

THE
EMBASSY OF RECONCILIATION,

WITH ITS

OCCASION AND MINISTRY:

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

THE ORDINATION

OF

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IN THE CHURCH OF COLDENHAM.

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THE
EMBASSY OF RECONCILIATION,
&c.



2 Corinthians v. 20.

We are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

CORINTH, the capital of Achaia, built on the isthmus which separates the Grecian seas, was famous as a place of commerce. Profligacy of character, in this city, had attained to a great height. The extensive intercourse of her citizens with foreign parts, while it opened the avenues of wealth, also opened channels for the introduction of vice. The crimes, so generally characteristic of commercial cities, were speedily accumulated. Paganism, the established religion, lent an approving smile to lewdness. Long had the Gentile philosophers an opportunity of trying, upon the inhabitants of Corinth, the force of those arts and sciences, which were their boast. They were embraced; but did not succeed, in polishing the unsightly parts of the Corinthian character. At the appointed time, a special herald of the cross is brought on his way to this eminent city. The standard of Mes-

siah is raised, and war is proclaimed against existing systems of iniquity. This proclamation of hostility was introductory to the reconciliation of sinners to God, against whom they had unrighteously raised the impious hand of rebellion. The weapons of warfare, employed by the apostle Paul, were not carnal. They were such as addressed themselves to the understanding, conscience, and affections, of men; such as God employs, to effect a change of heart in the objects of his love.

This change is exclusively ascribed to the Divinity, although in it he employs the ministry of subordinate agents. He deals with man according to his moral nature; he *persuades* him. The ministry of his appointment, for the accomplishment of his designs, he commits to men. Those invested with this ministry are, by divine authority, Ambassadors, whose duty it is to propose, to sinful men, the plan of reconciliation devised in heaven. To them it belongs to urge upon the sinner, by powerful considerations, a compliance with the overtures of the system of grace.

Enmity against God is exhibited, in my text, as a prominent feature, in the character of fallen man. Were enmity not supposed, there could be no plan for reconciliation. A *scheme of reconciliation* is here proposed. We pray men, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. *Ambassadors are appointed* for this purpose. We are Ambassadors *for* Christ. THE ENMITY OF MAN AGAINST GOD, the PLAN

OF RECONCILIATION, and THE APPOINTMENT OF A MINISTRY, to carry this device into effect, are the subjects of discussion, which our text affords. To a brief illustration of these subjects, your attention is solicited. To speak and hear aright, O Spirit, grant thy aid!

I. MAN, AS FALLEN, IS IN A STATE OF ENMITY AGAINST GOD.

To establish this truth, and illustrate its import, might I not draw my vouchers from the records of the world? from the history of public and private crimes? from the divine judgments that have fallen upon transgressing men? And, above all, from the testimony of infallible truth, are we not certified of the fact?

The correctness of the proposition may be refused, by such as have not habituated themselves to think, under the influence of that light which the revelation of God sheds on this subject, and also upon other doctrines intimately connected with it. But the assertion cannot be denied by the consistent believer in the sacred volume. *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* We find his law transgressed by men in every age, of every rank, and in all relations of life. Such an effect must have an adequate cause. The uniformity of the results leads, by an impulse very natural, to refer them to an inherent principle of our fallen nature: and that principle cannot be such as corresponds with the Creator's law, which is indelibly stamped

with the seal of glorious holiness. The wanton violation of moral order, must result from a principle inimical to him, who settled that order.

Permit me more directly to illustrate the proposition under the following particulars. It is evinced by,

1. The constant violation of those laws by which the benevolent author of nature binds us together in society. Ties which are respected by the beasts that perish, are set at nought by man. The ferocious herds of the wilderness, of the same kind, while they may prowl within the limits of a species different from their own, dwell in harmony together. In point of moral excellency sunk beneath them, man is peculiarly fierce, when a ground of quarrel can be found with fellow-men. The dictates of nature are expunged from the tablets of the heart, and he ceases to act as the dignified, and humane, lord of the lower creation.

This description is not drawn from a few solitary instances, appearing once in an age, under some peculiarly inauspicious circumstances. No; the original, real, and in still darker colours than here drawn, is to be found in every age and in every land. Where is the happy country in which the fatal spot, sequestered for basest acts of fell revenge, may not be found? What happy people have not witnessed the unrelenting passion, that only said—that scarcely said—it is enough, when the object of jealousy

and hatred was laid low, among the inhabitants of the house of silence?

Individuals, moved to deeds of cruelty, are not the only evidences of the enmity of our nature against the peaceful order settled by God, in his moral empire. The plains of every land have been filled with men, trained to the direful practice of destroying man. The slaughter of myriads by human hands, is an event, which, from its frequency, ceases to invite the sympathies of even the more humane. The orphan's cries are not heard; the widows' tears and parents' woes are not perceived, amidst the triumphs or defeats of war, where every shout is with confused noise, and where the sights of garments rolled in blood, are familiar to the eye. How changed is man from what he was, when on his heart was impressed the law of love! *How is the gold become dim!*

But why review the outrages committed against the law of our nature, on the dreadful field of war, or on the spot selected by the duellist for his murderous deeds? Turn and see a still more shocking defiance of the Almighty, and by the most contemptible of all, who occupy the ranks of degraded man. It is the puny wretch, who, too cowardly to encounter and vanquish with other men the ills of life, draws against himself the murderous shaft, and meanly hopes, unnoticed, to steal from the field of action, and to lie concealed in eternal oblivion; for immortality he cannot desire—felicity, beyond the

bourne of time, he cannot expect; who, shrinking from the duties assigned him here, basely betrays his trust. Inexpressibly odious must be the nature of that principle, and powerful its operation, which, in defiance of all the dread authority of God, and regardless of all the joys connected with his favour, degrades the mind, and perverts its choice so far, as to induce it to court the shades of the darkness of everlasting night, rather than with the magnanimity of the man, I should say the heroism of the saint; to ascend the hills of difficulty; to rise above the regions of clouds and storms, and in the firmament of glory shine among the morning stars in the splendour of eternal day. Base as the character of the self-murderer is, characters no less base, no less inimical, to human nature's dignity, are found apologists for his crime.—They hope to conceal its odious features, under the specious veil of superior sensibility of mind.—Such are the forms in which enmity against God appears among men. To search for further evidence, in these abodes of darkness, is painful to the mind. Let us turn,

2. To the religious world. Here also are displays of the hostile principle. I mean not to lead you to review the superstitious systems of ancient times. The worship of Moloch; the victims that smoked upon his altars; the obscene rites, and bloody sacrifices of Juggernaut, now established in India, shall not to-day offend the sensibilities of my

audience. Without going so far abroad, we have ample evidence of the truth now under consideration.

Opposition to the Gospel of Jesus is, perhaps, the most unaccountable display of enmity against God, that moral beings have ever witnessed. Man's woes are too sensibly felt, to require argumentative proof of their existence. Nature's light, and reason's investigations, provide no remedy. Upon the darkness of that futurity which the finally impenitent must expect, the bright discoveries of Gospel light cast no illuminating beams. The Gospel, however, proposes to sinners of every grade, a remedy in time. A compliance with the proposal is urged upon the sinner, by motives involving all that is awful, grand, and lovely. Eternal love appears in view, operating for fallen man. The device of the covenant of redemption is worthy of that wisdom which formed the plan of creation, and adds, in its execution, to the declarative glory of that power which reared the august fabric of the heavens. The gift of Christ, in beneficence, exceeds all human calculations. To enforce a compliance with this benevolent scheme, the ministration of the law accompanies the exhibition of the Gospel. It is a light shining in a dark place. It illuminates the abodes of man, enters the secret chambers of the heart, and lays open its deeds of darkness. It unfolds the odious nature of moral evil, and prohibits its practice in every form. Its penalty is dis-

played in all its dread—*cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law.* The vail that hides the writhings of despair, is drawn aside, while it rudely seizes the sinner, and drags him to the mount that is capped with clouds of darkness, illumined only by the blaze of wrath. There no voice is heard, but that of dread. The thunders of the Almighty's curse continually assail the ear, and carry alarm through all the soul. Still the fascinating power of enmity within cannot, by all this, be broken. *The law is weak through the flesh.* The charming voice of mercy kindly addresses the sinner, but is not regarded. That love, which in past duration lay concealed, is presented to view. Its effects are exhibited in Jesus' expiring agonies. The freedom of acceptance with God is declared, and the chart of the incorruptible inheritance, together with a title to those mansions in bliss, are offered in the Redeemer.—Still no suasive powers of men can induce to a reconciliation. A melancholy proof of the degradation of those powers, upon the possession of which man lays claim to a superior rank among the works of God. The time allotted us to-day, will not permit us to trace the winding paths, in which perversity of mind is discovered, by a proneness to corrupt evangelical doctrines and order. I remark,

3. That the immorality, prominent on the face of national transactions, evinces, at the same time,

the extent and force of this enmity. No truth is more obvious than that Jehovah is sovereign of nations. His law, which binds the subject of his moral empire, obliges that subject to regard his Lord, in every relation, into which he may enter. That code which proceeds from, and displays the authority of God, is adapted to every relation. Yes, it recognizes every moral relation, into which men can enter, and calls for the subserviency of them all, to the promotion of the divine glory. How distant the transactions of nations from the demands of this law! Those associations by which nations have been formed, for ages past, exhibit more the characteristics of legalized plunderers, than of moral establishments, subservient to the best interests of man.

To confirm this, I have only to place in your hands the history of nations. You have only to open your eyes upon the state of the world, in order to perceive, that degradation of character, that robbery of public and private rights—the number of the involuntary subjects of despotism, first preyed upon by overgrown monsters, and then still further degraded as instruments of lawless plunder, which establish, by tangible evidence, the truth of my remark. I shall not, however, recount those deeds of horror, a repetition of which employed the time and power of successive ages and dynasties. While men seek an apology for the violation of right in the pressure of the moment, we have evi-

dence of enmity against God. But in colours darker far are those crimes drawn, which by legal deeds, deliberately formed, authorize the robbery which enslaves our fellow-men—not for any fault which they have done—but to gratify the avarice of a degraded mind, and which insult the supreme head of every power by passing over in silence his indisputable claims; or perhaps erecting a power, in pretensions, superior to his, authorize, in given cases, the blasphemy of his name. *Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?* is the import of such impious deeds. These remarks conduct us,

4. To Atheism, as the perfection of this principle of enmity. Practical atheism is admitted to be abundant. The existence of the speculative Atheist is disputed by many. Of the existence of such, why should we doubt? The heart is desperately wicked; much more replete with enmity than sinners are willing, generally, to confess. When, however, we find one so lost to all that is fine and grand in nature, and so dead to shame as to declare himself an Atheist, why not give credit to his testimony of his own infamy? As sin stupifies the moral sense, so it darkens the intellectual eye. Though the inscription of the divine hand be legible in every page, and in every line, of the mighty volume God has exhibited for the instruction of man; yet the cloud of moral darkness has only to become more dense, and wretched mortals cease to perceive in those inscriptions the evidence of his existence. The influence of the principle of moral

degradation is progressive. No man ever became an Atheist at once; every progressive step in the way of vice is an advance to atheism. In defiance of a religious education, you have seen an unhappy child of fallen Adam mock a religious man; yes, and soon turn his religious acts into a subject of ridicule. Have you not heard such make an important truth of religion an object of derision? Have you never known, for sake of some momentary accommodation, the solemn remonstrances of conscience set aside, important doctrines of religion denied, and solemn bonds violently broken asunder? Have you not seen such as proceeded thus far, at length, in displays of human madness, totally reject the religion of Jesus, and close his eyes, which God in awful judgment sealed, never more to open on the bright page of evidence which substantiates to reason the Divinity of Jesus, and the importance of his sacred scheme of salvation? From this, to the region of atheism, the transition is easy. The mind that has fallen so low as to read the Gospel of Christ, and yet, for want of evidence of its authenticity, pronounces it a fraud, cannot surprise us, when it declares, that no traces can be found of an eternal Omnipotence in the system of nature; that no marks of a designing agent, wise and good, are perceptible in the organization of the heavens and the earth. The mode of reasoning adopted by the deist, is that to which the atheist has recourse; and indeed is as fairly used by the latter against the existence of

God, as by the former against the revelation of his Son. In both we have an exhibition of the power of enmity as existing in the human heart against God. Great indeed is that perversion of mind which can lead to rejoice in the idea, that there is no Saviour for sinful man; and to exult in the thought that there is no revelation to point out to him the way to his Creator. It is only another step in the scale of degradation to Atheism itself. This descent may be expected, if the Deist prolong his argument. That comely proportion, that grandeur of design, and magnificence of execution, which lately pointed out to him a present Deity, speedily vanish from his view. Mistaking the darkness for light, he triumphs in the importance of his discovery. The undesigning dance of atoms; the undirected progress of vice; the eternal extinction of consciousness, annihilation, the absence of that *Being*, who only confers importance on all transpiring scenes—These are the results of his vain Philosophy.

I turn,

5. To the retributive acts of the Almighty as proof of man's enmity against him. He grieves none without a cause. He has no pleasure in the unnecessary death of sinners. The restraints of his gracious influences prove his displeasure, and his displeasure finds the provoking cause in man: *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you.* Man's hostility is proved by the Lord's coming out

of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth. The dissensions among those most nearly related in society, prove that the sparks of a just and fiery indignation are lodged in the dwellings of the sinner. The flame of war, which has wrapped in its consuming folds so many nations, and reduced to ruin their unnumbered population; famine, in all its dark attire succeeding the ravages of the sword; and pestilence in the rear, with rapid march, carrying conquests at noon-day, and at the midnight hour sweeping away the offending sons of men, are all ministers of vengeance. Should it be inquired, why all this rage? We have the reply; *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. But the wicked his soul hateth. Therefore, upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.*

From these public displays of Jehovah's opposition to man, we may descend to those evidences of his displeasure that are secret; that are concealed from public view. The soul of man is the seat of rebellion. God is intimately acquainted with every lodging place of the hostile principle. Over the regions of mind he has a complete ascendancy; and there he can, and does exhibit his terrors. Go where his arrows are drinking up the spirits, and hear the bitter cry of the awakened sinner. Go to the death-bed of the impenitent, whose mind is roused to the anticipation of that unmingled cup of dreadful indignation, the dregs of which the heirs of desperation must drink. But,

II. GOD HAS DEVISED A PLAN OF RECONCILIATION.

We shall consider the evidence of this, and state some of the properties of this scheme. We shall consider,

I. Its evidence.

To the awakened sinner the truth of what is asserted in this proposition is of high importance. The nominal professor of christianity, being, from the first dawn of reason, accustomed to hear that there is forgiveness with God, considers it a doctrine of trivial importance, requiring but slight attention to obtain satisfactory evidence of its reality. He never saw, however, the evil of sin, nor did he ever feel the terrors of the Lord. Let his eye be once opened on the fearful turpitude of moral evil; let the alarming results be understood, and the formalist will not find it quite so easy, as he once imagined, to still the mind by satisfactory evidence, that reconciliation with God is probable, much less that it is certain. The revelation of this plan of grace must proceed from God. It is not found in the volumes of nature submitted to our view.

The existence of the stately fabric of creation proves indeed Jehovah's power. The organization of the system declares his wisdom and the subserviency of the insensate to sentient beings, aloud proclaims that he is good. Amidst those displays of omnipotence—in this splendour of wisdom—in all their loud proclamations of goodness,

the convinced sinner is unable to trace any footstep of special mercy. Pardoning goodness is not there revealed. Between the system of creation and that of grace, there is a connexion; but the connecting bond is mysteriously concealed from all whom God's Spirit has not instructed by supernatural light.

Providence, in the common course which God pursues, leaves the inquirer after a plan of reconciliation enveloped in darkness. The great Supreme indeed is patient with transgressors; patient with the patience of the ineffably perfect God, which consists in his power to restrain, for a season, the efficient expressions, in vengeance, of his determined opposition to sin. This is a luminous part of the divine dispensations; but not sufficiently clear to relieve the distressed conscience. The sinner is seen borne down the stream of life, in apparent ease; as he approaches the precipice, beneath which lies the abyss of wo, his calm is disturbed. He hears the thunders of wrath, and the pressure of guilt forces the exclamation, "hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from the Almighty's frowns."—Hope, founded on the general forbearance of God, is shaken, and the darkness becomes more gross, as the miseries and fall of empires, as well as of individuals, appear in view, declaring that *justice without atonement will by no means clear the guilty.*

This truth is enforced by all the knowledge which

man possesses of the Creator's law. It is the measure of justice; it prescribes duty; it unfolds the evil of sin, and against the infringements of its demands, it denounces death; but to reconciliation without atonement it is a stranger.

With the strictest demands of law, upon this subject, corresponds the voice of conscience. It is God's deputy in the soul, and in proportion as light shines around the tribunal upon which it sits, it resounds the voice of heaven. The feeble glimmerings of nature's light point out the guilt of man, and conscience pronounces the sinner's doom. In the infatuation of reason, the temples of superstition are reared, her bloody altars set in order; and, in the madness of despair, the transgressor inquires, *Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* All the beams of nature's light—the dictates of conscience—the fiery splendours of Horeb, and the majestic steps of Jehovah in his dispensations of common providence, conspire to show the door of access to a favourable acceptance with God, closed against the sinner. Grace, notwithstanding, reigns. It reigned in eternity, and, all-compassionate, appears in time, with the gladdening report, there is forgiveness with God—he is in Christ reconciling the world to himself. To cheer the drooping spirit of the convinced sinner, to call forth the faith and gratitude of the believer to more vigorous acts, evidence of this proposition shall now be adduced.—

Taking the testimony of God, we have ample EVIDENCE of the plan of reconciliation,

1. In the PROVISION OF A MEDIATOR. *I have found David my servant.* The antitypical David was adequate to magnify the law and make it honourable. To this it behooved him to have an appointment. He was constituted by covenant. The counsel of peace was between them both. The Son approved of the gracious plan; 'to do thy will I take delight,' was his reply. His consent was entered on the records of the eternal transactions of divinity. Then upon him was laid our help—he bore our sorrows. In compliance with his engagement he appeared, in the fulness of time, *leaping upon the mountains and exultingly shipping upon the hills.* His advent was a visible expression of his and his father's love—God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son. Why was the Mediator provided? Why was the covenant of redemption formed? Why such expense of wisdom, and such profusion of love, as appears in those grand arrangements? Do not all these prove the divine mind from the days of eternity determined upon accomplishing a plan of reconciliation between heaven and offending man? In prosecution of this device, Jesus appeared, bearing the appellation of *Prince of Peace.*

2. The OFFERS AND PROMISES OF GRACE, evince a plan of peace. These offers are not proposed to such as walk in the high circles of moral purity;

such need not this grace. The voice that kindly invites attention, addresses sinners; *I came not* says the Saviour, *to call the righteous, but sinners.* Accordingly, those of the darkest shades, are pressed to receive the rich donations of sovereign grace. Whosoever will—the far from righteousness—the dead in sin, are invited; they are encouraged by the great and precious promises of the gospel. *Hear, and your soul shall live. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though ye have lain among the pots, yet ye shall be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.* These promises, in the Redeemer, are tendered without regard to human merit. *For mine own sake, saith the Lord, not for yours, will I blot out thy transgressions.*

3. Is further proof required? Enter the secret retirement of the MOURNING PENITENT. Associate with yonder devout family. Attend with them at the devotional sacrifices of the morning and the evening. God accepts from them an offering.—This proves that it is not of human device; for *in vain do men worship him, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* Will-worship, under every form, he spurns with the indignant interrogatory, *Who hath required this at your hands?* Of the divine institution of religious worship, you have proof to-day. Since you assembled here, your prayers, as incense, have ascended to the throne of God. Within these walls you have often cried to God for

a pastor, according to his promise, who might take in this place the oversight of the flock which he hath purchased with his blood. The gift of the ascended Redeemer is already in your view, and as an answer to your prayers, you shall shortly see him set apart to the sacred office. It is worthy of remark, that the devotions of the closet, the social services of religion, and the public homage rendered to God, in the assemblies of his saints, are differently ordered, from the morning song and nightly orisons of innocent man, in the peaceful retreats of Eden. The worship of man's primeval state would be unsuitable, as it is impossible, for him in his present condition. After his first transgression, whether ever his lips should move in prayer, or his voice be turned in hymns of praise, depended upon a special appointment of the universal Lord. These are exercises not required of the degraded sons of the morning, for whom there is no hope. Those incarcerated spirits, who are bound in fetters of endless despair, have no demands made upon them for praise, nor have they a promise of grace, upon which they can ground a prayer. God never requires prayer, but where he proposes so bestow a blessing. He never said to any, *seek ye me in vain*. Nor does he call for praise, unless he has given cause for joy. No blessings are reserved for exiled angels, and joy is unknown in the regions of the damned. God demands homage of you. He graciously prescribes the forms

in which that homage shall be given. He does it in order to your felicity. That felicity lies in his favour. This favour is obtained in the way of reconciliation. Your supplications, your songs of praise, every devotional act, affords evidence of a plan of accommodation devised by God. How great is his goodness! His yoke is lined with love. The burdens he imposes evince his grace.

Does the trembling sinner demand, for the direction of his faith and confirmation of hope, another proof of the truth now under consideration? Let me,

4. Present to you some MONUMENTS OF GRACE. Consider some of the excellent ones of the earth. Do you not hear from the lips of one of these a bitter cry? Hear its import: *my bones wax old, day and night thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer; thou, Lord, hast afflicted me with all thy waves.* What course does he take? He confesses his sin. What is the result? His transgression is forgiven, and his lips are filled with praise. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities.*

See Saul of Tarsus rage against the Redeemer of men, and his harmless flock. In anxiety hear him cry, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Hear the ruthless keeper of the Philippian goal, under a deep conviction of his guilt, in trembling agony inquire, *What shall I do to be saved?* Soon we find them exulting in joy. Hear a specimen of the christian language of that day: *I am persuaded*

that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. What produced this wondrous change in minds so lately plunged in misery? The Gospel was presented to them, and in it Jesus, with all the fulness of his grace. They cordially embraced the offered gift; they were sealed unto the day of redemption; they have the witness of the spirit, testifying with their spirits that they are the children of God; assuring them that *the winter is past, that the rain is over and gone.* Through the same scheme of mercy which we now exhibit, were these saved.

Let the eye be lifted to the everlasting hills of glory. Who are they, that, clothed in white, with palms in their hands, stand before the throne of God? These are the spirits of just men made perfect. What were they? They were sinners, many of them sinners of no common grade. There is Adam, the transgressing head of humankind: in the same throng are Manasseh and Saul, the wasters of the church of God. The sons and daughters of licentious pleasure, washed from their sins, now mingle in the happy choir, and strike their celestial harps on the highest key, in praise of that grace by which they are saved. *Thou hast redeemed us by thy blood,* is the burden of their song.

To establish the truth of our proposition, I need not present to you the seals of God's covenant, the

condescending expostulations of the Almighty, nor the solemn oath of the great I Am. Additional evidence will appear, while I turn your attention

II. To some **PROPERTIES** of this device of heaven.

1. It is an **ETERNAL** scheme. God's love, which is the foundation thereof, is everlasting. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* This love appears to have been exercised, in selecting its objects, an infinite duration before the morning of time. *He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.* He hath saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ *before the world began.* In the pages of the Gospel we have a transcript of an arrangement made by the persons of the incomprehensible god-head, denominated the *counsel of peace*, and the *everlasting covenant*, by the blood of which the sinner is saved. This covenant, in duration, will be everlasting. It will be the eternal bond between God and his ransomed ones. Its blessings they shall participate, while they continue susceptible of joy.

2. It is a **GRACIOUS** plan. *By grace are ye saved.*

Yes, in securing eternal life to man, *grace reigns.* Overwhelming evidence of this truth is presented to our minds. God is independent; and is to, and of himself, all-sufficient. Can man be profitable unto God? No: our goodness cannot reach to him

who sits enthroned on the summit of eternal glory. The point in duration is not far back when there was no existence but God. The being of every creature, with all its modes, depended on the divine pleasure. *For thy pleasure they are, and were created.* What hast thou that thou hast not received? is an inquiry humbling to the pride of man. God is also Lord of the creatures he has formed. To serve him, man is bound by obligations numerous and strong. Lately he received his existence from the hand of God. Upon the communication of energy from the Creator, for the continuance of that existence, he still depends. Thus he was in his best condition; now he is fallen, at enmity with God, dead in sin, and justly doomed, according to the tenour of the righteous law, to all the pains of a state of endless separation from the fountain of bliss. Is salvation possible? Is any sinner saved? If so, it must be by grace. The saved sinner confesses it. *By grace I am what I am.* The spirits of the just made perfect sing, in sweetest strains, the riches of that grace, by whose conducting hand they ascended the heights of heaven, where they,

“Attir’d with stars—shall ever sit,
Triumphing over Death.”—

3. This device is **RIGHTEOUS**. While God declares himself merciful and gracious, he warns the sinner not to presume. Before his moral empire, he loudly proclaims his justice: *I will by no means clear the guilty.* His nature—his faithfulness—his

rectoral character, all require an adequate atonement for sin. But will an atonement by a substitute be admitted? The law does not decide this point; it has no such provisional clause. Another dispensation of the Legislator, however, informs us, that a favourable construction is consistent with his claims; that an atonement, by a substitute duly qualified, is admissible. But the law denounces eternal woe as the wages of sin. Must the surety of sinful man then be for ever banished from the abodes of bliss? The law requires all that is requisite to satisfy the demands of justice—to give energy to the administrations of God, and stability to his government amongst moral beings. Let these ends be answered, and the sinner with his sponsor shall go free. But where shall one, fit to mediate, be found? Behold! he cometh—he is the Choice of heaven, and the Desire of the nations. No objection can be found against him; Jesus the Son of God, in human nature, in a servant's robes, is the person. Infinitely dignified, he can give worth to his mediation. He is able to make every mountain a plain. He has an indisputable right to dispose of himself. He violates no previous obligation of a superior's law, by laying down his life for the chosen of the Lord. He has power, the atonement being made, to take up his life again, and at the head of the ransomed tribes, in the possession of eternal glory, to enjoy the promised reward.

The plan of grace being proposed to him, he engaged his heart in the arduous work. He assumed

our obligations, and *the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all*. In the transgressor's place he was wounded for sin, and was bruised for iniquity. In him have we righteousness, and *by his stripes we are healed*.

Gracious and glorious as is this plan, we are surprised with an opposing murmur from yonder numerous crowd, who, blind to their own mercies, revile the gospel-plan of salvation. It is, say they, impossible for the Divine Nature to be made obedient to the law, and equally impossible for the human nature to be exempted from the obligation of its demands. Jesus obeyed, **FOR HIMSELF**, and for himself only.

The principle of this objection is untrue, and the terms in which it is attired are exceedingly obscure, if not philosophically absurd. A nature, divine, human, or angelic, has no existence out of a person. The term Nature presents to the mind merely an abstract idea. That which has no existence cannot be the subject of obligation. It is a person only that is the subject of moral obligation. The humanity of our Lord was supplied with a divine personality; the law which is adapted to, and obligatory upon, a human person, is neither adapted to, nor binding upon, a divine person; and though the union of human nature with the person of our Lord, qualified him for becoming a subject of that law by which we are obliged; yet that subjection was wholly voluntary, and by no means necessary, from his possessing humanity. The divine person, I do not say *nature*, was, through his human nature, made under the

law, NOT FOR HIMSELF, but to redeem those who were under the law, that they who were aliens might receive the adoption of sons.

But the same ungracious voice still attempts to disturb the christian's hope, and an unhallowed hand is employed to remove the foundation of eternal life to man. It is contended that a TRANSFER of guilt from the sinner to one in himself innocent, and of righteousness to one who is guilty, "is naturally impossible and morally wrong." Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all—He made him to be sin for us who knew no sin—His own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree—He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities—He was made a curse for us—Why? That he might deliver us from the curse of the law, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him—that by the obedience of one, many might be made righteous—that the chastisement of our peace might be upon him—that with his stripes we might be healed—that he might bring us to God**. And is not this a TRANSFER?

Are these, and similar passages, intended to instruct or to deceive? If not intended still more to bewilder the already bewildered sinner, they teach not indeed that our transgressions are the personal acts of our Redeemer; nor that our personal disconformity is, or can be, made his personal discon-

* See Isa. liii. 5. 6. Rom. v. 19. Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

formity ; nor that his personal acts, his personal holiness, or personal pains, are our personal acts, personal holiness, and personal pains : but they do teach that this holiness, these acts and sufferings, are accepted in place of what the law required from the sinner, and of what it would have exacted from him, in proper person. When the surety pays the debt, the debtor is set free from the obligation. Our sins are debts ; they are forgiven for the Saviour's sake ; but if his sufferings had no relation to the sins of such as shall be saved, as the procuring cause of those pains, what relation can forgiveness have to his death ? If Jesus, by assuming the *obligation* of the sinner, to *suffer punishment*, WHICH OBLIGATION IS GUILT, was not made liable to suffer the wrath of God, what display of truth, justice, and divine opposition to sin, could be made, while deep was calling unto deep, and in close succession the waves of vengeance rolled over the Saviour's head ? To submit to punishment without an obligation, either personal or assumed, would be as unworthy the wisdom of the Son of God, as to inflict pains, under such circumstances, would be hostile to the principles of Divine rectitude. The thought is shocking, that God would *punish a person, in no sense chargeable with guilt*, to manifest his hatred of sin ! Should the reverse be maintained ; that it was to manifest **OPPOSITION TO INNOCENCE**, the assertion would be more impiously consistent ! It appears, however, by the system called Hopkinsian, that **MERE SUFFERING**, without Covenant

representation, opens the way for man's salvation, and that thus, only, did Jesus make atonement. Then, and shall I be allowed, without offending the pious ear, to draw the conclusion? then, the raging devils, and damned spirits of fallen men, while under the strokes of dreadful vengeance they blaspheme the God of heaven, are in their degree, and as properly, **REDEEMERS** of man, as is the blessed Jesus! If suffering merely make atonement, they in part, make atonement for us. They are subjects of pain. They are indeed, more properly, monuments of the divine opposition to moral turpitude, than the hypothesis of the **EAST** will allow the Christ of God to have been, while sweating great drops of blood, and in expiring agonies exclaiming, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" From these, worse than idle dreams, the Christian, whose faith rests, not upon metaphysical perversions, but upon the testimony of God, turns and draws consolation from the words of truth; Jesus tasted death for every* son whom he, as the captain of salvation, shall bring to glory. Heb. 2. 9. Thus he sees that God is just, in justifying the ungodly, who are brought to believe in Jesus.

III. GOD HAS PROVIDED A MINISTRY. *We are ambassadors for Christ.* Here I should illustrate the truth of the proposition; show the qualifications of the man called to be an ambassador of

* *ὕπερ πάντων.*

Christ; and mention some duties which devolve upon him in that character.

I. I shail confirm the truth of the proposition. But need I detain upon this? Your anxiety for a settled pastor, your calls upon the church for ministerial aid, prove that you believe the ministry of reconciliation to be of divine appointment. Your faith is not presumptuous. For,

1. It is the will of God that remission of sin, through the Redeemer's blood, shall be preached in all nations of the earth, and that the gospel trumpet shall continue to be sounded, till the voice of the arch-angel shall announce the approach of the resurrection morn*. His promise, who is the first and the last, to accompany and support the ministry of his church, amidst the perils which may surround it, until his hand shall arrest the motions of the wheels of time, establishes it as his own institution. Matt. 28. 20.

2. We have additional evidence of this in the gift of Christ. Eph. 4. 11—13. In his spiritual kingdom he has fixed a ministry, there to act, until the mistaken rebels against his government, for whom he has formed designs of love, shall have been gathered into the company of voluntary subjects, and be perfectly united, in one holy society, free from every moral stain.

3. The dependence of salvation upon the ministry, as an appointed mean, shows the divinity

* Matt. 24. 14. Luke 24. 47.

of the institution. See this stated, Rom. 10 13--15. Here we have the links of this chain; calling upon the name of the Lord is required in order to salvation; believing in his name is necessary to this: hearing is necessary to believing; without the preacher there is no hearing, and no legitimate preaching without a regular sending. It will remain an unshaken truth, that the feet of the ambassadors of peace will, upon the mountains of Zion, appear beautiful, while one of the elect throng is to be called into a state of reconciliation, or requires aid in his journey to the house of his Father in the better country. It can be said of the heavenly state only, there is no temple there. Here, there is a temple, there is a service. Here, are ambassadors whom God sends forth to beseech sinners to be reconciled.

II. Let us notice their **QUALIFICATIONS**. The ambassadors of Christ are **ABLE ministers of the New Testament**. When the glory of him whom they represent is considered; when the importance of the mission, and the awful responsibility under which they are placed, are brought to view, the necessity for talent, native and acquired, will at once appear. The **BISHOP** of the Church must be *apt to teach*. The weight of talent, opposed to the Gospel and its purity, adds additional force to this consideration. It is true, no talents, merely human, are of themselves adequate to the accomplishment of the great ends of the mission of the Christian

ambassador : but it is no less remarkable, that when God has a great work to accomplish, he calls forth the prowess of native talent, improved by science. Where was a reform effected ; where was a great impression upon the public mind ever made, by men of grovelling powers ? The first promulgators of the Christian system, independently of their divine inspiration, display a vigorous intellect. The host of intellectual giants which arose at the era of the Reformation, will long libel the mistakes of the advocates of imbecility in the ministers of God. Such are the depths of truth contained in their instructions ; such the extensive relations of those instructions with the system of nature, the customs of ancient times, and the history of the nations, that an extensive acquaintance with science, natural and moral, as well as a knowledge of the tongues in which the sacred pages were originally written, will be found requisite to their full and profitable illustration. The intelligent Christian looks around upon a multitude of those who unfold their diplomas, which, they say, bear the signature of Zion's Lord : their qualifications are examined ; their conduct is observed ; and the temptation is strong to pronounce their commissions a forgery. The church, in too many instances, has been inattentive to the caution of inspiration ; *lay hands suddenly on no man*. The consequence is, that infidels scoff, truth suffers, and the vineyard of the Lord presents a scene of barrenness painful to the eye. It will in-

deed be conceded that, in order to humble the pride of human claims, God may render vain the bravest exertions of the noblest mind, and to save his cause from total ruin, may smile upon the feeble exertions of Zion's weakest sons. The remarkableness of these exceptions, however, lends aid to confirm the truth of the principle now under consideration.

2. **INTEGRITY** is an indispensable qualification of the minister of God. Whatever native talent, whatever acquired knowledge a candidate for this important mission may possess, if destitute of piety; if not in heart reconciled to God, and in life conformed to his will, he will only betray his trust and promote the cause of the adversary. Intellectual vigour, a mind stored with the wealth of science, a tongue more eloquent than was ever employed by mortals, are all feeble, are all pernicious, if not consecrated by the grace of a sanctified heart. Under the direction of such a ministry, vital piety will languish, the glory of the Gospel be obscured, the hearts of the righteous be made sad, and the careless sinner will be suffered, unwarned, to slumber on the brink of ruin. Let the church of God avoid the Scylla of the formalist and the Charybdis of the enthusiast. Choose no man to minister in holy things, because of boldness, of genius and splendour of acquisition, when the traces of genuine piety are scarcely discoverable in his life. Let hands be laid upon no man whose feebleness of mind and shallow acquirements enable him not, with success, to encounter the subtle adversary. Let not hands be

laid upon any man, however unequivocal the evidences of his piety be, and however ardent his zeal in the Redeemer's cause, if his imbecility be such, as to induce the intelligent christian to tremble for that cause, when he sees him rise as its advocate. Let talent, learning, and godliness, concentrate in the character of the ambassador of God.

3. AN APPOINTMENT, investing the qualified person with the ministry, is requisite to its legitimate exercise. No talent, no qualification, will authorize a man without a previous call to enter on the execution of ministerial duties. The regulations of civil communities forbid such intrusion in national affairs. The safety of the corporation of Zion, requires a similar caution. Her Lord has made provision for her preservation. An order is established, according to which the candidate is to be inducted into office. Through the medium of this order the Church's Head confers official power. By the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, this gift is bestowed—this treasure is committed to the earthen vessel. The whole of the ministerial power is thus communicated. When the Lord of Zion said, *Go teach and baptize*, he included the power of the key of RULE. The constitution of the Church, and her constitutional laws, give no warrant to divide the ministerial power. Recognize not, then, the half commissioned ambassador; reject as an impostor the *gifted brother*, who, without a regular call, claims a superiority over men, and attempts to bind their conscience by a forgery, while he violently tramples under

foot the order of the house of God. To guard against imposture, the children of Zion are required to be conversant with her constitution and laws, as these are registered in the scriptures of truth.

III. The DUTIES of Messiah's Ambassador now invite attention.

1. Attention to understand the instructions which accompany his commission, is an important duty of the minister of religion. Ignorance of the claims of heaven is intolerable in a minister of Jesus. His instructions he must often review. *Study to shew thyself approved—Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them.* Connected with an experimental acquaintance with the power of godliness, extensive reading, diligent study of the lively oracles, and fervent prayer for the unction of the Holy One, are duties of indispensable obligation upon the Ambassador of Christ.

In order to produce this attention, an endeavour to have still more deeply impressed upon the mind, the importance of those concerns, about which the ministry is conversant, is requisite. Being persuaded of their truth, the messenger of Christ should grow in attachment to them. Aukward will be the appearance of that Ambassador, who has not faith in the doctrines of his instructions; and feeble will be his exertions in their behalf, if not united to them in the love of the truth. In the evil day such will forsake the post of danger. Appropriate is the apostolic counsel, *Hold fast the form of sound words, in faith and love.*

2. The reputable Ambassador will study the honour of the court he represents. *I magnify my office.* Inconsistently with his high standing, the minister of the Saviour will not act. Impious practices, low intrigues, ignoble pursuits, and whatever is remote from his high standing, he will carefully shun. The enemies of his Lord will not be the companions of his bosom. With them, so far as is requisite to explain and enforce a compliance with his claims, he will associate; but into their counsels he will not enter—He will visit them to do them good; but not to betray his trust; for,

3. Fidelity is required of him. This is urged upon the missionary of heaven by considerations vastly more cogent than can be presented to the minds of the ministers of earthly courts. The results are infinitely more important. The salvation of a soul, in his estimation who knows its worth, is of higher importance than the wealth of empires. *What is a man profited if he gain the world and lose his soul?* The glory of Deity is of still higher moment. *It is required that a man be found faithful.* High is the penalty annexed to a violation of this duty. He must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Acts 20. 27. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* Against the fear of man which bringeth a snare, his mind should be fortified. The sound of the Redeemer's voice should ever strike his ear, and

its import deeply impress his mind. *Go and teach all things, whatsoever I command you.* Whatever bears the stamp of Divine authority is great, and will claim the regard of the faithful ambassador: But he who is well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom, will discriminate between the weighty and the weightier matters of the law; and in proportion to their relative importance in the system of grace, will the fervour of his zeal in their defence be regulated. For the tything of mint his whole force he will not expend, while he perceives faith, and mercy, and judgment, neglected.

Faithfully must he enforce the obligation of that law which is the standard of human obedience. The authority by which it is sanctioned, and the penalty annexed to disobedience, he will explain. The qualities of the obedience required by a perfect law, he will not neglect to show; the necessary connexion between such obedience and the grace of the covenant, will not be forgotten by him who rightly understands the system of grace.

While with affection he unfolds the doctrines of grace, and faithfully administers the peculiar ordinances of the gospel, suitably will vice in all its diversified forms be reprov'd, whether found in the character of the obscure trifler, or in the more mischievous sons of insolence, whose eminence gives a wider scope, and more pernicious influence to their immoralities. As the bolt of heaven more readily strikes the lofty cedar, than the humble shrub, so should, so will, the undaunted ambassador of God

direct the thunders of the fiery law, against the more conspicuous transgressors of its high demand. He is sent to treat with sinners of every grade, and in every relation of life. The enemy of God in the cottage, and the hostile opposer of his claims in the cabinet, alike are the objects of the christian ministry. He who is invested with this ministry, should abide by his instructions, and if he do so, to the proud occupant of a throne, to him whose haughty brow an imperial diadem encircles, he will say, *Kiss ye the son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.* The minister of Jesus may and will appreciate talent and scientific acquirements. He may admire prowess as displayed by the mighties of the earth: but with their possessors he must not temporize. They are subjects of the "prince of the kings of the earth;" their allegiance he will demand under the penalty of Divine displeasure. To the vocabulary of sycophants, he is a total stranger; he knows not to give flattering titles to men. He knows that no power on earth is independent of the Mediator. Jesus is the *Head of all principality and power, of every name that is named in this world.* Such as refuse submission, to him he will break with his avenging rod. Due submission cannot be obtained, while politically opposed to him by whom kings reign, or while indifferent to his claims, by whom princes decree justice. The faithful minister will not, for sake of a momentary popularity, unfixed as the fickle opinions of the crowd, betray the cause of his Lord, and

give eclat to the robberies of men. He acts with reference to a distant day, when every part of human conduct shall be called by its appropriate name. He gives his present ease, and present fame, to the winds, knowing that his record is on high, and that his name, if not on earth, when better days shall come, shall, in realms of endless glory, be embalmed in the remembrance of his God. Leaving then the betrayer of his trust to the short-lived reward of his baseness, the consistent ambassador of Jesus will assert the grandeur of the system of grace, and the legitimacy of its claims upon the subserviency of every department of life. Upon easier terms, reconciliation with God cannot be proposed to any man, than an entire submission of soul to the righteousness of God ; and as evidence of this, a submission of talents, power, and influence, to promote his glory. *Be wise now, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear ; kiss the Son.*

4. The minister of God must urge those considerations upon the minds of man, which are calculated to persuade him to be reconciled. These considerations are many. He will address their fears. *Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.* His justice is terrible to the sinner. The eye must be directed to that wrath which is revealed from heaven. The punishment of sin, by an everlasting destruction, must be declared. The observing minister knows that faith worketh by fear as

well as love. The best interests of men must be proclaimed. Present felicity and future glory, in their connexion with submission to the Gospel-plan of grace, must be set forth. Deliverance from the baneful influence of the flying roll of the divine curse, the person, possessions, and the relations, in which he stands, must be, to the awakened sinner, a matter of high consideration to which his attention should often be directed. Let no quibbling refinements of specious evangelizers brand these ideas with the opprobrious epithet of legal: Moses had respect to the recompense of reward; and Jesus, for the joy that was set before them, endured the cross and despised the shame. Let man's thirst of glory be addressed. Pursuit of glory, considered in itself, is far from criminal. It becomes so, only when its objects are mistaken, the means of acquisition improper, the ends and motives wrong. Man, as he is constituted a moral and active being, is capable of achievements of glory, and of exquisitely enjoying the pleasures of renown. His eye should be directed to objects worthy of his high original. Turn his attention from that fictitious glare which dazzles but for a moment, and let foes, whose deeds of prowess are such as would give eclat to the valour that would overcome them, be set before him. Such are the potent hosts with whom the christian is called to contend. Let the throne of glory, and the crown of immortal life, be seen as the reward of victory. Exhibit also the plaudits of the triumphant hosts above, who have al-

ready gained the palm, and what is infinitely more, the approbation of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, not merely whispered in private to the conscience, by the witnessing spirit within; but proclaimed from the exalted throne of his glory, the assembled worlds which shall surround him when the sound of the last trumpet shall have been heard. What is all that glory whose greatness expires on the wings of the passing breeze, compared with that which increases in splendour as the brightness of eternal day advances through immeasurable duration?

Does any vestige of generous sensibility remain in the human breast? Powerful considerations are at hand to invite it forth to action. Is there no grateful feeling left? The unmerited kindness of God, the condescending goodness of the great I AM, are calculated under the Spirit's aid to generate gratitude in the rocky heart. See the gracious rewards of virtue before you. Behold the ample provision made to ensure a conquest to him, who enlists under the victorious banner of the captain of salvation. See the armour of God, Eph. 6. 11. Does God call to heroic deeds? Does he this for your reconciliation? His own arm, for he reconciles the sinner, will gain the triumph. Reconciliation then is urged upon man by all the charms of virtue, by all that is august in God, or dreadful in his wrath; by all that is tender in his love, or gracious in his dispensations; by all that is important in his glory, or de-

sirable in his favour; by all the solemnities of the judgment day, and all that is wrapped up in the cheering welcome—*Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* The sinner is entreated to be reconciled to God, *as ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled.*

Thus, christians, a brief view has been given of the wretchedness of man's fallen state. Of the remedial plan of grace, some properties of this plan have been submitted to your consideration. To exhibit it to men, as a mean of its application, you have also seen that there is a ministry appointed. Some of the qualifications and duties of this ministry have been mentioned. Our business now shall be to set apart in this place, one to the office of this ministry, whose qualifications and character, it is trusted, correspond with what you have heard, and whose business it shall be to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God.

After singing a psalm, the candidate, Mr. James Milligan, was called up before the Presbytery, and the questions in the FORMULA addressed to him. By answering these, in the affirmative, he entered into a solemn covenant, with both the Presbytery and congregation, to discharge the duties of the Ministry according to the PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

In a prayer addressed to the throne of grace, he was then

ORDAINED to the work of the Holy Ministry, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by virtue of the authority of Christ, the Head of the Church, by Mr. Mc Master, *with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, and installed BISHOP of the Church in Coldenham. The Preacher afterwards addressed both the minister and his pastoral charge in the following manner.



CHARGE TO THE MINISTER.

My brother, it now becomes my duty to address you, not in the language of a dictator, nor in the style of a superior, but in that of a friend, of a brother, and in the language of fraternal love. Your goodness, I know, were I wanting in that personal affection for you, which I now express, would induce, on your part, a candid attention to what I am with diffidence about to say; the importance of which I also desire myself to feel.

You have, to-day, heard a little of that gloomy, but awfully certain truth, the enmity of man against Him, who rides in his excellency on the sky, who is glorious in holiness, and abundant in goodness. With this principle of enmity, in all the diversified shapes which it may assume, you have to contend. You have to contend with it in your own breast, and to oppose its operations in your life. This shall continue with you an important contest, till that day, when the victory of grace shall be announced in the perfection of your holiness.

To-day you have placed yourself; your Redeemer has placed you, in a situation where you may calculate upon the displays of this powerful principle of opposition to God, against you, in its most grievous forms from abroad. Yes, sir, Satan has already bent his bow, and his quiver is full of poisoned arrows. The friends of the Satanic empire will be his ready minions, to do you wrong; and happy, thrice happy, will you be, if some of the friends of Jesus be not seduced to lend their aid to increase your woes. To expose the mysterious workings of this enmity, and to unfold the concealed devices of the common adversary, will constitute an important part of your duty. This will require an attentive observation, in the light of divine truth, of the movements of your own mind.

To lodge always amidst the shadows, you are not doomed. The cheering beams of evangelical truth are directed to your eye. The pages of the Gospel are delightful to peruse. God's eternal love, terminating in man's never-ending joys, embraces the system of grace which you are called to understand, to explain, and to enforce upon the hearts of men. This is worthy your talents, study, and exertions, were they all ten thousand times greater than they ever can be. By this system God is glorified, and sinners saved. These two ends, above all others, you are to aim at in your future career. Remember whose you are, and whom you serve. It is the God of glory. It is Jesus the Mediator of

the new covenant. It is the eternal divinity. Spread abroad the fame of his love. Tell the wonders of his works. Proclaim the miracles of his grace. Recommend to sinners your Redeemer. Tell them explicitly their dangers. Faithfully unfold to them the evil of their sins. Lead the alarmed sinner to the blood of the cross for relief. Let the precious doctrines of the Gospel be the burden of your pulpit exhibitions. When you preach the law, as a rule of life, let it be in connexion with the covenant-grace, the promises of which will always be soothing to the heart oppressed with godly sorrow, as well as a mean to allure such as weary themselves in the multitude of their own ways. Let this book of God be your directory; ask frequently, ask earnestly, the aids of that illuminating Spirit, who is promised to lead the disciple of Jesus into all truth. Beware, my dear sir, of taking up the *little systems*, and narrow views of party men. Helps you may ask from men like yourself; refuse to submit your conscience to any system, except that which God hath given. Discard, as too narrow, every one that would limit your range through the extensive volumes of the Creator's word and works. The lore you may collect, make subservient to the advancement of Messiah's kingdom. Let it be such as shall edify the house of God.

Your labours in future must generally be among this people. Let their souls be precious in your

sight. They will be precious, and their interests dear. Imprudence, even unkindness, you may sometimes perhaps observe; but you, though you will and may feel, will feel as a parent, and will be ready to seek the apology of parental affection for the errors of the beloved child. Rise above ungrateful feelings, which others' folly may provoke; let them be lost in the considerations of that eternity on the brink of which you stand.

The exercise of discipline will require firmness and prudence. Let not the walls of Zion be broken down, nor her precious things become the prey of the uncircumcised in heart. In the midst of laudable zeal for order, beware of excluding from communion any whom your Lord would admit to visible membership. Spurn with pious and manly indignation every attempt to make you, or the courts where you may sit, an instrument of personal vengeance. In your discussions of experimental religion, caution is also requisite. While rousing the slumbering sinner, break not the bruised reed; and while administering the comforts of the Gospel to the humble penitent, indulge not in security, those who are strangers to God and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. In your pulpit-exercises, doctrinal discussion, including the refutation of popular objections against the truth, will call your attention. A practical, affectionate, and searching application of those precious doctrines, you must not forget. You will remember that man possesses

active, as well as intellectual powers. You will therefore never address him as merely an intelligent Being, without reference to his affections; nor will you stimulate, by pathos, the heart, while the intellectual powers are famished, by withholding their appropriate food.

Recollect that you now stand a public advocate for the whole system of Pesbyterial order; for that well-proportioned system, for which our fathers testified, for which they bled, and as martyrs died; a system, the beauty of which has, since they retired to repose, been marred, in instances not a few, by ignoble accommodations. Never betray this cause. Strong as my affections are for you, my brother, rather would I witness your tongue cleaving to the roof of your mouth, and your lips sealed in the silence of the grave, than that you, in the exercise of this power, with which you have to-day been invested, should utter a faithless word against that cause, which I am persuaded will restore harmony to the church of God, and establish peace in every nation upon earth. In this case you have plighted your faith; we believe you sincere; but convinced of your own inability, methinks I hear you exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things!" With pleasure do I direct you to Him, whose goodness you have hitherto experienced: hear his promises; *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. I am with you always. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.* Encouraged by these

promises, go forth, and be valiant for the truth upon the earth. My brother, I shall thus directly address you no more. May our journey through life be pleasant to ourselves, and above all, be profitable to the church of God. May we obtain, at the end of the day, the blessed welcome—*Well done, good and faithful servants, enter into the joys of your Lord.*



CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION.

I now turn to you, brethren, the members of the congregation. I shall occupy your attention but for a few moments. The same brevity which has been observed in addressing your pastor, will be studied in my remarks to you. To this I am induced by the consideration, that *his* talents and experience, who shall address you in the afternoon, as also his intimate acquaintance with you, will enable him to tender instructions, more appropriate and interesting, than I can pretend to do.

Permit me to observe, that the day of espousals is a day of joy. To you I know this is a day of gladness, and I participate in your joys. I have known some of your sorrows, I am acquainted with your former disappointments*, and I rejoice that he who

* When Dr. McLeod was ordained to the Ministry, the congregation of Coldenham were entitled to one third of his time, for the space of three years. At the expiration of

healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their painful wounds, hath healed and invigorated your frequently disappointed affections. You have in this an additional evidence that God is good. I trust the transactions of to-day evince, that the Lord hath much people in this place. While we mingle our expressions of gratitude to the Giver of all good, I beseech you suffer the word of exhortation.

You behold an ambassador of the Prince of peace, sent to you for the express purpose of seeking your reconciliation to God; recognize him in this important character. Satisfied, as you are, respecting his mission, it is at your peril that you neglect the overtures he makes, according to his instructions. He speaks in the name of the court of heaven, and neglect of the institutions he administers, is an insult to him whom he represents*.

that term, they endeavoured in vain to procure his whole services. They afterwards made some unsuccessful efforts to recall him from New-York. They were also disappointed in other efforts to procure a Pastor. A call was made by them on Mr. *James Willson*, a man of distinguished talents and literary endowments, now the principal of the Academy of Bedford, Pennsylvania. The state of his health prevented his settlement. The congregation also presented a call to *Mr. Mc Master*; but he, in conformity to Presbyterial recommendation, preferred a call made upon him, at the same time, to his present pastoral charge. By these means, the congregation of Coldenham remained about eight years without a fixed Pastor.

* See Matt. 10. 40. Luke 10. 16.

Let his character be precious in your estimation. Let no ungenerous imputations, nor wanton aspersions, respecting him, escape your lips, or even be indulged in your minds. His burdens will be sufficiently weighty, without such additional loads.

Minister of your substance for his temporal accommodation. This is an act of common justice—it is more—it is an express institution of Jesus. Bear in this case a practical testimony against that device of Satan, so admirably adapted to a pitiful avarice—a device which threatens to banish talents and learning, even when combined under piety, from the ministry of Zion, by refusing it a competent support. This is not the age of miracles, nor yet of voluntary martyrdom. Show that you believe your substance to be the Lord's, and that to his cause it shall be practically devoted, when he makes the demand. An avaricious minister of religion is a contemptible character; but, however self-denied he may be, he must live in the world, and both the world and the church demand that he live honestly. But on this subject, I know much need not be said to you. Your consciences are enlisted in favour of divine institutions, and where this is the case, the ambassador of Christ will never suffer for want in temporalities.

I have another exhortation, brethren, of higher importance to tender. It is, that you remember your pastor when you approach the throne of grace, that you, in his behalf, often draw near the mercy-seat of God. When you lift up the desires of your

souls to God, *in the secret places of the stairs*; when in your families, and confidential meetings, you prostrate yourselves before your God, bear him upon your Spirits, whom the Holy Ghost hath to-day made your overseer. Submit to the reproofs of God's word from his lips. With faith and love embrace the message of reconciliation with which he is intrusted, under the influence of that gracious system. Live in peace with one another. *In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.* Thus shall the church of God rejoice, in beholding the fruits of the Spirit among you. Your pastor will rejoice, and will have many for a crown of joy at that day, when every secret shall be revealed—when the great drama of time shall be closed, the scenery of the heavens and earth taken down, and the destiny of every moral agent be forever fixed. Be ye now reconciled to God, that unhurt you may pass the vale of death, and enter upon an immortality of increasing glory. To God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, *who hath committed to us the ministry of reconciliation*, I recommend you and your overseer, and unto his glorious name be endless praises.—AMEN.

THE END.