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### The True Minister's Hungry Desire.

THERE is one desire that dominates every other in the heart of a true minister of God, and that desire is, that he may be used of God in bringing men to Christ. Every other thought that lives in him pales before that. That is supreme, and makes itself felt in his prayers, in his preaching, in his visitation of the congregation, in his dealing with men, in all the manifestations of his life. He is hungry for souls. He is willing to leave a thousand things to others who are constrained to seek them, but he, like Paul, desires with intense earnestness to be the means of saving some.

This burns like a fire in his bones. It makes him sleepless at night. It haunts him by day. It bears him on like a mighty flood tide. It keeps him from resting content in work done. He longs to see results. And he cries with the Old Testament Prophet, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed." He joins his soul to the New Testament preacher, "Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." This is the burden that presses on the heart of every true minister of God.

He is like a hunter, laying snares and traps of every conceivable sort in which souls may be taken. He is like a fisher using every kind of bait to catch withal. He longs to see the fruit of his labors, and God encourages him in this: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Saved souls are his joy and his crown of rejoicing. Robert Murray McChevne was described by a servant girl, in a house where he stayed, as a man who was "Deein' to hae folk converted." Dr. Andrew Bonar was a man of kindred spirit. He was always looking out for some coming home to the Father out of the far country. When he expounded a passage of the Scriptures, when he wrote a tract, when he offered a prayer, when he made an address, when he took a quiet walk, when he paid a visit even in the friendliest fashion, when he dropt a word by the way, when he did anything there was ever beneath and through all the desire to lead souls into the light of God's face and the joy of his favor. How abundantly the "Reminiscences" of his daughter, and his own "Diary and Letters" show that. They are mountain air for our stifled bosoms to day. They invigorate our hearts and stir our blood, and show us how far off the mark we are.

He asked a boy to hold his horse one day, while he went into a cottage. As he was remounting, and putting his foot in the stirrup, he turned to the lad and said: "Do you ever think you have a soul?" The question was never forgotten. "Always follow your work with believing prayer" was his counsel to a bus-

worker. At Collace, he heard of a woman awakened by his address at her marriage ceremony. In the Sabbath-school he spoke to the teachers thus: "Be sure and aim at the conversion of the children. They are never too young to come to Jesus. I hope you pray for each of your scholars by name. That has a wonderful effect on your teaching. Never come to your class without first being in prayer. Kindness to those you teach is part of the teaching." When visiting one who was ill, he turned to a stranger who was sitting in the room, and asked her if her name was in the Lamb's Book of Life? She said, "Oh, sir my name is not in your books." Oh, no, he said, not in my books, but in the Lamb's Book?" etc

That is the Spirit animating the true minister of God. It bring everything to a focus on the Salvation of the Soul. It issues all in peace with God: in leading poor wanderers back to the fountain of living waters. Oh that this spirit might have a gloriously rich and full manifestation in on ministry! Oh for that consecration to Christ that will master and keep in subordination every other desire.

John Knox may be taken as our leader in his longing for blessing for Scotland "Lord give me Scotland or I die." So should ministers pray for their congregation and their community.

John Brown of Haddington, whose name in Scotland is an ointment poured forth, and who is famed the wide world over for his, *Self-interpreting Bible*, when he preached, did so, "as if he was conscious that the Son of God stood at his elbow." This advice he gave to one of his son's "Oh, labor, labor to win souls to Christ; souls are well worth the winning, and Christ is far more worthy of winning them too. It gives me pleasure now to think that I did not indulge myself in idleness in my Master's service; not but that I was idle, only I do not remember indulging myself in it." This he said as he approached his end, and this also, "were the Lord to make me young again, I think I would study to devise other means for gaining souls than those which I have used, and prosecute them with more activity than ever I did."

Dr. Duff was severely criticised for some of his methods of working in India, and this was his answer, that he would stand on the street and beat two old wooden shoes together if so he might win the ears of the people. To bring men to Christ, to lead them into Eternal life is the high aim and the unspeakably noble work of every true minister of God. To miss this is to miss everything. To gain this is to gain all. And therefore Christ saith; "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me."

### Disunion and Its Remedy.

The Christian Church at its commencement was one and undivided, says the Australian *Presbyterian*. Among the very earliest notices in the Acts of the Apostles there is one which bears this testimony, that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." During the first three centuries persecution kept the company of believers so firmly welded together that disunion was scarcely heard of. The era of the Œcumenical Councils showed a marked change in the aspect of Christendom. By this time divisions had come fast and frequent; nor could the repressive rule of the so-called Christian emperors prevent sects from arising and multiplying. The Reformation and the period immediately succeeding were unhappily prolific in divisions which greatly marred that blessed work, and are still a standing reproach to Christendom. In