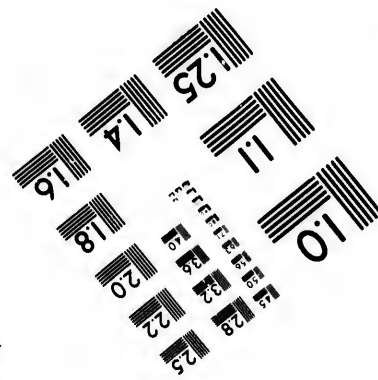
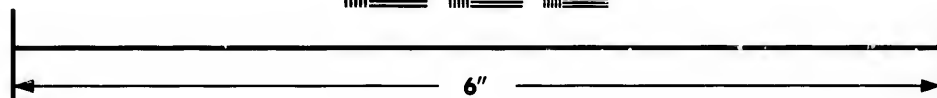
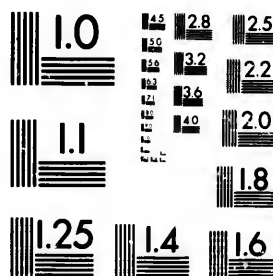


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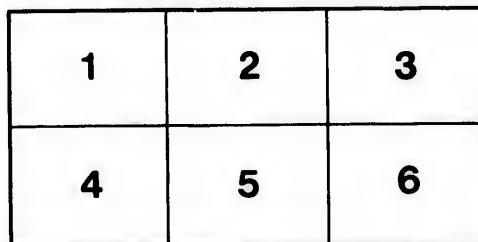
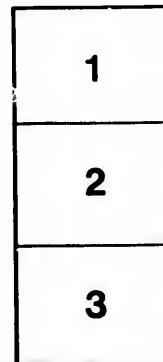
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à

**THE LEADING DOCTRINES**

OF

**THE GOSPEL.**

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A

**VALEDICTORY SERMON,**

DELIVERED IN

**CHRIST'S CHURCH, MONTREAL,**

ON

**SUNDAY, MAY 15, 1836,**

ON OCCASION OF HIS DEPARTURE FROM THAT PARISH :

BY THE

**REV. A. F. ATKINSON,**

LATE EVENING LECTURER AND ASSISTANT MINISTER OF CHRIST'S CHURCH, MONTREAL;  
AND NOW RECTOR OF BATH, ETC. UPPER CANADA.

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Published by Request.

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MONTREAL :  
ARMOUR AND RAMSAY.

1836.



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TO  
**SEVERAL MEMBERS**  
OF  
**THE CONGREGATION OF CHRIST'S CHURCH,**  
**MONTREAL.**

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MY DEAR FRIENDS ;

It is altogether in deference to your opinion, and in compliance with your urgent request, that I consent to the publication of the following Sermon. Having little of originality to recommend it, and believing that the peculiar circumstances under which it was preached, have led you to view it with partiality, I should not certainly,—were I to consult my own feelings,—have given it greater publicity than that, which the delivery of it occasioned. But as you seem to think that the circulation of it in a printed form may do more extensive good, I send it forth in the humble hope that your expectation may be realized, and that the perusal of it may be profitable to many souls, through the blessing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Believe me to remain,

My dear Friends,

Yours most sincerely,

In the best of bonds,

**A. F. ATKINSON.**

ST. JOHN'S PARSONAGE, BATH, U. C. }  
June 21, 1836. }





## SERMON.

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### PHILIPPIANS, CHAP. I, 27.

"ONLY LET YOUR CONVERSATION BE AS IT BECOMETH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST;—, THAT YE STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT, WITH ONE MIND, STRIVING TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL."

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It has been the approved practice of the Ministers of God, to make the hour of separation from the people among whom they have laboured, a season of devout and solemn appeal in reference to the past, and of serious and affectionate exhortation in reference to the future. Admonitions and instructions imparted under such circumstances, are found to strike upon the heart with a deeper impression; and *they* will listen with attention to a sermon which they know to be the *last*, who have never before, it may be, attended to any other. It is my desire, therefore, my beloved brethren, before I touch the utmost limits of my official Ministrations in this Church, to tread back the

course over which I have gone and have conducted you ; to review the character of those fundamental doctrines, on which I have been engaging your attention ; and then to close my duties as your Christian Minister with a most sincere and affectionate farewell :—and if, in following out this proposal, I shall be found to make somewhat larger encroachments on your forbearance, than those which the bounds of a single sermon usually allow, I must throw myself on that indulgence, which I have so often experienced at your hands, and which, addressing you for the last time, I may be privileged to hope for.

I. In the first part, then, of this discourse, I shall review with as much brevity as I can command, the character of those fundamental doctrines which, from time to time, I have held publicly among you ; and, having always taken it for granted, that they who appear beneath this sacred roof, admit the Scriptures to be a revelation from God, this principle I have rather invariably assumed than attempted to demonstrate. The question, then, is,—what are the doctrines of the Bible? We shall begin with *the universal apostacy of the human race*.

The whole tenor of the Scripture, from the third chapter of Genesis to the close of the sacred canon in the Apocalyptic vision, pre-supposes a charge of guilt against the chief and fairest workmanship of God ; it assumes for its fundamental truth, that every individual of our species comes into being with a depraved nature, without love to God or any of his commandments, and, of consequence, every moment liable to perish beneath the stroke of Divine

anger;—and we cannot preach a Gospel suited to human nature, unless we preach a Gospel that is built on this foundation-truth, the depravity of human nature; for no remedy less powerful will be adequate to a disease so deep-seated and inveterate. Of this apostacy,—which involves not only original but actual sin; not only the sin which “by one man entered into the world,” and by which death and ruin have descended on all our generations; but also our own personal misdoings:—of this apostacy the distinguishing characteristics are, a stupefaction and insensibility to whatever is of a spiritual nature, connected with a levity and carelessness, which at once imply not only weakness, but corruption; not only dulness, but dislike. The state of man by nature is, in short, no less than that of “death in trespasses and sins,” without holiness, without life, without spiritual feeling. His fall from his original high station in the universe, so shook and paralyzed every limb and nerve of the moral system, the inner man, as to leave him a mere withered, faded form of deranged humanity, without so much as a desire to see or feel his misery. The Apostle Paul, in the third chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, (and he is quoting from the inspired Psalmist,) remarks, “The Lord looked down from Heaven to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God, but they are all gone out of the way; they are together become filthy; they have turned every one to his own way, and there is none that doeth good, *no, not one.*” In this complaint against mankind, it is not said that they had any of them turned to a way of theft, or cruelty, or injustice, but that they had gone out of the way of God, and had turned every one to *his own* way. My brethren, it is quite iniquity

enough, that the way in which we walk is our own and not God's; that in all our doings there is reference rather to our own will, than to His authority; that our principles and habits are pleasing to *us*, without our knowing or caring whether they be pleasing to God. It is of little moment, then, to have upon our characters a variety of pleasing, amiable, and even honorable features: for if God be absent from all our thoughts; if the words of our lips, and the actions of our life, have not the great moral, indispensable infusion of love to Him; if a controlling sense of an omnipresent duty go not with us into all the secret places of our walk and conversation; then, let the blossoms of our life look never so fair and promising in the eye of man, the omniscient eye of God sees rottenness beneath the bloom, and they will yield no fruit to immortality.

We are very far, however, my brethren, from being unwilling to allow to all your amiable and social qualities their full share of praise and approbation: they are unquestionably excellent, and of good report, *so far as they go*; as means of promoting the peace, good order, and comfort of society, they can scarcely be too highly estimated. But what we want you to believe is, that these qualities were made entirely for *earth*; that here they have their origin, their use, and their reward; and that, while these qualities may gain—nay, *will* gain you credit in this world, that very credit may endanger your salvation in the world to come; because having been favored with the approbation of *man*, you may be tempted to think yourselves *consequently* secure of the approbation of God. Now, brethren, it is our duty to declare, that there exists a standard of opinion in the

courts of heaven, to which all verdicts must be finally referred, that are now given in the courts of earth; and according to that standard there is no medium whatever between perfect obedience to the whole law, and the want of it; the man who "offends only in *one* point, is guilty of *all*;" and, therefore, brethren, if by Him who sits on that impartial and unerring judgment-seat, it is now seen that you come short of that complete and perfect righteousness which Adam had in Paradise before he fell;—if there be found the absence from your hearts of that interior principle which would impregnate your minutest actions with the recognition of a God;—then, though your amiable and engaging qualities may be so numerous and lovely, that you are only half an inch within the limits of forbidden ground, you are still upon it; and while you are upon it, you are gone out of the way of God; and, however, little you may think it, you are defying the high authority of Heaven, and are apostate from Him who made you.

Now, there are very many persons, in whose opinion this will be taken as too dark and melancholy a picture of human nature; who suppose that the distinctive quality of inherent corruption belongs only to the profligate and abandoned, and who revolt from the thought of fastening such a charge upon every individual of the species. But the Apostle tells us, in the Chapter to which allusion has just been made, that he before had *proved*,—not merely said it, when borne along on some impetuous stream of declamation,—but, by a calm and scriptural reasoning, had *proved* both Jews and Gentiles, the two great divisions of the human race, that they are *all* under sin, and that "*there*

*is no difference.*”—What ! no difference between the lawless vagabond and outcast from society, and those patriotic, benevolent, and good-natured men, who have earned, and are receiving, the approving testimony of all who are about them, and of all who know them? No difference between the heroic and victorious warrior, who can tell of hazards and achievements in which he shared to bring renown upon his country, and shield it from impending danger, and those brutal desperadoes, those men of rapine, those commoners upon the world, who are so far dead to the tender sensibilities of nature, as to become on some occasions, ferocious men of blood?—What ! no difference between the beautiful and engaging female, who is so gentle in her address, so accomplished, and so courteous in her whole behaviour, as to sparkle in society with all the charms of gay vivacity, and be the delight of every circle in which she moves, and that poor wretched creature, who has cut away the anchor of her virtue, and pushed off on the ocean of life, without chart, and without pilot, to be abandoned to the winds and billows, till the waves close over her? What ! no difference? Are not *we*, in the sight of God, better than *they*? “No,” says the Apostle, “no, in no wise ; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”—Why, then, (it will be said,) we may as well throw down at once the land-marks of decorum, break up entirely the distinctions between right and wrong, and cease for ever to cultivate and cherish the moralities and the decencies of society. Stop, my brethren ; St. Paul’s expressions will not be found to justify anything like such a tremendous inference. When he says, “there is no difference,” what he means, is this ; that, sins as they are in the sight of God, admit not of

those distinctions which are imagined by men.—*Here*, offences are estimated by their probable effects upon society; and many things most atrocious in themselves, and most destructive to the soul, are overlooked, or excused, either because they are secret, and fall not under the cognizance of men, or because they are personal, and do not extend directly to the disorganization of our collective interests. But *all* sin is the transgression of the Divine Law—an angry thought, as well as a murderous deed; and, measured by this standard, although there are, doubtless, degrees in the atrocity of human actions, all sin is equally offensive *in the sight of God*, equally an outrage upon His claims, equally exposed to His wrath, and involves the offender in a common and just condemnation; “so that” (to use the powerful language of the Apostle,) “*every* mouth must be stopped, and **ALL THE WORLD** become guilty before God.”

I am glad to be borne out in these observations by the language of our venerable Church in one of her invaluable articles: “Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the fault or corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit.” Now it is said, that this expression does not imply that “original righteousness” is entirely lost, that all the good qualities with which man was at first created are absolutely destroyed, but simply that he is “*very far* gone from original righteousness.” In reply to this it has been urged, that the expression in the

Latin article signifies *as far as possible*\* from original righteousness. But, brethren, I am quite content to put this English article, (and if I remember rightly, both the Latin and the English versions of the articles were drawn up at the very same time, by the very same men, so that neither can be called a translation of the other,)—I am quite content to leave this article in the hands of the veriest child who knows no other than its mother-tongue, and it shall understand the meaning of the words “very far gone” &c. ; for that child shall tell me, that if I am very far gone from this city, I am not in this city at all ; and this is all that we want to prove.

This, then, is the state in which the Gospel finds the human race, and from which it is its peculiar and exclusive province to recover them. On the one side we see the righteous and unchanging Law-giver, exacting every iota of complete obedience to his holy laws ; and on the other, we behold a ruined and apostate race utterly unable, because unwilling, to obey one single precept. What, then, does human nature, thus peculiarly circumstanced, want ? What does this apostacy of mankind require ? It requires full compensation to be made to the offended majesty of Heaven for past transgressions ; the debt we had contracted must be paid, and we are ourselves insolvent ; and this compensation we call *atonement*. It requires unfailing and complete obedience, which being imputed to us, and placed to our account, renders us accepted in the sight of God ; and this we call *justification by faith in our LORD JESUS CHRIST*, the

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\*Quam longissime distet.



great and only Mediator between God and man. It requires an entire and spiritual change of heart and principle—a “turning from darkness to light, and from the power of Sin and Satan to serve the living God;” and this we call *repentance* or *conversion* : and it requires the *sanctification* of our nature through the agency of the Holy Spirit ; and this we call *holiness*. This is the system which we call the Gospel of Christ.

A full compensation, then, a complete atonement, must be made to the offended majesty of Heaven for past transgressions ; for no compassion could be shewn us but in a way, which should preserve the integrity of all the attributes of God. We may think, perhaps, that God might, by a single deed of amnesty, have issued from his high and holy throne, a gracious proclamation of forgiveness to all his revolted creatures. But, brethren, God *must* punish sin. As a father, he must punish it, to prevent confusion in his family ; as a Governor, to hinder anarchy in his empire—to establish his own righteousness—to vindicate his honor—to fulfil his law—and to accomplish his word. This, then, is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that “he made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Yes, brethren, bad as our case is, we are not left in despair. The Lord God himself has appointed and accomplished our salvation. “He hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling ; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” Here, then, we trace the plan of mercy to its origin and source, and see it flowing

from the eternal counsels of the Almighty Father ; who, in the fulness of time, charged upon his only and well beloved Son, the guilt of ages past, present, and to come.

It is to be observed, however, that though Christ was made sin, that is, a sin-offering for us, he was not made a *sinner* ; he bore our punishment, indeed, but he was free from our corruption. He was " holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." And, therefore, when we look at the state of man, and then at the provision of Divine mercy, we cannot but see how completely, " such an High Priest became us."

To procure the forgiveness of our past transgressions was, however, only a *part* of the mighty work of our salvation. The law of God requires not only compensation for the past, but a perfect obedience in future, and we have lost the *power* of rendering this perfect obedience. It was necessary, therefore, not only that Jesus Christ should make an end of sin, and reconciliation for iniquity, but that he should " bring in everlasting righteousness ;" which should be " unto all, and upon all them that believe." It is on this account that he is called " the Lord *our* Righteousness," and that we are said to be " the righteousness of God in Him." Now, what do these expressions mean? They mean *that* righteousness, by virtue of which we are justified, that is, acquitted from imputed and from personal guilt in the sight of God : it is called the righteousness of *God*, not as though it were Christ's *essential* righteousness as he is God, for that is incommunicable to us ; but because, either it is of God's institution, ordination, and appointment, and

that which alone he will accept of to life ; or, because it was performed by him who is God as well as man; and is therefore of infinite value and merit : and besides, if the essential righteousness of Christ could have justified us, he needed not to have become incarnate. But in the Epistle to the Romans, the Apostle styles it the righteousness of *one man*, and this it is exactly ; it was that righteousness which Christ worked out in the capacity of our Mediator, as God and Man, while he was on earth. But how, it will be asked, can we be made the righteousness of God in him ? We answer, just as Christ was made sin for us ; Christ had no sin by nature, and we have no righteousness by nature. There is an *imputation*, however, of our sins to Christ, and thus *our sins* become *his* ; and, in the act of justification, there is an *imputation* of Christ's righteousness to us, and thus *his righteousness* becomes *our's*—Christ was made sin for us by imputation, not by inhesion of sin in him ; so the righteousness of Christ, that justifies us before God, is not a righteousness of his *in* us, but a righteousness of his *put upon us*. And as the one part of salvation, viz. the pardon of our sins, is effected by God's not imputing sin to us, not by having no sin in us, but by having none imputed to us ; so the other part of salvation, our being made righteous in the sight of God ; is not by putting righteousness *into* us—for this is to confound justification and sanctification—but by *imputing* righteousness to us. As Christ was made sin by “ the Lord's laying on Him the iniquities of us all,” so we are made righteous by God's laying his righteousness upon us. The great instrument which God is pleased to use in transferring this righteousness to us is *faith*. Hence it is sometimes called “ the righteousness of faith ”—“ the righteousness

which is through the faith of Christ"—"the righteousness which is of God by faith." Here we are sometimes met with a quotation from the Apostle James—"Ye see, then, how that by *works* a man is justified, and not by faith only."—Now, a very little attention, if impartially given to this point, will be enough to shew, that St. Paul speaks of the justification of our *persons* before *GOD*, and St. James of the justification of our *faith* before *men*. If St. Paul talks less of practice than of doctrine, it is because he is anxious to run up the practice more uniformly into the *principle* that induces it; to connect the action more invariably with its motive; to show that in the Christian's offering, the *heart* must always accompany the hand. The Apostle James is arguing with a man who pretended to have faith; then, says St. James, "show me thy faith," prove the reality of thy claim to me, and to thy fellow-christians, who cannot see the inside of thy heart, or discern the spring of all thy actions. Show us thy *faith* "*by thy works*;" let thy conduct give evidence to thy profession. That St. James cannot possibly be stating the method of our justification before God, is put beyond all controversy, by observing, that through the whole of his argument, he never once mentions the death of Christ; who was "made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Therefore," as the Apostle Paul argues, "we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." So that when we count up how much a sinner contributes to his justification in the sight of God, we find that he contributes nothing but receiving it, and *this* is called Faith; which faith, like an indigent petitioner, holds out an empty hand, and receives the heavenly blessing. It will be evident,

then, that though faith *be* not without works as its fruit, yet it *justifies* without them : for, says the 13th article of our Church, " works, done before justification, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they have the nature of sin ;" and, says the Apostle, " being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." But we do not scruple to tell you, brethren, that " faith without works is dead, being alone ;" " that you may boast of the highest spiritual attainments, of the most exalted faith, of the deepest experience, and yet, wanting those Christian virtues which endear man to his fellows, and which liken him to the meek, and lowly, and forgiving, and compassionate Redeemer, you are in reality destitute of that saving faith from which they necessarily spring, and you have therefore neither part nor lot in the salvation which it secures."\*

Inseparably allied to justification, is *Sanctification*. This continues the process of our recovery, and is quite distinct from justification. Justification regards God as a *Judge*, and releases us from the penalty of the law : sanctification unites us to him as a *Parent*, and conforms our principles and life to his will and his precepts. In the one case we are delivered from his wrath ; in the other we are changed into his likeness. By the one, the guilt of sin is taken away ; by the other, the love and power of it are overthrown. The first is by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us ; the second is by holiness imparted. The one precedes the other, and sanctification is the evidence of justification. Justification is an act performed at once ;

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\*The late Rev. H. Blunt's Lectures on the Thirty-nine articles.

sanctification is progressive, and goes on through life : and though in the ungenial climate of the world in which the Christian lives, this heavenly plant cannot attain its full maturity ; yet its progress intimates, its growth in grace distinctly shews, that it *will* terminate in absolute perfection ; that the life of grace will be assuredly completed in a life of glory.

These, then, beloved brethren, have been the matter of my own personal and private faith ; and will, I trust, be found to be established by the word of God ; and I hope to be sanctioned by your recollections, when I say, that I have endeavoured to make them the matter of my public preaching also. Impressed with a full conviction of the alienation of the heart in its affections and desires from God, it has been my object to make reconciliation to Him, the distinct and prominent point of my ministerial addresses ; at all times telling you how free the offer is of forgiveness through the blood of Christ, and how readily the Holy Spirit's aid and influence will be imparted, through the channel of the Saviour's mediatorship, to all who ask it.

II. Such, then, beloved brethren, is my appeal in reference to the past ; what must be my exhortation in reference to the future ? " Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ ; that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." The term here rendered " conversation," signifies *citizenship*—that is, attachment to the privileges, and obedience to the duties, of the city to which a man belongs. If, then, brethren, you have been made the citizens of the heavenly

Jerusalem,—“for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come,”—if you have sincerely embraced the faith of Christ, and professedly declared yourselves his followers, O, *act consistently* with your high character : “ Let your conversation be as it *becometh* the Gospel of Christ.” This is the amount of my request ;—and yet, be it remembered, that in making this request, I am pressing earnestly upon you the necessity of a *practical* profession. For, brethren, you have fallen into a most mistaken estimate of the kind of influence which the Gospel brings along with it, if you imagine that godliness in the inner man, can ever be unconnected with uprightness in the outer man. There is not a single doctrine in the Bible, which is, or can be, cordially received, without its producing correspondent moral effects ; where it touches the *heart*, it always regulates the *life*. Christianity, indeed, is a religion avowedly adapted, not for the *theoretical*, but for the *actual* world ; and most grievously have you misunderstood its nature, if you suppose it ever was designed to be wrapped up in the garments of your ministers, or to be deposited in the pews of your Churches. It offers to go with you where you go, and to dwell with you where you dwell ; its proposal is, to take the whole man,—material as well as immaterial, mortal as well as immortal,—under its direction, that it may subordinate and sanctify his every movement. It does not send away the Christian to retirement and retreat ; it does not tell the servant to forsake his or her household occupations ; or the man of business to sit down in indolence ;—No, brethren ; it calls a man, indeed, *out* of the world, with respect, to its spirit, maxims, and vanities ; but it calls him into the world as

a place of activity, circumspection, and trial. And it is in the relative connections, the every-day departments of human life ; in the counting-house and in the market place ; in the walks of merchandize, and in the professional or official chamber, that the reality of your religion will appear ; and if it goes not with you *there*, it is never with you *here*.

The measure of your piety is to be taken, then, not so much by the devotions of the Sabbath as by the doings of the week ; not by what you *seem* to be at Church, but by what you really *are* at home. It is into the relative and social character, that the Gospel is to strike its influence ;—and he that is not relatively a Christian, is not really such ; the man who is ungodly at home, is ungodly throughout. O, “let *your* conversation,” then, beloved brethren, “be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ ;”—“walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called ;”—“with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ” Let it be your distinguishing character as Christians that you are upright and consistent, “the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation”—the most equitable masters—the most faithful servants—the most watchful parents—the most obedient children—aiming to live as *one body*, actuated by one spirit, of one heart and one mind in the concerns of religion ; not “striving” one *against* another, not “five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three ; the father striving against the son, and the son against the father,—the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the



mother ;" but "*striving together*," with united energies, against your common adversary—"striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

The text which I have chosen as the basis of my final exhortation, is not one of those desultory and random discussions which distract the mind, and leave us at a loss what we are to think and what we are to do; every one may understand, and every one may practise it. Receive it, then, as the memorial of one who loves your souls—of one who, though he be absent in person, will be ever with you in heart.

Touching, therefore, as I feel to be the prospect of our parting, there is yet to come an event of infinitely higher interest and importance,—that of our re-union : that august scene, when the pastor and the flock shall appear together at the call of the Great Shepherd. And oh, brethren ! what a fearful reckoning will there then be made, if, at that awful day, it shall be found that all which we have done has been done in vain ; that though these sanctuary doors have constantly been opened to admit the associated worshippers of a holy and heart-searching God ; though the people have assembled and responded, and united in the serious proceedings ; yet that, after all, a mere mechanical Christianity is the only thing produced ; that the *instruments* of religion have been confounded with the *end* ; that a desire to be *pleased* has occupied the place of a desire to be *profited* ; that though the judgment may have been convinced, and the feelings interested, yet not one step of that repentance—which, if we have it not, we perish—has been taken,—no faith

implanted, no conversion accomplished, no conscience touched, no heart humbled ! Oh ! brethren, how possible may it be, that in the awful hour when God shall publicly declare *that* judgment which he is *now* forming, the whole series of our services, Sabbath after Sabbath, the prayers and the singing, may prove to have been nothing more than so many repeated acts of congregational indevotion and mockery ; professing lamentations which we do not feel, soliciting what we do not want, deprecating what we do not dread, and promising what we never purpose to perform !

But, brethren, I do sincerely trust that it has been otherwise. “ We hope better things of you, though we thus speak, and things that accompany salvation ;” for I believe that God is dealing graciously with many souls present. And when I look beyond this transitory world ;—when I go into the immeasurable regions of eternity, and attempt to ascertain the value of one undying soul ; to estimate the agonies of eternal death, and the tremendous consequences of a condemning judgment ; and then remember Calvary, and the wrath that was poured out upon “ the only-begotten of the Father,” and see that God required the blood of his own Son as the lowest price of the soul’s redemption ; assuredly, brethren, if I have had the honor to be employed as the weak instrument, in only a single instance, of conducting that mysterious process by which a man is born of God ; if I have been the means of drawing but one guilty sinner to the cross of a suffering Saviour ; if only one, “ halting between two opinions,” have been led to decide for God—only one unhappy soul, fainting beneath

the burden of its transgressions, have been placed upon "the green pastures," and put beside "the still waters" of heavenly consolations—then, beloved brethren, I do humbly trust, I may "rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

But, brethren, the time admonishes me to close. Having neither time nor strength sufficient to pay my respects to you individually at your houses, I must from this spot bid you all *farewell*. Among you many blessings I have received, and many friendships formed—friendships which, I trust, shall continue to exist when time shall be no more; and these have only served to raise sincere regret, that my feeble labors have not borne more proportion to the indulgence with which they have been received. But I feel the time of parting as Minister and People, to be painfully impressive. It is a season for very solemn reflection. The years we have passed together cannot now be recalled; having parted with them once, we have parted with them for ever. Our seasons of united worship are now numbered and finished. Both Minister and People are now being "weighed in the balance" of the Sanctuary; and on another day it will be known who of us has been "found wanting!"

With respect to the future, endeavour to go forth prepared for whatever God may be preparing for you. As in the years that are past, so in those that are to come, life will appear, what it really is, a chequered scene—filled with alternations of sorrows and enjoyments, of sufferings and of ease. But let not these things move you. "Only let

your conversation," at home and abroad, in public and in private, in business and in pleasure, "be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ;" that you may at length be made meet for that unfading inheritance, where sorrow and separation are alike unknown.

Most fervently, then, do I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon you and your respected Pastor, my beloved fellow-laborer in the Lord: fervently do I pray that the Holy Spirit may descend more and more abundantly upon him in his richest influence—that he may come forth to you every Sabbath "in all the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ;" and that in you, brethren, he may be blessed with an "increase of fruit unto holiness," so that in the day of the Lord he may present you before the Throne, as his "joy and crown of rejoicing."

And now, beloved brethren,—farewell! "Be perfect; be of good comfort; be of one mind; live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you!"

AMEN.

