

faithful men, who should be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii. 2.); that so a successive Ministry might be continued unto the end of the world. And thus it is that the commission to minister in the name of Christ has been transmitted to us; a commission which, although conferred through human instrumentality, is yet derived from no human power, a commission which invests the ministry of him who bears it while faithfully teaching the truth of Christ with the solemn sanction, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me" (Luke x. 16.); a commission in the absence of which more harm is commonly done by the divisions, and confusion caused by the usurpation of the ministerial office, than is likely to be compensated by any good effected by an unauthorised teaching even of the truth,—and finally, a commission in the faithful discharge of which they who bear it are authorised to look for, at the hands of the Chief Shepherd "the crown of glory which fadeth not away." (1 Pet. v. 4.) "Therefore," brethren, "seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. iv. 1, 2.)

The last general ground of support and encouragement that I shall mention, is one whose importance cannot be overrated; and I feel well assured, brethren, that you have already anticipated me, when I state this to be, the promised blessing of the Holy Spirit of God. For as without the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the soul, it is impossible to obtain the necessary qualification for the Ministerial office, so the same Divine influence is indispensable to the successful execution of it. In vain may our teaching be orthodox, and our commission, as the Ministers of Christ, regular and valid, unless, while we serve before Him in our holy office, He is pleased to bless our ministration. Were the Apostles now on earth,