

the minds of the hearers, that, in the transaction on Calvary, amid the dread darkness, expiation was made for sin—the broken law was magnified and made honorable, and a way opened up into the holiest of all whereby the penitent might find forgiveness. Consequently, Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man—the only way to eternal life. The Holy Spirit completes in man what Christ begins in the dawn of faith. The believer, then, who puts his hands to the plough, must not look back, but steadfastly, constantly persevere till the race is run, the battle is fought, and the prize is won.

There is a very important part of ministerial work demands your closest attention—the visitation of your congregation. In towns, where the congregation live pretty much together, this work is comparatively light; but when the congregation extends for miles up and down both sides of the river, the work is anything but light, and but too seldom do people realise how fatiguing and exhausting travelling and preaching are to a minister. However, with all its hardships, amid storm and wind, frost and snow, this work must be done, this part of your duty must not be neglected. In this work you become better acquainted with the people—understand their ways, habits of thought, and know more intimately than otherwise their spiritual condition. Here you have the doubting to confirm, the indolent to arouse, the mendacious to reclaim, the profligate to reform,—above all, the sick to comfort and console, the dying to cheer, and make their bed feel “soft as downy pillows are.” In your visitation among the varied diversity of human characters, you will find those who are ready to entertain you with the gossip of the hour, or of a bypastime. This is a most pernicious practice. Satan can wield no instrumentality so powerful as this to destroy the usefulness of a minister’s labours. Close your ears, then, against it, check it in the bud, crush it as you would the fangs of a deadly viper. Your safety, your success, depends upon it, and the salvation of some souls may be endangered by it; therefore, touch not the unclean thing. You may be placed in circumstances where you may have to listen to gossip; if so, then, as a rule, take the part of the injured one, for in his character there may be some good which the gossip seeks to darken. Never retail gossip, and the peace and harmony of your Church, your home, your friends, will never be marred.

The lambs of your flock form no inconsiderable portion of your congregation. Feed the lambs—watch over them. The safeguard of this community lies in the godly bringing up of the youth. No national system of education—indeed no education is worthy of the name, that does not recognise and teach the Bible as the true basis of instruction. Legislators, in their shortsightedness, may exclude the Bible from our common schools, but they will find yet that to be their worst policy. If people choose to submit to this, which deprives them of that which laid the foundation of England’s greatness, then it is the duty of the minister of religion to stem the tide of secularism and infidelity by means of the Sabbath-school. This is the nursery of the Church—the hope of posterity. Let it be your peculiar care to maintain and promote the prosperity of this noblest of Christian institutions. Gather round you the faithful of the congregation to assist in this laudable work; and the more successful its Sabbath school, so is the Church and congregation.

In all your work, of whatever kind, times will come when you will feel discouraged—as if you spent your strength for naught, and were labouring in vain. At such a time remember the words of the Lord Jesus—“Lo! I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the world.” Amid the surging and heaving to and fro of public opinion and theological controversy, never give up the theme “Christ and Him crucified.” Turn not aside from this; let this be your guide, your light, your all. This is as unchanging as the throne of God. It is the word divinely great. The cross of Christ! It is a mine of wealth—a firmament of power! It is the unwinding of all great principles—the expression of all glorious thoughts! The cross of Christ! It alone can adjust the wreck and