

then instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." There should be then no intermission in our importunity at the throne of grace, no rest given to him that heareth prayer "till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

And does not this subject authorize an earnest and affectionate appeal to the Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, and to those who are about to be engaged in its arduous services. If on the face of the whole earth there be any order of men, any class of christians who may be expected most deeply to feel their need of divine influence, surely it is the order of christian Ministers. Without a powerful impression of the necessity of that influence, you cannot to any effect, study the scriptures, or address your hearers on the things that belong to their eternal peace. You may bring forth out of your treasures things new and old, you may present interesting elucidations of divine truth, you may make impressive appeals to the understanding and the heart; you may awaken attention and excite admiration, and after all you may only be to your hearers "as a very lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they may hear your words and yet do them not." It far transcends the energies of the most able and most holy minister to chase away the darkness of the benighted understanding, to open an avenue to the heart, which is closed against the admission of truth, and to say to the troubled conscience, "Peace be still." Let then the persuasion of incompetency to secure the grand objects of the christian ministry, powerfully urge you, dear Brethren, who preach the gospel, to seek with the utmost importunity the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Ever honor the Holy Spirit by the strain of your public and private devotions, and by the character of your discourses from the pulpit. Let the Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit, the nature of his various operations, and the promises of his gracious influence hold a due prominence in your discussions, and in your exhortations, and then may you hope to be in some measure prepared to say with the Apostle "thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us." But let this doctrine be obscured or blotted out, let the Holy Spirit be no longer fully and heartily acknowledged, as the exclusive agent in shedding abroad the love of God in the hearts of men, and we may indeed write upon the gates of our Zion. "Ichabod, the glory of our God is departed."

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