

tion cannot be one of indifference, What good has it effected?

Now, in reviewing my own conduct in your presence, and in the presence of God, I cannot be regarded as seeking to attract your attention unduly to myself, for you observe it is only what Paul does when addressing the Ephesian elders; and there is no minister who has any sense of the importance of his office that will not feel desirous of publicly acknowledging his deficiencies, or vindicating his conduct, when about to be separated, it may be for ever, from the charge which had been committed to him.

Now, while there is no one more conscious than myself of the many defects that have characterized my labors and my conversation among you, yet I think I can earnestly say that I have, for the most part, acted under a sense of the vast importance of the duties committed to me. I may have been beguiled for a moment with the flowers that I have met in my path; I may have had less of a feeling of responsibility at one time than at another; but what I have mentioned has been, so far as I know myself, the general spirit of my conduct. Though, doubtless, chargeable with many inconsistencies, I have striven, so far as possible, and so far as I understood my duty, that my example should be unmistakably in favor of what I believed to be right. And, as regards my public ministry, though the messages which I have been privileged to deliver have rarely been such as I could have wished them to be, yet has it been my sincere desire to direct your attention to such truths as I thought were likely to be most useful or seemed most needed. I have, in some measure, endeavored to act up to the sentiment enunciated by Paul, with whom it was a very small matter that he was judged of by man's judgment, but who sought the approval of God only; for if a minister's chief object is to select only such topics as are palatable to a congregation or shape with their notions, he is not very likely to please Christ.

Like Paul, I may say that I have "kept back nothing that was profitable unto you," and "have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God," in cases, too, where, doubtless, I would have given more satisfaction had I kept silent. While I have sought to win you by the attractions of the Gospel, I have not failed to persuade you by reminding you of the terrors of the Lord. While preaching a free and a full salvation through Christ, I have not been slow to warn you that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. While urging on you the duty of working out your own salvation with fear and trembling, I have sought also to impress on you the necessity of looking up continually to God, without the aids of whose Spirit we can do nothing. While exhorting you to labor, above all, for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, I have ever

taught that this is perfectly consistent with the strictest attention to the duties of this life—nay, that religion is brought into most healthy exercise amid our daily employments, and that we best evidence the sincerity of our faith when it leads us to discharge faithfully the various obligations and requirements of this present scene. If we have urged you to render unto God the things that are God's, we have urged you, no less, to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's. If we have sought to rouse the careless, we have sought, no less, to edify, comfort, and conduct in the way of life, those who have already assumed the pilgrim's garb.

The substance of my preaching has been very much that which the Apostle describes in the passage before us, "testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, as the alone ground of pardon and salvation; repentance towards God, as the necessary consequence and fruit of such faith;—these are what it has been my constant aim to enforce. To wean you from all dependence on any righteousness of your own—to show you how, nevertheless, believers are under peculiar obligations to maintain a high standard of conduct—to point out to you, honestly and impartially, what the requirements of the Christian religion are;—this, I think I may say, has been my unceasing object since coming among you.

Though, then, I dare hardly say with Paul, in the prospect, it may be, of never seeing you again upon earth, after leaving this, "Wherefore, I take you to record this day that I am free from the blood of all men"—though I dare not, my friends, say this, for, doubtless, I might have been a hundred times more faithful, more earnest, more devoted—yet am I confident that there are none, who have regularly attended my ministry, that can plead ignorance of the way of salvation, or of the duties required of them as Christians; and if there are any among us who have preferred darkness to light, the ways of sin to the ways of holiness, the road that leadeth to destruction to the path that leadeth unto life, you know well that it has not been without repeated and earnest warnings from this pulpit. Nay, I have no doubt there are some who fancy that I have preached on death, judgment, and eternity, and the necessity of instant and habitual preparation for death, more frequently than the case required. Now, I am free to acknowledge that I have frequently taken up these topics at the risk of treating of matters stale and commonplace, and of repeating the same truths over and over, from a sense of their extreme and superlative importance, and from the feeling that, in an uncertain scene like this, men cannot be too often urged to flee from the wrath to come.

And, my friends, it is right that I should