

life—Christian faith, without which indeed there can be no Christian life. It concerns, it challenges the whole man, however strong or weak he be—the whole man and at his best, for loyal, practical, spiritual, effective, service. Hence the inspired charge of Paul to Timothy, his beloved son in the gospel, who from a child has known the Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation, and who cherished unfeigned faith and love toward Christ: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth,” that is, submit yourself to thorough training *for* your work and *in* your work. Whether ours be or not an age of learning, it is certainly a practical age. It is, therefore, especially required in our day that the Christian minister make his acquisitions practical, and tributary to his high calling. If as a student his acquisitions have only been formal, he should hasten to interpenetrate them with a living purpose, and fill them with vital contact toward God and men. If they have been merely theoretic and technical, he should transmute them into faith and life for himself—into principle and practice for the people.

He who fails to do this will certainly fail to secure the benefits of his preparatory course, and fail also to attain the proper object of his sacred calling.

But more than this, he should remember that he has been graduating from lower into higher schools. At every advance he has met with higher challenge and higher training. As a thoughtful and true student, he has been more and more impressed with his own ignorance, not because he knows less, but because in his enlarged vision there appears so much more to be known. At first he thought as a child, he understood as a child, but growing in every way—growing to be a man, he has been putting away childish things.

From the seclusion of the schools and from the fostering care of his theological Alma Mater, he goes forth into the great, busy, noisy, practical, critical world, which will not respect his person because he wears the clerical garb, but will test him and estimate him substantially according to *what he is* and *what he does*. “We may judge ourselves by what we are capable of doing, but others will judge us by what we have done or are doing.” The Christian minister should be sensitive to this practical experience, observant of this public estimate. This is at once an opportunity and an obligation which he should by no means neglect, but be docile and wise enough to turn to his immediate and lasting good. Such chastening freely—perhaps too freely given by saints and sinners, though seeming for the present not joyous, but grievous—is a part of the providential training *in* the ministry.

But there is in store for him other training certainly more pleasant and perhaps far more profitable for preparation *in* the ministry. Graduating from the theological seminary, he enters a larger university