

and of this he was self-conscious. "I am the resurrection," "I am the door," "I am the way, the truth and the life;" "I am the true vine, and my father is the husbandman;" "I am the vine, ye are the branches," and "I, when I am lifted up, will draw all men unto me;" "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." All salvation, therefore, you will perceive, lies in the Saviour, and must come from him; all Christianity in its redeeming, and in its sanctifying power, is in Christ, and can be felt only as he is accepted and embraced. Hence the apostolic Christian ministry ever presented Him as the sum and substance of preaching. Philip went down to Samaria and "preached Christ unto them;" and on his return, finding the eunuch reading the Scriptures, he "preached unto him Jesus." The apostle of the Gentiles stands out preeminent for his constant presentation of his Lord and Master to all with whom he came in contact. Representative words we find in his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians: "And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

Now, if the Christian minister is in any way to succeed his divine Lord, if his ministry is in any degree to mirror the spirit and mission of the Master, he must enter with quenchless ardour into the sublime purpose which controlled; and be animated by the exalted motives which constrained the Lord Jesus, he must, by a baptism of fire, be made willing to toil, to endure, if need be to die, by the same self-sacrificing love which made Jesus what he was, and urged him to do what he achieved.

The moral grandeur of the ultimate issues of your contemplated work, my dear brethren, can now be only dimly apprehended and partially realised. Who can imagine what is involved in the salvation of a single soul? To understand its full import, we would need to look on the misery of Hell, and witness the bliss and ecstasy of Heaven. But what shall we say of being co-workers with God, co-labourers with Christ, in that vast enterprise peerless in moment, and unrivalled in glory, by which a multitude, countless by human arithmetic, shall at the last awful day of reckoning stand before God, pardoned, purified, and transfigured!

Frequently in your future work you will find it hard to realise your connection with this grand super-human economy. Nights will come, when you will have to toil amidst weakness and discouragement, when no star can be seen above you, and nothing heard but the ocean's distant boom, or the nearer moan of approaching tempest. Then let faith look back on the days of the Son of man; on his trials and temptations; on his works and weariness; on his shame and sorrow; and then look upwards to his triumphs, his recompense, and his glory.

As intimated in these remarks, I have only thrown out a few thoughts on the Christian ministry, without any attempt at systematic presentation; and now without any intention of giving a full or logical development of the subject, permit me to give you,

II. A few hints as to how a man may be enabled to enter on this great work. In giving these I will confine myself mainly to those qualifications which ought by every theological student to be sought for, *even during the period of preparatory study*, and even thus, your time limits me to two trains of thought.