apt to forget that we are speaking to them; and will hardly reflect upon their own particular, personal Concern in the important Messages we bring; which have an immediate Reference to every Individual, as much as if they were directed to a particular Person by Name. When we do not seasonably intermingle in our Discourses some clear, discriminating Marks, resulting from the Subjects, whereby our Hearers may examine themselves whether they be in the Faith, and discover their real 2 Cor. 13. Characters, they cannot apply the Word to 5. themselves, according to their respective Characters: they cannot appropriate the Directions, the Consolations, or the Terrors, that belong to them as Saints or Sinners. This promiscuous, undistinguishing Method of Preaching is as absurd and pernicious, as if a Steward should scatter various Provisions, before

his Domesticks, and leave it to their *Appetites* what Entertainment to *chuse*, without consulting their Constitutions: Or as if a *Physician* should fling Medicines at *random* among his Patients, without informing them of the Nature of their various Diseases, and directing them to make Applications accordingly. And when we *characterize* Saints and Sinners, let us not do it in a *distant, abstract* Manner, speaking of *some Body in the World*, in the *third Person*, as tho' we were characterizing those that are *absent*, and not our *Hearers present*; otherwise they will hardly reflect that *they* belong to the Class either of *Saints or Sinners*; and so will not *apply to themselves* the Portion of *either*; for it is *astonishing*, and might seem *incredible* to such as have not seen it unhappily confirmed by *Observation*, how *averse* Mankind generally are to *apply* the great Truths of the Gospel to *themselves*, and to hear them as *interested Persons*; as Persons that have the most *intimate, important Concern* in them. To remove this grand Obstruction to the Success of our Ministrations, we must address ourselves to our Hearers in the most *pointed distinguishing* Form. Our Business, My Brethren, is with you, *who hear us*; and therefore do not expect that we should amuse you with the Character of some *vague, indefinite* Individuals, that may be *somewhere in the world*; Our Adresses are directed to you, to you in *particular*; and you are *each of you personally* concerned in them. In this *pointed* Form our great Master, and compleat example was
 went

Luke 6.
27.

wont to address His Hearers; as even a superficial Observer cannot but see, who reads his Discourses recorded by the Evangelists.* Or if any are so *impiously modest* as to think this Mode of Address in the inoffensive *Lamb of GOD* rude and irritating; or conceit themselves too polite to learn true Oratory from Him who formed the Tongue; let them at least condescend to learn it from Demosthenes and Cæcero, whose celebrated Orations owe much of their Life and Energy to this Circumstance, that they are direct, immediate and pointed Addressees to their Auditory. Let us exhibit the distinguishing Characters of Saints and Sinners, in the strongest Light; and earnestly urge our Hearers to examine themselves by them; that they may discover their real Characters, and appropriate to themselves the Consolations or the Terrors that belong to them respectively. And let not an extravagant Charity, which is but ignorant Credulity, mislead us to think this Search needless. Let us not promiscuously compliment them in gross, as tho' they were all sincere Christians; for tho' a Persuasion of this would be inexpressibly pleasing to a benevolent Heart

Exod. 4.
11.

* Many Instances of this might easily be given; but it may suffice here to refer the Reader to the following. Luke 6. 26. to the 27. and 13. 3. Mat 7. 9, 10, 11. and 23. 13. to the 33. In the same Manner did John the Baptist preach. Mat. 3, 8,—10. And St. Paul. Act. 22. 7.

41 *The Marks of Saints and Sinners must be proposed.*

Heart, and ease it from many an *Agony*; yet alas! where is the *select Society*, where the happy *Congregation*, concerning which the most generous *Charity*, under any spiritual or rational *Limitations*, can presume, that

2 Cor. 11. they are *all truly religious*? Let us not fear
2. to insinuate, that we are *jealous over them*
Gal. 4. 11. *with a godly jealousy*; and are afraid, lest
we have bestowed *Labour upon some of them*
in vain. It would indeed be *imprudent* for
us publicly to *particularize* the *Guilty* or
suspected: that we must leave to the *Conscience*,
and must Charge that *Lieutenant-Governour*
of the King of Heaven to be faithful in its *Trust*,
and fix the *Charge* upon the *Guilty*, saying,
like that *honest Prophet* to a mighty King, "*Thou*
2 Sam. 12. *art the Man.*" But we must furnish *Conscience*
7. with *Light* to form a *Judgment*, by exhib-
iting the *general Characters*, and exposing
the dreadful *Doom* of the *Wicked*;—of the
wicked among *our dear Hearers*, as well as
elsewhere. They may indeed rather affect
smooth Things; and this *generous Instance* of
the most *faithful* and *disinterested Friendship*
I sa. 30, 10. may be returned with *angry resentments*. But
we must not *humour* them to their *Ruin*; nor
consult our own *Popularity* more than *Fi-*
delity in the *Discharge* of our *Office*, and ac-
quitting ourselves from the *Blood* of all *Men*.

A ct. 20. 26.

2. Let us preach the Gospel with "*pa-
thetic Earnestness and affectionate Solemnity.*"

• This Particular is intimated. by the emphatical Word
δυναστευομεναι. which (as was observed in a former Note) im-
plies a *pathetic Solemnity*, of Address, like that of *Adjuration*.

To address ourselves to *perishing Immortals*, on the very *Brink of Eternity*, in *cold Blood*; to lull our Hearers *asleep with languid Harangues* upon Matters of *everlasting Consequence* and *infinite Importance*; Matters that might *overwhelm* them with their *tremendous Weight*, transform them into *statues of Attention*, and *awaken* all their most vigorous *Passions*: *this is the most shocking Incongruity in Nature*: *this is inconsistent with the Oration, the Christian, and the Minister of Jesus*. *This gives Umbrage for just suspicion*, that the *Speaker* himself has no *suitable sense* of the *dread Importance* of the Things he is speaking, upon his *own Spirit*; but *amuses* himself and his *Auditory*, with them as *trifling Levities*: and how *little Energy* such *spiritless Discourses* will have upon the *Auditory*, may easily be determined by such as know any thing of *human Nature*.† It is at *least* an *Evidence* that the *Speaker* uses *unnatural Violence* to suppress and conceal the *genuine and vigorous Workings* of his *Heart*, under the *Influence* of such *Solemn and tender subjects*; for *such is the Constitution of human Nature*, that we cannot but *speak in earnest* when we are *in earnest*. A *warm Heart*, under the *almighty Energy* of *divine Things*, will express itself in the very *easy Language* of *Nature*, unless
it

† ————— *Si vis me flere, dolendum est*
Primum ipsi tibi. ————— *Hor. De Art. Poet.*

46 *And this is natural to a Heart duly affected with them.*

it be laid under *violent Restraints* §: and devout *Passions* will adorn our *Delivery* with those *genuine Indications* of affectionate *Concern*, which are so *decent*, so *graceful* in *Christian Orators*; which are the most *powerful Eloquence* to our Hearers; and which *Affectation* and *Grimace* strive to *counterfeit* in vain. *True Politeness* can never require us to *deviate from Nature*, and put on the *Masque* of so *awkward* an *Hypocrisy*, as to *appear* stupidly *calm* and *dispassionate*, when our *Hearts* are all on *Fire*. † I am far from *recommending*

§ *Omnis Motus Animi suum quendam a Natura habet Vultum, et Sonum; et Gestum: totumque Corpus Hominis, et ejus omnis Vultus, omnesque Voces, ut Nervi in Fidibus, ita sonant, ut a Motu Animi sunt pulsae.*—Cic. De Orat.

† Here I am confident the Reader will pardon me if I borrow a few Lines from that *rich Treasury* of pious and majestic Sentiments, *The Night-Thoughts*; written by the celebrated Dr. Young; as good a Judge of *Politeness* and the *true Sublime*, as most that have adorned the *English Nation*. I hope I shall be forgiven also, if I take the Liberty of *transposing* a few Lines, to render the Quotation shorter; and *altering* two or three Words, to adapt to the *Preacher* what was originally applied to the *Post*.

“ O ye cold-hearted frozen Formalists!
Ye *Quietist's* in Homage to the Skies!
Serene! of *soft* Address — is my Discourse
Too turbulent? too passionate? too warm?
Are *Passions*, then, the *Pangs* of the Soul?
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd
To touch Things sacred?—Oh for warmer still!
On Themes like these, 'tis *impious* to be calm;
Passion is *Reason*; *Transport* *Temper*, here.

Shall

commending a *wild fanatical Air*, an irrational passionate *Fury*, or the *frantic Reveries* of Enthusiasm: *these* are extremely *indecent* and *odious* in the Ministers of the Gospel, who are to perform a *reasonable Service*, and to *speak the Words of Truth and Soberness*: Rom. 1. 21. but I would humbly recommend a *solemn* and *Ag. 26. 25.* *servent* Address, *animated* with affectionate *Zeal*, and yet *regulated* with all the *Decorum* Reason prescribes. Ministers should be *burn-* Joh. 5. 35. *ing* as well as *shining Lights*: they should diffuse among their Hearers the *Light* of Knowledge, and the *Fire* of Devotion together; like the Sun, which *illuminates* and *warms at once*, and not like the Stars in the Winter Nights, *clear* and *cold*; nor like Comets glowing *hot*, but *confused* and *eccentric*. The God-like *Solemnity* and affectionate *Earnestness* of Christ's Address, was probably one principal Reason of that honourable Confession extorted from His very Enemies, "*Never Man spake like this Man.*" ---7. 46. On this Account also *the People were struck with Astonishment at His Doctrine*; for He taught them as one having *Authority*, and not
I with

Shall Heaven which gave us *Ardour*, and has shewn
Her own for Man so strongly, not disdain
What smooth *Emollients* in *Theology*,
Recumbent Virtue's downy Doctors preach?—
Devotion, when *lukewarm*, is undevout;
But when it *glows*, its Heat is struck from Heaven."
Night 4.

- Mat. 7. 28 with the *Langour and stupid Air* of the
 ---29. cold-hearted, droning Scribes. In this that
 ardent Preacher St. Paul imitated his Master:
 such was the *affectionate Earnestness* of his
Delivery, that his Enemies seem to have taken
 Occasion from it to insinuate that he was
 2 Cor. 5. *besides himself*, when under the vigorous
 ---13. 14. *Constraints of the Love of Christ*. Under
 such an *awful Impression* of the *Divine Pre-*
sence, with such *tender Concern*, and *grace-*
ful Solemnity, may we command the *Attenti-*
 1 Thes. 2. *on* of our *Auditory*, and *solemnize their*
 4 *Hearts!* May we *speak not as pleasing Men,*
 1 Cor. 2. 4. *but GOD!* May we *speak, not with enticing*
 2 Cor. 2. 17 *Words of Man's Wisdom*, not with *pert thea-*
trical Levities, but as of *Sincerity*, but as
 of *GOD*, in the *Sight of GOD in Christ*, with
Demonstration of the Spirit, and with *Power!*
 ---4. 2. Let us, by a *solemn Manifestation* of the
Truth, commend ourselves to every *Man's*
Conscience, in the *Sight of GOD*, warning
 Col. 1. 28. every *Man*, teaching every *Man in all Wis-*
 Gal. 4. 19. *dom*. May we *travel as in Birth*, with
 Pangs of *zealous Concern*, till *Christ be for-*
 2 Cor. 6. *med in our Hearers*; and let our *mouths*
 11. *be opened unto them*, and our *Hearts be en-*
larged! With all the *Authority and Affecti-*
 1 Thes. 2. *onate Solicitude and tenderness* of a *Father*
 11. towards his *Children*, may we *exhort, and*
comfort, and charge every one of them! Let
 our *Hearts be softened* with such *apostolic*
 Phil. 3. 18. *Tenderness*, that we cannot mention the *Ene-*
mies of the Cross of Christ without *weeping*;
 Act. 20. and that we may *warn every one Night and*
 31. *Day*

We should not bring in personal or party Contests. 49

Day with Tears! And, when we survey *impenitent Sinners*, and denounce their dismal Doom, may our *Hearts melt thro' our Eyes*, with something of that *compassionate Concern*, which dissolved the Heart of our gracious Lord, amid His only *Triumph*, and the *Hosanna's* of the Multitudes, at the View of ungrateful *Jerusalem*, the Den of those savage Murderers, who He knew in a few Days would shed His sacred Blood! Thus it becomes the great Truths of the Gospel to be preached; and when thus preached, they are most likely to make suitable *Impressions* upon the Minds of Men.

Luke 19.

—4, 42.

3. We should preach the Gospel of Peace with "*a peaceable Spirit*," not causelessly introducing *personal or party Contests* into our public Discourses, nor intermingling our own *angry Passions* with those *Controversies*, that are *necessary* for the Vindication of Divine Truths.

It does not become the Servants of that *Master who was called Beel-zebub*, to be *peevish and touchy*, under Calumny, and *excessively tender* of their Characters: and when *self-vindication* is a *Duty*, as sometimes it is, the *Pulpit*, and the precious Hours sacred to *public Worship*, are not a suitable Time and Place for the Purpose. We should *not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord*; and never let our Honour interfere with *His*.

Mat. 19.

25.

2Cor 4.5

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We

We should also disdain to prostitute our noble Office to the sordid Purposes of a *Party*. An *Uniformity* of Sentiments about the *Circumstantials* of Religion, which have been *controverted* by Men, perhaps equally valuable *on both sides*, cannot be expected in the present imperfect State, however desirable it be. Good Men will always be *unanimous* in those Things in which the *Substance* of true Religion consists, *without* out warm Disputes upon them: but all our *Controversies* and Argumentations upon *extra-essential*, and *lesser* Points, will never bring good and wise Men, and much less the *unthinking* Herd of Mankind, to a *perfect Agreement* about them.

Rom. 14. 5 *Let every Man, especially every Teacher of Mankind, be fully persuaded in his own Mind, that his own Conduct may be regulated in a steady, uniform Tenor: and he may, at proper Seasons, assign the Reasons of his Persuasion, with Meekness, Fear and Moderation:*

1 Pet. 3. 15 *but let him not bewilder the weak with doubtful Disputations, nor sour the Minds of his Hearers with little angry Debates about his Peculiar, instead of nourishing them with the great Truths of the Common Salvation.*

Rom. 14. 1 *What tho' he be right in his own Opinion? (as indeed, who is it that is not orthodox to himself?) This will not warrant him to fling the Fire-brands of Contention among his Hearers. Some that have been mistaken in these Circumstantials, have conducted themselves with so much Moderation and Forbearance, that they have done less Injury to*

Jude v. 3. *the*

And angry Passions not to be mingled with Controversies. 51

the Church, than others that have been *rigidly right* with their *disproportionate* and *intolerant Zeal*: and it may stand as a Maxim in the Christian Church, That **MODERATE AND CANDID ERROR, IN EXTRA-ESSENTIALS, IS NOT SO PERNICIOUS, AS FURIOUS HIGH-FLYING ORTHODOXY.** Let us labour to gain Men to the Knowledge and Practice of *genuine catholic* Christianity: be *this* the principal Object of our Zeal: for *this* End let us exhaust our utmost Abilities: and we shall have neither time nor Inclination *to turn aside to vain jangling.* The Design of our Office is not to propagate the Contagion of *Bigotry*, or to *gain graceless Profelytes* to a Party; but to *gather the People to the Divine SHILOH*, and make them *truly good.*—And it affords us no small Satisfaction, My Brethren, that you are our Witness, that in all our public Ministrations, and private Conversation among you, we have acted upon this *generous Principle*, whatever Ignorance or Prejudice has insinuated to the contrary.

1 Tim. 1. 6

Gen. 49. 10.

When the *essential* and *important* Doctrines of the Gospel are *perverted* or *denied*, then it is our Duty to *contend*, and that *earnestly*, for the sacred Depositum of the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and to hold fast the Form of sound Words against all the Artifices of the Enemies of Truth to *wrest* it from us. In this Case, which, alas! too often happens, Controversy is *unavoidable.* But even in this Case, we must *speak the Truth in Love*; and temper

Jude v. 3.

2 Tim. 1.

31.

Jam. 1. 20 temper our Zeal with *Humanity* and *Compassion*: for *the Wrath of man worketh not the Righteousness of God*. *Scripture and Reason*, and not *Raillery and Passion*, are the proper *Weapons* to fight the Cause of *Truth*; and we must not *speak wickedly* and maliciously even
 Job 13. 7, for *God*, nor talk *deceitfully* for *Him*. Let us
 8. expose *Error* in its native *infernal Colours*, and treat it with the most rigid *Severity* it deserves: but the *Persons* that espouse it, let us *love as Men*, and *pity and pray* for as the unhappy *Advocates* of so wretched a Cause.

Thus, My Brethren, I have shewn you, as far as the Limits of this Discourse would permit, the great *Business* of the Gospel Ministry, *Testifying the Gospel of the Grace of God*; and it is by the Labours of such as faithfully pursue this Method, that you may expect to be edified.—'Tis not my Design, Sir,* to usurp the Province of your *Instructor*; but I *humbly recommend* these Things to you, to be improv'd and matur'd by your own *Contemplations*. In this Method, My brother, I doubt not but you have *honestly begun* to
 testify

* Here the Preacher addressed himself *immediately* to Mr. *Todd*; and so elsewhere when the Address is directed to a *particular Person*; which the Reader may perceive without farther Intimation, tho' the *Apostrophe*, without mentioning the Person, is not so discoverable and graceful to *him*, as to a *Hearer and Spectator*.

testifie the Gospel: but to *begin well*, is not *enough*.—And hence I naturally proceed,

II. To shew what is implied in “FINISHING THE MINISTRY.”

This implies two Things, —*PERSEVERANCE* in the faithful Discharge of the ministerial Office, —and, *A joyful and happy CONCLUSION* of it in the important Hour of Death.

I. To finish the Ministry implies *PERSEVERANCE* in the faithful Discharge of it.”

It is not sufficient to make a *Flourish* upon our *first Entrance* on the public Stage; to *flash* and *blaze* for a while, till we have rendered ourselves *popular*, and secured our own Interest; or to use extraordinary Diligence as an *Artifice* to obtain a Settlement. But we must *CONTINUE fervent in Spirit*, and *never cease to warn every one*, at proper Occasions, *Night and Day with Tears*. Our *Work* is not the Business of a Day, but of our *whole Life*, and therefore we must devote our whole Life to it, and *be steadfast and immovable, abounding in the Work of the Lord*. As we have received this Ministry, we must not *faint*; but *approve ourselves as the Ministers of GOD* by much *Patience*. *A Dispensation of GOD* is given unto us to fulfil the Word of GOD: and methinks I hear the venerable St. Paul address us, as he did *Archippus*, *Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received*

Rom. 12.

II.

Act. 18. 25

—20, 31.

I Cor. 15.

58.

2 Cor. 4. 1.

—6. 4.

Col. 1. 25.

—4. 17.

in

in the Lord, to FULFIL it: never think thou hast done enough, till thou hast complearily finished it. † We must be *instant in season* and out of Season. We must make the Ministry the *Business* of our Weeks, as well as of our Sabbaths. The Neglect of preparatory Studies is a more criminal Kind of sloth in us, than the Neglect of their proper Business in Men of secular Employments. An Emperor of the World catching Flies, ‡ or turning all his Attention to a Fiddle,* is not so shocking a sight, as a Minister of the Gospel, abandoning himself to an over-eager Pursuit of the World, dissolved in Luxury, trifling in idle Conversation, or wasting too large a Share of his Time upon the little Delicacies of polite Literature; when he should be engaged in laborious Studies after useful Knowledge to communicate to his People, or wrestling with GOD in importunate Prayer for himself and them, or teaching them publicly, or from House to House.—We must not only continue our first Zeal and Diligence, and retain the Acquisitions of our Education; but by incessant Application to study, a Course of ardent devotion, we must make new improvements. Our path like that of the Just, must be as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. We must grow
in

† Thus he also addresses Timothy, Col. την διακονιαν πληροσορη-
ων 2 Tim. 4. 5 Tho' our Translation gives it something of a different Turn; and he uses a like Phrase concerning his own Progress in the Ministry, Rom. 15. 19. — πεπληρωκεναι το Ευαγγελιον —

‡ Domitian,

* Nero, both Roman Emperers.

in Ministerial as well as Christian Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let St. Paul's fatherly Charge to his Son Timothy have Weight upon our Hearts. Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee—with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. Give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine, Meditate upon these Things; and abstracting thyself as far as possible from other Cares, give thyself wholly to them; that thy Profiting may appear, unto All: i. e. that all thy Hearers may discover thy daily growing Proficiency in every ministerial Qualification; and that thou art not at a stand, or upon the Decline, like a Person weary of his Office. Such improvement may justly be expected, especially from persons not far advanced in Years. And nothing but Laziness, or a criminal Waste of Time in idle Visits, trifling Conversation, or excessive secular Cares, can prevent it.

1 Tim. 4

14.

—13,

—15.

2. Finishing the ministry more especially implies “a happy and joyful Close of our Work in the important Hour of Death.”

Ministers are but Mortals; brittle, earthen Vessels; and the Prophets, do they live for ever? If popular and useful Ministers were continued Immortal from Age to Age, amid a dying World, they would at length become the Objects of superstitious Veneration, or a kind of Adoration; but God wisely secures his own Glory, and kindly delivers Mankind from

2 Cor. 4. 7.

Zech. 1. 5.

K

this

this Temptation to *Idolatry*, by timely removing them out of this Way. Now when Death advances them from their pious Toils *below*, to the happier Employments of the triumphant Church on *High*; then, and not till then, their ministry is *finished*. And when they expire under a Gleam of Heaven, and review their past Conduct with a joyful *consciousness* of *Fidelity* in the Discharge of their important Function, then they finish it with *Joy*. When *this* is their *Rejoicing*, even the *Testimony* of their *Conscience*, that in *Simplicity* and *godly Sincerity*, and not with *fleshy Wisdom*, but by the *Grace of God*, they have had their *Conversation in the World*, and more especially towards their respective Charges: then they may make an honourable *Resignation* of their Office; and having finished their *Work*, they may humbly expect the *Reward*. Then, serene and undaunted amid all the ghastly Terrors of Death, they may say, with something of the Rapture of their blessed Redeemer, "I have glorified thee on Earth; I have finished the Work Thou gavest me to do: and now, O Father, I come to thee." Then they may take a graceful *Adieu* of the World, and make not only a *safe*, but a *triumphant Exit* from the public Stage. Then, confident and placid, they may consecrate their *Death-bed* for a *Pulpit*, and expend their *expiring Breath* in recommending that *Jesus* and that *Religion*, which were the familiar Subjects of their private Thoughts and public Discourses in *Life*; and which they now find sufficient to

support

2 Cor. 1.
12.

John 17.
4.

— 11.

support them in their last Extremity, and to enable them to insult the Tyrant Death, and the all-conquering Grave : O Death ! where is thy Sting ? O Grave ! where is thy Victory ? 1 Cor. 15 : 55.
My Brethren, what a glorious Prize is this ! With what alluring Splendours does it gleam upon us from afar, and animate us to break thro' all the Difficulties attending the pursuit ! which are neither few nor small !—And this reminds me that I proposed,

III. To point out “ THE PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTIES,” which usually attend the faithful Discharge of the ministerial Office.

When we turn our Thoughts to this melancholy Subject, these Difficulties crowd upon us on every Hand, and rise up before us in a dismal Succession. They principally proceed from “ the Difficulty of our Work in itself ;” — from “ the Aversion and Indisposition of Mankind to the great Design and Tendency of our Ministrations ;” — from “ the Opposition of the World,” — and of “ the infernal Powers ;” — and (as we must honestly confess) from “ our own Infirmities.”

I. There is no small “ Difficulty in the work of the Ministry in itself.”

'Tis our Business to unfold the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, which are hidden from the Wise and Prudent ; and to explain the deep Things of God : at once to familiarize
Matt. 11 : 25.
— 13. 11.
1 Cor. 2 :
K 2 the 10.

- the *sublimest* Truths to the *meanest* Capacities; and to preserve their native *Dignity* and *Grandeur*, that they may not fall under the contempt of the *Judicious* and *Delicate*. It is our hard Task to *clear our Way*, and conduct our Hearers safe through the Intricacies of thorny *Controversy*, with which the most important Truths are now unhappily perplexed. We must as it were *delineate* the very *Hearts* of Men, that *Saints* and *Sinners* may know themselves. We must *anticipate* and guard against their *Objections*, however unreasonable and causeless; *obviate* and remove their conscientious *Scruples*, however absurd or trifling; and *overcome* their inveterate *Prejudices* and stubborn *Infidelity*, not with imperious, dogmatical *Affertions*, but with clear and solid *Reasoning*. We must present divine Things to them in a pleasing *Variety* of Forms, to adapt them to their *various Tastes* and Capacities; and thus, *becoming all things to all Men, weak to the Weak*, and strong to the strong, we must try *by all Means to save some* of every Character. We must shew ourselves
- 1 Cor. 9. 22. *Scribes well instructed into the Kingdom of Heaven*, and bring forth out of our *Treasure Things new and old*; that we may not cloy them with *fulsome Repetitions*. It is our Character especially to be *mighty in the Scriptures*; that precious inexhaustible *Mine*, where we are to *digg* for Knowledge; and whence we are to *make many rich*. The *Scriptures* are sufficient to *make the Man of God perfect*, thoroughly furnished to every good work; and
- Matt. 13. 52.
Acts 18. 24.
2 Cor. 6. 10.
3 Tim. 3. 16,

we are to use them for *Doctrine, for Reproof,* 2 Tim. 3.
for Correction, and for Instruction in Righte- 16.
ousness—And who is sufficient for these Things? —17.
 What *great Accomplishments* are necessary to
 make us *ready Scribes of the Law of the God* Ezra 7: 6,
of Heaven, and able Ministers of the New Te- 12.
stament? A little *Smattering* of human Lite- 2Cor. 3: 6.
rature, a superficial Acquaintance with Divi-
nity and experimental Religion, a stock of
useless Pedantries, a volubility of Tongue,
a Dexterity to amuse the Populace with empty
Harangues; these are not sufficient: and much
less a Capacity to play the Plagiary in reading
the Sermons of others as our own; which is
but stealing the Word of the Lord from our Jer. 23: 30
Neighbour, and strutting Majesty in borrowed
Feathers. † But our Work requires an ex-
tensive Acquaintance with the various Bran-
ches of human Learning, especially these more
immediately subservient to the Study of Di-
vinity, and the Arts of Reasoning and Persua-
sion. The sacred Oracles especially must be
the Objects of our daily Contemplation and
laborious Enquiry. We must also read Men,
as well as Books, and obtain the Knowledge of
human Nature: And it must be our daily
Labour to maintain and observe the rigorous
Exercises of Religion in our own Hearts; that
Experience, the best of Teachers, may assist
us in our Applications to others; and that in
our

†———*Si forte suas repetitum venerit olim*
Grex Avium Plumas, moveat Cornicula Risum
Furtivis nudata Coloribus — Hor. Epist. Lib. I. Ep. 3.

our own Hearts, as in a Mirrour, we may see the various Cases of *other Christians*: for *as in*
 Prov. 27. *Water Face answereth to Face; so doth the heart*
 19. *of Man to Man.* For these Ends, we must be ardent and frequent at *Devotion*; and laborious and unwearied in *Study* Night and Day. Our Minds should be always upon the *Rack* of Thought, as far as our feeble Nature can bear it; and our *Recreations* should be *rare*, and of the *graver* Sort; and such as may intermingle *Improvement* and Profit with *Pleasure* and Amusement. § Now we are *admonished* by the wisest of Men, who had sufficiently made the Experiment, that *much Study is a Weariness to the Flesh.* A *sedentary studious*
 Eccl. 12 *Life* exhausts the Spirits, nurses Melancholy, and shatters the Constitution; especially when our painful Searches after Truth are intermingled with those wasting *Anxieties* about the *Success* of our Ministrations; which we cannot avoid, if we have it *at Heart.* And indeed this is the *imbittering Ingredient*, that renders ministerial Studies so painful; for it must be owned, that the most *laborious* and *incessant* Enquiries after Knowledge are attended with the most exquisite *Pleasure* to *curious* and *refined* Minds; when they entertain the agreeable Prospect of doing extensive *Service* to Mankind by their Discoveries—But alas!

2. Mankind are strangely “*averse and indisposed*” to receive and improve our Instructions, and promote the Success of our Labours.
 What

§ *Omne tulit Punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci* Hor. de Art. Poet.

Whatever Pursuits Men are earnestly engaged in, the Prospect of *Success* is the strongest Inducement to *rigorous Endeavours*, and the most encouraging *Support* under all the *Hardships* and *Fatigues* that attend the Pursuit: but *Discouragement* as to the *Success* cannot but *enervate* their Activity, and add a *dead Weight* to the Burden of their Labours. How discouraging then, how burdensome, how heart-breaking must it be to these faithful Servants of Christ, who have nothing so much at Heart as the *Success* of their Ministry, to labour in vain, and to spend their Strength for Nought and in vain! When they are very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts, and exert themselves even to an *Agony*, in all proper Measures to reform a degenerate Age, and deliver Sinners as *Brands snatched out of the Burning*; and yet find all this *Labour of Love* abortive and *fruitless* with respect to the generality; is it any Wonder they should be forced at Times upon *Elijah's* hasty Prayer, "It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life; for I am not better than my Fathers!" How distressing is it, to use the most earnest Endeavours for the Conversion of their dear Fellow-mortals; Endeavours that have the *directest Tendency* in their own Nature to obtain the End; and yet to be taught by repeated Disappointments, *hardly to hope* to succeed! To report the most important, and in the mean Time the most credible Things, which even GOD can reveal, or a finite mind conceive; and yet be driven so often upon *Isaiah's* melancholy

Isa. 49. 4.

1Kings 19. 10.

Ezek. 3. 2.

1Kings 19. 4.

Isa. 53. 1. melancholy Complaint, *Who hath believed our Report?* To declare the majestic Realities of the eternal World, the infinite Importance of which overwhelms their own Minds, to thoughtless Creatures, that hardly care a *Straw* for them! To speak Things that might break Hearts of *Stone*, and strike the very *inanimate* Creation into a *Consternation*, with as little Effect as if they had poured out *insignificant Sounds* into the Air! And, to aggravate their sorrowful Disappointments, to see the *Missionaries of Hell* successfully propagate the *Contagion of Vice*, and win *Crowds* of willing Profelytes to *Sin and Ruin*; while their *generous Efforts* to profelyte them to *Virtue and Piety*, and conduct them to everlasting Happiness, prove so often *hopeless and vain*! A melancholy discouraging Employ! and yet *this* is the Employ of the Ministers of the Gospel; especially in such a Time as this, when, instead of the Influences of Heaven to give the Increase, to what we plant and water, a Spirit of deep Sleep seems judicially poured out upon Multitudes — Sinners are utterly *averse*, and Saints in a lamentable Degree *indisposed* to improve our Labours.

1 Cor. 3. 6, 7. —
Isa. 29. 10

As for *unregenerate Sinners*, the habitual Bent of their Souls is *obstinately set against* the Success of our Ministry. *They hate the Light*, because their Deeds are evil; and will not willingly come into it. They are *averse* to those alarming Discoveries of their *Guilt and Danger*, which we must force upon them. Their

Their inmost Souls are intimately united to those darling *Lusts*, which we must strive to tear from them. They *abhor* that strictness of evangelical *Holiness*, which we must *inculcate* upon them: and are obstinately *averse* to that *Method* of Salvation, which it is the *principal* Business of our Ministry to *recommend* and urge. They may like very well to have *public Worship* celebrated among them: but a *hearty, universal* Obedience to all the Demands we are to make upon them in the Name of GOD; a *ready Compliance* with all the Requirements of the Gospel; *this* they cannot endure; *this is a hard Saying*; and *they cannot bear it*: And when this is *closely urged* upon them, they either *neglect* it, as a Matter in which they are *not concerned*; or they *murmur* and *fret*, and grow *impatient* of such importunate Persuasion. It is *astonishing*, and Nothing but Matter of *Fact* could compel us to believe it, that *Multitudes* sit for many *Years* under the *Glare* of Gospel-light; and yet continue as *ignorant* of themselves and divine Things, and as *unconcerned* about their eternal State, as if *they sat in Darkness*, *Ia. 9. 2* and *in the Shadow of Death*. Should a *Stranger* to our World observe, on the *one* Hand, the *Earnestness* of our Exhortations; and on the *other*, how *little* they prevail; it might tempt him to think that we were persuading them to some *horrendous Crime*, shocking to human Nature: but in all our Addresses to them, we do but propose the most solid and exalted *Happiness* through an *immortal* Duration, and

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exhort

exhort them to pursue it in the Way of *Holiness*; HOLINESS, which is in itself the *Perfection* of their Nature; nay, I may add, 'tis that Attribute of the Deity which adds a *peculiar Lustre* to all his *other* Perfections: and yet alas! *this* Proposal is the *most hopeless* we can make to the World: *this* Exhortation, tho' enforced with the *strongest Reasonings*, urged in the dread Name of GOD, endeared with all the *Love* of a dying *Jesus*, and softened with the *Tears* of our own *Compassion*; *this* Exhortation, with all these *Recommendations*, is *less prevalent* than the *slightest* Call of temporal *Interest* or sensual *Pleasure*, to purchase a *Trifle* at the Expence of an immortal *Soul*; *less* prevalent than the *Importunities* of a *Debauchee* to rush to *Ruin* in the enchanting *Paths* of Sin. Lord! *to whom shall we speak, and give Warning, that they may hear? Behold, their Ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the Word of the Lord is unto them a Reproach; they have no Delight in it.* When we set *Death* and *Life* before them, they seem to *love* *Death*, and virtually make it their wretched *Choice*. When we would *persuade* them by the *Terrors* of the Lord, we are frequently no more regarded, than if we addressed the *irrational* Creation, and cried with *Jeremiah*, "O *Earth! Earth! Earth!* hear the *Word* of the *Lord*." We may exhibit a *Saviour* lifted up on the *Cross*, to draw all *Men* to Him; but alas! they do not feel the *Attraction*. We may use the most *convictive Arguments*, the *strongest Persuasions*

Jer. 6. 10.
Deut. 30. 19.
Pro. 8. 36.
2 Cor. 5. 11.
Jer. 22. 29.
John 12. 32.

ons, the most melting *Expostulations*, the sweetest *Promises*, the most tremendous *Denunciations* of Wrath; and yet they can resist and break thro' all these, with greater Ease than they can conquer a trifling Temptation to Sin. They retaliate all these by censuring us as importunate *Babblers*; or at best by complimenting us with the Character of *very good Preachers*, that seem to be in Earnest; while they do not seriously reflect, that all this Earnestness is for their Sakes, and that they are intimately concerned in all the Messages we deliver — Some of them, to excuse their Neglect of the Gospel by some plausible Plea, with malignant Zeal labour to blacken the Character of its Ministers, and watch for their Halting: and if they do not find angelical Perfection in the whole of their Conduct, they will catch with malicious Pleasure at their involuntary and lamented Infirmities, and magnifie them into Crimes equal to their own, and propagate the Report of them with officious Industry. Nay, if the Ministers of Christ are enabled, thro' divine Grace, to conduct themselves unblameably, so as to deny their Enemies the Pleasure of finding some plausible Occasion to expose them; then these Malignants, like their genuine Father, commence Accusers of the Brethren, and spread Scandals of their own Invention, with diabolical Zeal. Yea, they will not scruple to put the most perverse Constructions upon their most generous Designs and pious Endeavours. If they urge the strictness of universal Holiness,

Acts 17.
18.

Jer. 20. 10

Rev. 12.
10.

and expose the *favourite Vices* of the Age with just Severity; they are censured as aiming to rob Men of their *Pleasures*, and transform them into melancholy *Precisians*. If they are *holy themselves* above the common Rate, in all Manner of Conversation; then it must be suspected as an *hypocritical Artifice* to gain the Applause of Men, and secure their own Interest, or a Bait to catch *Profelytes*. If they conscientiously scruple to conform to the ecclesiastical Establishments; and therefore peaceably endeavour to promote our common Christianity, in a *separate Communion*; then they must be censured as *perversely affecting Singularity*, pretending *Conscience*, when they are governed only by *Humour*, turning the World upside down, &c. &c. Nor will *Conformity* shelter them from the uncharitable Censures of the World. If they can conform to the established Church *without* Scruple of Conscience, and *honestly* labour to promote Religion in that Communion, they will still suffer *their share* of that *Persecution*; which the *Sons of Flesh*, in an uninterrupted Line of Succession, will carry on against the *Children of the Spirit*; and their *Conformity* will be easily resolved into *mercenary* and *sordid* Motives, by the *Prejudice* and *Bigotry* of a censorious World! In short; we must be *Conformists to the Ways of the World*, as well as to the *established Forms of Religion*, before we can escape the *Lash of Calumny and Censure*—Thus the most *benevolent* and *generous* Office is the most *thankless* in the World. Thus the most *generous*

2 Pet. 3.
11.

Acts 17.6.

Gal. 4.29.

rous and *disinterested* Actions are suspected as the most *sordid* and *wicked*. 'Tis to stretch the *Charity* of the Public on a *Rack* to suppose, that Men should take *so much Pains* from a noble *disinterested Zeal* for the Good of others. The *Generality* are *so conscious*, that all their *own Conduct* is governed by *mercenary* and *selfish* Principles, that they can hardly allow *any* that are capable of acting with *superior Views*. But let us learn of our gracious Lord, to *love our Enemies*, and not retaliate their *Ingratitude* by neglecting their Souls. Let us *very gladly spend and be spent* even for these *Ingrates*, tho' the more abundantly we love them, the less we should be loved—It is no small *Relief* under this unkind Treatment from the World, to find the *pious Few* giving kind Entertainment to our Messages: but alas! even with respect to *them* we must observe,

Mat. 5. 44

2 Cor. 12. 15.

That *they* are too often unhappily *indisposed* to receive and improve our Labours. In their View indeed, the very *Feet of them* are beautiful, that preach the Gospel of Peace, and bring glad Tidings of good Things: yet that lamented *Imperfection*, which attends all the religious Exercises of the present State, discovers itself here also. They have not a suitable *Dexterity* in improving the Word of God to their Advantage. They are strangely *unskilful* in applying it to themselves. They often *reject* the Consolations we intend for *them*, thro' an excessive *Jealousie* of themselves; and

Rom. 10. 17.

And impartially apply it to themselves:

and they catch at the dreadful Portion we would distribute to the *Wicked*, and distress themselves with *false Alarms* and *needless Terrors*. Their *Fears* and *Scruples* are very frequently *causeless* and *absurd*; and our strongest *Reasonings* can no more *allay* them, than they can *calm a Hurricane*. They take up *little Prejudices*, and stumble at *Straws*; which prevents their Benefit by the Labours of their Minister. They sometimes affect *Entertainments* that are *not suitable* for them; and they are *offended*, if we follow our *own Judgment*, and do not gratify their *depraved Taste*. Many of them have *narrow Souls*, of *dull and slow Apprehensions*; and we must *inculcate* divine Truths upon them with *Repetitions* tiresome to ourselves, and the more judicious Part of our Auditory, before they can thoroughly *understand* them. They must have *Line upon Line*; *Line upon Line*; *Precept upon Precept*; *Precept upon Precept*; as if they were just *weaned from the Milk*, and *drawn from the Breasts*—On these and the like Accounts, we meet with no *small Difficulty* even from those who are *our Joy and Crown*. But

Isa. 28. 9,
 ——— 10.
 Phil. 4. 1.

3. We must meet with "Opposition from the World," in the Discharge of our Ministry.

The THINGS of the World engross the Thoughts and Affections of Men, so that our Instructions can find *no Room* in their Hearts. When we have *sown the Seed* of the Word in their

their Hearts, they go forth, and are choaked Luke 8. with the Cares, and Riches, and Pleasures of 14. this Life, and bring forth no Fruits to Perfection. All that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Lust of the Eyes, and the i John 2. Pride of Life, is perpetually in Arms against 16. us. And tho' all the Concerns of this transitory State are comparatively but *Vanities, Dreams and Shadows*; yet alas! they make deeper Impressions on the Minds of our Hearers, than all our most striking Representations of the awful and majestic *Realities* of the eternal World.

The MEN of this World also conspire, with infernal Zeal, to blast the Success of our Ministry. *They are wise to do Evil*; and with diabolical Dexterity, they invent a Variety of Stratagems to confirm the Impenitent in Sin and Security, and to cause these to relapse, whose Recovery by our Instrumentality, we were just ready to congratulate. When a deep religious Concern breaks out in a Family, or Congregation; it will generally meet with some steady Opponent, who with alas! too great Success, will labour to suppress it. — Now how hard is our Task, to be always swimming against the Stream! to be carrying on a Design so contrary to the greatest Part of the World! and to labour to build Temples for the Holy Ghost, which every Passenger will attempt to demolish, lest he should be molested with the Presence of the Divine Inhabitant.

Jer. 4. 22.
1 Cor. 6. 19.

Eph.6.12. *habitant!* — But this is *not all*. We wrestle *not only against Flesh and Blood*, but

4. “*The infernal Powers*” counteract our *Ministry*, and hinder its *Success*.

1 Pet.5.8. These devouring *Lions* are perpetually roaming this *Wilderness* in quest of *Prey*: and it requires our utmost *Vigilance* to secure our feeble *Flock* from their *Jaws*. They are still ready to *catch away the Seed of the Word*.

Matt. 13. 19. They present *ensnaring Images* to the *Fancy*, to allure *Men to Sin*: They torture the *Melancholy* with the *Suggestions* of horrendous *Blasphemies* and *desperate Conclusions*. They lull the *Secure* asleep with *delusive Hopes*; and in a *Word*, *strengthen* all the *corrupt Propensions* of human *Nature*, already de-

Luke 22. 53. Eph.6.12. Col.1.13. praved, and *prone to Sin without* their *Instigation*. They are with great *Propriety* called *Powers of Darknes*; and they *act* in the *Dark*. Their *Agency* is *invisible*, and therefore *hard to be discovered*: The *Blow* is *imperceivable*, till it fall; and therefore we cannot *ward it off* from our *Heaters*. Their *Policy* is *deep* and their *Schemes* *disguised*.

2 Cor.11. 14. — 2. 11. They at *Times* assume the *Appearance* of *Angels of Light*; and lead our *Flocks* astray with *plausible, unsuspected Devices*: And it requires no small *Degree of spiritual Sagacity*

Eph.6.11. Rev.2.24. in us, to detect these *Wiles of the Devil*, and sound the *Depths of Satan*. We cannot be *always present* with our *People*, nor have *immediate access* to their *Minds*: but these *sub-*
til

til immaterial Intelligences, when permitted by divine Providence, can haunt them, tho' invisible, in all their Ways, even in their closest Retirements, with incessant Temptations; and as it were penetrate their Minds by insinuating, ensnaring Ideas. We are incapable, thro' the Frailty of human Nature, of perpetual Vigilance and uninterrupted Activity: but these active Spirits, after the incessant Labours of near six Thousand Years, are as vigorous and unwearied as ever. They are now, as well as in the Days of Job, going to and fro in the Earth, and walking up and down in it; perhaps vainly attempting to mitigate and amuse their fullen Despair, as well as seeking whom they may devour, and watching every Advantage against the Sons of Men; and they may destroy, in our careless and inactive Intervals, what we have been painfully building in our laborious Hours — And are we, feeble Mortals, able to encounter these Principalities and Powers, these gloomy Gods of this World? No; if the GOD of Heaven were not with us, as a mighty terrible One; and if the Weapons of our Warfare were not mighty thro' Him; We and our Flocks would soon fall a helpless Prey to their Rage. GOD will indeed shortly crush Satan under the Feet of the feeblest Saint; and all His People shall be made more than Conquerors thro' the Blood of the Lamb. But in the present State, he permits him to embarrass the Christian, and the Minister, with numerous Difficulties in their respective Courses. — But all these are Difficulties from Without:

M

these

Job 1. 7.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

2 Cor. 2.

11.

Eph. 6. 12

2 Cor. 4. 4.

Jer. 20.

11.

2 Cor. 10.

4.

Rom. 16.

20.

— 8. 37.

Rev. 12.

11.

these may afford us *Sorrow* and *Discouragement*; but no Room for *Remorse* and *guilty* Self-reflection. How happy were we, under all these *Discouragements*, if we could perfectly *acquit ourselves!* But alas! the most *melancholy* Circumstance is yet behind; and our Hearts may *break* at the very Thought of it. It is no *new* Discovery; it is the *familiar* Burden of our own Spirits in our thoughtful *Retirements*; and it damps our Hearts in our *public* Ministrations. Alas! how shall I mention it! Or in what *mournful Language* shall I express it! — It is this;

5. “*Our own remaining Infirmities*” *indispose us for the Exercise of our Ministry with suitable Zeal, and afford us many Difficulties in it.*

Oh! were our own Spirits under the *tenderest, deepest Impressions* of eternal Things; were our own Hearts in a perpetual *Glow* with the *Love of Christ*; were our *Estimate* of one immortal Soul equal to its *real Value*; were our *Compassion* for our dear perishing Fellow-Sinners always suitably *soft* and *vigorous*; with what *relittleless Ardour* would we then address you! with what *passionate weeping Earnestness* would we persuade you! with what *Agonies of Zeal* would we urge you! with what *unwearied Importunity* pursue you, 'till we had *gained our Point!* We have at *Times*, thro' the *immerited Mercy of Heaven*, *some small Experience* of this: and then *preaching*
the

the Gospel is quite another Thing than usual to us : and I may leave you to judge, whether the *Difference* be not very *perceivable* even to you. How happy we, and how much would it be for your Advantage, if our Mouth were always thus opened unto you, and our Hearts thus enlarged ! But alas ! we share in 2 Cor. 6. the universal *Degeneracy* of human Nature ; 11. and Divine Grace has not as yet *completed* our Recovery. How often do we feel *Qualms* of spiritual Indisposition ! and in the Seasons of our *greatest Activity*, we are even then enfeebled with *remaining Imperfections*. We often *relapse* into *Lukewarmness* : and the sacred *Fire of Zeal*, which should flame from us in the *Pulpit*, and warm all around us in *Conversation*, too often *languishes* : and our *utmost Efforts*, in these unhappy Hours, are but *faint, spiritless Essays*. This we often accuse *ourselves* of, when the *World* is censuring us on a very *different Account*, and charging us with a Crime, of which we are *unhappily innocent*, viz. *excessive Zeal* and *superfluous Earnestness*. But we must not judge of the *Degree* of Zeal that becomes us, by what a *secure World* judges sufficient ; otherwise we might commence mere *lukewarm Laodiceans*, Rev. 3. 17. like themselves : But our Zeal should be *proportioned* to the infinite *Importance* of the *Things* we speak, and the alarming *Circumstances* of those we address. And oh ! when shall the happy Moment come, when *such a Zeal* shall fire our Hearts, animate our Addresses

to you, and render us as *watchful over you*, as your *guardian Angels*!

And now, My Brethren, do you not begin to think, that your poor *Ministers* stand in need of your earnest *Prayers*, to assist them in so *difficult* a Work? They have not only the *private* Christian Course to run, as well as you; and some of you know by Experience that *even this* is extremely *difficult*; but their *public* Station exposes them to a great many *difficulties peculiar* to themselves. They have
 Heb. 13. *your Souls* to take Care of, as well as *their*
 17. *own*; and are accountable for them to the
 2 Cor. 2. Supreme Judge: *And who is sufficient for*
 16. *these Things*?

These, My Brother, are some of the *Difficulties* that attend that *Office*, to which you have *devoted your Life*. These are *some*, and *but some* of the *Difficulties* you may expect in the faithful *Discharge* of it in *this Place*; the pastoral Charge of which you are about publicly to undertake. Yea, perhaps *severer* Trials than these are before you: perhaps *Bonds* and *Imprisonments* may await you; and it may be put to *Experiment*, whether you count your *Life dear unto yourself*, when the Honour of your Master requires you to resign
 Exod. 3. it. No Wonder then, My Dear Brother, if
 10, 13. like your Superiors, *Moses* and *Jeremiah*, you
 Jer. 1. 6. find your Heart *fail* within you, and all your
Ardour for the Salvation of Men; and indulging a *secret Wish* to be *excused* from so *difficult*

ficult a Work, notwithstanding your pious
Ambition to be the Instrument of promoting
 the best Interests of Mankind. Or if a *Neces-* 1 Cor. 9.
sity is laid upon you to preach the Gospel, and 16.
 you *must* go upon the Embassy; no Wonder,
 if, with *Ezekiel,* you go in *Bitterness,* and in *Eze. 3. 14.*
the Heat of your Spirit. Indeed, considering
 the *Importance* and *Difficulty* of the minist-
 rial Office, and the awful and deep *Sense* of it,
 which *such* retain upon their Hearts; it is real-
 ly a Wonder to see a *conscientious faithful*
 Man undertake it. Were he not *THRUST* *
 into it by *the Lord of the Harvest,* his Appre- *Luk. 10.*
 hensions of the *Work,* and his Diffidence of his *2.*
own Abilities, would cause him to *shrink a-*
way from the Undertaking; while *hardy* and
daring Mortals, insensible of its Weight and
 Difficulty, and ignorant of themselves, might
rush into it with thoughtless Presumption,
 from *lucrative* or ambitious Views—But af-
 ter I have kept you so long under this *trem-*
endous Gloom, let me open to you a *brighter*
Prospect; which may animate you with un-
 daunted *Resolution* and *Christian Bravery* un-
 der all these Discouragements. Therefore,

IV. I

* *Thrusting,* or *urging,* answers the Emphasis of the original
 Word *εβαλλν,* used by our Lord in this Case, (Luke 10. 2.
 Matth. 9. 38.) better than so faint a Word as *sending.* And
 no doubt the original Word was designedly chosen to inti-
 mate the *Reluctance* of the Labourers to undertake the Work,
 and the *resistless Power* with which Divine Providence sweetly
constrains them to it.

IV. *I shall shew, that "the Joy resulting at last" from the faithful Discharge of the Ministry, is a sufficient Encouragement to break thro' all the Difficulties attending it.*

To illustrate this, I shall only present you with an *Image* of a *faithful Minister of Jesus*, in his *last Moments*, who has *spent his Life*, and *exhausted his Strength* in the pious Labours of his Office. Amid the Pangs of Death, his Conscience is peaceful, without a Pang. He *reviews his past Life* with unutterable Satisfaction, conscious that amid all the *unavoidable Imperfections* of the present State, it was *sincerely devoted to his GOD*, and the everlasting Weal of Mankind. He *dare look up to GOD*, with humble, joyful Confidence, as smiling propitious upon him in the last Extremity. He *dare look forward to the awful World beyond the Grave*, on the Threshold of which he now stands, with unshaken Courage, and transporting Expectations. He can rejoice in Existence, and triumph in his *Immortality* as an infinite Privilege, in that solemn Period, when Multitudes are agonizing with eager fruitless Wishes that they could relapse into their native *Nothing*; or that they had never been born. And now such rapturous Thoughts as these crowd upon him in delightful *Soliloquies*; or perhaps break from his quivering Lips with all that resistless *Pathos*, which the solemn *Pomp of Death* can give. "The toilsome Labours of this transitory Life are

" are now just come to a happy Close. *I have* 2 Tim. 4.
 " *fought a good Fight; I have finished my* 7.
 " *Course.* My Difficulties, my Sorrows are
 " *over; and shall never, never return.* But
 " *oh! the Joy, oh! the Transport, that now*
 " *springs from the Review! I leave some be-* Jud. v. 23.
 " *hind me, who by my Means were plucked* Am. 4. 11.
 " *as Fire-brands out of the Burning; and who*
 " *will support the Cause of Religion in a de-*
 " *generate World, when I am silent in the*
 " *Dust.* I am just going to that blessed World,
 " *whither some of my spiritual Children have*
 " *taken their Flight before me, and are waiting*
 " *ready to congratulate my Arrival on the*
 " *Coasts of Light, and to crown my Head*
 " *with Blessings, as the happy Instrument in*
 " *the Divine Hand, of a glorious Immortality*
 " *to them.* And as for those unhappy Sinners, Ifai. 49. 4.
 " *with regard to whom I have laboured in* 2 Cor. 2.
 " *vain, and been a Savour of Death unto* 16.
 " *Death; I can now, when taking my last*
 " *Leave of them, call themselves to witness,* Act. 20.
 " *that I am clear of their Blood.* I shall be a 26.
 " *sweet Savour unto God, even in them that* 2 Cor. 2.
 " *perish; and tho' they be not gathered, yet* 15.
 " *shall I be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord,* Ifai. 49. 5.
 " *and my God shall be my Strength.* As yet
 " *indeed I am but Flesh and Blood; and I still*
 " *feel the tenderest Compassion for them: but*
 " *a few Moments will free me from those*
 " *painful Anxieties that attend this Compassi-*
 " *on: in a few Moments these painful Anxi-*
 " *eties will be swallowed up in a delightful*
 " *Acquiescence in the Divine Will, dooming*
 " *them*

- “ them to that Punishment, of which I oftent
 “ warned them in vain. Blessed JESUS! I
 “ would crown Thee with the Praises of my
 “ *expiring Breath*, and employ my *Immorta-*
 “ *lity* in adoring Thy Name, for condescend-
 “ ing to *honour* so mean, so unworthy a Crea-
 “ ture to be the Instrument of so *much Ser-*
 “ *vice* to my Fellow-mortals; and to *suffer so*
 Act. 9. 16. “ *many Things* for Thy Name's Sake. It was
 “ *worth while*, O my GOD! to come into
 “ *Existence*; it was *worth while* to pass thro'
 “ the longest *Series* of Labours, Calamities
 “ and Sorrows, which could attend my Sta-
 “ tion in this *wretched* Life, for so *noble*, so
 “ *divine* a Purpose. And now, *I come to*
 Joh. 17. “ *Thee*; to be with *Thee*, where thou art;
 24. “ and to behold Thy *Glory*—But here I am
 “ *swallowed up*! Here I am *dazzled* with in-
 “ *sufferable Splendours*! O the Brightness of
 2 Tim. 4. “ the *Crown of Righteousness*; just about to
 8. “ be put upon my Head! O the *far more*
 2 Cor. 4. “ *exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, now
 17. “ to succeed these *light and momentary Af-*
 “ *fections*! O the transporting Prospect of
 “ *complete, everlasting Deliverance* from Sin,
 “ the Burden, the *Plague* of my present Life!
 “ And shall I now behold Thy Face without
 “ a Veil, O Thou Blessed JESUS! whom I
 1 Pet. 1. 8. “ have *loved*, whom I have preached, *unseen*?
 1 Cor. 13. “ Shall I henceforth *know even as I am known*?
 12. “ Shall I now leave the *humble Services* of Thy
 “ *earthly Sanctuary*, and join in the *nobler*
 “ *Employments* of the *heavenly Armies*, with
 “ *Zeal*, with *Activity* like theirs? Shall all my
 “ Ca-

" capacities of Happiness be enlarged, and be
 " compleatly filled? Shall all my Faculties
 " of Operation be perfected, and employed
 " in Exercises, which are the Honour and
 " Delight of the *Angelic* Nature? And shall
 " Eternity, that solemn majestic Attribute,
 " ETERNITY! be entailed upon a *Worm*,
 " that a few Years ago was *Nothing*, and
 " perpetuate his Blis? *Hail*, delightful
 " day! *Welcome*, thou important Juncture!
 " Now I leave this *infant* state of my Exist- 1 Cor. 13.
 " tence and put away *childish Things*; now ——— 11.
 " I commence an *adult* Immortal. Nor do
 " I shudder to enter the gloomy *Valley of*
 " *Death*, while irradiated with Glimpses of
 " *eternal Day*. *O Death!* where is thy sting? —15-55.
 " *O Grave!* where is thy Victory? *Father*,
 " *into thy hands I commend my Spirit* — Luke 23.
 " Here *Death* happily interrupts his rapturous 46.
 " strains. He bows his *Head*, and gives up the Joh. 19.
 " *Ghost*; and a Guard of Angels conduct his 30.
 " Soul to *Abraham's Bosom*. Luk. 16:
 " 22.

And now, My Brethren, is not so joyful,
 so triumphant an end, a sufficient Encourage-
 ment to animate the most timorous Soldier of
 Jesus-Christ to encounter every Difficulty,
 and patiently endure all the Labours of the
 most painful station in the House of GOD?
 Sure, if we may but thus finish our course
 with joy, none of these Things should move
 us, nor should we count our Lives dear unto
 ourselves. Tho' our outward Man should
 decay under our Labours and Sufferings; 2 Cor. 4:
 nay, tho' we should always be delivered unto 11.
 ——— 16.

N

Death

80 *Obligations of the People towards their Minister.*

Death for Jesus, sake; yet we cannot faint, and be discouraged, if we look not upon the Things that are temporal; but upon those that are not seen, which are eternal; and if we have a suitable respect to the recompence of

Heb. 11. *Reward.*

27.

This, Sir, may animate you in particular under all the Burdens that now oppress your Heart. And for your farther Encouragement, remember, this triumphant Joy is *not far off*. A few Years at most will finish your Course, and introduce your Joy, if you continue faithful to your great Master. Your worst Enemies cannot doom you to a wretched *Immortality upon Earth*, nor to consume an *Eternity* in the Fatigues and Anxieties of your present Function. No, My Brother; *Rev. 2. 10. be faithful unto death, which is kindly hastening; and you shall receive a crown of Life: You shall be advanced to the easier, the sweeter, the nobler Employments of the heavenly Sanctuary, in company with those* *Isa. 8. 18. spiritual Children* which the Lord shall give you in this Place; and we humbly hope that *Pf. 87. 5. this and that Man shall be born here.*

Now, My Brethren of the *Lalty*, must you not own that there are many *Duties* incumbent upon you towards your *Minsters*, correspondent to these Duties and Difficulties of the ministerial Office? Can you be so ungrateful, so stupid, so absurd, as once to imagine that *they* must devote their *Life* and all their *Abilities* to serve you, and go thro' such

such an oppressive series of Labours for your Sakes; and yet that you are at Liberty to treat them just as you please? That you are lawless and unobliged to them, when they are under such solemn Obligations to you? No, my Brethren; the Obligations are mutual: You owe Duties to them, exactly correspondent to their Duties towards you; as the Obligations of the parental Relation infer answerable Obligations on the Child—We do indeed not only allow, but exhort you, and solemnly charge you, to reject us, and no more to treat us as Ministers of Christ, when we cease to behave as such. The Obligation upon your Part ceases, when we habitually violate our Obligations to you. And we would not attempt to secure our Interest among you, by keeping you ignorant of the Duties you may justly expect and demand of us, or by diminishing them in our own Favour; and therefore I have this day plainly and impartially informed you of the Duty of a Minister in the principal Branch of his office, Preaching the Gospel: And I shall presently, in the Form of the Installation, enumerate the other Duties of his Function. But as long as we habitually behave in Character, and conscientiously endeavour to perform these Duties towards you, tho' in weakness, and in Fear, and much Trembling; you are obliged so to account of us as Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD, and to entertain us and our Ministrations accordingly—And You in particular, who have called this Servant of Christ to be your Pastor, are under the following Obligations to him.

1 Cor. 2. 3.

—4. 1.

N 2

1. You

1. You are obliged to "honour, esteem and love him."

Christ assures you, that what is done unto
 Matt. 25. *the least of his Brethren*, He will account and
 40. retaliate as done unto Himself; and much
 more what is done to His *Embassadors*. Ac-
 —10. 40. cordingly, He expressly tells you, that *they*
 —41. *whoreceive and bear His Messengers, receive*
 John 13. *and hear Him*; and *they who receive a Pro-*
 20. *phet, in the Name of a Propbet, or upon*
 Luke 10. *Account of his Office, shall receive a Pro-*
 16. *phet's reward*: And on the other Hand, that
they who despise His Messengers, despise Him;
 yea, that the contempt reaches the eternal
 Throne, and terminates upon the Father that
 sent Him. I therefore beseech you, Brethren,
 1Thes. 5. *to know him who labours among you, and is*
 12, *over you in the Lord, and admonishes you*;
 —13. *and to esteem him very highly in Love, for*
his Work's Sake. Observe, you are to love
 and esteem him not merely for his own Sake,
 but principally for his *Work's Sake*. You are
 2 Cor. 5. *to honour him, not merely as a Gentleman,*
 20, *but as an Ambassador for Christ, and your*
 1 Cor. 4. *spiritual Father*. You are to receive him not
 15. *merely as a Neighbour or Friend, but as a*
 Matt. 10. *Prophet, i. e. as a Minister of GOD*. And
 41. *this implies a proper Regard to all his*
 Heb. 13. *Ministrations*. It is your duty to obey him
 47. *as your Ruler in the Lord*; to imitate him
 1Co. 11. 7. *as your Pattern, as far as he follows Christ*;
 Prov. 10. *to cover his Infirmities with a Mantle of Love,*
 12. *as a Man of like Passions with you*; and, in
 Acts 14.

To receive the Gospel and its Ordinances from him; 83

2. Word, so to account of him as a Minister of Christ. Jam. 5.17
1 Cor. 4.1.

2. You are obliged to "receive the Word and Ordinances of the gospel dispensed by him."

A Dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto him; and he is commissioned to teach, to baptize, and to celebrate the Lord's Supper: And you have called him that he may discharge his Commission among you. You are therefore to make Conscience of attending on his Ministry at every Opportunity. You are to be instant in Season, and out of Season in hearing, as well as he in teaching. It is your Duty to seek the Law at his Mouth; and to receive the Word of GOD from him, and that not as the Word of Men, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of GOD! You are to place yourselves as in the solemn Presence of GOD, to hear all Things that are commanded him of GOD. You are to receive his Instructions; to obey his Admonitions and Reproofs; to consult him in the Affairs of your souls, and seek his Advice; and that he may give it with Judgment, and adapt it to your Cases, you are to lay aside an excessive Reservedness, and open your Cases to him, as far as Prudence will admit.

1 Cor. 9. 17.
Mat. 28.
19.
20.
2 Tim. 4.
2.
Mal. 2.7.
1 Thes. 2.
13.
Acts 10.
33.

3. You are obliged to "submit to the Exercise of ecclesiastical Discipline by him."

The Kingdom of Christ is not of this World; and
Job 18.
36.

and therefore none of His Officers should claim or exercise any Government in His Church, which in the least *supercedes civil Authority*, or interferences or coincides with it.

2 Cor. 1. Nor have they any *Dominion over your Faith*,
 24. nor a Right to *lord it over God's Heritage*,
 1 Pet. 5. 3. and exercise a *spiritual Tyranny* over the Consciences of Men, by their *arbitrary Impositions* in matters of *Faith or Practice*. But notwithstanding this, the Church of the GOD

1 Cor. 14. of *Order* is not a *Chaos*, a confused, anarchical Society. The Lord Jesus reigns, let the
 33. Church rejoice. Jesus reigns
 Ps. 97. 1. a *mediatorial King* upon His holy Hill of Zi-
 — 2. 6. on, to *order it*, and to *establish it*. *Holiness*
 Isa. 9. 7. *becomes His House for ever*; and He will not
 Ps. 93. 5. suffer it to be turned into a *Den of Thieves*.
 Mat. 21. He has therefore instituted a *spiritual Govern-
 13. ment* in His Church, to be managed by proper
 Eph. 4. 8, *Officers* in His Name. When He *ascended*
 — 11, *up on High*, — He gave some *Pastors and*
 — 12. *Teachers*, — *for the Work of the Ministry*, whose duty it is partly to *rule well*, and especially to *labour in the Word and Doctrine*.

1 Tim. 5. It is also probable, tho' it has been disputed
 17. by good and great men, that He has appointed another Set of Officers in His Church, who are not authorized to preach the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments; but only to *assist* His Ministers in the Exercise of *Discipline*, as the *Representatives* of the People, chosen by them †. This Authority is given *for Edification*,

† This would be a very unsuitable Place to discuss so difficult a Point as the *Jus Divinum*, or *Divine Institution* of the

tion, and not for Destruction; and was intended not to irritate Offenders, and confirm them in Impenitence: or shut them up under a Sentence of irrevocable Condemnation; but as a wholesome Severity to bring them to Repentance; to purge the Church from the Infection, which might spread thro' it like Leaven; and to warn others, that all Israel may bear, and fear, and do no more any such Wickedness. Our Church, My Brethren, is not the Creature of the State; and it is our Happiness that we are not doomed to fruitless Prayers for the Restoration of the godly Discipline of the primitive Church; but can actually exercise it. You are therefore to expect that

2 Cor. 10.
8.
1 Cor. 5. 7.
Deut. 13.
11.

the Office of Ruling Elders. I shall therefore only hint at the principal Topics of Argument in its Favour. The Apostle distinguishes Elders or Presbyters [*πρεσβυτεροι*.] into two Classes; the one, whose Province it is only to rule, or preside, [*προεδρετε*] the other, who are also to labour in the Word and Doctrine. (1 Tim. 5. 17.) And in his Enumeration of ecclesiastical Offices, he mentions Governments, i.e. Governors, as distinct from Teachers; (1 Cor. 12. 28.) and intimates that these Offices were not always united in the same persons. (v. 29, 30.) so in Rom. 12. 7, 8. he mentions him that ruleth, as distinct from him that teacheth and exhorteth.--From all which Presbyterians have inferred, I think with sufficient Probability to warrant their Conduct, that some may be appointed to assist in ruling the Church, who are not qualified nor authorized to officiate as Ministers of the Gospel.—It is evident that Church-discipline is to be exercised by the Church, and is not appropriated to the Minister alone. (Matt. 18. 17. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5, 13. 2 Cor. 2. 6.) It must therefore be exercised either by the Church collectively taken, which will give

equi

86 *To purge the Church, and bring Offenders to Repentance.*

that your Minister in Conjunction with your Elders will exercise it among you. They
1 Co. 5. 7. must purge away the old Leaven; they must
-----13. put away wicked Persons, or scandalous Of-
Tit. 3. 10. fenders from among you, and reject Heretics
after proper Admonition; and not admit
them to the Communion of the Church; 'till
they give Evidences of Repentance and Refor-
mation. Them that sin publicly, they must
1 Tim. 5. rebuke before All, that others also may fear.
20. If any of you therefore should be so un-
happy, as to expose yourselves by any
Offence inconsistent with the Profession of
Christianity, to the Admonitions and Cen-
sures of the Church, inflicted by your
Minister, you are to submit to them; and
make those open and sincere Acknowledg-
ments

equal Authority to the Injudicious, yea, to Women and Children, (for they may be Church-members) with those that are endowed with a Spirit of Government; which is absurd: or by the Church representative, i. e. by Persons chosen and appointed by the People to assist the Minister in the Exercise of Discipline. — I shall only add, that ruling Elders may be very serviceable to the Minister as well as the People, by inspecting their Conduct; which the Minister cannot possibly do, especially in a large or scattered Congregation; and by assisting him with their Advice in Matters that may come before them. There seems therefore the same Reason for this Institution as for the Appointment of Elders for the Assistance of Moses in a like Case. (Exod. 18. 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26.) And we may conclude that what was so expedient to be instituted, was actually instituted. — This has been practised by all Churches who follow the Presbyterian Plan in Scotland, Holland, Geneva, &c. — After all, I must not boast a dogmatical Certainty, till fuller Evidence appear.

ments of Repentance and Reformation, which the Nature of your Crime may demand. If you knew with what *sorrowful Reluctance* the Officers of the Church use the *Rod* of Discipline towards Offenders; instead of *resenting* their Conduct, you would heartily *pity* them, and severely *censure yourselves*, for imposing so very *disagreeable* a Task upon them. And what will ye? Shall they come unto you with a *Rod*; or in *Love*, and in the Spirit of *Meekness*? This depends upon your behaving according to the Gospel; and therefore, for your *own* sakes as well as *theirs*, let this be your constant Care.

4. You are under Obligations to *contribute a sufficient maintenance to your Minister.*"

A *covetous rapacious Disposition* in a Minister of Jesus, whose Kingdom is not of this World; is peculiarly *unbecoming* and *odious*; nor are his People obliged to gratifie his insatiable *Greediness* after riches, or to heap upon him the *superfluous Luxuries* of Life. But he has a *Right* to a *competent Maintenance* for himself and Family, from those who enjoy his Labours—This, I hope, I may say on this Occasion, without giving any Umbrage for Suspicion; since I am not speaking in my *own* behalf; and I can appeal to yourselves that this is the *first* Time you have ever heard it from my Lips—Ministers are under

1 Tim. 1. 8. der the Obligations common to All, to provide for themselves and their Household; and if they neglect it, they have denied the Faith, and are worse than Infidels—They generally sustain the tender Names of Husband and Father; and they are not hardened against the affectionate Anxieties of those Relations. Nature and Religion oblige them to educate their Children, and to raise them above the Hardships and Temptations of extreme Poverty: They are but Mortals; nay, they belong to a languishing, dying Fraternity; who if they are industrious and indefatigable in the labours of their Function, are not seldom immaturely pressed into the grave under the burden of them. And I may appeal to such of you, as know any Thing of the Tenderness of parental or conjugal Affection, what acute Anxieties must distress their minds, to leave their dear Relicts and tender Off-spring, helpless and forlorn, to the wide World, to all the Extremities of remediless, abject Poverty.

Tit. 1. 8. Ministers must also be Lovers of Hospitality, according to the apostolic Character of a faithful Bishop; and afford a generous and kind Entertainment to Friends and Strangers that visit them—But how, My Brethren, can they be capable of these Things, but by the generous Contributions of their People? They cannot take the usual and necessary Measures to provide for themselves, without disqualifying themselves for the Exercise of their Office, and neglecting your Souls. All their Abilities

Abilities are sacred to GOD and His Church: and the Time and Strength which you employ in temporal Pursuits, they are obliged to lay out in hard Studies for your Good, or in the painful Labours of their Ministry in a more public Manner. And if you suffer them to be disturbed in their Preparations with distracting secular Cares and Incumbrances, their Discourses will unavoidably be indigested, shallow and injudicious, and less adapted for your Edification; and consequently the Disadvantage in the Issue will fall upon yourselves—Besides; their Education, Studies and Employment have given their Minds such a Turn to other Things, that they are not capable of managing their worldly Affairs with the same Dexterity with those that have always been habituated to them. Since then, My Brethren, for your Sakes they deny themselves the Advantage of secular Pursuits; it is highly reasonable you should make a sufficient Provision for them. Nay, this is a Matter of Justice and natural Equity. So the Apostle has stated it. Who goeth a Warfare at any Time at his own Charges? Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eateth not of the Milk of the Flock? Whence it is evident, that a Minister has as good a Right to Maintenance from his People, as a Soldier to wages from his King, for whom he fights; or the Keeper of a Vineyard to eat of the Fruit of it; or a Shepherd to the Milk of his Flock. And if they are denied this Right, they are more hardly used than Oxen, according to the Law of Moses

1 Cor. 9. 7.

- Moses; for there we have this Prohibition,
- 1 Cor. 9. 9. *Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox, which treadeth out the Corn; which the Apostle informs us, was not given for the sake of Oxen, but to teach this Moral, which I am now inculcating. This is also a Ministers Right according to the Law of Retaliation, or the Rule of Proportion; for if we have sown unto you spiritual Things, saith the Apostle, is it a GREAT THING, (as some narrow Souls may count it) if we reap your carnal Things? Nay, this duty you are obliged to perform by the Authority of GOD Himself; and therefore to inculcate it, is not to make an avaricious Demand upon you in our own Names, but to instruct you in a matter you should make conscience of: for, as according to the law of Moses, they which minister about holy Things, live of the Things of the Temple; and they who wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar in the Offerings of the People: even so (saith St Paul)*
11. *hath the Lord Himself ordained, that they*
13. *who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel; and no wonder; for the Workman is worthy of his Meat; and the Labourer of his Reward. You are therefore, My Brethren, to look upon yourselves as bound by Reason, by Gratitude, by natural equity and Justice, and by the express Authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to make a competent Provision for your Minister of the good things of this life; that he may attend upon the Lord without Distraction, and give himself wholly to the great Work of the Ministry*
- Mat. 10. 10.
- Tim. 1. 5. 18.
- 1 Cor. 7. 31.
- 1 Tim. 4. 15.
- Ministry

Ministry among you. And, in so doing, you are not to think, that you are performing a *Work of Supererogation*, or a Matter of *Generosity*, or giving *Alms to a Beggar*; but that you are discharging a *Duty binding upon your Conscience* towards him that labours among you in the Lord.

Finally; It is your Duty to *exert yourselves* to the utmost, in your respective spheres, in *all proper Methods to promote the Success of the Gospel* among you, and to *lighten your Minister's Labours*. Join unanimous, as one man in this generous Enterprize: and in so doing you may expect the Blessing of Heaven to rest upon you, and render you a flourishing Church: and that when your Minister and you have joined a while in the *imperfect Services of GOD's earthly House*, you shall meet around *the Throne on High*, and spend a happy Eternity together, in the *divinest Intimacy*, in the *more exalted Services of the Temple of GOD in Heaven*.—Which may the Blessed GOD grant for *Jesus Sake*.

A M E N.

APPENDIX.

Containing the Form of INSTALLATION, &c.

YOU have, Dear Sir, at your *Ordination*, solemnly entered into Obligations to discharge your Ministry faithfully towards the *Church of GOD in general*. But as you now undertake the pastoral Charge of *this Congregation in particular*; it is fit you should publicly, with the most awful Solemnity, *renew your Obligations*, with such *circumstantial Variations*, as your Relation to a *particular Charge* requires.

Therefore,

Do You publicly and solemnly undertake the pastoral Care of this Congregation, who have joined in presenting a Call to you ?

Do you solemnly promise, in the Presence of God, Angels and Men, as you will answer it at the tremendous Day of final Accounts, that thro' the Aids of Divine Grace, you will perform towards them all the Duties belonging to your Character, as a Minister of the Gospel ? Particularly—That you will be diligent and laborious in *Study*, to furnish your own mind with a rich Treasury of Divine Knowledge,
to

Acts 20.
27.

to communicate to your People?—That you will faithfully, solemnly and clearly *declare* to them *the whole Counsel of God*, and preach *the Gospel* in that Manner, which you believe in your Conscience will have the most effectual Tendency to the Salvation of your Hearers, and to advance the Honour of your heavenly Master?—That you will take all other proper Measures, publicly and privately, for their Edification; as *examining* them in that *catechetical* Form, which you shall judge best suited to their Capacities; making them *ministerial Visits*, as far as your strength, and the Extent of your Congregation will allow, to *teach them from House to House*, to enquire into the state of their Souls, and their Regulations as to Family-Religion; and intermingling solemn and instructive Reflections in your *common Conversation* with them?—That you will *administer the Sacraments* of the New Testament, *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, to proper Subjects, according to the Divine Institution?—That you will, in concert with the *Ruling Elders* of this Congregation, *exercise the Discipline* and Government, which the King of Zion has instituted in his Church? And that in all these Branches of your Office, you will make the SACRED SCRIPTURES your only *infallible* and *supreme* Rule, as they are substantially explained in the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, *Catechisms*, *Sum of saving Knowledge*, and *Directory*, which you adopted at your Ordination; and in *the Articles of the Church of England*, which you have subscribed;

ed; excepting those engaged in the *Act of Toleration?*

Do you solemnly promise, that in all your Behaviour and Conversation, you will conduct yourself as a Christian, and a Minister of the Gospel, in your private, domestic, and public Capacity; and in all your Dealings with Believers in Word, in Conversation, in Letters, in Spirit, in Faith, in Power, that you will follow you as a Follower of Christ?

[Mr. Todd at the Close of his Sermon, paragraph, passing over to these Obligations.]

And you, My Brethren of the Congregation, who have presented a Call to the Rev. Mr. John Todd, Do you now, at your free Choice, publicly and explicitly testify to him as your Minister in the Lord, and acknowledge him as such? — In Token of your Testimony you are desired to hold up your Hands.

[This Signal was given by the People.†]

Do you solemnly promise, that you will thro' Divine Grace, you will

† That this Signal may be given with propriety, a great Multitude is required, or some other way determined by their

Church, I thus
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I have
Tim. 4
2 Cor.
lifting
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him all those *Duties*, which according to the sacred Scriptures, are due to One of his *Character*; while he behaves in *Character*? Particularly—that you will *love* and *honour* him—that you will attend upon and receive the

Word

their Consent in some *public, explicit* Manner. To express it with the *Voice*, would cause such confused Murmurings, or noisy Exclamations, as would not consist with the grave and still Solemnity of public Worship; and it would be difficult in this Method, to distinguish those that *consent* from the *Dissentients*. It has therefore been the Practice of Presbyterians; and sundry other Denominations, to require the People to express their Consent by the silent, signifying Token of *holding up the Hand*. And this *Signal* has been used in public Elections by various Nations, particularly by the antient *Greeks*; as appears from the Words of their famous Orator *Demosthenes*: 'Ο δ̄ημος τας εμας γ̄νωμας περῑ σωτηριας τ̄ης πολ̄ω̄ς χειροτονει i.e. The Populace signified their Approbation of my Sentiments for the public Safety by *stretching out their Hands*. Nay, this was so usual a Ceremony in public Elections, that the Word *χειροτονω* did at length, like most other Metaphors, drop its *literal* Signification, and was used to denote the *Choice* of Persons to an Office, when the Choice was *not* made by this *Sign*. Thus it is used with a Preposition. Acts 10. 41 "Him hath GOD raised up, the third Day, and shewed Him openly, not to all the People, but unto Witnesses chosen before [π̄ροῑ χειροτονημενοῑ] of GOD." But that which has most Weight in the present Case is, that this *Token* appears to have been used in ecclesiastical Elections in the *Apostolic Age*; which is a Precedent to be followed in all future Ages. The only Places where I can find the Word *χειροτονω* simply used, are Acts 14: 23: and 2 Cor. 8: 19. The first is thus rendered by our Translators, "When they had ordained Elders in every Church, &c." But, literally translated, it would read thus, "And having chosen them

Word and Ordinances of GOD dispensed by him, and honestly endeavour to profit by his Ministrations?—that you will submit to the Exercise of ecclesiastical Discipline by him and your Representatives? — that you will provide for him a comfortable Maintenance of the

them Presbyters by LIFTING UP THE HAND, in every Church, &c.” for the original Word is χειροτομαντας. And thus it plainly intimates, that those Ministers or Presbyters (as they were called in that Age) to whom they committed the pastoral Charge of particular Congregations or Churches, were first chosen by the Suffrages of the People, signified by their lifting up, or stretching forth the Hand. For to allege, as some have done, that the original Word here signifies Ordination by the Imposition of Hands, is to take it in an unprecedented Sense; for the Imposition of Hands, as far as I have observed, is always expressed by another Phrase, viz. επιθεσις των χειρων (See Acts 8. 18. and 9. 17. and 13. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 6. Heb. 6. 2.) In the other Place, (2 Cor. 8. 19.) we read of one chosen by the Churches by the lifting up of the Hand, [χειροτονησις] to receive their Contributions—From hence we may infer, that this was the common Method among them of signifying their public Consent in like Cases — And this is confirmed from the Practice of the primitive Church, in the 3 first Centuries; in which this Ceremony was commonly used in public ecclesiastical Elections. Thus Fabianus was elected Bishop of Rome, when all the Brethren were met together to chuse One by lifting up the Hand. [χειροτονιας εινεν] Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 28. Thus also Ignatius advised Polycarp to convene his People to elect by lifting up the Hand [χειροτομασαι] a Messenger into Syria Ep. ad Pol. And the Church of Philadelphia met to chuse a Messenger by this Sign [χειροτον σαιδιακονου] to send to Antioch. Ign. Ep. ad Philad. p. 40. I shall only add, that the Promises of a People to a Minister on such an Occasion

98 *The right Hand of Fellowship given to the Minister.*

the good Things of this Life? — And in a Word, that you will unaniously *exert* yourselves to lighten the Burden, and promote the Success of his Labours among you? — In Token of your undertaking these Obligations, you are desired again to lift up your Hands.

[*This was here complied with again by the People.*]

And now let the *Elders*, as the Representatives of this Congregation, give Mr. Todd the Gal. 2. 9. *right Hand of Fellowship*, as a Token that you receive him as your Minister. §

[*This was also complied with by the Elders.*]

The

are equivalent to an *Oath*. Now this Ceremony of *holding up the Hand*, is properly used to signify an Oath. Thus GOD is represented as *lifting up his Hand*, when He swears. Deut. 34. 40. Ezek. 20, 5, 6, 15, 23, 28, 42. and 36. 7. and 47. 14. Thus Abraham expresses a solemn *Oath* he had taken, "I have *lifted up my Hand* unto the Lord, &c." Gen. 14. 22. And thus an Angel is represented (Rev. 10. 5, 6.) as *lifting up his Hand* to Heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever — From all these Things it appears, that this is a rational, scriptural and precedented Method of congregational Election, and entering into solemn Engagements on such Occasions.

§ The *joining of Hands* has by Custom become a significant Sign among many Nations of civil *Respect*, *Reconciliation*, *Promising* or *contracting*, &c. And in various Churches, particularly that of *Scotland*, this Ceremony is used at the *Ordination* and *Installation* of a Minister; at his *Ordination*,

The happy Day, My Brethren, is now come, for which you have longed, for which you have prayed, with anxious Importunity; the Day of the joyful Accomplishments of your eager Wishes, in the Settlement of a Minister of your own Election among you. And will you not highly prize, will you not zealously improve, the *distinguishing* Favour of Heaven to you? *Distinguishing*, I may call it; for many Congregations under the Care of the same Presbytery with you, have lain for many Years vacant, thro' the Scarcity of Ministers; and they are still *crying for Bread, but there is no Man to break it unto them.* - And will you not bring forth more Fruit, than that Part of the Lord's Vineyard, that lies *uncultivated* for Want of Labourers? Shall *this* be the Occasion of more aggravated *Condemnation* to any of you, *that Light is come among you, and you love Darknes rather than Light?* Remember, *Sirs*, the Con-
Lam. 4.
4.
John 3.
19.
sequences

by the Ministers, in Token of their receiving him into ministerial Communion as a Member of the Presbytery; and at his Installation, by the Congregation, the pastoral Charge of which he undertakes, as a Token of their receiving him as their Minister, and into a more intimate Communion with them. And it seems warranted by the Example of the Apostles, who signified their Approbation of the Doctrine of Paul and Barnabas, and their receiving them into Fellowship in the Apostleship, by giving them *the right Hands of Fellowship*, Gal. 2. 9. This Ceremony was used as a *Token of Agreement* long before, both among the *Israelites*, 2 Kings 10. 15. and among the *Heathens*. Jer. 50. 15. Ezek. 71. 18. See also Ezra 10. 19. 2 Cor. 7. 8.

- sequences of this Day's Transaction will be everlasting, and of infinite Importance. The plain, simple Gospel, which you will hear from Time to Time from the Mouth of your Minister, will not be an *Indifferency*; but, like *strong Medicines*, either *recover* you to Holiness and Happiness, or *exasperate* your Disease, and sharpen the Agonies of eternal Death. And what, My Brethren, if the commission of your Minister to some of you, should appear by the Event to have been like that shocking one of *Isaiab, Go,—and make the Hearts of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes: lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and convert and be healed?*" Your hearts melt, Horror chills your Blood, and your whole Frame shudders at the Terror of the Thought! And yet (alas how shall I express it!) *this* will certainly be the Doom of such of you as *trifle* with the Means of Grace: And such, in all Probability, will be found among you. You should *rejoice with trembling* in the Settlement of a Minister among you: for it is an *awful*, as well as a *joyful* Providence. You may tremble, lest in his subordinate Sphere, he should, like his Divine Master, be *set for the Fall*, as well as *for the Rising again of many* among you.
- Isa. 6. 9.
 — 10.
 Psa. 2. 11.
 Luk. 2.
 34.

Therefore, *adjure* yourselves by the living GOD, to *exert* yourselves in the improving his Ministry. Sinners, *now is the accepted Time;*

Time, now is the Day of Salvation. "Now **OR NEVER**"! Be this your alarming *Motto* from henceforth. Now it is *Harvest* among you; now this *Reaper* is sent into it: and if you refuse to be gathered, except to be burnt with the *Stubble* in unquenchable Fire. Now the *Kingdom of Heaven* is preached; let every Man press into it. Force your Way into it with holy *Violence* and take it with almighty *Importunity*. And *Saints*, now you will have the *Bread of Life* frequently broken unto you. You have a *Pastor*, we hope according to *God's own Heart*, to feed you with *Knowledge and Understanding*. Therefore grow in *grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. What can rejoice your *Minister* more, than to see you flourishing in the *Courts of your God*, and still bringing forth *Fruit*, even when others are barren and withering around you? Let your *Prayers* assist him in his *Negotiations* with you, and with the *Ungodly*, in the Name of *Jesus*.

2 Cor. 6, 2.

Joh. 4, 35.

Luke 3, 17.

--- 16, 16.

Matt. 11,

12.

Jer. 3, 15,

2 Pet. 3,

18.

Pf. 92, 13.

— 14.

Now, My Brethren, you want only the *Influences of the Spirit* to carry on Religion among you: and indeed, even a *Zealous Paul* may plant, and an eloquent *Apollos* water in vain, if *God*, does not give the *Increase*. It is not by *Power*, nor by *Might*, but by the *Spirit of the Lord of Hosts*, that *Mountainous Difficulties* can be levelled, and made easy; and a *spiritual Temple* erected and finished among you, with triumphant *Shouts*

1 Cor 3, 6.

Zech. 4, 6.

Shouts of GRACE ! GRACE ! Therefore lift up your Cries to the God of all Grace for the Influences of His Spirit. Here is the Minister ; here is the Gospel ; here are multitudes of perishing immortals. But where is the Lord GOD of Elijah ? Where is He that can put His Holy Spirit in them ; and make His Word living and effectual, † sharper than a two-edged Sword, as a fire and a Hammer to melt and break rocky Hearts into contrition?—Lord ! if thou be here, our Souls will not Die. And “ oh ! that Thou wouldest rend the Heavens ! that Thou wouldest come down ! But alas ! Thou hast hid Thy Face from us ; Thou hast consumed us, because of our iniquities : and therefore there is none that calleth upon Thy Name, or that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee.” Let us therefore, My Brethren, ardently seek the Lord, ’till He come, and rain Righteousness upon us ; ’till Truth spring out of the Earth ; ’till Righteousness look down from Heaven, and Glory dwell in our Land.

You have generally forsaken the *Established Church*, we hope not from a *schismatical Spirit*, and with *no hostile Dispositions* ; but from a *sincere Desire of attending stately* on such Means, as you believe in your Consciences are better adapted to your Edification ; still possessed with *benevolent Wishes* for the spiritual Prosperity of the church you left. And now, My Brethren, tho’ some discover

† *ἵνα καὶ ἡμεῖς*

no small *Malignity* in their *extravagant* Expectations of this Kind; yet, let me tell you, the World may *justly* expect a *Consistency* and *Uniformity* in the *Whole* of your Conduct. They may *justly* expect, that you will be peculiarly *holy* in *all Manner of Conversation*; 2Pet. 3. 17; and if you make no Conscience of the important Duties of our *common* Christianity, while you pretend conscientious Scruples about attending stately on the *established* Forms of Religion, they may *justly* brand you as *Hypocrites*. For what is it but glaring *Hypocrisy*, when Men make a mighty Noise about *purser* Modes of Worship, while they wallow in the *Impurity* of Sin; or pretend to relish the Doctrines of *Grace* and *experimental Religion*, while they neglect the plain Dictates of *Natural Religion* and *Morality*? What is it but bare-faced *Hypocrisy*, that one who makes no Conscience of Prayer *at all*, should pretend conscientious Scruples against praying *by Form*? Or in short, that one *void of Christianity*, should set up as an *Advocate for Presbyterianism*, as tho' he might be a *true Presbyterian* without being a *real Christian*; or must be a *Christian unavoidably and of Course*, by assuming the *Presbyterian* Denomination? Therefore, my Brethren, be nobly *singular* in *all holy Conversation and Godliness*. SEPARATE yourselves from all Sin, and causeless Familiarity with the *Irreligious*. DISSENT from the *vicious* Ways of the World, however fashionable: and have no COMMUNION with the *unfruitful works* Eph. 5. 11;

Q

of

104 *And to beware of perfidiously violating them.*

of Darknefs. Otherwise you can find no Refuge in any Denomination under Heaven; but your Condemnation will be aggravated in Proportion to the Purity of the Society to which you belong, and the Excellency of the Means you enjoy.

Remember the solemn Obligations you have entered into this Day towards your Minister. Even in *common Cases*, you must *not change*,
Ps. 15. 4. *tho' you swear to your own Hurt*; But now you have opened your Mouth unto the Lord, in a Matter of the most sacred Importance, and cannot go back. You have lifted up your Hands to the Lord, the most High GOD, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, that you will perform towards your Minister, while he behaves in *Character*, all the Duties due to his sacred Character, according to the Divine Oracles. And I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you this Day, that if you violate those solemn Obligations, you will walk the Earth under the heavy Guilt of *Perjury* and broken Vows; and in Case of *final Impenitence*, will at length descend into the *Blackness of Darknefs for ever*, under the intolerable Curse of GOD Almighty, as *Covenant-Breakers*, who are ranked among the most abominable Sinners. Therefore I solemnly charge you, Be faithful to God; be faithful to his Messenger among you, according to your own voluntary Obligations. Obey him that has the Rule over you, and submit yourselves: for he watches for your Souls as one that must give Account; that he may do

Judg. 11. 35.
Gen. 14. 22.
Deut. 30. 19.
Jud. v. 13.
Rom. 8. 31.
Heb. 13. 17.

do it with Joy, and not with Grief; for that is unprofitable to you. However, whether you hear, or whether you forbear; yet shall you know, to your Comfort or to your Cost, that there has been a Prophet, i. e. a Minister Ezek. 2. 5. of God, among you.

And You, My dear Brother, who after all your anxious Perplexities about the Place where Duty called you to settle, among the many vacant Congregations so earnest to obtain your Labours, have at length determined, we hope under the Direction of Divine Providence, to undertake the pastoral Charge of this People; allow me the Freedom to address you once more. You also may say, *Thy Vows are upon me, O GOD.* You have solemnly consecrated your Life, and all your Abilities, to the Service of this People. *Son of Man, behold GOD has made thee a Watchman to this Congregation: therefore hear the Word at His Mouth, and give them warning from Him. If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his Way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his Blood will I require at thine Hand, saith the Lord.* Dreadful! Does not the Terror of the Thought overwhelm you! Were you accessory to the Murder of your Father that gave you Being, how would you shudder, and be ready to run a Vagabond and a Fugitive upon Earth, lest every one that finds you, should slay you! But the Blood of Immortal Souls is a more dreadful burden; and by being accessory to

Ps. 56. 12.

Ezek. 33.

7.

—9.

Gen. 4. 14

Q 2

4.

it, the *Physician* becomes the *Butcher* of Mankind. Therefore, take the Alarm; and *whether they hear, or whether they forbear,*

Ezek. 33. *give them faithful Warning from GOD. And know it to your Comfort, that if you warn the Wicked, and yet he turn not from his Way; he indeed shall die in his Iniquity;*

Jer. 45 .4. *but thou hast delivered thy Soul. Glorious*

5. *deliverance in so wretched a world as this, where all is going to Ruin; if you get your own soul for a prey, you are infinitely enriched.*

No doubt, Sir, you will meet with *many Difficulties* in the discharge of your office :

1 Kin. 1. 49 *for what are you better than your Fathers; who have always groaned under them? You will meet with Opposition and unkind treatment from an ungrateful World, even while you are labouring to promote its best interests: for though the Strictness of living Religion be the most beneficent thing in the World; yet it is alas! the most ungrateful Thing to the degenerate sons of men, which can be obtruded upon them; and they may count you their Enemy for telling them the truth.*

Gal. 4. 16 *But, feeble "Son of man, be not afraid of them; neither be afraid of their Words; tho'*

Ezek. 3. 8. *Briar's & Thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among Scorpions; for behold, saith the Lord, I will make thy Face strong against their Faces; and thy Forehead strong against their Foreheads: as an Adamant harder than Flint, will I make thy Forehead: therefore fear them not, neither be dismayed*

ut their looks, tho' they be a rebellious House." The Word of the Lord, may be made a reproach to you, and a derision daily: and you may be mortified with that *supreme of difficulties, Unsuccessfulness*. Then your discouragements may almost sink you into that Resolution, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His Name: for ah! Lord God, I cannot speak, for I am a Child: and to what Purpose shall I speak & give warning, when none will hear? Why should I toil in vain to charm deaf Adders? Thy voice, O my GOD, says, cry: but what shall I cry? From what new Topics shall I try to persuade those, who have disregarded all the Arguments which thy Gospel can afford?"—But take Courage! take Courage! say not, "I am a Child;" for you shall go to all that God shall send you; and whatsoever He commands you, that you shall speak. Be not afraid of their Faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. These were the encouraging Promises of GOD to his extraordinary Embassadors; & these may be humbly claimed, abstracting extraordinaries, by all His faithful Servants, in all Ages, in their lower Spheres; as the Promise to Joshua, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," is extended by the Apostle, & applied to all sincere Christians. Therefore, my Brother, be strong and of good Courage. Let the resistless Constraints of the love of Christ carry you thro' Honour and Dishonour, and every Discouragement. Let His Word be

Jer. 20. 8.

—9.

—1. 6.

—10. 6.

Psal. 58. 4.

Isa. 40. 6.

Jer. 1. 7.

—8.

Josh. 1. 5.

Heb. 13. 5.

Josh. 1. 6.

2Cor. 5. 14

—6. 8.

in

108 *And exhorting him to take Heed to himself. and his Doctrine.*

Jer. 6. 9. *in your Heart as a burning Fire shut up in your bones, that may make you weary of forbearing, and impatient of Silence, under the most overwhelming Discouragements. Be full of*

Job 32. 18. *matter, like Elibu; and let the Spirit within*
— 20. *you constrain you. Speak, that you may be refreshed; open your Lips to give vent to the Overflowings of an affectionate Zeal.*

Isa. 62. 1. *For Zion's Sake do not hold your Peace, & for Jerusalem's Sake do not rest, until the Righteousness thereof go forth as Brightness, & the Salvation thereof as a Lamp that burneth.*

1 Tim. 4. 16. *Let it be your first care to take Heed to YOURSELF; lest by any Means when you have*

1 Cor. 9. 27. *preached to others, you yourself should be a Cast-away. Let not your own Vineyard run*

Cant. 1. 6. *waste, while you are taking Care of that of others. Let not your Concern for the Public swallow up all your Care for yourself; but remember you have as intimate a personal Concern in the important Things you declare to others, as any of your Hearers; and therefore they should first impress your own Heart; and the Concern, by a happy Contagion, should spread from you to your*

Mat. 5. 13. *People. You are the Salt of the Earth; but if the Salt have lost its Savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for Nothing.— Let it be your next Care to take*

1 Tim. 4. 16 *Heed, to your DOCTRINE. Speak as the*

1 Pet. 4. 11. *Oracles of God. Speak the Truth as it is in*

Eph. 4. 21. *Jesus. Give yourself continually to Prayer,*
and

and the Ministry of the Word. If you would Aet. 6. 4.
evidence your Love to the blessed Jesus, then Joh. 21. 15.
feed his Sheep; yea, feed His feeblest Lambs. — 16.
In short, take heed to yourself, and to the — 17.
Flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you
an Overseer, to feed the Church of GOD, which
He hath purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD! A-
mazing Love! who can resist the Energy of this
endearing Excitement! Can we begrudge our
most painful Labours for them, for whom an
incarnate GOD thought it worth while to
shed His own Blood? No; if GOD laid down
His life for us, we ought to be willing to 1 John 3.
lay down our Lives for the Brethren. Yea, if 16.
we should be offered upon the Sacrifice and
Service of their Faith, we should joy, and
rejoice with them all. Therefore take the Phil. 2. 17.
Oversight of the Flock, not by Constraint, but 1 Pet. 5. 2.
willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready
Mind: neither as being Lord over God's Heri-
tage; but being an Example to the Flock; and
when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you
shall receive a Crown of Glory, which fadeth
not away.

These Things, Dear Sir, I affectionately
recommend to you as a Friend: These Things
I beseech you to observe, with all the earnest
Importunity of a Petitioner: Nay, as an
humble Embassador of the most High, "I 1 Tim. 5.
solemnly charge thee before GOD, and the 21.
Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels that
thou observe these Things. I charge thee before 2 Tim. 4.
God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge 1.
the

the Quick and the Dead, at His Appearance,
 2 Tim. 4. and His Kingdom; preach the Word; be in-
 2. stant in Season, and out of Season; reprove,
 rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and
 Doctrine: and in so doing you will save
 1 Tim. 4. yourself, and them that hear you." A glo-
 16. rious Salvation! A more noble exploit than
 subduing Kingdoms, or delivering Nations
 from the Yoke of temporal Slavery!

And now, My Brethren of the Laity, when
 you have heard the solemn Charge laid upon
 your Minister; can you ever resent it, if He
 should deal with you with plain, honest, and
 (as you may think) rough and severe Faith-
 fulness? Alas! Sirs, what would you have
 him do? Would you have him perjure him-
 self, and ruin you and his own Soul, thro'
 excessive Lenity and indulgence, rather than
 risque your Displeasure by endeavouring to
 save you, and pluck you out of the Burn-
 ing with unacceptable Violence? Should
 he prophesie smooth things, and you love
 to have it so; you might indeed dream a-
 way our life in carnal Security; but oh! what
 would you do in the End thereof? Then this
 will appear the most treacherous friendship,
 and the most inhuman Cruelty to himself and
 you; and a treacherous Violation of his obliga-
 tions to his Divine Master. Therefore be pa-
 tient of faithful Dealing; yea, love it, and
 love your Minister for using it, and acting so
 as to convince you, that he seeks not yours,
 but you.

Finally;

Finally; let me exhort you all, *Minister and People to join unanimous and ardent to promote living Religion among you.* In this let all your Endeavours center; for this preach; for this hear, according to your Stations; and for this waft up your united Prayers to Heaven. Make one honest Attempt to promote the Kingdom of God, among you. Make one joint Attack upon the usurped Empire of Satan. *Cast off the Works of Darkness, and put on the Armour of Light.* Let a religious Zeal become *universal* among you; let it catch every Heart, and spread from Family to Family. Let one go to another, saying, "Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of Hosts; and let every Individual echo back the Resolution, "I will go also." Parents and Masters, now begin to deal with your Children and Domestics with the tenderest Solemnity; and labour to impress their Hearts with a Sense of eternal Things. Kindle the fire of Devotion first in your Families, and bring it with you into the House of God. Children and Servants, now set yourselves to seek the Lord: let your Hearts be susceptible of Impressions from the public and private Instructions you hear. Let even *Aethiopia stretch forth her Hands unto God.* Let poor *Negroes* submit to the Gospel; and they shall become the genuine Children of Abraham, the Father of all the Faithful, and be the Lord's free-Men.

Rom. 13. 12.

Zech. 8. 21.

Pf. 67. 31. Gal. 3. 7. Rom. 4. 16 1 Cor. 7. 22

Away with every obstruction in the Way of the Lord. You have now a Voice crying

R in

- Isa. 40.3 *in this Wilderuess, " Prepare ye the Way of*
 —4. *the Lord; make straight Paths for our God."*
Sink, ye Mountains! Rise, ye Valleys! into
 Mal. 3.1. *Plains before Him. And then the Lord whom*
ye seek, will come into His Temple. Away with
your Jangles and Animosities; away with your
cavilling unforgiving Dispositions. Forbear,
forgive, love one another, and be at Peace
among yourselves; unless you would banish
 1 Thes. 5. *the pacific Spirit of God from among you*
 13. *unless you would weaken your own Interests;*
break the Heart of your Minister; and ren-
der his Ministrations useles among you. Be
this the only Contention among you for the
future, Who shall be the most patient of In-
juries, the most forgiving, and the most Zea-
lous to promote the common Cause of Chris-
tianity.

- Acts 20. *And now, Brethren, I commend you to God,*
 32. *and to the Word of His Grace, which is abi-*
to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance
among all them who are sanctified, And may
the God of Peace, that brought again from
the Dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd
of the Sheep, through the Blood of the ever-
lasting Covenant; may He make you perfect
in every good Work, to do his Will, working
in you that which is well-pleasing in His
Sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be Glo-
ry for ever and ever.

A M E N.

The

The PSALM sung in the Conclusion.

Psal. 132. 13,—18.

(*Dr. Watts's Version.*)

1. Where shall we go to seek, and find
An Habitation for our God?
A Dwelling for th' eternal Mind
Amongst the Sons of Flesh and Blood?
2. The God of *Jacob* chose the Hill
Of *Zion* for His ancient Rest:
And *Zion* is His Dwelling still,
His *Church* is with His Presence blest.
3. Here will I fix my gracious Throne,
And reign forever, saith the Lord;
Here shall my Power and Love be known,
And Blessings shall attend my Word.
4. Here will I meet the hungry Poor,
And fill their Souls with living Bread;
Sinners that wait before my Door
With sweet provisions shall be fed.
5. Girded with truth, and cloath'd with Grace
My Priests, my Ministers shall shine;
Not *Aaron* in his costly Dress
Made an Appearance so Divine.
6. The Saints unable to contain
Their inward Joys, shall thout and sing;
The Son of *David* here shall reign,
And *Zion* triumph in her King.

7. *JESUS*

7. Jews shall see a num'rous Seed
Born here, & uphold his glorious Name,
His Crown shall flourish on his Head,
While all His Foes are cloath'd with Shame.

FINIS.



ERRATA

Page 30 line 5th for Ruin- r ruined Page 52
for threefore r therefore.

