

shrivelled souls, whose only thought is to make themselves comfortable; believe me they are not the men on whom the Great Captain will bestow His highest honours. Do not think that these everlasting laurels will, of necessity, grace the brows of those who stand out most prominently in the eyes of the church and the world. No, no! Not on the minister of the most influential, fashionable or liberal congregation, not on the teacher of deepest erudition and widest fame, but it may be on some meek man whom the church, as a whole, has never heard of, labouring with many hardships, discouragements and tears in the obscurity of a crowded city, or of a sparsely populated mission field; spending his strength among the case-hardened sinners of Christendom, or the degraded votaries of heathenism; yea, on that man, wherever he may be found, who puts most of the Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth into this work, on his brow, amid angelic acclamations, will the pierced hand of the Great King place His brightest diadem. Oh, sirs, in welcoming you to this work, I would magnify our office! Ours is the highest and most honourable calling to which an immortal soul can bend its energies. Consecrate, then, every power you possess to this service. Having put your hand to the plough send back no wistful glances to the empty and ephemeral guerdons of time. To revel in the treasures of human thought with the man of learning; to discover nature's hidden wonders with the man of science; to amass untold wealth with the man of commerce; to conquer worlds with the man of war; to govern millions with the mighty statesman; to reign in splendour with the proudest monarch; these may be counted high honours by the sons of men; but to announce to perishing sinners the way of life; to point dead souls to the life-giving Saviour; to be an ambassador of Christ; to turn one soul to righteousness, is an honour as high above these as Heaven is high above the earth.

Yes, so it is, though most men, in these days of worldly religiosity and respectable infidelity, would laugh the assertion to scorn. So it is, and so it will speedily be confessed to be, when all shall behold those that have turned many to righteousness, shining forth, as the stars, for ever and ever.

And I would not only welcome you to the work, but remind you what it is. You are to preach and to teach; to preach the gospel to those that are ignorant of it, and to teach those who have embraced it. You must do the work of an evangelist, seeking to make the way of salvation plain to all, and you must also feed the flock of God. This is your work. Live for it. Be not among the hirelings who preach to live, rather live to preach. Remember that the true minister of Christ ever feels a necessity laid on him to declare the whole counsel of God. Yea, he cries, "Woe be to me, if I preach not the Gospel!" The hireling gives so much work for so much pay, and is always grumbling about both. He is the opposite of that earnest labourer in the North West, of whom the Frenchman said, in his broken English, "He eat anything, he sleep anywhere, he never grumble, he good minister." If any class of men should show supreme devotion to their work, surely it is that class who have the noblest work to do. I once heard that celebrated surgeon, the late Professor Syme, of Edinburgh, in addressing the medical graduates, urge them to give their whole time and attention to their work. "Think of your patients," he said, "not only when at their bedside, but also when passing along the street, when alone and in company, when eating and drinking, when busy and at rest, morning noon and night, and," he

added, "if you dream about them so much the better." The advice was wise, and who does not feel that it applies with infinitely more force to the work in which you are to be engaged. If such consuming earnestness should mark the men who care for the body, how much more should it characterize those who minister to the soul. Therefore, I repeat, live for this work. Doing so, you will be diligent, grudging no time or trouble in accumulating material, and in seeking to do this work in the best way. You will also be ingenious in pressing all things into your service. It is said of a great statesman, that in a famous speech, he laid the whole world under tribute, in order to attain the end he had in view. As far as in you lies, this should be your aim; and you will find that not only all knowledge of every kind that you have accumulated in the course of your studies, but the commonest events of life, the most familiar objects, the current topics of the day, can all be made to yield rich means of instruction. Learn to look at everything from the point of view of the preacher. Imitate the bee and gather honey everywhere. Be not checked in this work by the nonsense which is sometimes talked about the craving for originality, and the crime of plagiarism. It has been truly said that the ancients have stolen all our original thoughts, and even modern doubters cannot invent a new heresy. Wherever, therefore, you find truth, or that which will be helpful in the elucidation of truth, take it, you commit no robbery, it comes from God, and is the common heritage of all who love Him. Take it, make it your own, and whenever you have so assimilated it that it receives the flavour of your personality, give it forth in the name of God, from whom it comes, for the benefit of all; and, remember in all your labour, that the most original thing in this world is intense spiritual earnestness.

Again, if you live for this work, you will not fritter away your energies in other directions. Some ministers seem to think they cannot find sufficient scope for all their energies in this work. They are deeply to be pitied. Can it be that, as Dr. Chalmers puts it (and he knew from sad experience the meaning of his words), they have never yet realized the greatest of all magnitudes—God, the soul, Eternity? Such a temptation as this comes from within; but there are other influences from without that give it greater force. Not a few so-called Christians, they who have a form of godliness but deny its power, seem to think that a church is a sort of mutual amusement association, with, of course, a religious flavour about it to make the thing respectable. Is it not an institution, to uphold which they subscribe so many, or so few, dollars per annum; and do they not expect in return a nice sacred concert every Sunday, from a well trained choir, and a dainty morsel of composition and elocution from the minister, in which he deftly avoids pricking the conscience of the greatest sinner in the congregation, even with the point of a pin, and, pleasing everybody, shows how clever he is in making "pillows for all armholes"? Then, they must have occasional church socials and fairs (should I say vanity fairs?) at which a homœopathic dose of religion, in the shape of a doxology or something of that sort, may be tolerated, but the bulk of the evening must be given up to something far more enjoyable. How do these things act on the minister? His spiritual energy is utterly dissipated, and he is degraded into a mere master of ceremonies, whose duty it is to keep things going, and make all happy while they live, and comfortable when they die. This species of refined selfishness is not at all uncommon,