

The truth which we undertake to proclaim is the savor of life unto life or of death unto death. "We are set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." Bright is the prospect of those who are wise in winning souls, who are to shine as the brightness of the firmament. Among the distinguished ranks above, they shall shine preëminent; among the seats of bliss, they shall occupy the nearest to the throne. They shall have the bliss of being benefactors in the highest sense, the bliss of benevolence fully gratified, the bliss of love most rapturously returned. But the prospect of preaching truth as a savor of death, is truly awful; of hardening men, leaving them more inexcusable, preparing them for deeper damnation. We can understand how one of the fathers of our Church was often led almost to pray for his removal from his congregation lest he might be the means of adding to the misery of any of them in the undying flames. When we consider the possible effects of our faithfulness in holding forth the word of life, we may well say, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

But our assuming the work of the ministry has a most important relation to our own interests as well as of others. In the discharge of duty we seek to save them. But our duty has to do with our own salvation likewise. We tell our people that certain things accompany salvation; that faith unaccompanied by works is dead. If they live in the violation of the divine law, the neglect of known duty, there is no hope for them. Now if the disregard of Christian duty by the people endanger them, so must the disregard of ministerial duty endanger us. If we see a minister ignorant of his duty, not seeking to know it, neglecting it when known, and habitually doing so, we must say to him as to our people, the habitual neglect of known duty, *i. e.* the practice of known sin, is rebellion against Christ; he that is guilty in one point is guilty in all. Christ can never receive such to his family and to his home.

The work in which we are engaged is laborious, difficult, and painful. We must labor to understand the truth, and avoid error; to feed the flock, and keep nothing back; to study character, and present the truth in a suitable shape. We must contend against the powers of darkness. We must submit to have our cherished hopes often dashed. We may be hated, nay continually hated, if faithful; for there is an undying enmity between light and darkness. We may be the butts of malignity, and that at the hand of our own pretended supporters, for there are many Judases. If we be like other faithful ministers we shall often bleed in secret, and present ourselves before God with strong crying and tears.

We are to expect such things, but not to be discouraged. It has been said, Strong affections are strong afflictions. It may be said with greater truth, strong affections are strong enjoyments. We may see our children walking in the truth. Even if we do not, we may still rejoice in God. He has sent us a warfare, not on our own charges. The work of the ministry is of divine institution. We are on God's