

ministers, especially young ministers, have temptations, and they need to be very watchful and ever on their guard, for temptations often come in a way from a place and at a time when least expected, and many a minister's sun has set in a dark cloud, and he has gone down to the grave with a broken heart, and all for the want of watchfulness and grace, when the hour and power of temptation came upon him. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

The Apostle speaks of "keeping back" something. In this he followed the example of "the Master." Advanced doctrinal truth would not be suitable for babes in Christ, he would therefore "keep that back." Controversial truth, suitable for the Romans and the Galatians, he would keep back from the Philippians and the Corinthians. As we have already seen, he gave "meat to men" and "milk to babes."

The Great Teacher, after speaking to his disciples about the mystery of sin and the judgment to come, said,—“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,” and therefore he “kept them back” as an example to be followed by those afterwards called to the work of the ministry. While truth is always truth, it is not always wise to speak it, for both Jesus and Paul have taught us that there are seasons and circumstances when some truths have to be “kept back.” But with wise caution the Apostle here says—“I kept back nothing that was profitable”—“Nothing that was profitable unto you and have showed you and have taught you publicly and from house to house.”

“From house to house.” This we call Parish work. The office of the ministry is often very properly divided into two parts—public preaching and pastoral work—or, as we generally term it, parish work. The most learned and eloquent preachers have not always been the most successful, that is, as far as saving sinners and building up churches may be regarded as marks of success. The chief cause of their failure in this vital point has generally been for the want of coming down to common parish work, in visiting from “house to house” as St. Paul did. No minister ever succeeded, and no minister ever will or can succeed, unless he follow up his preaching by visiting from “house to house.” He may possibly gather crowds to hear him on the Sabbath day, and that in itself is a good thing, but if it is not followed up by pastoral, personal work, between the Sundays, much of the good resulting from the preaching will be lost. Have we not known men of but slender abilities in the pulpit, who built up strong churches by their tact and diligence in pastoral work? Have we not also known men of great power in the pulpit who have been conspicuous failures in the work of the ministry, just because they left their work incomplete like a man who lays the foundation of a house but never finishes it. When a minister leaves the pulpit on a Sunday evening his work is only