

ing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Such passages indicate the truth that the ministry of the Gospel, the oral and public teaching of the truth as it is in Jesus, is to be regarded as the great instrument of imparting and applying this Gospel to the world, till the world be evangelised and the office of christianity fulfilled.

If, then, the ministry be thus connected with imparting the blessings of the Gospel to the world, there is a solemn call on us who exercise that ministry, diligently and accurately to study the constitution of the Gospel, and to ascertain and acquire a perfect and mature knowledge of its contents; and having done so, there is also a solemn call, freely and faithfully to declare it to our fellowmen. If there is one truth more than another on which we are called to dwell, it is that delightful theme of reconciliation by the merit of the atoning sacrifice, the prominence of which causes the Apostle to call the ministry of the Gospel, the ministry of reconciliation. And if at any time we are compelled to lead men by the thunders of Sinai, or to open the Decalogue and remind them that God spoke all these words, or to bring before their view the torments of futurity, every statement, even apparently the most remote and disconnected, must be made to concentrate and meet, as in one common centre, around the doctrines of the cross.

And if ever there was a time for earnestness in this work, it is now. The aspect of the times, from the mutual relation of the church and the world, and from the gigantic efforts which are made by the enemies of the truth to strengthen them in their impious warfare, all these things are urging us to stand forth, as with a mighty and more flaming zeal, between the living and the dead, and hold up the cross with faithfulness, and calling on men to behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world. It is well that we stir up one another by reflecting on these things.

This, then, is the object of our ministration, the salvation of souls in connex-

ion with the manifestation of the divine glory, to promote and advance the glorious future of the church of the living God. That is our business, this we professed as our object in our ordination, vows, this the church expects from us, and so does the world. It is one of the mysteries of God's moral government that He has made a matter of such transcendent importance as the salvation of souls, in a measure to depend on our influence over others. This, however, is the case, and therefore how tremendous is our responsibility! It is indeed no ordinary matter to be an ambassador from the King of kings. Angels never had committed to them a matter of such deep and everlasting moment. There is not one who hears our voices, but will take an impression which will never wear out. Myriads in time to come may depend for their eternal welfare in some measure on our instrumentality. Oh! then, let us forget everything to minister in the fidelity of our souls for the service of Christ. Let us look anew at our responsibility. Well may we say, "who is sufficient for these things?" Let us ever remember the encouraging truth that "our sufficiency is of God," and let that lift up our hearts in the ways and work of the Lord. Ours is the ministration of the Spirit, and that Spirit employs our ministry as the instrument of conveying His heavenly influence to open the blind eyes and quicken the spiritually dead. To encourage us still more, let us remember that we are on the side of victory. The Gospel is incapable of defeat. It shall be victorious, proving either the savor of life or the savor of death. It shall bear down all opposition, and fill the whole world with the glory of God. "Lo, I am with you always," is encouragement sufficient to sustain and cheer the servants of the living God. While He is with us, there can be no just cause of fear or faintness. Let us then diligently work the work of Him that sent us into the world, for, if God be on our side, who or what can prevail against us?

There is also a solemn call on all who attend on the ministry of the Word. The call on you is to honor the ministry by giving earnest heed to the things which ye hear. "Let a man so esteem us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." With the free-