

sal. And in our own Congregation, we have had to lament the loss of many of our members.—not the old and infirm only, but rather more of an age at which death is generally supposed to be far away, thus enforcing the Divine caution upon us all, to “watch” and be ever ready for an early call. Thus “the Lord’s voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the word and who hath appointed it.” May such be the use that we all make of the Lord’s dealings around us and with us. “When thy judgments are abroad, saith the prophet, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness.” Finally, dear brethren one and all, “hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering.” “Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure.” Be ever looking unto Jesus, as the way, the truth and the life. After all our long years of preaching and of hearing, it comes to this at last, “are we Christ’s or are we not.” Have we His Spirit in our hearts, and its fruits in our lives. Have we come as poor sinners to His Cross and to that alone for pardon, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? He will soon come to take an account of his servants. Examine yourselves, then, whether you are ready. Avoid false teachers, and false doctrines are abroad even here. Avoid them. Cling to your church with unwavering affection, because in her services and articles and creeds she clings to Christ, teaching us that we are justified only by faith in Him, freely, and not for our own merits or deservings—holding forth to us the words of Life, following us with wholesome food from our cradles to our graves, and there leaving our mortal bodies with the cheering promise that He who is the resurrection and the life will not forget us, but will reunite us by and bye, if joined to Him by a living faith to the Spirits that meanwhile have lived with Himself in the higher world. True, your church cannot save you. But she would lead you to Him who can. You need no better earthly helps or outward means than that church supplies. Love her much, but love Christ more. He must be exalted far above all on earth. I trust I can love all those by whatever name distinguished, who love Him. But at the same time I more especially prefer that Church in which I and mine have been born, baptized and nurtured, in which I have so long been preaching the Gospel of Salvation, and in which as I have lived, so I hope to die. And I hope it is no bigotry (which I abhor) to commend her to your unceasing regard and support, and your regular and devout