

things; and he must thus ere long differ much from his present self in his increased knowledge of divine things, and acquired fitness, from his personal appropriation of divine things, to communicate divine things from faith to faith in the house of God. Now, from the design of the gospel ministry, and in view of the qualities here marked out as characteristic of the preacher, two things imperatively demand your regular attendance on his ministrations in order to go along with him in the work of the Lord within your souls. The first thing is his constant onward progression, both in the matter and in the spirit of his ministrations. He is thus being always the better qualified to expound unto you the word of God in all its significance and spirituality; to unfold unto you the plan of redemption in all its grand provisions as set forth with fulness in the oracles of heaven; to spread out before you the unspeakable riches of his grace scattered everywhere with rich profusion in the sacred volume; to give you clear insight into divine things, adequate views of them, and a deep interest in them. Will you not, therefore, from your regular attendance on his ministrations, gain knowledge upon knowledge of God in the economy of grace? Or, if you allow occasional interruptions in your attendance on his ministrations, will you not therefrom lose much spiritual good? Will there not thence be a break in the continuous flow of the preacher upon you in his thoughts and sentiments on divine things? Of all this there can be no doubt; for, something which he has said before, has a bearing on what he now says, but inasmuch as you were not regularly in the house of God to hear him, there necessarily ensues a break in the continuity of thought and sentiment between your mind and his mind either in the matter or in the spirit of what he preaches to you on your again hearing

him. Are you thus not rendering less efficient the means which God has appointed for your spiritual good? Are you thus not depriving yourselves of the spiritual good which God designed for you in the public ordinances of religion? Are you thus not frustrating the grace of God in your own salvation? Again, regular attendance in the house of God to hear the gospel of Christ, viewed merely as a habit, exerts a mighty influence on your upward and onward progress in the divine life. Habit is everything to a man in the development of his capabilities. Is it not continuous habit that makes the skilled artisan? Is it not continuous habit of study that makes the scholar? Does not the habit of prayer intensify the spirit of prayer within you, or give enlargement to your soul in the exercise of prayer, and enjoyment in it? Does not the habit of ascribing praise unto God give delight to the soul, heighten in you the tone of piety, and increase in you the desire for closer communion of soul with God? In like manner does the habit of hearing, every Sabbath, Christ preached unto you not tend to bring you in harmony with the truth, to familiarise you with the truth, to interest you in the truth, to wed you to the truth, and thus to nourish your soul unto life eternal? Now if such are the native effects of regular attendance on the preaching of the word, viewed merely as a habit, still higher are the effects, when you go regularly to hear the gospel of Christ from conscientious conviction: from a pure desire to meet with God in his own house, and to honour His holy name in the public ordinances of religion. If you wait upon God in His own house from a deep sense of duty towards him, He shall spread out before you a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. If you go thither from a pure