

with simplicity and pointedness in reliance on the Holy Spirit's influences, this is the only method of attaining the end of our ministry.

The faithful minister must have singleness of aim. The enlargement of a congregation, the pursuit of learning, the acquisition of literary honors, or a commanding station in the church—all these ends, if not dismissed wholly from the thoughts, must be made entirely subordinate. How remarkably is this exemplified in Paul! How ardently he desired to have some fruit among the Romans also, as among other Gentiles. "I would," he saith to the Corinthians, "that ye know what conflict I have for you."—"Remember," saith he to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, "that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, day and night with tears." "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved." John Welsh, with his shepherd's plaid about him, lying on the ground in the cold winter's night, and wrestling in prayer for his people, in replying to the entreaties of his wife, "Woman, I have the souls of three thousand to answer for," furnishes a beautiful illustration of this subject. Samuel Rutherford, writing to his beloved flock at Anworth, assures them that they were the objects of his tears, care, fear, and daily prayers; that he labored among them early and late: and adds, "my witness is above that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me." Matthew Henry said, "I would think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to Christ, than to gain mountains of gold and silver to myself. John Brown of Haddington spent many a night in wrestling prayer for his unconverted hearers, and scarcely ever addressed them without tears. And the eminently devoted McCheyne was distinguished, not so much by his literary or theological attainments, as by his insatiable thirst for souls. The work of the ministry is not, creditably and popularly to perform clerical duties. The ministry is devoted to the salvation of souls. With singleness and intensity of mind ministers must aim at this object. Love for perishing souls is the true ministerial spirit, counting every soul more than a world, and more delighted to see a soul saved, than to win a kingdom.—It is a glorious calling to have fellowship with angels in the ingathering of the elect; and while this is unattained the main desire of our work fails. The applause of men is an empty bubble; acceptance in the Lord and success in conversion is everything.

2. *Devotedness to this work.*—Such is our work, and well may we give ourselves wholly thereto. Well may we make it our highest aim to fulfil this ministry. Extraordinary powers of intellect will not enable a man to do this; without an enlarged measure of grace, they are apt to prove a snare and a hindrance. Our devotion then must

not take the direction of the mere cultivation of intellectual gifts, or of acquiring the powers of the orator. The more simply and exclusively he gives his attention to pastoral labors and the preparation of his sermons, and kindred duties, the more truly will he fulfil his ministry.

The great duty of the minister is to preach the Gospel fully. First of all he is to preach the Gospel fully. It will not do to generalize revealed truth, and present a few propositions, as if they contained the whole Bible. All the revealed counsels of God present to us some object of faith and hope, intended to be influential upon our minds; and the truth as it is in Jesus is the centre of every line. Take away a crucified Christ, and our ministry is gone, for this is its glory.—To hold up a glorious Christ to the view of perishing sinners, this is our grand duty.—"I love," said Halyburton, "to live preaching Christ, and I love to die preaching Christ." "Let Jesus Christ," said Matthew Henry, "be all in all. Study Christ, preach Christ, live Christ." In our pulpits, and at the firesides of our people, we must know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is Christ who knocks at the heart. It is Christ who unbars the closed doors of that heart; and when thus opened, he enters in with pardon, and peace, and a new heart, and sanctifying grace, and all the gifts of the covenant. Christ is the only way to Heaven. We must preach Christ to man as a sinner—to man as sinner, wholly depraved, dead in sin; we must bring the glad tidings, that for such there are solid hopes for eternity, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. O did we but realize the value of one soul, and were we suitably impressed with the love of Christ, what different sermons we would preach! Gravely, earnestly, impressively, and withal plainly and practically, should the Gospel minister preach Christ, and that not only on the Sabbath day, and in the sanctuary, but every day, and by that most impressive and memorable of all sermons, a *Christ-like life*.

Into this work the minister must throw his whole mind. Our work was described by one who had little of the Spirit of Christ, and who, speaking in scorn, spake the truth; he calls it "*the heroic passion of saving souls*." Now to this we must bring all the earnestness and all the energy we possess. We must not waste our time and strength on matters of inferior moment. All our pursuits must bear on the one great object.—The fisherman is not always on the water, but when not engaged in fishing, you will find him mending his nets, repairing his boats, or putting his tackle in order. And when the fishers of men spend a portion of their time in missionary, or temperance, or benevolent operations, they are mending their nets, and preparing more effectually