

commission given by Him without whom not even a sparrow falls to the ground

Parents should give all diligence to bring their children to Jesus Christ—to cast them on His care, and then they may enjoy the blessed assurance that whether living or dying “they are the Lord’s.” God has a peculiar right to the “Children of the Covenant” who have been dedicated to Him in baptism, recognized as members of His body the Church, given up wholly to Him. He may spare them to live usefully in the Church militant amid the storms and revolutions of this life, or he may call them away while still in childhood to sing the songs of the Church triumphant, up above the shadow of death. Parental duty is in all cases the same. For life and for death, for time and eternity, commit your children to Him who is able and willing to save.

If God has taken some of your children away and left others under your care, give earnest heed to train those left to you for Heaven lest peradventure they be eternally separated by sin and impenitence from their dear brothers or sisters already redeemed and washed in the fountain of the blood of Jesus and now rejoicing in His presence.—As it is an inestimable privilege to train up children for God and Heaven, so is it a dismal thing to nourish children for the Wicked One and Hell!

Sabbath school teachers also should be roused to uncommon earnestness by the frequency with which their classes are thinned by disease and death. Might I not have been more faithful in dealing with that boy or girl? Was I sufficiently kind, attentive and earnest in my dealing with them? What have I done to prepare them to meet their God? Such are the questions which must often press themselves upon our consciences. We should not forget the children who have never come to Sabbath Schools and have no means of instruction at their homes. For the poor, ragged and hungry children die, and need the same preparation for eternity as the children nurtured in the tender bosom of the church.

Ministers and office-bearers in the church should recall to some effect their responsibility in regard to the young, especially the

baptized young who have been thus acknowledged as under the care of the church. Let none perish through your neglect. Feed Christ’s lambs and lead them with never-ceasing vigilance, knowing that you must render an account for their souls.

“DIETS OF EXAMINATION.”

This invaluable and time-honoured method for the instruction of young and old in the truths of our holy religion, has of late years been falling into disuse in many of our congregations. In some congregations it has never been introduced. In others it was given up after a few unsuccessful attempts. While in others it is in successful operation. The importance attached to this method of instruction by our Church may be gathered from the fact that the second question put to pastors at Presbyterial visitations is,—“Do you hold diets of examination in the various sections of the congregation, and how often?” Many pastors have to reply in the negative. They attempt to supply the lack by Bible classes, lectures, and prayer meetings. But while these are of inestimable value in their own place, they do not—they cannot supersede the diets of congregational examination, any more than Sabbath schools can supersede the duty of family instruction on the Sabbath evening at home. In some respects the pastor is to the congregation at large what the parent is to his children and household. He must, if he be a true pastor, catechise young and old as to their knowledge of the principles of the religion of Christ, and watch tenderly over their growth in the Christian life.

The excuse generally made for not holding these diets of examination is, that people will not attend them, and do not like to be catechised. Now we are persuaded that fact, earnestness and perseverance, will in time, overcome these obstacles, formidable as they may appear. They have been thoroughly overcome in many of our most important congregations. As a venerable Father of one of our Presbyteries, said to a younger brother who complained of the difficulty of getting people to attend these meetings,—Do you your duty, appoint the meet-