

And then again, when his pen is laid aside, and the last page is writ, comes another question that weighs like a mountain upon his heart. Will the Holy Ghost bless it, will it reach any breast, will it move any soul, or will it be chargeable with the deadly sin of having used a divine thought without blessing a hearer with it?

And apart from these anxieties, which vary somewhat with the mood of the mind, there is this continual and never-bitted burden—the care of souls. What will become of this people to whom I minister? Will they be saved? Will they go to Heaven? Will they sing and rejoice at the last? Will God give me those impenitent souls? Can I reach them with God's Truth and Spirit before death reaches them? Can I reach them while God sees there is hope for them? How long shall I wait sorrowfully for any souls to my in misery? Will God ever own me as His messenger of salvation to lost men?

There is not a poor soul in the midst of you or around you that more needs your prayers than your minister. In many of his labours the only way in which you can help him is to pray for him. You cannot help him directly in selecting his topics for the pulpit. You cannot stand by him in the hours of his laborious but unsuccessful thought, and tell him what to say and how to say it. You cannot ensure by guiding his pen, that the sermon shall be one the Spirit will own and bless—but even in these cares you can reach him with the arm and help of prayer. You can ask God to direct him in the choice of truth, to help him in its exhibition, to make it in manner and form what he will bless. You can ask God to sustain him in all his toil and solicitude, that he may roll the burden of souls for whom he watches upon the Saviour, and in all his way take hold of a hand Divine, a strength from above. The knowledge that such requests are ascending from him where his people bend in social and secret prayer, will of itself mightily stay his heart, and gird him with vigour. These requests will do more. They will call down unseen ministrations of grace to his heart, and, if you find him, as he comes before you, unusually earnest and fervent, you will but see, it may be, what your prayers have done for him.

You are to be your pastor's helpers by keeping yourselves in the path of duty. If much of his anxiety is to be anxiety for you because he sees you cold and lifeless in the service of Christ, acting anywhere inconsistently with your solemn vows, having a name to live only, while the pall of spiritual death is spread over you, then do your relations to him but multiply his burdens. If he must spend much of his time and strength in urging you to take up neglected duties, to pray more, to join your brethren more frequently around the throne of grace, then are your hindrances to his work, not helpers. He can do little with a slumbering church weighing him down.

Moreover, his own piety will be too likely to take its tone and hue from yours. If you sleep, he will sleep. If there is no response, or but a drowsy one, to truth which he utters, the utterance will become drowsy too,—such a sympathy is there between pastor and people in religious feeling. He may be faithful, I know, if you are unfaithful,—he ought to be,—he ought to keep far in advance, but will he be likely to?

So also your arousing fires his heart. When he sees you all wakeful and active, his eye will take a new earnestness, his heart beat quicker, his words be warmer. The sight of you will do him good, to talk with you will do him good, to hear of you will do him good. Being yourselves holy men, you will be his helpers indeed.

You are to be your pastor's helpers by seconding his measures to advance the kingdom of Christ in your community. If they are measures in which you can consistently join, if they are such as the Spirit has been wont to bless, if they have been again and again fruitful in conversion, if they give promise of spiritual good to every heart, they are to receive your concurrence and co-operation—not a listless concurrence, a tame and sluggish acquiescence, but a nervous, hearty, energetic approval working with them and through them, and by them, for the end aimed at. They who stand back at such times, who hang back, who must be dragged along, who openly condemn, or coolly criticise, or faintly countenance, are a grief to his heart, and grieve the Spirit too. Those, who would be helpers of such efforts to save souls, must be willing to give up time, to give up gain, to give up ease, if the circumstances require such sacrifice, for the sake of a fellow-sinner's good. To help your minister, then, you must be ready to advance the movements which he may see it wise and imperative to make to reach dying men, to show him that you are ready to keep at even pace with him,—to make him feel that he goes not forth alone,—to give success and certainty to each blow that is struck by striking all together.

You are to help your minister by distinct efforts of your own to lead the impenitent to Christ. Not only are you to pray earnestly for them, to hold them as a burden upon your heart in communion with God, to feel that you cannot be denied them, to follow with supplications every public address to them, saying fervently "Amen" to each appeal of a preached Gospel, but you are to go farther. You are to seek them out, to take hold of them, to converse with them, to deal faithfully with them, to be very kind, very urgent, very tender, and very persevering. If you find one of them serious, you are to follow him up, to give him no rest,—like a true and devoted servant of God,—to keep on his track night and day, to allow the world no opportunity to get new hold, the feelings no time to subside, the seriousness no space for dissipation, to work with the Spirit and the Truth to lead the soul into the kingdom.

In this way you can be, if you will, and if God bless you, most effectual helpers of his servant and yours, who stand before you as your religious teacher and guide. Now, not to go farther in specifying modes in which

you may co-operate with your pastor, and help on the cause of Christ, let me ask you, as if addressing you one by one, what you say so far? Will you take up, if you have not already done so, these simple means of serving God and advancing Christ's kingdom and glory?—*Christian Treasury*.

**PASTORAL LABOR IN STATED PREACHING**—There is a wide difference between a pastor and an evangelist. The latter visits a city for the first time, and preaches with frequency and power which excite amazement. The secular press heralds it as little short of miraculous; that a mortal should be able with no apparent exhaustion, day after day and night after night, to address changing crowds. The truth is, that such an one is leading a life of intellectual recreation. He repeats the same discourses over and over again in the course of his itinerancy, till they are as familiar to his memory and facile to his utterance as the letters of the alphabet, and he has grown expert in every expression, gesture and intonation. It was the testimony of David Garrick, that the sermons of Whitefield, as specimens of oratorical art, never reached their fullest power till the fiftieth repetition. What, for intellectual expenditure, is such a career compared with the life of a pastor preaching to the same congregation two or three times a week, month after month, year after year, with increasing interest, profit and power! The late Mr. Sergeant, of Philadelphia, after delighting an audience with a lecture on some moral topic, declared to a friend that, for the labour involved, he would prefer speaking at the bar six times in a week on cases made to his hand in the ordinary course of his profession, to preparing one popular lecture on any point on the philosophy of law once in a month. To the latter the weekly preparations of a minister are the most analogous, yet how few among the most intelligent pause to reflect what is implied in the intellectual labors of a pastor protracted through many years, in connexion with the same congregation, with continued freshness, novelty and delight.

#### "PILLARS" IN THE CHURCH.

We read in one of the epistles of Paul of certain disciples who "seemed to be pillars" in the church at Jerusalem. The figure is striking and suggestive. Pillars are used in ordinary edifices to support and adorn the building. They contribute to its strength and beauty. Such are "pillars" in the Church. Upon those worthy to be thus denominated the Church rests for support, and they constitute its conspicuous and attractive ornaments. Without these "pillars" our churches would fall into ruins, as we see many doing, from which they are withdrawn by some mysterious providence.

But who are the pillars in a church, and what is necessary to make them such? They are persons of sound and deep piety. Without this they cannot be pillars; they may "seem" to be so, but they are not indeed. No talents, no genius, no learning, no wealth, no family influence merely, can make one a "pillar" in the sanctuary. To be this there must be a genuine and ardent love to God and to souls. Those who aspire to this honour must be men and women of faith, and prayer, and zeal. They must be heavenly-minded, and prize Jerusalem above their chief joy, and resolve that they will not rest until "her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth." Lofly mental endowments, and learning, and wealth, and influence, are exceedingly desirable in church members, and, when sanctified by piety, they undoubtedly form a "pillar" in the sanctuary, upon which it is delightful to gaze. Nothing however, can compensate for the want of deep and fervent godliness.

"Pillars" in the Church are judicious and cautious persons. They are not given to crotchets; they are not extremists; they do not threaten to desert, if all things do not go according to their notions. There are very pious persons who still seem to be wrong-headed, and obstinate, and impracticable. Such cannot be considered "pillars" in the full sense of the word. If they give strength to the church, they cannot be said to add much beauty. A solid judgment, a large share of prudence, and a still larger measure of forbearance, are necessary to constitute one a pillar.

Those who deserve this epithet are present at all the meetings of the church. They do not attend the house of God on Sabbath morning simply, or morning and afternoon. They are found at the evening-meetings, the prayer-meetings, the business-meetings. If circumstances require they are in the Sabbath school, diligently employed there. We might specify many other characteristics, but we forbear.

It will be seen that the poor and humble in worldly circumstances may help, support, and adorn the sacred edifice, whose corner-stone is Christ. Many a church has been sustained by the faithful and active services of those despised by men of the world.

It is tolerably clear that those who "seem" to be "pillars" in the church should be such. Now, the office-bearers of a church are generally regarded as placed in this responsible relation. If the ministers, elders, and deacons of a church slip from their position, or fail and break, the edifice may not fall, but serious injury will accrue. Some who ought to be pillars in Zion, like the leaning tower of Pisa, are not quite perpendicular; and, were it not for certain unrecognised columns that bear up the superstructure, there would be a terrible crash.

All the members of a church ought to be pillars. It is a great honour—one to be sought and prized—to sustain that institution purchased by the blood of Christ. In point of fact, however, it is sadly apparent that the "pillars" in a church are apt to be few, and often to be more for show than support.—*Christian Treasury*.