

has not embraced that record with a living faith? It is indeed a melancholy position for a man to occupy, to be a Minister of Christ, but not a real Christian. The external call to the ministry which we have received according to primitive order, only confers official authority; the internal call is the true Divine vocation without which no man can really perform with effect the office of a Messenger of Christ. What can be more solemn than the question put by the Bishop at the ordination of a Deacon in our Church? "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office?" Bishop Burnet, remarking upon this, says, "Certainly the answer that is made to this ought to be well considered, for if any says 'I trust so,' that yet knows nothing of any such motion, he lies to the Holy Ghost, and makes his first approach to the altar with a lie in his mouth, and that not to men but to God." My Reverend Brethren, there is such a thing as being outwardly a Minister of Christ, it may be even for many years, without any vital union with him, who is the fountain of all grace; "the head over all things to the Church." Such Ministers may well be compared to clouds without water, no fructifying blessing descends upon the people through their means. That portion of the field, upon which their shadow rests, is rendered unproductive of spiritual fruit, no harvest is gathered into the garner of the Lord. Bishop Bull has well said, "The Priest who is not clothed with righteousness, though otherwise richly adorned with all the ornaments of human and divine literature, and those gilded over with the rays of seraphic prudence, is yet but a naked beggarly and despicable creature, of no authority, no interest, no use, no service in the Church of God." For the due discharge of our ministry, we are therefore called, in the first place, to take heed unto ourselves and to the state of our own souls. Archbishop Leighton, in a sermon to the clergy, fully and faithfully treats this subject. He says, "We think, that they who savingly know not Christ, should not be fit to make