

for their immediate work. People sometimes think that ministers have whole days of relaxation, when perhaps these days are not sufficient for their conflict of study and of prayer; and when the laboring man sleeps sweetly on his pillow, his minister is perhaps striving with holy violence, seeking the blessing of God on his flock. The minister is called upon to strive with holy, humble, laborious exertion, and with intensity of interest to pursue his sacred work.— Concentrating his mind upon his duties, he must make full proof of his ministry, by that self-denying devotedness, which hallows the most cursory as well as the stated employments of the ministry, and spiritualizes his very recreations. All this necessity is laid upon us by the greatness of the work.

Lastly, he must throw his whole heart into the work. It is a great mistake to suppose that nothing more is necessary to secure the reception of the Gospel, than the clear logical announcement of its doctrines. It was not thus with the Apostle Paul, nor with any minister upon which God hath bestowed success. The clearness at which we should aim is not that of the icicle, which chills and freezes while it glitters, but that of the warm sunbeam, ardent with love of souls, and bursting with impassioned sensibility. Love to his parish, love to the individual soul committed to his charge, is alike the minister's duty and his comfort. How wearily would a minister drag along his tedious years, did not God knit his heart to his people, and their hearts to his. The minister's flock should have his whole heart: without this devotedness he cannot make full proof of his ministry. And each new conversion, and every instance of growth in grace, will form a new tie betwixt pastor and people, and draw more tightly the bond of affection.

It may seem to my readers, that I have addressed the ministry and not the people. But it is necessary to bring the truths about the ministerial office before the people, in order that they may understand the duties which they owe to their pastors; and to this topic I would now ask attention.

1. Seek in the ministry the pure Gospel of the blessed Jesus. The Church should seek a pious and evangelical ministry, and you should value the sermon most which humbles you the lowest, brings you nearest to Christ, and fills you most fully with his Spirit. The ministry that pleases by its sweetness, or awes by its sublimity, that startles by its novelty, or carries you away by its resistless reasoning, if it leaves souls unconcerned about their salvation, if it starves hungering saints and feeds the sinner with false flattering hopes, is not a gospel ministry. Though Presbyterian by birth and by conviction, I would prefer an evangelical ministry of another denomination to an unfaithful ministry professedly Presbyterian. And were I asked to what church ought a man to go, I would unhositatingly

say—Take scripture doctrine where you can find it, rather than soul-destroyed error under the hallowed name of the Church of your Fathers: go where you can get the bread of life—this is the grand, the paramount consideration! Let congregations then learn to love and esteem the ministry, just in proportion as they make full proof thereof, by feeding your souls with living bread. Do not seek great things, so much as good things.

2. Learn to throw no obstacles in the way of your minister's devotedness. Do not allow him to be harassed by worldly anxieties. Do not force him to give his attention to some other occupation that he may discharge the Christian obligation, to "owe no man anything." Do not give reason that he should enter his study and pursue his pastoral duties distracted by worldly cares. On this topic I only speak a word to the wise.

3. Co-operate with your minister. As God gives you opportunity, seek with him the salvation of souls. Let each aspire, with noble and sanctified ambition, to win that precious word from Christ's lips to the woman—"she hath done what she could."

4. Pray for ministers. Pray that God would raise up faithful ministers and give them success. Brethren pray for us.

D. I.

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