

episcopal hands as you see here to-day, and that this has been perpetuated without a break until this day.

What is the office of a priest or presbyter in the Church of God? I have chosen this morning these inspired words that describe the ministry of John Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. But if they are a true description of him who went before Christ, so much the more are they a perfect description of those who follow after Christ as His accredited ministers. Word for word they tell you what is the pith and kernel of those duties that shall presently be laid upon these men. "The same came for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that light but was sent to bear witness of that Light."

You will notice, not only here but everywhere in Holy Writ, that the personality of Jesus is everything. It is not so much what He says, as what He is. He, not His words, is the salvation of men. The personality of John on the contrary is nothing. His testimony alone brings him into connection with Jesus. As we estimate character here on earth John was one of the greatest of men. But yet Holy Scripture so speaks of John continually as to remove altogether his personality, and teach that from the stand-point of Redemption he is nothing, and his witness to Jesus everything. And how beautifully conscious of this John himself is! What humility in his ministerial life! To the priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem to ask who he was what a reply he gave! Art thou Elias? No! Art thou that prophet of whom Moses spoke? No! Who art thou then? I am nothing at all, just "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord." "There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose." And you recall these other words to his disciples wondering at the popularity of Jesus, "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He must increase but I must decrease."

Noble words and nobler heart! Here we learn what the minister of Christ should be. He is nothing at all—nothing but a voice crying out to men. Of all the temptations that assail the minister of Christ, perhaps the greatest and the most disastrous is to forget