

is in God? Our hope must be in him, first, as our reconciled God in Christ.—Our hope must be in God; not in our own merit, not in our own righteousness, nor in any claim we have upon God's mercy. We have no claim upon the mercy of God. We might be justly treated as outcasts, rebels, transgressors. Are we not all these? Have we not rebelled against God's authority? Have we not transgressed his law? Have we not cast ourselves out from his favour? Are we not obnoxious to his displeasure? Then, we must depend solely upon God—upon his mercy and justice, reconciled. These have been reconciled in the work of Christ. God is not a God of mercy, and a God unjust. He is the just God and the Saviour. He is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. We have but to believe in Christ: truly to trust in him: and if we do so, we shall be saved: God will receive us graciously, and we shall be able to say: "Now, Lord, what wait I for? *My hope is in thee.*"

Let us urge the importance of immediately exercising this trust in God. It is when we do so that we are safe for eternity, and that we shall have all needed blessings in time. When God is once reconciled to us: when he becomes our God in Christ: when, by faith in his son, we are restored to his favour: then we can hope and trust in him for all that we need. We can look up to him with confidence for the supply of every necessity: for God is "a sun and shield: he will give grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly." We can come to him in our utmost emergency, and cast our burden upon him: we can say: "My hope is in thee." That has been the solace of many an otherwise desolate child of God in every age. His hope was in God, and that gave him comfort in every circumstance of trial. And he has never found his hope fail, or deceive him. What a comfort is it to be able to look up to God in such circumstances as would otherwise altogether overwhelm the soul! When friends die, when the desire of the eyes is removed as by a stroke; when our earthly comforts are stricken, when the world disappoints: in the midst of suffering: under spiritual trials: in any or all of these circumstances—when there is nothing for which we can wait—how comforting to be able to say: "Now, Lord, what wait I for? *My hope is in thee.*"

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

In some preceding numbers we have given a short exposition of the Bible principle with respect to the support of the Ministry. We have also considered the special ground on which the Apostle Paul, who so pointedly declares, "even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel," did not always avail himself of this provision; as he himself tells us, it was "lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ." We would now direct attention to the nature of the ministerial work itself; without a due consideration of which we are but ill qualified to judge how far such exceptional cases as those of the Apostle Paul with the Corinthians and Thessalonians, either justify the people in leaving their ministers, as in so many instances they have done here, without adequate support, or warrant the ministers in prosecuting a secular calling, that they "may make the gospel of Christ without charge."

There are undoubtedly many who know little of a minister's duties beyond what they occasionally witness in the conducting of public worship. Some of them may have formerly enjoyed, altho' without profiting by them, opportunities of witnessing a full and faithful discharge of ministerial duty; but these opportunities have passed away, and they now form their notions under the influence of present impressions. Others of them may have had little acquaintance with public ordinances at any time—they may have grown up under the lifeless system that may be the result of a professedly religious people leaving their minister either to eke out his scanty subsistence, or wholly to provide it for himself, in the engagements of a worldly business. In both cases they may be found attending public worship without any due consideration of the object for which it is instituted. Though they hear the service, and seem to take a part in it, it is without real attention. Their hearts are uninterested, their souls are unedified; and, when they have been affected only by what meets the outward senses, they may not unnaturally conceive that there is no great need of making an effort for the comfortable support of one whose weekly labours, as they think, are confined to two or three hours' duty on the Lord's day. There is reason also to fear that in cases not a few, the addresses which they hear as the preaching of the gospel may have cost the speaker little more