

regret that many of these study religion in a hostile spirit—that their aim, often when they profess to be merely searching after truth, is to subvert the very foundations of religion. And religion is not merely attacked by the vulgar atheist like Ingersoll, but by the earnest philosopher like Spencer; by the sincere and richly-gifted *litterateur* like Arnold; by the high-toned scholar like Renan. If the theologian wishes to be thoroughly equipped for his task, he must be ready to meet the attacks of such men as these; or, assuredly, enquiring minds will be led astray by their teachings, presented, as such teachings are, in a style of great richness and beauty. The age needs, the age demands an intellectual ministry. And, unless the ministry is an intellectual one, it will be left behind, and its teachings will be disregarded by the restless, enquiring spirit of the times. I counsel you to pass much of your time in the study. If you pursue your researches in a religious spirit, then, even though these may not always directly bear upon the Sabbath duties, they will, in course of time, add to the value of your pulpit ministrations. They will expand your thoughts and give grace and richness to your intellectual life. Remember that evangelical fervor is not all that is needed in the pulpit. Intellectual strength must be united with spiritual zeal if the pulpit is to advance in influence. Unless the minister passes much of his time in the study, the truth he presents to his hearers, even though they *are* truths, will lose much of their freshness and force. If the preacher wishes to interest his people and to find satisfaction in his work, his mind must be constantly growing. His intellectual and his spiritual life must be continually striking out new roots and drawing nourishment from a wider area. Only thus will his work be satisfactory to himself. Then preparation for the pulpit, instead of being a drudgery, will become a real pleasure. The minister does not work for his people alone: he labors for his Heavenly Master; and it should be to him a matter of delight and zeal to make his work as perfect as he can!

3. Above all, let it be your aim to study carefully the Holy Scriptures. Thank God the great truths of religion are altogether beside the questions raised by what are called the Schools of Criticism;—the critical objections raised by those schools may, or may not, be true. If they prove true we will accept them; if they prove false we will reject them; and there is an end of the matter. But the great truths of religion remain behind all such questions of criticism, and are not affected by

them. But if you wish to be a workman thoroughly equipped for the work to which you have been called by the Master, then you must study most carefully the great truths He has revealed in His Holy Word, and teach them: truly and exactly, loyally and lovingly, not in their letter only, but in their spirit and life. It is one of the wonders of this wonderful Book, that the more it is studied, the more appears still to be learned, from its Divine depth of riches.

4. I need hardly add that it will be your duty to become acquainted with the feelings, the wants, the difficulties of your people, by frequently visiting them. Only thus will you be able to gain a permanent influence over your congregation. You may be as strong as you like in the pulpit; but if you are not also strong in the cottage, your ministry will be only half successful. The pulpit ministration and the pastoral visitation are like the double action, the systole and diastole, of the heart. Each necessary for the well-being of the other. I have known an orator famous in the pulpit, but whose influence was almost *nil*, because he neglected personally to visit his people, and thus to become acquainted with their feelings and wants. Next to the study of the Scriptures, I believe a study of human life,—with its wants, its aspirations, its difficulties, its sorrows, its complex problems,—to be the best preparation a pastor can make for his life-work.

5. So much has been said, of late, regarding the question of union, that I can not forbear to say a few words on this topic. Whatever advantages there may be in *ecclesiastical union*, there are advantages still greater in the cultivation of the *spirit of unity*. Let it be your aim to foster this spirit with men of *all* sections of Christianity. Work loyally, hand in hand, with faithful ministers, even though these belong to different denominations from your own. Remember that the matters on which you differ from them are of no moment in comparison with the great truths and objects you have in common. Remember, I beseech you, that the conquering of sin, and the winning of souls for CHRIST, are a higher object to attain than the building up and maintaining a wall of separation between you and your brother soldiers, even though these may belong to a different regiment from your own. If others be hostile, still be you ever peaceful!

6. Finally, I beseech you to cultivate a spirit of zeal and love for your profession. It is the noblest profession in the world! It is yours to hold up the torch and to guide men in the path of religion. It is yours to win