

addressed the Minister, and Rev. Mr. MacKenzie the people. At the close the newly inducted minister was warmly welcomed by his people.

We congratulate our friends at Thamesford in this unanimous and happy settlement. They have long waited for a minister. We trust they have now one over them, who will prove a faithful, zealous and successful minister, and that their lonely days of destitution of the gospel will be more than redeemed by the full enjoyment of precious privileges for the future.

A SERMON

ON THE CHURCH'S GRAND DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF TAKING POSSESSION OF THE WORLD FOR CHRIST,

Preached before the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, at its opening, on the 14th of June, 1855,

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JOSHUA, xiii. 1.—Now Joshua was old and stricken in years, and the Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

Joshua sustained the double character of leader in war and civil ruler of God's chosen people.—He had been employed by God, to secure by conquest a considerable part of the land of Canaan, destined for their possession; but in order to the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes, very much of it yet remained to be possessed.—This honorable warrior and statesman having reached his *hundredth year*, the Lord solemnly reminds him that before resting from his labours and going to his reward, no time should be lost in doing with all his might what yet remained to be done of the *Lord's work*. That work was, under God's directions, to make a division of the land conquered among the different tribes of the Lord's people.

Now all acquainted with the Bible know, that the taking possession of the land of Canaan was but one in a series of preparatory steps towards the accomplishment of that plan which Jehovah has been pursuing from the foundation of the world.—the plan to establish the *kingdom of Christ*—that *spiritual kingdom* of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the divinely constituted Head and King—a kingdom into which all the subjects have been translated out of the kingdom of Satan, out of a state of sin, rebellion, enmity to God, spiritual death, into a state of justification, adoption—made heirs of eternal life, in its beginnings and progress here on earth,—its consummation in Heaven's weight of eternal glory hereafter.

In defiance of all the opposition already made, or to be yet made by earth or hell, to Christ's kingdom, it is destined to hold on its majestic career—even until its triumphs shall be at last so complete, that all other kingdoms, nations, things, shall be brought under its subjection—even until its happy subjects shall be numerous "as the dew-drops from the womb of the morning"—shall accumulate to "that great multitude which no man can number."

Applying the text, then, to the obligation and privilege devolving on all Christians and Christian Churches, to put forth their utmost possible and unceasing efforts to *win over human souls in spiritual conquest to Christ*. In divine dependence let us consider I. The claims which the whole field, the world, has on our utmost Christian efforts. II. The claims which that part of the field has where God has cast our lot. III. The practical conclusion which the subject suggests.

As Canada, the more immediate field of our labours, claims the prominence—that vast sub-

ject—our Christian debt to the world—must be brought within a narrower compass than is convenient.

But, Fathers, Brethren, Friends, met as we are this day, in Synod, as a section of the Church of Christ, for the professed purpose of laying ourselves out to devise and execute the best measures for the glory of God, and happiness of man; would to God, that under his direction I could strike such a key-note as might at the very entrance on our duties, wake up our spirits to the sacredness of the duty and glory of the privilege of making conquest of souls for Christ wherever the field lies.

Now, believing that we can never act our part rightly to our race, whether near to us, or distant from us, until we come to see and feel that most peculiar position assigned to us on the creation and purposes of God, by being born into this world, in speaking to the claims of the world, we shall endeavor to press home these two questions:

1. Have we ever realised the solemnity of our position as having been born into this world, and as professing to be Christian Office Bearers, Members of Christ's Church?

2. Have we ever realised the amazing privilege and encouragements of the position?

1. All the worlds made by God, have no doubt their own characteristics, and you know that the grand distinguishing characteristics and features of this world are, *Sin and Redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God*;—man seduced into sin "the transgression of God's law" by the devil, and ruined—Jesus the Son of God coming to *destroy the works of the devil*—to vindicate and satisfy God's broken law and save. This is the Bible in little.

Now, this world's having been made the stage for Redemption—the battle-field of that stupendous moral contest for the vindication of the divine law, has stamped a significance and importance upon human condition and destiny, that never can be overrated. Indeed, in certain respects, the thing done by God on this earth never has had, nor ever can have any parallel.

True in point of *material extent*, this world is little more than a speck among the vast and magnificent worlds which the omnipotent arm of Jehovah has launched into the boundlessness of space.

But be it ever remembered that "God is a Spirit" and that, therefore, the material must always be infinitely inferior in nature to the spiritual and moral—that be material worlds and systems as glorious and stupendous as they may—they can only be means subservient to spiritual and moral ends, to God's sublime benevolent purposes in calling into existence, spiritual creatures of a nature like to his own—made happy by being made holy.

Be it ever remembered that, God's moral law is infinitely dear to him—that it must ever yield the sceptre of supremacy in creation, be the creation as wide and boundless as the power of God. Be it remembered that, his law is that eternal rule of the right, the holy and pure, the fair, lovely, and good, in which the blessed God eternally found his own blessedness before there was any creation at all—and that without conformity to his law, that is, without being holy, it must be eternally impossible for any intelligent creature to be happy. Yes, sooner, infinitely sooner, will God suffer all creation to rush back to chaos, to nothingness, sooner suffer, than his law to be set at naught.

The bright sun be extinguished, and the stars Wander forth dazling in the eternal space, Wayless and pathless, and the icy earth Swing blind and blacke'ning, in the moonless air.

For, saith the Saviour, *it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.*

But the contest of which this world is the

battle ground concerns this law, and so involves the honour of God's character and moral government, the order of the universe, the interests and happiness of all intelligent creatures.

Then the deed! The deed done on this earth, the stage to vindicate the law. *Calvary, Calvary!* For the victory is now won; though the contest still goes on, which is to decide on what side found. Yes! this is the thing which makes this world so peculiar. We cannot toll what may have been the deeds of glory of Jehovah among the archives and chronicles of the history of the past, or what they are to be in the history of the future. But wide as the consequences and effects of the Redemption over the whole moral universe may be, and the Bible indicates are, still this must be certain that there can be but one world that can say, it is the world of the Incarnation—of the Cross, where the great God became Incarnate—*The Son of God died; and that world is ours*. We see then that the destiny of human beings is entirely wrapped up in Christ Jesus the Son of God. "The destinies of other creatures, fallen or unfallen, seem to be fixed—But ours hang in suspense,—tremble in these eventful scales, for Christ, or against him—If found for, by falling in with the gospel's free offers, neither tongue of angels or of man has yet told the half, or given any approximation concerning the glory and blessedness of that heaven which Christ's blood has earned for us;—if found against—concerning the horrors of that hell—awaiting despisers of that blood. There is no middle ground lying between—for, or against.—"If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins"—There is not, and in the very nature of things, cannot be any neutrality. "He that is not for me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

Fathers, Brethren, Friends, the double weight of our own salvation, and the salvation of others presses upon us. First, let us see to it, be sure of it that we ourselves are among the *For*. We find from Paul, (and that is high authority,) that not only Christian Professors, but Ministers of Christ, may be *castaways*. The thought, we find, led to the most earnest soul solicitude,—the most close self-inspection and self-watchfulness. But we as Christians, and Office-bearers of the Church of Christ, are charged instrumentally with the salvation of others as well as of our own. We are Christ's representatives and ambassadors, to win over the world to Christ. How indescribably solemn our position.

But while it is well to feel the full weight of our responsibility, so that we may be thrown upon our Divine Master, with the imploring cry, "who is sufficient for these things? think on me; undertake for me," we shall never succeed in gaining over souls for Christ, unless we look up to the Throne of Jesus, as well as his cross. What a full tide of hope flows in upon all our Christian efforts, when we realise our Lord and Master's *universal dominion*.

2. Have we ever made the proper use of this Bible truth—That all things were made not only by, but for Christ?—That Christ, along with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is not only the Author, but as Mediator and Saviour, the very object and end of Creation? That whatever may be the ulterior of Divine purposes in creation with which it would appear from the Bible, Redemption is closely connected, the key to the grand idea of creation, is to be found so much in Christ, that not only was this world made for Him to be a stage for His work of Redemption, but all worlds, and all agents and things in them, were destined to be put under His Mediatorial sceptre and providential management, to subserve Him, and minister to the accomplishment of Redemption.

These are affirmations so large, that the mind sinks oppressed under their magnitude. But let us see how completely the scriptures sustain them. In Col. I, 16-18 Paul, after describing the person and work of Christ, its greatness, and the