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Dr. Scott's Sermon,

WITH THE

INSTALLATION CHARGES

IN THE

THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

Rev. Dr. Richards's.

NEW ORLEANS:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF "THE CREOLE," 94 CAMP STREET,

1854.

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GOSPEL MINISTER'S
Character and Platform.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE

THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 16, 1854,

AT THE

INSTALLATION OF

Rev. JAMES RICHARDS, D. D., as Pastor,

BY

REV. W. A. SCOTT, D. D.

ALSO,

THE CHARGES TO THE PASTOR AND PEOPLE,

BY

REV. MESSRS. WOODBRIDGE & HENDERSON.

(Published by request of the Trustees and Elders of the said Church.)



NEW ORLEANS:

PRINTED AT THE OFFICE OF "THE CREOLE," 94 CAMP STREET,

1854.

NEW ORLEANS, April 17, 1854.

To W. A. SCOTT, D. D.:

Rev'd and Dear Sir: By the direction of the Session and Trustees of the Third Presbyterian Church, I take this method to request for publication, a copy of your Sermon delivered last evening at my installation. As the subject is specially important at the present day; as there is reason to believe that the publication of it will result in immediate good; and as your life is devoted to the welfare of the churches in this city and the church of God; it is hoped you will not decline this urgent request.

Yours, sincerely,

JAMES RICHARDS.

NEW ORLEANS, April 17, 1854.

REV. DR. RICHARDS:

Dear Sir: I have a very strong conviction that you, and the Elders and Trustees of your church, in asking as by letter of this day, a copy of my discourse at your installment for publication, have put far too favorable an estimate on its merits; nevertheless, under all the circumstances, and just on the eve of a long journey, I submit it to you, as fully as it exists in my notes, to do with it as you like, praying that Christ may be honored and souls saved, and that you, and all the people of your choice, over whom you are placed as a bishop by the Holy Ghost, may receive the fullness of the Gospel of Peace now and forevermore.

Yours affectionately,

For Christ's sake,

W. A. SCOTT.

GOSPEL MINISTER'S CHARACTER AND PLATFORM.

“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

1 CORINTHIANS II: 2.

When Jesus Christ, the one, only, sole and supreme Head of the Church, ascended up on high, after his resurrection from the dead, “He led captivity captive,” and for a legacy to his people, “gave gifts to men.” Among the chief of these gifts are the influences of the Holy Spirit and the written word, teaching us the will of God for our salvation. “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*”—Eph. iv: 11—15.

1st. It is obvious from this passage of holy scripture that *living* teachers of the way of salvation are set in the church by Divine appointment. At one time they were patriarchs and prophets; at another, apostles and evangelists; and now, they are bishops or pastors and teachers. While the Revelation of the Divine will was in progress, and while the Gospel was being gradually revealed to mankind, prophets and apostles of the highest order were necessary; but when the canon of the Revealed will was complete—when the Gospel dispensation was fully introduced, prophets and apostles gave place to pastors and teachers, who are bishops or overseers of the people. 2dly. It is equally palpable that the object of the Divine appointment of a class of men from time to time to be servants of the Most High God, showing unto us the way of salvation, is eminently for the instruction of mankind,—for the

edifying and comforting of believers. The Church is God's great teaching Institution. Her ministers are missionaries of light, and heralds of His good will to men. They are sent to teach all nations *for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

I. In the Scriptures of our God various significant names are given to religious teachers, expressive of their character.

We find bishop, overseer, pastor, ambassador, angel or messenger applied to one and the same person. These names are expressive not of different orders or ranks in the Gospel ministry, but significant of various duties performed by the ministers of the church. They are for the same reason called rulers, governors, watchmen, soldiers, builders, and laborers. These titles are highly expressive of their character and appropriate work. *Are they laborers?* Then it is their duty to sow, plant, water and cultivate God's vineyard. They are sent to toil with pains and diligence, and wait for the harvest. *Soldiers?* Then they are engaged in war against the powers of darkness. As soldiers they are required to endure fatigue, and to persevere through dangers and difficulties, following their glorious leader unto death and victory. *Watchmen?* Then are they set on the high places, to give due warning by night and day of the dangers that threaten. They are set to watch for souls, as men that must give an account. They must keep awake themselves, and arouse the sleeping, and cry aloud to those that are dead in sin, lest the blood of those that perish, should fall upon their heads as unfaithful watchmen. They are commanded to utter all God's judgments, whether the people will hear or forbear. And as *stewards of the manifold mysteries of the household of God*, they are to give to every one his portion in season. Milk to babes and meat to such as are strong. *Are they ambassadors?* Then they are the accredited ministers of heaven, to treat of peace between God and man. To them is given the word of Reconciliation. They are sent by Christ, and speak in God's name, as though God did beseech us by them to be reconciled to Him. As ambassadors their mission is one of the highest dignity and of most tremendous responsibilities. They are to maintain the dignity and honor of their government, and so manage their mission, that the sovereign clemency, wisdom, glory and majesty of the king of kings may be seen in the salvation of sinners reconciled to Him and saved from sin by the death and mediation of His own well beloved son. Are they called *angels or messengers?* This is the title given to those pure and sublime natures who surround the eternal throne—ever doing the will of God—and are sent forth to minister to those that are heirs of salvation. Min-

isters who are the angels of the churches, which are the glory of Christ, should be like these holy spirits, in elevation of thought and devotion, and in the consecration of themselves to the study of the works, the word and the glory of God; and as the angels above, ever be found doing the will of their Lord, especially in ministering to the souls for whom the "angel of the covenant" made himself a propitiatory sacrifice. The most common appellation by which religious teachers are known, is that of minister or pastor, both of which terms are expressive of the duties of their office. As ministers, they are servants of the church for Christ's sake. As bishops or overseers or pastors, which terms mean the same thing, they are to overlook and feed the flock. A pastor or shepherd is one who takes care of sheep, not only that they feed in good pastures, but also that they be not torn by wild beasts, or hurt in any other way.* In the favorite *twenty-third* psalm, God is called a SHEPHERD, by which we are to understand, that He leads, feeds, preserves and heals his people, as a shepherd does his flock. Our Blessed Saviour calls himself the good shepherd, who not only exposes his own life, but does actually and willingly lay it down for his own sheep, and takes charge, oversight and care of them, dispensing to them such things as they have need of. In a few places of Scripture civil and political rulers are called pastors. In the Bible, ministers of the Gospel are called shepherds, bishops or pastors, signifying that their office was like that of a shepherd to feed, lead, guard, heal, and watch over their charges. The prophet Jeremiah, in the name of the Lord, promised the ten tribes, if they would return to Him, by repentance, that He would give them pastors after his own heart, who should feed them with knowledge and with understanding—that is, *instruct* and *save* them. But the true Israel are the same in every age, and that which was the richest promise to the church in prophetic times, is the richest gift that God has bestowed upon his people, in these last days—pastors after his own heart who have an open vision from Him, to reveal unto the people the riches of His Grace.

1. As then the pastoral office is one of divine appointment, the churches are to love their pastors, and tenderly cherish them, and honor them very highly for their work's sake, and encourage and sustain them in their many arduous labors.

2. Pastors being called of God to their holy office—being set apart for the edification of the church, should devote themselves wholly and

*See Cruden.

faithfully to their work. They should love the truth and preach it faithfully and affectionately, and so conduct themselves as to magnify their office by glorifying God in the salvation of the souls of men. "Our excellent" book sums up the matter in hand most happily, in the following style: "As it is the minister's duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed Presbyter or elder. As he is the messenger of God, he is termed the angel of the church. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed Ambassador. And as he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God."

[Form of Government, Chap. iv., p. 408, 9.

Again, Chap. vi., directory for Public worship: "The preaching of the Word being an institution of God for the salvation of men, great attention should be paid to the manner of performing it. Every minister ought to give diligent application to it; and endeavor to prove himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed; rightly dividing the word of truth. The method of preaching requires much study, meditation and prayer. Ministers ought, in general, to prepare their sermons with care; and not to indulge themselves in loose, extemporary harangues; nor to serve God with that which costs them nought. They ought, however, to keep to the simplicity of the Gospel; expressing themselves in language agreeable to scripture, and level to the understanding of the meanest of their hearers; carefully avoiding ostentation, either of parts or learning. They ought also to adorn, by their lives, the doctrine which they teach; and to be examples to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

Whatever be the minister's method in presenting Christ and Him crucified, he must preach "*Painfully*, not doing the work of the Lord negligently,—*Plainly*, that the weakest may understand; delivering the truth not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the SPIRIT and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect;—

Faithfully, looking at the honor of Christ, the conversion, edification, and salvation of the people, not as his own gain or glory; keeping nothing back which may promote those holy ends; giving to every one his own portion, and bearing indifferent respect unto all, without neglecting the meanest, or sparing the greatest in their sins.

Wisely, framing all his doctrines, exhortations, and especially his re-

proofs, in such a manner as may be most likely to prevail : showing all due respect to each man's person and place, and not mixing therein his own passion or bitterness.

“ *Gravely*, as becometh the word of God,” and the Ambassador of heaven ; shunning every thing that might give occasion to ungodly men to despise him and his ministry.

“ *With loving affection*, that the people may see all coming from his godly zeal, and hearty desire to do them good. And, *as taught of God*, and persuaded in his own heart that all that he teacheth is the truth of Christ ; and walking before his flock as an example to them in it ; *earnestly*, both in private and public, recommending his labors to the blessing of GOD, and *watchfully* looking to himself, and the flock whereof the LORD hath made him overseer : so shall the doctrine of truth be preserved uncorrupt, and many souls be converted and built up, and himself receive manifold comforts of his labors even in this life, and afterward the crown of glory laid up for him in the world to come.”

II. Thus we see that by whatever titles ministers of the Gospel are known in the Scriptures, and in our most “excellent” standards ; still the prominent idea is that they are men of God, *servants of the Most High*, converted by His grace, called by His spirit, and set apart to His work. And the nature of their office, and their place in the world's history, not now understood, and their bearing on the cycles of a rapidly coming eternity in regard to the happiness or misery of immortal souls that are passing through time on our globe to future immensity, may be farther seen by considering briefly THE GREAT PLATFORM, on which they are set forth as a spectacle to men and angels. Their character, titles and work have passed rapidly before us. The text was the platform of the great apostle before Jew and Gentile, in Arabia and in Athens, in Jerusalem and in Corinth.

The CROSS OF CHRIST was his favorite topic. The chosen subject of his discourse, the grand theme of all his writings. He gloried not in his Abrahamic descent, not in his Hebrew lore, not in his classic attainments, not in his mighty intellect, but in the cross of Christ. Though a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and as touching the law blameless, and though brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, we do not hear him speak of his genealogy or of his learning. Nor does he boast of his miraculous gifts or visions, or eminent usefulness, although he had been caught up to the third heavens and had visions unutterable, and had planted churches and built churches not on another man's foundation, and had been honored as the *very chiefest of the apostles*. All these things he considered as

nothing. "God forbid that I should glory," says he, "save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1st. *To know Christ and Him crucified* is to know the whole Gospel, and to preach from this platform is to preach Christ crucified as the whole Gospel. The cross of Christ is put for His humiliation and suffering. It is the representative of His death, its manner and ignominy. To preach Christ and Him crucified, therefore, is to preach salvation through the satisfaction which He rendered unto the divine and immutable law—to explain the method by which sin is pardoned, and how the forgiveness of the penitent sinner is reconciled with the Justice and holiness of God. To preach Christ and Him crucified, then, is to declare the miraculous conception of the Son of God—His true human nature, and yet His proper Divinity—to reveal His holy and benevolent character—how He laid down His life as an expiation for our sins—how He was wounded for our transgressions—bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace being laid upon Him—a lamb slain from the foundation of the world—the Lamb that was slain still standing bleeding before the throne in the midst of the elders and angels that are round about the throne. Hence, to *know Christ and Him crucified*, is to set forth the death of Christ as the great central point of the Christian system—that the great purpose for which He came into the world was to die under the law, in the room and stead of his people—that by this great vicarious sacrifice of Himself, in behalf of His people, God can be just and yet the justifier of all who believe in Jesus. To *know Christ and Him crucified* is to know the glorious method of *Free Grace* revealed in the Gospel—a method honorable to God, because, while He receives the transgressor into favor, He expresses his aversion to sin in the strongest manner, and requires that the demand of His holy law be perfectly fulfilled; and yet all this is done in a method suited to man, coming down to His weakness and wretchedness, and offering him just as he is in this sin-smitten world, in which he is born, and out of which he is to die and appear before his Creator, a finished, gratuitous, honorable and glorious salvation. To preach Christ and Him crucified is to preach the being and glorious perfection of Jehovah as the one, only, living and true God, the Creator of all things; the future judgment and eternal state of righteous retribution; the lost state of man, and his recovery through the One great Mediation; the necessity of regeneration, repentance, conversion and personal holiness through the Spirit; the duties and precepts of the Gospel.

“THE WORD OF GOD ONLY ;
THE GRACE OF CHRIST ONLY ;
THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT ONLY.”

2dly. *The minister of the Gospel who stands on the apostle's great platform must know Christ experimentally as his Saviour.* He must be truly a pious man. He must know by experience what it is to repent and believe, and have a sweet experience in his own soul of the preciousness of the Savior's love. How can he point others to the Lamb of God, if he has not seen Him for himself? How can he teach others, who has not himself been taught? There is something fearful in the idea of an unconverted and ungodly minister. Terrible is the thought that his own doctrines and preaching shall come up as a swift witness against himself in the great day of eternity—that having preached Christ to others, and thereby been the instrument of saving others, he should himself be a castaway. But such things have occurred. There were wicked prophets and false apostles, and there are doubtless unconverted ministers. It becomes us all to watch and pray.

3dly. *The minister's platform is to believe and preach the same truths that Jesus Christ believed and preached.* There is no irreverence in speaking of the Creed and worship of our Lord. He was an example in all righteousness. His inner life as the God-man—mediator, as to the truth which he believed, the precepts he honored and the devotions he poured out to his God, is the highest model for the piety of every one that believes in Him. As his ministers, we are to believe and preach what the Son of God believed and preached, concerning God his father, himself and the Eternal Spirit, and the whole economy of Free grace. The DIVINE WORD, therefore, which is the utterance of Christ's Spirit to us by prophets and apostles, is the sum total of all we are to believe and preach. It is our armament, arsenal, fleet, artillery and land forces, with which we are to lead his sacramental hosts in our great aggressive movements upon the kingdom of darkness. We must enforce and explain the Scriptures, because they testify of Jesus, and therefore it is that in them, we have eternal life. The Scriptures set forth Christ crucified in promises, prophecies and types. They give an account of his birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession. They represent from beginning to end a suffering, atoning, dying, yet living and reigning Messiah as the only hope of mankind. The sacred oracles are our “only Rule of Faith and manners.” It is by the *truth through the sanctification of the Spirit, that men are to be saved—sanctified through the truth—begotten by the truth.* The Scriptures are able to

make us wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. There is then great amplitude as well as emphasis in the Apostle's injunction—**PREACH THE WORD**. If insulated texts are used, however eloquently and skilfully it may be done, there is danger that the minister's discourses will be substituted for the Divine Word, and that his discourses will become mere dry rhetorical flourishes, or essays, and **SENTIMENTS**, opinions, and fancies be regarded as the teachings of eternal truth. Holy Scripture must be explained by holy Scripture, and not wrested out of its proper connection. The customs of the country of their several writers, and the idioms and meaning of the words in which the mind of the spirit has been communicated, must be understood by the interpreter of the sacred text. This expository method of preaching is sometimes called lecturing. It is more difficult, if it be well done, than the topical essay kind of preaching; but I doubt not far more agreeable to God, who hath placed the chief honor on his word as his instrument for converting men from error. Earnest, pointed, practical exposition was without doubt the primitive mode of preaching. It was thus Ezra preached. He read the law and then caused the people to know its meaning. The blessed Saviour stood up and read out of the Jewish Scriptures, and then sat down and taught the people the true meaning of what he had read. It was thus Philip preached to the Eunuch, and in like manner we find that Paul and the other apostles were daily engaged in expounding the Scriptures to the people in the synagogues. The Reformers and the most eminent and useful ministers of Christ in past ages have been able doctrinal, expository preachers of the Word. This mode of preaching has this advantage, that the minister always has his subject before him, and in going through a book by chapter and verse, all sorts of characters are spread out before him, and all manner of opinions, so that he has an opportunity of striking home every kind of error, without seeming to aim his discourses at particular persons in his congregation. It may be best, sometimes, for a pastor to use but a single text as the theme of his discourse; but the fullness and the richness, the profitableness and the *mellowness* of his ministrations will depend upon his acquaintance with, fondness for, and ability in expounding the whole volume of God's truth. Its promises, threatenings, doctrines and precepts, rewards and punishments are set forth best when preached in the order of the spirit of God. If a minister of the Gospel, through ignorance or indolence, or for the want of courage, smother up the light that is given him—if he do not preach and cause his hearers to understand the great truths of Revelation, he is a *traitor*

to his sovereign or totally unfit for his mission. The burden of the Lord on the minister, who stands on the Apostle's platform, will always be "Repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ." "Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God." "Of God Christ is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and complete redemption."

4thly. *On the Apostle's platform Christ is set forth as the minister's MODEL in the manner as well as the matter of preaching.* The minister of the Gospel, who knows nothing but Christ and Him crucified will strive to imitate the Son of God in his humility, piety and zeal. Our Lord had all wisdom and power, yet never was there one so meek and unassuming. He never exerted his omnipotence for display, nor for His own personal comfort. *He who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God took upon himself, the form of a servant—humbled himself—emptied himself of his ineffable glory—and became a man—a man of sorrows and of sufferings, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* The minister of Christ, therefore, is not to preach himself, but Christ Jesus the Saviour of sinners. He is not to preach his own fancies or sentiments, but the words of eternal life. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, the unsearchable riches of Christ." There may be—there will be differences and diversities as to the form and manner in which Divine truths are presented by preachers of the Word; yet Christ must ever be the centre in which all the lines of Truth meet. The preacher of the word may command the wealth of history, the powers of eloquence and the charms of rhetoric—splendid talents, varied and profound attainments, great learning and untiring research, and the more knowledge of men and things, of learning sacred and profane he can lay under tribute, the better able is he to be useful, but like the wise men from the East, he must lay all his talents and attainments at the feet of Jesus. If he speak in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," let it be of Christ, *the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person—the Lord* JEHOVAH, OUR STRENGTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Apostle Paul, on the great platform laid down by himself, is an example to be well studied and followed. He had talents to shine in the Senate, or to rule in the Sanhedrim—genius and position to have been among the first men in his nation; but, the only pre-eminence he desired after his conversion, was a pre-eminence in suffering and in devotion to the glory of His Divine master. See Acts xx: 17, 27. Paul was a preacher of *free grace*—a doctrinal, argumentative, earnest, practical preacher. He brought logic and rhetoric and philosophy and the

heathen classics, and a well trained and powerful mind to the cross of Christ, and baptized them all into his blood. The prominent, the chief topic in all his discourses and in all his epistles, is *free grace*. How often do we hear him acknowledge his indebtedness to redeeming love. He seems never to weary of the theme, nor to have been ashamed of his obligations. *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God*, was with him, a sort of stereotyped address. He exulted in the obligations laid upon him as a sinner saved by free grace. He speaks of it as *undeserved, unexpected*, and when first revealed to him *undesired*. He says it came to him from the highest Heavens, arrested him in his career of impiety and persecution, and made known to him a saviour. *Free, sovereign grace* is the affecting theme that melts his heart, elevates his powers, and tunes his tongue to praise—which dissolves his whole soul in tenderness and pours out the deep emotions which heaved his bosom. He could say by experience: *It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*. The grandeur of his mind ; the amplitude and strength of his intellect ; his moral courage ; his heroic devotion, his patience in suffering ; his powerful genius ; his decision of character ; his fixedness of purpose ; his eloquence and zeal—all give him a prominence in the ministry of God's dear Son, that well entitle him to the study and careful imitation of all Christ's preaching servants. Who more powerful, massive, clear and overwhelming in argument than Paul with the subtle and vain philosopher ? Who more terrible in dealing out the thunders of Jehovah and sounding forth the trumpet-tongued curses of Sinai against gainsayers and all the ungodly tribe, who refuse free grace ? And yet never was there a more tender and affectionate son of consolation in his discourses to the timid disciple. He knew better than any other man how to wind his way into the human soul—"how to coil around its most sacred affections—how to explore the secret place of tears, and to put in motion all its kindest sympathies." But, it is when he speaks of the fulness, depth, length and breadth of free grace, whereof he was a minister, and an Apostle both to Jew and Gentile, that he looms higher and shines more gloriously than on any other subject. Here all his powers of intellect, and all his feelings are concentrated. He declares unhesitatingly that the *grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was exceeding abundant—and that he had obtained it for this end, that in him, first the Saviour might show forth, all long suffering to them, who should believe on Him, to life everlasting*. He regarded himself as a monument in-

scribed with: THERE IS FORGIVENESS WITH GOD. He tells us, moreover, that his ministry was marked with *many tears*. I have often thought of the Apostle in tears. I have tried to imagine how he must have looked when preaching free grace in tears. There is something peculiarly affecting, tender and sublime in the tears of an Apostle. But wherefore, O thou man of God, these "many tears?" Did he weep before the Jewish Sanhedrim, or before the Roman Governor? Did he weep when he was shipwrecked—when he was put in prison—when he was scourged—when he was stoned and taken up half dead—or when he was in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, or in perils of false brethren, or when he was carried to Rome and appeared before Nero, and under sentence of death, or when taken to the block to be beheaded? No, my brethren, there is no record of any tears from Paul on any of these occasions. But he does tell us expressly, *that none of these things move me; nor do I count my life any thing, only that I may finish with joy the ministry of the Lord Jesus. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*

The fountain of his tears was sealed up too deep to flow on his own account. But the great deeps of his heart were broken up, when he saw his countrymen rejecting the only Messiah—when he saw his fellow-men rejecting free grace—putting away from them the only words of eternal life. Having a full view of the completeness and glory of the Gospel, and of the terrors of the Lord, and the awful destruction that awaits the finally impenitent from the presence of the Lord, he could not refrain from tears. Now the eyes that knew no tears while he stood in chains before a Roman governor, nor when he was sentenced to death by the bloody Nero, are suffused and overflowing. *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* He was willing to be accursed after the manner of Christ, for his brethren's sakes. Like the prophet, he was ready to exclaim, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Whitfield and many other eminent servants of God have not been able to refrain from tears when pleading with sinners to be reconciled to God.

5thly. For a minister of the Gospel to stand on the platform of knowing nothing but Christ and Him crucified, is, as the dying Rutherford said to his fellow presbyters: "To do all for Christ; to pray for Christ, study and preach for Christ; feed the flock committed to your charge

for Christ; to visit and catechise for God, and out of love to the souls of men, and to beware of men-pleasing." In a word, it is to make Christ the all in all of his ministry—the soul of all Christian graces, ordinances and sacraments. Psalms and hymns, spiritual songs, prayers and sermons, baptism and the holy supper are nothing without Christ. He gives them all their value. Christ, my brethren, is the subject of all our preaching—the ground of argument, the magazine of arms, and the great motive of persuasion. He is all that we want to give peace to the conscience, strength to the feeble, patience and courage to the suffering. He is all that is wanted to purify the affections, and loosen us from earth, and lift us up to Heaven. Christ formed within us the hope of glory; will be followed by the setting of our affections on things that are above. If we preach the *law*, it is that it may be a schoolmaster to bring our fellow-men to Christ, the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. If we preach *repentance*, it is because Christ is exalted to the right hand of God, to be a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins—that repentance should be preached everywhere in his name. Do we preach *faith*? It is because Christ is the author, object, and finisher of faith. And if as faithful men, who cannot shun to declare the whole counsel of God, we preach *the torments of Hell*, it is to warn men of the wrath to come, and induce them to flee to Christ as a glorious refuge. And when we preach the joys of heaven, it is to allure to that bright world—to encourage sinners to fly to Christ, who is the way to the inheritance of the Saints in glory. As ministers we are without occupation, commission, authority, subject or hope of success, except as we realize the presence and authority of Christ. One is our master, even Christ. It is his commandment to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." All our strength as ministers of the Gospel is from Christ. Paul and Apollos, Calvin and Edwards, are nothing without him. He giveth the increase. As the clouds from which the rain descends have not that rain in themselves, but derive it from the sea and various moist places of the earth, and then disperse it abroad; so all the *efficacy* of the Gospel which is preached, is derived from Jesus Christ, who is the overflowing fountain of all that is good and holy. The treasure is committed to earthen vessels that the excellence of the power may be of God.

With two remarks, I close this discourse.

And the FIRST is this, that to be a minister of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is to bear an awful and fearful responsibility. No man should take this office upon himself unless he is called of God to it. And then he should ever bear in mind that he is set to watch for souls as one that must give an account to the judge of quick and dead in the light of eternity. Christ's ascension gift is not nuncios, popes and cardinals; nor clergymen, nor assemblies, nor vicar generals, nor rabbis, nor Ulemans, nor reverend, nor right reverends, but *bishops or pastors* to feed the people with knowledge and understanding. Of all things clerical, pride and pomp and hypocrisy are the most contemptible. What can be more melancholy than to see a man who is set between the living and the dead—a mouth for God—himself a poor sinful man, converted and saved by free grace, and honored with the ministry of reconciliation, so far forgetting his high calling as to compliment himself in the pulpit, and be far more anxious to show himself off, than to win souls to heaven by preaching Christ and Him crucified?

The *second remark* is, that in proportion to the divine authority attached to the living ministry of the Word, is the responsibility on the part of the hearers of preachers of the Gospel, to take heed how and what they hear. As men sent of God to preach the Gospel of His grace, their authority is from heaven. In preaching Christ and Him crucified, they speak not their own words, but the words of God. If you receive their message, you shall inherit eternal life; if you reject it, you reject the offer of pardoning mercy from your eternal Judge. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned.*

May the ever blessed head of the Church multiply grace upon grace to you, my beloved brethren, and enable him, whom you have called to be your pastor, and who is now set over you in the Lord, so to live and labor and preach from the glorious platform of the prophets and apostles, and of the noble army of martyrs, and of saints, that he may both save himself and those that hear him. May he be a burning and a shining light among you many years. May he be full of faith and of the Holy Ghost—mighty in the Scriptures—showing unto you the way of salvation—and when he stands before you at the judgment seat of Christ, may his sentence be: *Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou with this thy flock into the joy of thy Lord.*

AMEN, AND AMEN.

CHARGE TO THE PASTOR BY REV. S. WOODBRIDGE.

In addressing to you, by the appointment of Presbytery, the customary charge on this occasion, permit me, first of all, to greet you on these heights of Zion as a brother beloved.

The Christian ministry, like the Sabbath and the Christian sacraments, is a divine institution. The Saviour of mankind, having consummated by his death on the cross the expiatory sacrifice necessary to render the forgiveness of sin practicable, without infringement upon the moral perfections and government of God, before re-ascending to the glory which he had with the Father antecedently to his humiliation in the flesh, assigned the promulgation of the glad tidings of salvation to the eleven apostles and their successors in office through all time. "Go ye into all the world," said he, "and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned; and lo! I am with you always till the end of the world." In this commission, neither the work designated, nor consequently the promise annexed, is restricted to a favored portion of the clergy invested with special prelatival powers, but appertains alike to all authorized ambassadors of Christ, to all who *preach* and *baptize*.

As a minister of Christ, entering upon a new and important field of effort, we solemnly charge you—

To take heed unto thyself. Although the treasure of the Gospel is committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men; still the usefulness and success of a minister depend in no small degree upon his personal qualifications and deportment. A clear head and a good heart are essential. When Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, the king known to fame as he who "made Israel to sin," was desirous of introducing a spurious idolatrous worship among his subjects, the worship of golden calves, it is said by the sacred historian that he made priests of the lowest of the people—thus enlisting ignorance and vulgarity as co-adjutors in his unholy enterprize. His moral turpitude did not prevent his discerning the connection between cause and effect in this matter—like priest like people.

Give yourself to reading and meditation. Let the Bible be your textbook; and, through the medium of its revelations, as a glass to strengthen and clarify your vision, contemplate all other objects. In the light derived from this source, God appears in all his works—crea-

tion beaming with his glory—Providence the development of his purposes and attributes. Let the morning and the noonday sun—the evening and the midnight lamp—shine upon those hallowed pages, while with unwearied assiduity you cull the diamonds, the precious gems of truth which lie scattered in inexhaustible profusion through this El Dorado of wealth unknown.

Knowledge, however, without charity, can profit little; therefore guard your *heart*, for out of it are the issues of life. *Know thyself* is a proverb of antiquity never stale, never to be forgotten. Impartially examine your desires and affections by the Word of God. The study of your own heart will inevitably lead to a full conviction of the necessity of a divine influence to insure the purity of your purposes and motives. No worldly adversity will so soon drive the Christian to the throne of grace, as a simple recognition of the innumerable spiritual foes which lurk amidst the windings of his own depraved nature. “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” Meanwhile, the spirit of self-justification lies at the foundation of nearly all false systems of theology. Assuming their own heart to be the standard of rectitude, the law of God is qualified by self-righteous errorists to suit the palate of human pride. Intoxication is the result, and the inebriate fancies he is every inch a king. Is he not perfect?

In your walk and conversation, as a disciple and servant of Christ, imitate Christ. Live above the world, not below it. Ever bear in mind that you occupy an elevation far in advance of all that the world calls great or honorable. To you the riches, honors, pomp of earth are children’s toys, or rockets that explode in smoke. The men of this world walk in their transient, flickering light—you in the light of eternity—they wander and trifle among graves concealed from their sight—to you the stone is rolled away from the sepulchre, the door is open; their hopes terminate here, yours *above*.

In your official capacity, as a prominent duty you are to *preach the Word*. By the foolishness of preaching, it pleases God to save them that believe. To fill acceptably and profitably this department of your commission, strict attention is required both to the *matter* and the manner.

The burden of an evangelical preacher’s message is “Christ and Him crucified.” It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners! With the plan of salvation, however, by Christ, are connected numerous topics for illustration—*man’s need of a Saviour*, which is shown by comparing the

human heart with the precepts of the moral law in their spirituality and extent—the *sufficiency of Christ to meet the claims of that violated law*, which is developed in the analysis of his character, and his various offices as prophet, priest, and king—the entire circle of the divine perfections—the *justice, benevolence, mercy and truth of God*, which are portrayed and confirmed in the plan of redemption; *the duties connected with discipleship, and the endless rewards awaiting the righteous, together with the fearful consequence of unbelief*—these open a field so extensive and fruitful that, without encumbering the pulpit by the introduction of foreign themes, our only difficulty consists not in finding, but in selecting subjects for presentation. “The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before you.”

Both the glory of Christ, and the safety of souls, require in all your ministrations an unshrinking adherence to the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Every other system allows to man a portion of the merit which secures salvation to the believer. That merit is all Christ's. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. The Jews stumbled at that stumbling stone, and to the Greeks it was foolishness; and in modern days, the doctrine is confounded with anti-nomianism, as if being in Christ and born of the spirit did not constitute a *new creature*. The believer loves to obey his divine master. As Christ's freeman he serves God, not because the service is meritorious, but because he loves God. The world has troops of Saviours—morality, sincerity, zeal, bodily exercise, nervous spasms, intercourse with familiar rapping spirits—even ignorance is supposed by many to be an adequate remedy for the ruin of the apostacy—all physicians of no value. Christ is a safe substitute for sinners who repose their trust in him, but substitutes for Christ are damnable. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid.

As to the manner of exhibiting truth, you are to seek out acceptable words—you are to be ardent, affectionate, in meekness instructing such as oppose themselves. Be sincere, and speak as if you were so. Think, and write and preach to be understood. Sharpen the nail in your study; in the pulpit drive it home upon the hearer's conscience.

The apostle Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, utters a warning against admitting to Christian communion and fellowship, individuals by him designated metaphorically as wood, hay and stubble. In seasons of special religious excitement many delusive hopes are entertained, which with the excitement pass away like bubbles, occasioned by the agitation of waters—vanishing with the cause that produced them. A public profession of religion in such cases must terminate

either in ex-communication, or the party will retain a standing among the followers of Christ, having a name to live when spiritually dead. Sad dilemma! amputation of the limb or mortification of the body. It may indeed be urged that if we do not receive these persons, other denominations will. So be it. Such additions are a lifeless incumbrance to any church; and such accessions furnish no evidence of the usefulness or success of a minister. Every plant, says Christ, which my heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

Pastoral visitation—going from house to house after the manner of the apostles—is owned of God in frequent instances of conviction, and conversion among the careless and unconcerned, and in the increase of holiness and zeal in believers. Personal appeal reaches the heart with a force scarcely to be expected from public addresses. What is said to us as individuals is felt to apply directly to ourselves, while truth thrown broadcast over a congregation is too often like the seed by the wayside, which the birds of the air picked up. In the performance of this duty, moreover, the pastor becomes acquainted with the circumstances and states of mind, and necessities of his flock, and is thus enabled in his sermons to furnish to each of his hearers a portion of milk or of meat in due season.

The painful duty, alas! often devolves on the minister of Christ, to enter the chambers of sickness and of death, houses of mourning and lamentation. The death bed of a believer, indeed, is not unfrequently bright with the divine presence, enriched with an illumination from paradise, rendering the scene anything but depressing; it exhilarates, it quickens faith, it animates hope. It is good to be there; and we feel that it is a privilege to wear out life and all our energies in diffusing a religion whose influence can thus dissipate the heavy fogs that overhang and enshroud the grave. But ah! the gasp of agonised impenitence on the verge of eternity! The harvest past, and the summer ended, and the soul not saved—a soul, too, my brother, committed to *your* care. The moveless features of the corpse, typifying the fixed condition of the departed soul in the other world, are enough to set in motion all the whips and stings of conscience, and to drive the maddened spirit of an unfaithful minister to the depths of remorse, if not of despair. Assuredly by your fidelity you will save yourself from such wretchedness! No; if sinners perish, let it not be through your neglect.

In your intercourse with your brethren of the ministry, and in all transactions where their interests are involved, you will uniformly labor

to strengthen and increase their influence ; to the extent of your ability will cheerfully assist them in their work ; and as you are one with them in profession and employment, will be one with them in feeling and in effort.

Give yourself wholly to the work. However justifiable and even praise-worthy it may have been, through the necessity existing in their times, for the apostles to engage in secular pursuits among the heathen, that necessity, in a Christian country, when established churches are able to sustain their pastors, can hardly be supposed to remain. A faithful minister has enough to do and to occupy his mind without dabbling in temporalities ; and a wise people will prefer supplying their spiritual purveyor with the bread that perisheth, to being fed, on the Sabbath, with the mouldy refuse of old trains of thought, whose unction, if indeed they ever had any, has long since been absorbed in the lust of pecuniary gain. Love of fame—a desire to be known and talked about, literature, politics, and other kindred worldly concernments, may and often do divert the servants of Christ from their legitimate employments.

While general encyclopedic knowledge is necessary to extensive usefulness, great care must be observed lest the servant become the master. We need indeed ever to be on our guard, lest at unawares we fall into the snare of the tempter. We are not “to entangle ourselves with the affairs of this life, if we would please Him who has called us to be soldiers.”

The TRIALS incident to the ministry are many and various ; trials of the heart, of the closet, of the study, of the pulpit ; trials from false brethren ; from ignorant brethren ; from heretical brethren ; from brethren of one idea, and that idea not Christ and Him crucified ; from seditious, self-willed, disorderly brethren ; from assuming ambitious brethren ; from anonymous brethren, “who bray among bushes ;” *trials* from the heedlessness, the stupidity, the recklessness of impenitent sinners, who set at nought the counsel of God, and, by thus exposing their souls to endless death, assail the faith, provoke the patience, and aggravate the feelings of their religious instructor. But let none of these things move you. Be steadfast, immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord ; in due time you shall reap, if you faint not.

Corresponding to the arduous and self-denying duties of the ministry, are its *motives*, *encouragements*, and *consolations*. If you ascend into heaven they are there, where God is and where Christ is, at his right hand, and where the redeemed from among men, saved by the

foolishness of preaching, have entered into the joy of their Lord; if you descend into hell they are there, where lost souls, in an unceasing, endless moan, bewail their mis-improvement of the Gospel message, and curse the memory of the temporising worldly ambassador of Christ; if you take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, they are there for all the priceless souls of all the millions of the human race in all climes, in one universal chorus of death groans—groans of moral spiritual death—implore, command the herald of the cross to “cry aloud and spare not,” while yet the door of mercy is open. Meanwhile the trumpet of eternity from the other side of Jordan, with its deep unvarying tone, sounds from morn to night, and from night to morn, through successive weeks and months and years and ages, summoning mortals to their great account—forever telling the consequences (yet untold) connected with the Christian ministry. Amid these stirring scenes and incitements, there comes a voice from the THRONE: “Lo I am with you; my grace is sufficient for you; I will never leave nor forsake you; you can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth you; they that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars, forever and ever.”

What can you ask more? If the Lord be for us, who shall be against us. In a little while you will meet the people of your charge in other circumstances in another world. What you now sow, you will then reap. What a rich harvest! How invitingly it waves and bends to welcome the inheritor to the reward. O my brother, work while the day lasteth; the season of toil will soon be over, and then comes
THE HARVEST HOME.

CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHERN :

The relation you have now formed, involves on your part important duties.

Their nature you are supposed to have considered solemnly and maturely.

Yet our excellent form of government enjoins that, on this occasion, you should be reminded of them.

Your Pastor is to be regarded in two lights—as a spiritual ruler and as a teacher.

In the former character, he has a right to expect a conscientious and cheerful respect. Upon the nature of the submission which you owe him in the Lord, there will not be time to dwell.

For the sake of brevity, the present remarks are confined to the duties on your part, which grow out of his relation as a teacher.

Let me then, in the outset, call your attention to the fact, that he is a *public* teacher.

It is not only true that, if he is a Pastor after God's own heart, he will feed the people with knowledge and understanding, but it is equally evident that the chief sphere of his instructions is the sanctuary.

It is in the great congregation that he can scatter light upon the largest scale. A failure there, is a failure pre-eminently disastrous. No social habits, no colloquial powers, no vivacity of spirit, no parlor preaching, can compensate a congregation for the loss which it sustains from a jejune, uninformative, monotonous pulpit.

Next to personal piety in your Bishop, nothing is so important as thorough preparation for instructing in the public services of God's house.

Therefore, he must forego the pleasure of seeing his friends at their homes, as often as he and they desire.

Hundreds, for their spiritual nourishment during the whole week, depend on the food which they receive from him on the Sabbath. All these he must not neglect, for the sake of calling upon a few families.

Then, *be not exorbitant in your demands for visits.*

Pastoral visitation is delightful and indispensable, in its place and season. But how frequently it should be performed, must be decided in view of the minister's talents, and the circumstances of his charge. By the former alone, the decision can properly be made. Complaint or dictation by the latter are shortsighted and annoying.

Again, though a shepherd must attend to the whole flock, some members of it may require more care than others.

In one household, he may discover a secret inquirer; in another, a Christian prone to declension; in a third, a heart bleeding with wounds which are disclosed to none but a spiritual physician. On these, and other accounts, the best interests of the church may demand that he should make a distinction. His reasons for doing so must not at all times be blazed abroad. Consequently, his friends should honor him with a degree of confidence sufficient to prevent words or feelings of jealousy and envy.

Yet again, it should be remembered by all that the apostolic injunction to every religious teacher is, "give thyself wholly to these things." In order to his opportunity for obeying this injunction, his congregation should *relieve him from pecuniary care.* The world and his own conscience require him to be honest; nay, to avoid the appearance of dishonesty. But he cannot meet his engagements, unless his salary be paid on the very day when due. His comfort and usefulness can be

greatly promoted by an energetic, systematic treasurer, and punctual subscribers.

To no man is it so indispensable that he should live within his income. Then if time should prove his income to be inadequate, let it be generously increased. In estimating it, keep in view the fact that he is not in the market. His position renders it impossible to watch the prices, and consequently he is unable to live as economically as others. As far as your obligation is concerned, he merits not only a living, but a liberal competency. By no man is it more fully earned. His is the most laborious profession in the world. Not only the week, but the very Sabbath (which gives others a respite) is spent in unrelaxed and solicitous exertion. Therefore, his people should blush at a calculation of his mere necessary expenses. They should so furnish him, as to exempt his heart from worldly anxiety, and enable him to pursue his studies with an unincumbered mind—to increase his library, so as to keep pace with the progress of the age—and to extend that hospitality which is enjoined on every Bishop.

That he may give himself wholly to these things, it is also advisable to *relieve him from all services which are not essential to his office.*

The Presbytery have been exceedingly gratified by the zeal recently manifested in this congregation. We hope it will abound more and more. The field has peculiarities which suggest the necessity for much foundation work—much gathering together of material. Let not this burden fall entirely on your Pastor.

His great employment should be the acquiring of knowledge by study and prayer, and the dispensing of it by preaching and pastoral visitation. These are sufficient to absorb his whole attention, and his whole time and his whole heart. Append not those executive details, which others can perform as effectually as himself. Allow him not to shrink from the proposing of important measures, because he is unable to devote his own time and energies to their accomplishment. Let your forwardness in every labor of love authorize him to start any enterprize, with the full confidence that co-workers will achieve it, without requiring him to leave his appropriate sphere.

The Scriptures inform us that a Bishop must have a *good report of them that are without.*

That good report is in the hands of his church. Unfortunately, it is often destroyed by the thoughtless remarks of his best friends.

No man is faultless. Nor can the least foible be made a topic of frequent remark, without assuming an exaggerated importance. If you would not lower your pastor, in the respect and confidence of your children and friends—if you would not neutralize his sermons—beware, both in domestic and social intercourse, of unnecessary allusion to his real or fancied, his public or private foibles. Be as careful of his reputation, as you would if he were a relative in your own sacred family circle.

Finally, permit me to suggest the importance of keeping constantly in view the *duty of encouraging your spiritual guide.*

The incessant draught upon his mental resources and his sympathies, creates a liability to nervous depression. His sense of responsibility is sometimes overwhelming; the perception of the evidence that those whom he addresses are spiritually deaf, is often disheartening. I admit he ought to find, in his direct communion with God, sufficient to sustain and cheer him, independently of social influences. But God has not formed us thus independent. Ordinarily, the depressed are, to a certain extent, thrown upon their fellow-men for animation. Nor can a Pastor dispense with the cordials which his people can impart.

You can do much to cheer him. Without uttering a word, you can convince him that his labors are appreciated. This can be done partly by regularity in attending upon his instructions. Leave not your own minister for any other, who may be preaching elsewhere at the same hour. *Let no inadequate excuse of weather, business, visiting engagements, or bodily indisposition, detain you from the Sabbath services, the weekly lecture or prayer meeting.*

Your absence will render your compliments valueless and disgusting; Your uninterrupted presence will animate him more than the highest eulogy.

The cheering effect will be increased by showing that you *profit by his teaching.*

Then hear not with indifference, but with earnest attention; not with fastidious criticism and cavilling pride, but "receive with meekness the engrafted word." Be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the Word. So live that he can perceive your growth in grace, and can point to you as "living epistles" of his ministry. Such visible evidence, that he has not labored in vain nor spent his strength for nought, will stimulate his diligence, and cause him to rejoice with joy unspeakable.

And permit me to add, this course will be pleasing not only to your earthly shepherd, but to the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

Only a few years can elapse before the link of connection formed this night shall be severed.

Pastor and people shall be separated by death. They must part, to meet no more till they confront each other at the bar of final judgment.

If he shall have been faithful, he shall then give his account with joy, and not with grief.

Shall it then appear that he has been to all of you a savor of life unto life?

Can it be, that to any of you this beloved pastor shall prove a savor of death unto death!

God forbid?

May he so preach, and may you so hear, that at the sound of the Archangel's trump, you and he may rise with the dead in Christ, to lift your voices on Mount Zion, with the General Assembly of the church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven.

AMEN.