

## SERMON.

PREACHED AT THE OPENING OF THE FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA, AT OTTAWA, ON THE 12TH OF JUNE, 1879, BY REV. DR. JENKINS, THE RETIRING MODERATOR.

"As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." John xvii. 10-18.

Jesus was the apostle of the Father; sent forth into the world on a mission of love—the great Gospel mission of saving men from sin. "The Twelve" were the apostles of Jesus, sent forth by Him into the world with His Father's message of mercy. This message He Himself brought from heaven to earth—"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Timothy, Silvanus, Epaphras, Titus, and many others, were apostles of "The Twelve," sent forth by them into the world to teach the same doctrine of salvation from sin, as they had been teaching; and also to provide for their being continuously proclaimed to the coming generations of men—"The things that though hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." This apostleship, thus ordained and ordered by the Father and the Son, and perpetuated during nineteen centuries by the presence of the Holy Ghost, exists in

## THE CHURCH TO-DAY.

For they to whom is committed "the ministry of reconciling," are apostles. Not in that technical and official sense in which the word came to be used in the first age of the Christian Church, and which limited it to "The Twelve," but in the broader, the literal sense, indeed, of their being "sent forth" into the world, as were "The Twelve," and as was Jesus before them, with the original message from God, of "goodwill toward men." They who trace back the authority of the Christian pastorate to the Apostles merely, take a limited view of the dignity of the pastoral position. The first link in the chain of the Christian ministerial succession is fastened in the will of the Eternal, in God's everlasting purpose of love to man. For, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Again, "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The work which devolves on

## THE MODERN CHRISTIAN MINISTER

is, therefore, that to which "The Twelve" were commissioned by their Lord, is indeed, the work to which the Father originally commissioned Him: "The Lord hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." In what manner Jesus fulfilled this mission and ministry, with what wisdom and true-heartedness, how strong and how enduring was His loyalty to that commission under which He had been sent "into the world to save sinners," how deep was His sympathy with human woe, and how intense His longing to promote and secure the saving design of His great mission; is known to all you who have studied the life of Jesus, as it is portrayed in the Gospels. From time to time, Christian ministers are counselled, in books, in lectures, and in friendly conversations, to model their professional character and course, now, after one eminent and successful man, and now, after another. Sometimes a distinguished modern is commended to their study and imitation. At other times, some of the many men of real power who shed

## SO BRIGHT A LUSTRE

on the Puritan period of British ecclesiastical history. Then again, ministers are invited to go back to the era of the Reformation, and are urged to adopt as models of ministerial life and action, some of the men of might who, in that great age, defended with almost apostolic power and against many a fierce assault, Bible-truth and liberty of conscience. Beyond all these, ministers, time and again, are pointed to the age of the Apostles, that age which excelled every other age, whether previous or subsequent, in real preaching power; St. Paul being very naturally the favourite apostolic model on which modern ministers are recommended to order their professional course. A grand model truly! If we could but fashion our minister character after it! For the intellectual force and culture of this great Apostle; his eloquence, his resolve, his self-denial, his power of endurance, his sanctified zeal, have never been surpassed, if, indeed, they have been equalled in the missionary history of the Church. At this point, before passing to more important matters, I venture to offer this word of counsel, if not, indeed, warning, to my brethren in the ministry; chiefly to my younger brethren: Imitate no man! Read what the great Christian preachers and other authors of the different ages have written; make yourselves masters of their best productions; catch the inspiration which comes to any and every man who intelligently and laboriously and prayerfully studies the lifework, the spirit and the methods of those great pastors and preachers, who, from time to time have been instrumental in

## BUILDING UP THE CHURCH OF GOD,

and have made her strong and successful in the world. Noble men, who adorned and magnified the office of the Christian ministry. Do not, however, set them up as models after which to shape your own professional career; not so much, because they are not worthy of your imitation, as that you haven't the skill to imitate them. While during a long life in the ministry, I have known a man here and there, who has contrived to become respectable by overlooking the fact that he was himself thinking that nothing was left to him but to become an imitator, affecting to copy men who had reached high position in the Church by themselves recognizing and working upon their own individuality, I have known scores who have ridiculously and hopelessly failed. The rock on which many young ministers have split, and on

which many more are likely to split, is that of selecting some popular living preacher, or some admitted professor, as worthy of imitation, the result being that they have followed their cherished models in ungainliness of gesture, or in an unattractive elocution, or in defectiveness of utterance, or in tricks of style, or in other weak points of manner and method, while the nobler qualities, the really solid and valuable characteristics, those which lay at the root of the popularity and power which attracted them, were either overlooked in the modelling, or found too difficult to copy, and were not therefore reproduced. No man among us can afford to be another man—to be anybody but himself. You cannot become another man! By dint of foolish practice you may counterfeit some great man's gifts, or reproduce them in caricature; but the real power of the man is his own! not yours! nor anybody else's! It never can be another man's! It can never be yours!

"This above all! To thine own self be true; And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Be yourselves! Any man amongst us who will resolve upon being himself; who will then strive to find out what his individuality is; and who will at length work upon the discovery; may become, in no long time either, an influential and successful minister. Likely enough he will become a power in the Church. One model exists which I may fitly set before you; which, indeed, I may urge you to follow; to fashion upon it that religious life which is personal to yourselves, and also that professional life which is relative to the interests of the Church, and to the salvation of men from sin. I shall venture to recommend, with all the strength and earnestness of which I am capable, that you study, and as far as may be, reproduce in your respective spheres of ministerial labour, the spirit and method of His working, whose brief ministry of three years, told so powerfully upon the men of His own generation, and the record of which even, as we have it in the Gospels, has mightily influenced all the generations of men that have come and gone, since he came and went;—our great Master, Teacher, Saviour, Apostle, Example. Of all others,

## JESUS IS THE MODEL MINISTER,

and missionary of "the Gospel of Peace." All that characterized the spirit and method of our Lord, in fulfilling the mission of His Father, is worthy of being studied by us, and followed. I must content myself with noting two or three points. Certainly the piety of our Lord is worthy of our imitation as ministers. It must be imitated by us, if we would become "able ministers of the New Testament." By His "piety" I mean, that life of purity and goodness which He led during His earthly sojourn, chiefly during His official life. The divine side of religion and its human side were in full development in the character and life of Jesus; they were completely balanced too. Perfect was He in goodness, perfect in virtue also. Devoutness marked His whole bearing toward His Father, a pure, a kind, and a loving spirit was pre-eminent in all His intercourse with the children of men. I say "devoutness;" for His life was a life of prayer; and to commence with His Father was His highest joy. We are told by the evangelists that He was often and much alone with Him who had sent Him into the world. How near and abiding was the intercourse which existed between the Father and the Son, may be gathered from those of Our Lord's discourses which have come down to us in the Gospels: That to Nicodemus, &c., and that also spoken at Jacob's well, to the woman of Samaria; in both of which he betrays a perfect knowledge of the Father's character and will, and the closest identification with the Father's purposes. Then, we have the discourse which He preached after the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, a discourse which reveals His intimate knowledge of heavenly things, as they bear upon earthly things; and of the things of God, as they bear upon the interests of man; a knowledge which must be largely set down to the strength and nearness of

## THAT HOLY FELLOWSHIP

of which I have spoken. Especially do we detect this oneness in that discourse in which, after the last supper, He instructed "the Twelve" in "the deep things of God," and comforted them, in view of His going away, by the promise of the Holy Ghost; chiefest of all, we are made aware of it by those marvellous intercessions which followed, in which the mysterious oneness existing between Himself who was interceding and Him who was being addressed, is disclosed with a clearness and certainty of statement which falls not short of a new revelation; it is, indeed, "the mystery of Godliness," made plain to human apprehension. With how great self-denial Jesus worked the works of Him that sent Him, how completely the zeal of His Father's house ate Him up, I need not say. It was His life, His all of pleasure to glorify His Father on earth, and to finish the work which He had given Him to do. A whole-hearted, unselfish consecration of His great and wondrous nature to God the Father of glory, in the salvation of mankind, this—together with those qualities which make up the human side of His moral character, kindness, meekness, gentleness, condescension, patience, tenderness, His love in a word, this is the sense of what I venture to call the religious life of Jesus of Nazareth. How, and to what extent this life of consecration and goodness, bore upon the success of His work none of us can certainly explain. The references to this difficult question which are contained in our Lord's intercessory prayer, lead us to infer that there did exist a link of connection between His faithfulness to God the Father, and the successful establishment in

## THE WORLD OF CHRISTIANITY

and the Church. But ye followers of this supreme example—in the devoutness, the tenderness, the strength and the endurance of His piety! Let our Christian pastors walk in these steps of "the Chief Shepherd," "the Shepherd and Bishop of souls." Believe me, brethren, no man among us, whatever his talents or his learning, can build up a worthy and fruitful ministerial character, save on the basis of a holy personal character. A man who would faithfully and effectively minister the gospel in the Church of the living God,

in order to this, know the strength and joy of sustained fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And how is this to be secured? By an earnest, constant, personal study of the oracles of God, by much private prayer, and by a simple daily faith in Christ I am crucified. Let every minister find time to be alone with his God; after the example of Jesus. Faithful work in the preparation of sermons is important, so also is industry in parochial and pastoral duty. Prayer meetings and missionary meetings, Bible classes and classes for communicants are admirable constituents in the machinery of a congregation; but they are nothing, unless they are guided in their operation by holy hands, by devout men, by men who set apart daily seasons for communion with God. Let us be sometimes "alone!" I say! Not even in the streets, or in the houses of our people; not spending all our time in public meetings, in church courts, at social entertainments. Snatch from the busy, rattling hours of the day, one quiet hour for talking with God. Sometimes there will be constraint upon you literally to follow your Lord, by setting apart a lonely night,

## A NIGHT OF HOLY CONVERSE,

with the Father of your spirits; a night in which you will plead with Him for new strength, for quickening grace, for supplies of that wisdom which He had promised to them that ask, for the sending down of the Holy Ghost upon both yourselves and your congregations. Doubt it not; your people will take knowledge of you if, in imitation of Jesus, you are much with God in prayer and communion. It will tell powerfully upon your pulpit work; your hearers will "catch it in your public prayers and in your sermons; and it will be felt also in the discharge of your pastoral duties. Let then your studies and all other departments of your work, be "sanctified by the word of God and prayer." "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another (God and we) and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The modesty and meekness of Jesus, in the prosecutions of His mission, are also worthy of being considered and imitated by us who sustain the office of the Christian ministry. He, the Creator of the ends of the earth, mingled with the people as one of themselves; not obtruding Himself on their attention; not, as a rule, displaying the power and majesty of His Godhead on a grand, commanding scale; not introducing either His most formal discourses or His greatest miracles with a flourish of trumpets; not, thus, I say, did He fulfil His great mission. Calmness modified His displays of power; humility softened the dignity of His bearing. More often than otherwise, His was the still small voice. His

## THE SOFT AND SILENT TREAD.

"He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets." There was no boasting, with the view of producing the impression upon the people that He was some great one who had come into the midst of them. Not even at Bethany, the scene of His greatest miracle; no, nor when He miraculously fed the 5,000. Quiet, unostentatious, modest was He. Concealment of power, rather than display, characterized the Son of God in all the work which He undertook and carried out in their behalf whom He came to save. Brethren, concealment of personal power, rather than display, is the position to which the example of Jesus points as the fittest and the best for ourselves. No man who is worthy of being called a man, much less a Christian, ever boasts of what He is, or what He can do; ever tries to call attention to himself as a man of extraordinary power; as a man whose worth has been under-rated, whose qualities have been overlooked by the Church. If men will do their best, quietly, earnestly and without ostentation, in the sphere in which they are, depend upon it they will soon rise to their true level. The men who fret and fume after positions which they have not secured, but which their vanity or ambition or both lead them to think they ought to have secured, are almost sure to fall short of that advancement which they have been so diligently seeking. As a rule the men who rise to places of prominence, are the men who do not strive, nor cry, nor lift up their voice in the streets, as though they were set aside and neglected, but the men who shrink from responsibility. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a King, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." He shrank from prominence, and preferred prayer, communion with His Father. I commend these thoughts to my younger brethren specially. Be sure that, in the long run, the Church and the people will rate us

## AT OUR TRUE VALUE.

This ought to encourage you, that the least talented man in the Church, by prayer, by communion with God, by diligent study of the Scriptures, by faithfulness in pastoral duty, and by a pure and single aim, remembering all the time that he is himself, can do for God and for man a great and lasting work. Such men oftentimes outstrip in usefulness, aye, and in position too, men, who, with more ability and more learning, fail, to a greater or a less extent, for want of simple, earnest, sanctified purpose; and because, through lack of meekness and humility, they have cherished a feeling of discontent with their position. "Whosoever will be great amongst you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." 2. The teaching of our Lord—the substance and the manner of it—is also worthy of being studied and followed by the Christian minister of to-day. Christ's teaching was in harmony with that morally defective condition of humanity, which led to His being sent into the world by His Father. His mission, as to both His Father and Himself, was prompted by the universal sinfulness of mankind, and by the Divine desire and purpose to save men from their sins. His teaching was based upon three considerations: The fact of human sin; the penalty of human guilt, and the purpose of God in regard to human salvation. The existence of sin in man, and the danger in which it has placed man, must be deemed to have been a controlling motive in all that Jesus spoke and