

one the influence of which reaches through time onwards to the judgment seat. But while the duties and responsibilities that lie upon our respected brother, and now your pastor, are heavy, those which devolve on you are not less heavy. At the same time, the privileges which you enjoy in connection with the ordinance of a stated ministry are unspeakably great. If it is a blessing to have one to guide and to counsel amidst the varied anxieties and sorrows of life; if it is a blessing to a christian parent to have one to aid him in training up the young in the fear of God, and by his influence and his teaching to fortify them against the temptations of the world; if it is a blessing to the aged to have one to point them to the source of comfort and support, to smooth the dying pillow, and to light up the dark valley,—yours is that blessing. Prize, therefore, highly the ordinance of the ministry. It is appointed by Christ for the good of His people. Of all the gifts of Heaven, none is to be more earnestly prayed for than a faithful labourer in the vineyard; of all the evils that can befall a people, none is greater than to have the candlestick removed from among them. Verily, “happy is that people who know the joyful sound.” Long was it your inestimable privilege to enjoy the ministrations of a faithful, zealous and unwearied pastor. But the Lord hath called him to enter into his rest; and while his memory will be revered by you all, and handed down to your children’s children, we doubt not but that the influence of his life and labours will long live and bring forth fruit among you,—for while God calls away his faithful servants to enjoy their reward, He is not unmindful of the flock. He leaves you not as sheep without a shepherd, but has sent another to feed you. Your eyes again behold your pastor. We rejoice with you that you have had this day one set over you in the Lord to break the bread of life among you. I trust that he has been sent to you in answer to your fervent prayers, and that he and you may prove a blessing to each other. He comes not to you as a stranger untried, but has been going out and in among you, and we rejoice that your experience of his labours has resulted in your appreciating them, and in calling him to be your stated Minister. It is our earnest prayer that the cause of Christ may still prosper among you as in days past. Receive him, therefore, in the Lord. We would address to you the words of Paul, in writing to the Thessalonians: “Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake; and be at peace among yourselves.” Respect him, therefore, whom you have called, and whom the Presbytery has this day solemnly set over you. Receive him as one who bears a sacred divine commission, and is the servant of Christ. Have a tender regard for his character; encourage not the slander to which every faithful minister of Christ is more or less exposed. In these days, few ever hesitate to break through that awful hedge: “He that despiseth you despiseth Me.” Be it yours to defend your minister, and in everything to hold up his hands, and encourage his heart, in the arduous work in which he is engaged. Have a regard to his feelings, his convenience, his time; give him at all times a welcome into your houses, and in every good work bid him God-speed.

Need I press upon you the exhortation, “Neglect not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.” Be regularly in your places in the sanctuary, and bring up your children along with you. You will thus set an example to those who watch your conduct, and you will thus, too, encourage the heart of your pastor. “Take heed how ye hear.” Beware of treating the message with disrespect. Remember the words of the Master, “He that heareth you heareth Me.” Come to the house of God with hearts prepared by earnest prayer. Exclude from your thoughts all worldly business and cares. Do not come to the house of God thinking of the world, sit in it thinking of the world, and return from it talking of the world. While you listen to the Word of Truth, strive to understand it; cherish for it reverence; apply it carefully to your hearts and lives; lay it up in your memories and affections; use it as the