

of any thing, that would in any way prevent the Lord from blessing their Sabbath ministrations. As the Sabbath approaches, the prayers of God's people for ministers should be increased; the earnest desire of the Church on the Sabbath morning should be that the ambassadors of Christ might come into her midst from the presence of God, filled with the Spirit, entirely freed from the fear of man, and the love of human applause—and reflecting from their appearance, manner, and words, so much of the character and love of Christ that the Master might be as visible in them as the servant.

When ministers have entered the pulpit, the church should not fancy that they have got into a place so very sacred, and where so much of the presence of God must be constantly realised, that they cannot be exposed to temptation. The very reverse of this is the sad truth. The pulpit, like the closet, is the place most haunted by the Wicked One, where he uses his greatest skill and power, and where he is often most successful in the prosecution of his most malicious work. The Sabbath is Satan's market day, and the church is his market place. If Christians would have much of God's presence, and a great out-pouring of the Spirit in connexion with a faithfully preached gospel, they must keep the world, sin, and Satan, out of God's house; and this can only be done by earnest believing prayer during the whole period of divine service. Whenever Christians cease to pray when in the house of God, they cease to hear in faith, or in an humble dependence on God, as present and gracious, and when they cease to receive in faith, they cannot receive even the riches of God's grace with relish; and when the gospel is not relished, Christ is rejected, God is dishonoured, and the Spirit is grieved.

The efficiency of the holy ministry is a thing of such vast importance and so dependant on the faithfulness of the church, that to relieve herself of most fearful responsibility and bring into operation the very best means of honouring Christ and extending his kingdom on earth, she should feel herself most powerfully constrained to hold many social meetings for prayer with a view to its increase.