

his treasure, things new and old, I say such persons will know how to be very lenient to their minister in the way I have mentioned. My exhortation to you then on this point is—be not exacting upon your minister in the way of visiting. Give him a cordial welcome, and that I well know you will do, when he does come to see you, and when he is not with you in your homes, take it for granted that he is labouring in his study to enable him to meet you for your profit and welfare in the house of God.

These remarks of course refer only to ordinary ministerial visitation, when all is well in your families. It is very different with regard to the visitation of the sick. There is no more important part of a minister's duty than that, nor any that a right feeling and conscientious minister will be more anxious to discharge. It will ever be his great desire and delight in all cases of serious illness amongst his people to offer what sympathy is in his power, and as a servant of Christ, to bring the consolations of religion to those who are in affliction. But remember that in order to his being enabled to do so, he must be informed of those cases where his attendance is required. It is a frequent subject of regret to ministers that the friends of those who are laid low by sickness, do not take care to inform them of the fact. In this they are much to blame, and yet perhaps they are all the time blaming the minister, and wondering why he is not calling; as if he ought, by some mysterious and invisible influence connected with his profession, to know where sickness is. He may by chance hear of some cases of illness, and, as it were, by a side wind, occasionally get notice that so and so is ill, but that is a mere chance, and it is doing a great injustice both to themselves and to their minister, when people do not take the needful care to inform him that his presence is desired. When you are ill, and wish the advice and assistance of a doctor, you send for him, and you don't expect his presence unless he is sent for; and the minister's position is the same; he expects that he too shall receive notice when his presence is desired. It may no doubt be said, and it is often said: "The minister might have missed me out of Church." Let me tell you, my

dear friends, that were you in the pulpit with the service of the day engrossing your whole mind, you would find it utterly impossible to note down in your memory who were absent. Besides there are other causes than sickness which often keep people from church, and these sometimes so trifling, that they would rather the minister remained ignorant of them. But when there is sickness, the command of the Apostle James is plain and your duty is therein made plain: "Is there any sick among you? let him call the elders of the church." If, then, you desire the presence of your minister when there is sickness or trouble in your families, remember that the least you can do is to give him timely notice of it.

After making these few remarks, suffer, in conclusion, one further word of earnest warning. If you desire His blessing which maketh blessed indeed, you would retain prosperity as a congregation, if you wish to profit by ministrations of him, whom you have called to be your spiritual guide, then forbear, I beseech you, to irritate, harass and annoy him, by going and repeating to him every little bit of gossip, and every idle report which may happen to hear about him. This is a terribly common evil amongst our congregations. Ministers now-a-days seem to be butts for every silly and malicious tongue to have a shot at; and there are always some very ready to carry the tale, or the malicious remarks to the minister. This, as you all well know, is a fruitful source of mischief in congregations, and frequently leads to the bursting asunder of the ties which unite pastor and people together. I was lately very much struck with the truth of a remark made by a minister who has much experience in the ways of congregations in this country, while speaking to him on this very subject: "Said he, 'one fool can ruin a whole congregation.'" Knowing this, then, beware, I beseech you, of tittle tattling about your minister, and especially repeating it in his hearing. Rather let it be your great aim to encourage him, by speaking words of kindness to him, and letting him know that you remember him in your prayers at the throne of God. In this way you will strengthen and