

scriptural teaching of the divine call to the Christian ministry, and by a due appreciation of this gracious truth. While personal piety is a primary condition of the divine approbation, so that none are divinely called to the Christian ministry who are unconverted, yet not every man who is converted is divinely called to the Christian ministry.

There should be a lively appreciation of *the high spiritual significance* of this calling. It is a ministry of reconciliation between God and man. This is the key-note of the high calling. A state of amnesty is to be proclaimed between the Sovereign and the sinner—the condemned sinner and the holy Sovereign—a human, finite sinner and the divine, infinite Sovereign. Such a reconciliation is possible now, for time and eternity. Such is the marvellous message. How much it involves on the part of God! How much it involves on the part of those to whom it was sent! How much it involves on the part of those who are called to bear the message! Never was a calling of such high spiritual significance. Yet this is the key-note of the high calling: “To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.” There is full and gracious provision made in the atoning sacrifice of Christ for such reconciliation: “For He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” “God so loved the world.” There is no fact of such blessed significance to the sinner as this. How will he regard such heavenly love and grace? How will he regard his own spiritual need, or treat this his supreme opportunity? It can scarcely fail that such thoughts as these will come to him who may be looking forward to this high calling. They should come with profound impressiveness and abide with him through all his ministry. Next to the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit they will help to make his own ministry effective. Without this two-fold presence, how can one appreciate his sacred calling, or profit even by the best of training for his work and *in* his work?

If there is such a word of reconciliation made possible by such a costly provision of divine grace, then the Christian minister is not only to be a message-bearer, but he is to know, and feel profoundly, that the estate of sin is one of spiritual irreconciliation, fraught with all spiritual ills; that this estate of sin so imperatively needs to be changed that unless changed it is fatal and final; that the carnal mind is enmity against God; that it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be, while it is carnal; that if sinful resistance continue it must prove serious and suicidal. This the preacher is to present “in demonstration of the spirit and of power.”

At the same time as Christ's messenger, and by the aid of the Holy Spirit, he is to proffer reconciliation in its fulness—to win back the alien if it be possible—to overcome the enmity of the carnal mind,