

A FUNERAL
SERMON,

FOR THAT VERY REVEREND AND MOST LABORIOUS SERVANT
OF CHRIST, IN THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY,

MR. MATTHEW MEAD,

WHO

Deceased October 16. 1699.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

JOHN AND FRANCES,

THE

LORD AND LADY HAVERSHAM.

May it please your honours,

THE request of the mournful widow, and other relatives of the worthy person deceased, concurring with my own inclination, left with me no room to deliberate concerning this inscription. I easily apprehend how quick and deep a sense you both have of the loss of such another valuable person from off this earth; having so lately borne your part, in lamenting the decease of one you much valued also. Upon which account I put into your hands, a discourse on those words, John 11. 16. Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Such persons leave this world so fast, that it grows a more difficult choice with whom to live, than with whom to die. When on that sad occasion I did set myself to consider that passage of holy Scripture, I had seen some expositors that made it a doubt whether that were meant of Lazarus, or of our Lord himself. Some of good note thought the latter: for which, was plausibly to be alleged

what we find ver. 8. and that in this verse 16. the words were spoken not to Christ, but to the fellow-disciples. That doubt was not to have been moved in an assembly, where was neither time nor a fit season to discuss it. And though I might more conveniently, I shall not say much to it now, only I judge, that without necessity the present coherence was not to be torn. When by the series of discourse the same *him* seems plainly to be referred to, in the close of the 15th verse, and of this 16th.—Lazarus is dead, ver. 14.—nevertheless, let us go to *him*, ver. 15.—Let us also go, that we may die with *him*. It was little needful to say to Christ, Let us go, whose mind appeared set upon going already; but to the disciples, who drew back. Besides that reverence might restrain from saying this to our Lord, when what was to be proposed was matter of hortation, not of inquiry. Though sometimes they feared even to ask him a question also; as Luke 9. 45. And they might the rather be now under a present awe, from the rebuke, or expostulatory answer, he had given them, for their objecting against going into Judea. Especially, so as not to signify a remaining fear, which he had so newly checked. Therefore Thomas's speech, directed to his fellow-disciples, but not out of Christ's hearing (for we have no reason to suppose that he separated them from him, that he might say this to them apart) is so ordered, as not to import fear of death, but love to the deceased.

If any should object, that Thomas could not mean dying *with* Lazarus, when he was told, he was already dead. That scarce deserves answer to any one that understands the latitude of the participle rendered with, especially, that it frequently signifies after, and not always with. And very often notes nothing of time at all. And therefore may here mean no more, than let us go that we may die too, or die as well as he. All this I say, not that I have heard any person in our days, object against, or plead for, this or that sense of these words: but knowing they have been differently understood; and this being the first opportunity I had to take public notice of the difference, I am not ill pleased that I have now, this occasion of representing it to so competent judges, partly to prevent objection, or at least, to shew with what temper of mind, any such different apprehensions, in matters of no greater moment, ought to be looked upon. Nor shall I here vie authorities of commentators that have gone this way, or that, in this matter. Therefore I name none: only some, of as great name as any, have judged this the more probable opinion, which I have followed.

Many instances might be given, wherein, when matters extraneous to the sum of religion, are delivered, one sense must be pitched upon, though another, very divers (of which there cannot be two) is not to be demonstrated impossible. In which case, I much prefer a tacit following that which one chooses, before a conceited confidence, and crying down of the other. For confident clamour neither admits light, nor tends to enlighten any body.

In the present case, it makes no difference to any disadvantage. For if we desire to be united in death, or in that state to which it introduces, with this or that holy man: to be with our blessed Lord in that state, must be much more desirable. But the departure of the excellent ones of the earth from it, leaves us less here of present attractive, and gives us a very threatening prospect and presage of what we are to expect for the future.

Your lordship's great respect to this servant of Christ, was even hereditary, and descended to him, by you from your family; as I have often heard him acknowledge, with great sense of obligation. And, madam, your ladyship's great value of him, though it might take its first rise from so near, and judicious a relative, could not but receive a great increase from his known worth, and your own discerning judgment. I pray, not doubting it, that with whatsoever kindness you have received any prophet, or other servant of Christ, in that name, you may have a proportionable reward; and am my most honoured lord and lady;

Your most obliged, humble servant,

In the work of the gospel,

JOHN HOWE.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general history of the world from the beginning of time to the present day. The author discusses the various races of mankind, their physical characteristics, and their social and political organizations. He also traces the progress of science and art, and the development of the human mind. The second part of the book is a detailed account of the history of the United States, from its discovery by Columbus to the present day. The author describes the various stages of its development, from a collection of scattered colonies to a united and powerful nation. He also discusses the various wars and conflicts that have shaped its history, and the progress of its civilization. The book is written in a clear and concise style, and is well illustrated with maps and diagrams. It is a valuable work for anyone interested in the history of the world and the United States.

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FUNERAL SERMON.

1 Tim. iv. 16.

—Thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

THESSE words I principally design to insist upon at this time, and on this sad and mournful occasion; but not without retrospection to the foregoing verse, and the former part of this; which runs thus, verse 15. Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all: ver. 16. Take heed to thyself, and thy doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee. This whole foregoing context contains precepts, which reduced to practice, afford an eminent example and pattern of a true gospel preacher: or, as the words are, ver. 6. of a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine; as these last words shew the blessed end and issue of such a one's ministry: that is, that he shall save himself; which must be looked upon as certain: and them that hear him; that is, as much as in him lies, he shall herein do his part, and what is incumbent upon him, to the saving of his hearers. These latter words hold forth the double end which a minister of Christ is to pursue, the saving his own and his people's souls. The foregoing words, considered in reference to these, contain the *proper means* he is to use in order to this twofold end. That is, he is to meditate much on the great things of the

gospel. He is to be wholly *in* them,* as the words literally import which we read, He is to give himself wholly *to* them. He is to be continually increasing in the knowledge of God, and that so as not to know only to himself, but so as to make known what he knows. He is especially (though that be the common duty of christians) to turn all to the use of edifying, Eph. 4. 29. that his profiting may appear to all. For though Timothy was at this time a young man, yet the most grown did always need to be still growing. None have here attained their *ne plus ultra*, but may still write for the motto, *plus ultra*, all their days; even Paul the aged, as he styles himself to Philemon, tells the Philippians, (both those epistles being dated from Rome, and supposed to be written about the same time, when he was first there) that he had not yet attained, in point of the transforming knowledge of Christ, chap. 3. 10, 11. And unto what pitch soever he grew, it was still in order to communication. He writes to the Corinthians, that he determined to know nothing among them † which is so to know, as to make known, nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. And to the Ephesians, that he would have them understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ; || no doubt that their salvation might be promoted thereby. And hereupon, in great part, depends a minister's own salvation; as hereafter will further appear. But besides, he is to take heed to himself, and see to the good state of his own soul; he is to take heed to his doctrine, not to corrupt, or handle deceitfully the word of God, but represent it sincerely, and as the truth is in Jesus. He is to continue in them; that is, in the things he before exhorts him to meditate on, and be wholly in them; to continue in the faith of what was to be believed: and the practice of what was to be done; and in pressing and insisting on both. And all for the mentioned ends, that he might both save himself and those that hear him. And it is this twofold end of a minister's care and labour, that will take us up at this time. This is that therefore, which as God shall help, I am to evince and apply, namely, That a minister of Christ is to make it his business, both to save himself and his hearers.—I am, as the text directs, to speak of these two ends conjunctly.—And here I shall not spend time, or use a liberty beyond what is obvious and useful, in inquiring into the counsel of God, why

* *'Ev τούτοις ἵσθι*. In a better than the Poet's sense, *scire tuum nihil est*.

† 1 Cor. 2. 2. || Eph. 3. 4.

he makes use of such in order to the saving of others, as need to be saved themselves also. But shall principally insist, that since it appears to be God's pleasure to make use of such, they should therefore most earnestly concern themselves, and be very intent upon carrying on this design, namely, of their own, conjunctly with that of their hearers salvation. Yet as to the former of these,

I. Somewhat it may be requisite to say, concerning this course and method, which we find the wisdom and good pleasure of God have pitched upon, for the carrying on a saving design in this world: to make use of such for the saving of others as do need to endeavour the saving of themselves. And here I shall briefly shew;—how it is to be understood: and—how the fitness of this course may be evinced.

1. As to the former we shall briefly note; that we must be cautious to understand aright, how, and in what sense any one can be said, to save himself, or another. Therefore,

(1.) It must be understood so, as to keep at a remote and awful distance from intrenching upon a divine prerogative. It being most expressly said, Isa. 43. 11. I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no Saviour: and chap. 45. 21, 22. There is no God beside me, a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me. Look to me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. Which plainly signifies, that in the highest sense, to save, is most appropriate to Deity, especially with an everlasting salvation, as it is expressed, ver. 17. of this chap. 45. Israel shall be saved, in or by the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. And that to be so a Saviour, is equally incommunicable, as to be God. How gloriously doth he triumph in this excellent peculiarity of the Godhead, in his expostulations with Job, chap. 40. 9. Hast thou an arm like God! As if it had been said, "Come let us compare; stretch out that weak, withered, ulcerous arm of thine. Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, array thyself with glory and beauty; try if thou canst make thyself shine in Godlike splendour: cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: behold every one that is proud and abase him. Try thy power upon thy fellow mortals. See if thou canst crush all the haughty ones of this world, bring them down, and bind their faces in the dust of the grave. And (to recall thee to the greater things mentioned before) try if thou canst form me such another earth as this, establish its foundations, lay its corner stone. If thou canst countermand the motions, bind up the influences of the stars in the heavens;" then will I confess unto thee, that thy own right-hand can save thee, ver. 14.

It is, it seems as much above created power to be a Saviour, as to be the Creator or Ruler of the world. And how should we dread to think of usurping the title and office of the great Immanuel, the Saviour, who is therefore called Jesus, because he was to save his people from their sins, Matt. 1. 21.

(2.) Yet there is a true sense wherein the saving act and power, are otherwise and very variously ascribed. Sometimes to faith, Luke 7. 50. Thy faith hath saved thee. Sometimes to hope, We are saved by hope, Rom. 8. 24. Sometimes to baptism, 1 Pet. 3. 21. Baptism doth also now save us not the putting away the filth of the flesh, &c. Sometimes to husbands and wives in reference to one another, 1 Cor. 7. 16. So is the gospel called the gospel of our salvation, Eph. 1. 13. And to you is the word of this salvation sent, Acts 13. 26. So are we exhorted to save ourselves, Acts 2. 40: And others, Jude 23. Others save with fear. Thus in lower matters, is the act of writing, for instance, ascribed to the pen, to the hand that uses it, and to the writer himself, that moves both; and we have no difficulty to understand those different forms of speech: nor is there a greater difficulty in the present case, so to ascribe to the creature the low subordinate agency, which in distinct capacities may belong to it, as in the mean time to reserve to God and Christ, the supreme agency, which is most peculiar and appropriate to divine power and grace, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Eph. 2. 8.

2. We now come next to shew, that it was very manifestly agreeable to the most accurate wisdom of God, to employ such in the design and work of saving others, as were themselves concerned, and needed to be saved too, that were to be upon the same bottom themselves with the rest; and to venture their own souls, and their everlasting concerns the same way, and into the same hands. And this we shall labour to clear and make evident by degrees.

(1.) It was fit, since creatures were to be employed in this work, to make use of intelligent creatures, such as could understand their own errand, and act with design in pursuance of it.

(2.) Mankind was universally lost, so as all do need being saved themselves.

(3.) Therefore no intelligent creatures else could be employed herein, but the unfallen angels.

(4.) We may adventure to say after God, and when he hath so determined the matter himself, though it was not fit for us to have said it before him, as if we would direct the Spirit of the Lord, or as his counsellors would instruct him, (Isa. 40. Rom. 11.) that it was more suitable to make use to this purpose of

sinful men, than of sinless angels. Let us sever and lay aside herein, what may at first sight, seem specious, but is really not considerable in this matter, as that men, in the same miserable circumstances with those whom they are to persuade, that they may save them will be so much the more earnest and importunate, use so much the more pressing arguments, as having been upon the brink of hell, and the borders of destruction, for we suppose such as are most likely to promote the salvation of others, to have been made sensible of their own undone, lost state, and to be in a way of recovery themselves. But hereupon it may also be supposed, they will therefore so much the more pathetically plead with sinners. Their knowledge of the terrors of the Lord will urge them to persuade men, (2 Cor. 5. 11.) and make them eloquent at it. But what! more than angels? When the apostle, (1 Cor. 13.) supposes one speaking with the tongue of men and angels, doth he not intend a gradation, and signify the latter far to excel? And are we to suppose that the benignity of their own natures, their kindness to man, and their perfect conformity, and obediential compliance and subjection to the will of their sovereign Lord, would not have obliged them to do their uttermost, if he had sent them upon such errands? We cannot doubt it. But,

[1.] It is apparent that what the blessed God doth in pursuance of this saving design, he doth to the praise of the glory of his grace, and that it might appear the more conspicuous, in the whole conduct of this affair.

[2.] That it is not within the compass of any created, no not of angelical power, to change the hearts of men, and turn them to God. If angels were the constant preachers in all our assemblies, they could not with all their heavenly eloquence convert one sinner, if the immediate divine power, did not exert itself. The people are willing in the day of his power, who was God-man, as Psal. 110. 3. The Jews at Mount Sinai received the law by the dispensation of angels, yet kept it not, Acts 7. 53.

[3.] Yet if God should put forth his own power, by such a ministration; if angels should appear in glorious array among us, and speak to men with greater advantage, and more persuasive eloquence, than we can conceive; and marvellous effects by divine concurrence should ensue: those great effects among a sort of creatures led by sense, and who judge by the sight of the eye, would all be ascribed to the visibly glorious instrument, not to the supreme Agent, who is invisible and out of sight; even as in effects of another kind, the invisible power and Godhead that do all, are little regarded by stupid man.

whose dull eye stays and rests in the visible outside, and fixes his mind there too.

[4.] Therefore the rich treasures of the gospel, are put into earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power, might be, that is, might appear to be of God, and not of the inferior instrument, 2 Cor. 4. 7.

[5.] In this way of dispensation, wherein God speaks to men liable to the same passions with themselves, he accommodates himself to their frail state, who cannot bear glorious appearances; and to their own option and desires, who say to Moses, (Exod. 20. 19.) Speak thou to us and we will hear, but let not God speak to us lest we die. When they had heard the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words, accompanied with thunders and lightnings, they entreated that they might hear no more, Heb. 12. 19. The celestial glory, while our mould and frame is dust, doth more astonish than instruct. Those soft and pleasant words, This is my beloved Son, —hear him, spoken by a voice from the excellent glory in the transfiguration, made the disciples that heard them sore afraid, and fall on their faces, Mat. 17. 5, 6. How would it unhinge the world, and discompose the whole state of civil affairs, if all conversions were to be as Saul's was, when he became Paul, with such concomitant effects, not only on himself but all others present, especially being wrought (as most conversions may be) in numerous assemblies, the convert struck blind for some days, and all that were in the place speechless! Perhaps we have one such instance to let us see how inconvenient it were, such instances should be common; or that this should be God's ordinary way of converting and saving sinners.

[6.] The holding of men in this world under the ministry of men, not of angels, in reference to the affairs of their salvation, is certainly more suitable to the condition of probationers for eternity, and another world; and more aptly subservient to the business of the judgment day, when all the talents men were entrusted with, their natural endowments and faculties, as well as additional advantages, are to be accounted for. We shall hereafter understand better, but may, in good measure, conjecture now, why there is so fixed a gulf by the wisdom and counsel of God, between the two worlds, the visible and invisible, and so little commerce between them.

And whereas in the Old Testament the apparition of angels was more frequent, that passage, the world to come being said not to be put in subjection to angels, seems to signify, the time after the Messiah's appearing should be more entirely left to

the conduct of a gospel ministry, as the connexion, Heb. 2. ver. 4, 5 intimates.

[7.] And though the compassions of men, who have been in danger to perish themselves, cannot be supposed more powerfully to influence them, unto an earnest endeavour of saving them that are in the like danger, than the kindness and benignity of angels would do, if they were so employed; yet their concern to save others, who are also to be saved themselves the same way, is likely, more easily, more generally, more sensibly, to be apprehended by those others, to whom they are to apply themselves upon this account. They have kinder thoughts of one another, than they are like to have of a superior order of creatures. Their own flesh and blood is nearer akin to them: yea, they are more apt to love one another (and consequently to apprehend one another's love) than the blessed God himself. Which is more than intimated in that of that holy apostle, 1 John 4. 20. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he love God, whom he hath not seen? Things affect us not merely as they are, but as they are understood. Ministers cannot be kinder to men's souls than the blessed angels, among whom there is a joy for the conversion of a sinner, much more pure, exalted, and sublime, than a human breast is capable of; and, in proportion, more fervent desire of such conversions: but their propensions towards us, though they should be expressed by counsels and precepts that tend to our good, would be less apprehended by most men; they carrying a severity with them, which makes them need such insinuating recommendations, as slide more easily into their minds from creatures of their own order.

[8.] Our Lord himself was so concerned for the saving of souls, as who could be besides? But though before the flood he is said to have preached to the old world, it was by his Spirit in the ministry of Noah, a man like themselves, to whom he preached. But when he thought fit to preach immediately himself, he put on flesh, and dwelt, or did tabernacle among men as one of them, John 1. 14. So Moses foretold: a prophet like to me shall God raise up, him shall you hear.* So his terror was not to make us afraid. And though his compassionateness towards us is argued from his being tempted, and compassed with infirmities,† as we are, that cannot be understood as if hereby he became more gracious and merciful towards us in himself; but his being so, was the more apprehensible to us.

* Acts 3. 22. from Deut. 18.

† Heb. 4. 15.

[9.] The steadiness of the course God hath taken in this matter, shews what his judgment was of the fitness of it; who doth all things according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. 1. 11. It is observable, that when our Lord was now about to ascend, he fixes a ministry that he promises his presence unto, always, or every day, unto the end of the world, Mat. 28. 19, 20. Ascending on high he gave (among other) these gifts to men, even to the rebellious, Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, 'psal. 68. Eph. 4. 8.—11. And that he might put an honour upon this ministry, when he designed the gospel to be preached to Cornelius, and his relatives: though he prepares Peter by a vision, and sends an angel to Cornelius, it was not to preach to him but to direct him to send for Peter to preach to him and his; who tells him, when he fell at his feet, I also am a man, Acts 10. We are human preachers, though from a divine Master and Lord; and of a divine word.

II. But now the mind and counsel of God being sufficiently evident in this matter, both in the fact and in the fitness of it, to make use of such, for promoting the common salvation, as do need themselves to partake therein: we come now to shew, that the ministers of the gospel of Christ ought to be very intent upon the business of their own salvation, conjunctly, with that of them that hear them; and of theirs, with their own. There is a double obligation meeting upon a minister of the gospel; that of the law of nature, and of the law of his office; he is to comply with both. Nature obliges him to intend his own salvation; his office, theirs that hear him. The same authority lays him under the one obligation and the other. For he that is the author of nature, is the author of his office too.

1. He ought so to mind the concern of his people's salvation, as not to neglect his own. This is so evident in itself, that it would be superfluous to speak to it, were it not that we, as well as they to whom we preach, do need to be put in remembrance of very important things, though we know them, 2 Pet. 1. 12. To know and to consider, we not only may distinguish, but do too often separate. And there are divers things to be considered to this purpose.

(1.) That the royal law, as it is called, James 2. 8. which requires us to love our neighbour as one's self, makes love to ourselves; that is, not merely, which we bear, but which we owe to ourselves, the measure of that which we ought to have for our neighbour. And that which ought to be the measure in any kind, should be the most perfect in that kind; and must oblige us to love first our most noble self, our own souls.

(2.) It is gross hypocrisy to seem earnestly intent upon saving other men, and to be neglectful of one's own salvation. It is sin only which endangers both; meant by the mote and the beam, Mat. 7. 3, 4, 5. And our Saviour we see there, stigmatizes such a one, with the brand of a hypocrite, that is officious to take out the mote from his brother's eye, but never concerns himself to cast out the beam from his own eye.

(3.) It is a scandalous and an ignominious absurdity, as the apostle's sharp expostulations imply, Rom. 2. 19,—22. to take upon one's self to be a guide to the blind, a light to them that are in darkness, to take up with having a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law; and to teach others, and not to teach one's self! Preachest thou (as he adds) a man should not steal and dost thou steal? thou that sayest, a man should not commit adultery? dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? thou that makest thy boast of the law, by breaking the law dishonourest thou God? This is that which makes the name of God be blasphemed among the gentiles; as he tells us it is written, referring to some texts in the Old Testament, Ezek. 16. 47—52. chap. 36, 22. It is a blackening thing when it can be said, I was keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept, Cant. 1. 6. Our Lord speaks of it as a reproachful proverb, which he, knowing the hearts of men, observed some were apt to misapply to him, Luke 4. (noted to have been in use among the Greeks, and which with that empire had reached Judea) physician heal thyself. It would be very opprobrious to us who are in the ministry, if it could be truly said to us, we seem concerned at the diseasedness that appears in our flocks, but overlook the diseases and distempers of our own souls. That was meant for a bitter reproach to our Lord dying upon the cross, He saved others, himself he cannot save. To us if it might be truly said, it must be a just reproach as well as bitter; our saving ourselves being our duty enjoined us, and tending to the saving of others; whereas our Lord's saving himself, in the sense intended by those scoffers, was against the law he was then under: and against his own design tending to overthrow it, and leave them to perish, whom he was dying to save.

(4.) The observable neglect of the design to save our own souls, would defeat and destroy the other design of saving theirs that hear us. For who can think us serious in our preaching, or that we believe ourselves, in what we say, if we manifestly decline ourselves that way of salvation, which we propose to others? We tempt men to infidelity if we live like infidels.

It was a cutting^d repartee made by an atheistical person, to one, that leading an ill life, yet professed to wonder that the other, the arguments for a deity being so plain and cogent, did not own there was a God; the other replied, he much more wondered, that he who did own him, should yet live as he did! This tends to overthrow all our preaching. Though our Saviour directs to do as they said, who sat in Moses' chair, not as they did; because they said and did not: yet he did not thereby justify those self-repugnant teachers: for his reflection upon them is sufficiently severe. And we are to consider in the case, not merely what man's duty is, but what their dispositions are. Not what they ought, but what they are apt to do. If they think we do but act a part, when we speak never so movingly to them, they will be little moved by all that we can say. They will be more apt to conclude, that we who have studied, and searched into the matters of religion more than they have done, have found some flaw at the bottom, and perceive the very foundations of it to be infirm; and therefore practise not according to the doctrines and rules of it. But that for our gain, because it was the calling we were bred to, and we know not how else to live, we are content, and some way constrained, to keep up the forms we found in use; and maintain them that they may maintain us.

(5.) Yet when it shall be found, as upon strict inquiry it cannot but be, that the foundations of religion are more firm than those of heaven and earth, how dismal will it be to have preached to others and ourselves to be cast away? 1 Cor. 9. 27. For as by loose, licentious walking, we hazard other men's souls, which we should endeavour to save; so we, more certainly, lose our own. God may save them some other way, and by other, more apt instruments; but we have little reason to expect that we shall save our own, either while we design it not (as if we were to be saved by chance) or, much less, if we counteract any such design. Which we may, most destructively, by that single instance, which the apostle, in that last mentioned place, refers to; an indulged intemperance; or not keeping our bodies in subjection; in servitude, or in a serviceable temper, as the word *δελαγωγειν* imports, to subdue them into the state of servants; wherein rather than fail, one would use the severity which this other word *υπωπιζειν* there signifies. It is plain, that if we live after the flesh we must die. Rom. 8. 13. There is one law for ministers and people. And it is only by the Spirit we are so to mortify the deeds of the flesh that we may live. How dismal when a minister's own breath poisons him! When the very gospel which he preaches is a

deadly odour* to himself! How horrid when a shepherd is the leader of the epicurean herd!

(6.) But if by neglecting visibly the gospel-way of saving himself, he not only hazard, but actually destroy other men's souls, together with his own, he then perishes under a much heavier load of guilt, than another man can, that was not under his obligations. As his obligation was double, so is his guilt. When sinful, vicious inclination, hath depraved his mind, put out the eye of his practical understanding, so that the blind leads the blind, both fall into the ditch; but he falls much the deeper, having the others destruction charged upon him, together with his own. Such teachers as bind heavy burdens for others, which they will not touch fall under an aggravated woe. And the case is the same with them that prepare, and set before their hearers the most nutritive and delectable fare, which they will not taste. And for that reason, perhaps, the people will not feed on them, because the preachers themselves too evidently appear to have no taste or relish of them.

2. The ministers of Christ ought to conjoin the serious design, and earnest endeavour, of saving them that hear them, with the design and endeavour of saving themselves. They are not to be so bound up within themselves, as only to mind their own things, though of this most noble kind.

(1.) The law of nature obliges them to it, which extends its obligation as far as human nature extends. And must therefore include them with the rest of mankind under the same common notion, namely, them who are ministers, not as they are such; for nature hath not made them ministers, but as they are men. Whom the royal law, mentioned before, requires to love their neighbour as themselves: and therefore to seek another's felicity, not before, but as their own. We are taught to count it an unnatural barbarity, when we see any pressed and pinched by bodily wants and miseries, to hide ourselves from our own flesh, Isa. 58. 7. How much more, if we see immortal souls in danger to be lost and perish, that are of the same make and capacity, with our own!

(2.) The law of Christ, as such, obliges christians to the same thing. Which is not, in this instance, therefore a divers law, but hath a different stamp and impress, as being the law of the kingdom of God in Christ. We are to bear one another's burdens, so fulfilling the law of Christ, Gal. 6. 2. What so weighty a burden can there be upon any man as this, the importance of his eternal salvation? And which is plainly here

* 2 Cor. 2. 16. οσμή.

referred to, when we are required to endeavour the restoring of such as have been overtaken, and lapsed into sin; by which the precious soul is hurt and endangered, should they be left to sink under such a burden. Christians are elsewhere required to have compassion on such as they see in such danger, to save them with fear, and pull them as firebrands out of the fire, Jude 23. These are obligations common to ministers with others. But,

(3.) The law of their own office lays upon them an obligation peculiar, as such, to themselves. What serves their office for, but this, as the principal end and design of it? What is it meant for, but to gather in souls to Christ, and confirm them in him? Because there is salvation in no other; nor is there any other name given among men, by which any can be saved, Acts 4. 12. They are the messengers of the glad tidings of peace. Their business is so well known, even in hell itself, that a spirit from thence speaks it out, These are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation, that is, to human creatures, of whom the possessed person was one, Acts 16. 17.

(4.) They are obliged by the example of their blessed Master. Our Lord Jesus himself, the primary Saviour by office; whom they are both to imitate, and to serve in this merciful design. Christians are so far to imitate them, as they do Christ, (1 Cor. 1. 11.) which implies their obligation to imitate him, as the word *μιμηται*, there used signifies. The great salvation, which none that neglect, can escape vengeance, began to be spoken by the Lord himself, then by them that heard him, and so on; by others that succeed in the same office. This is following Christ in the way of imitation, as in the mentioned place. And we are required to have the same mind in us, which was in Christ, Phil. 2. 5. and are told wherein, ver. 6, 7, 8. which read over at leisure, and consider what was that deep humiliation and suffering for? But the salvation of souls. And consider that this is said, as to the saints at Philippi, so particularly to the bishops and deacons there; which shews their common and their special obligation both together. And now can we behold with what compassions and in what agonies, even unto blood, our blessed Lord pursued this design, and not feel a constraint in our spirits, in our lower sphere, and capacity, to serve it also to our uttermost!

(5.) They are obliged by the peculiar advantages they have for this work, and those they expect by it.

[1.] They have special advantages for it from their very calling, being separated to the gospel; taken off from other busi-

ness, to give themselves (as in this context) wholly to this. They are supposed therefore to know more of the concernments of souls; of the terrors of the Lord, (2 Cor. 5. 11.) whence, therefore they are to persuade men; of the nature of sin, and how it entangles men's spirits; of the wiles of Satan, and how he waits for advantages to destroy them; of the foundations of religion, and by what arts they are endeavoured to be subverted and shaken; and by what means and methods they are to be demonstrated or established; of the mysteries of the gospel of Christ, and how they are to be unfolded; to have more special assistances from heaven in their work, according as they faithfully mind it: Christ's promised presence therein, even to the end. These are talents, with others, tending to the obtaining of these, which they are to be accountable for. And hereby they are strongly obliged, with their own, to intend earnestly the salvation of other men's souls.

[2.] They expect great advantage by it: that since nothing is more grateful to our Lord Christ, than the progress of this saving work, he will bountifully reward them that faithfully serve him in it: that if they be steadfast and immovable, abounding in this work of the Lord (as he hath not a greater, now in doing, in this world) their labour, in him, shall not be in vain. They shall hear from him, Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord. If they turn many to righteousness (or endeavour it with sincere minds) they shall shine as stars in the firmament. And in the mean time, the honour, and the pleasure of serving that mighty Redeemer, and lover of souls, in so glorious a design, have in them a very excellent reward; and which cannot but be esteemed such by a right mind.

(6.) They are obliged by the exigency of their own case. They cannot, as that is stated, neglect the design of saving other men's souls, without forfeiting their own. If they warn them not, over whom, as watchmen they are set, they perish, but their blood will be required at their hands. It is a mighty trust they stand charged with, which if they discharge not, they are liable to accusation and condemnation, as false and faithless servants; perfidious to the souls of men; traitorous to the King of kings—whose interest they will have betrayed, being his agents and ministers in his kingdom of grace; about the prosperous state of which kingdom, with the successful progress of the affairs of it, he is most deeply concerned.

And now from this conjunct consideration of these two great ends, which a minister of Christ is to propound to himself, I might proceed to consider them severally, and apart; but this the case doth not require, it being easy to sever what

hath been said to the one and the other ; nor do our limits allow it.

III. We therefore go on to the more necessary use of the whole. To this purpose we collect,

1. That this world is universally in a very miserable state. For it is the business of Christ's ministers, to endeavour both the salvation of them that hear them, and their own.

(1.) The salvation of them that hear them. This is very indefinite: let who will be the hearers, they are supposed to be such as need to be saved. The object of their ministry is all nations, and every creature, namely, that is or shall be capable of being taught the way of salvation. Therefore all nations are deluged by the destructive evils, from which they are to be saved; and the world is everywhere inhabited by miserable creatures. We are told, that sin and death have passed upon all men, (Rom. 5. 12.) and all the ends of the earth are invited to look unto God in Christ, (as the application of this context, Phil. 2. shews) that they may be saved, Isa. 45. 22. Whereas therefore the ministers of the gospel of salvation, wheresoever they can obtain to be heard, are to endeavour the salvation of their hearers; it shews they can speak to none who stand not in need of saving mercy.

(2.) And that they are also to save themselves as well as them that hear them, more fully shews the absolute universality of the ruin that had befallen this world; that there are among men none to be found that may be employed in saving others, but who are of the lost themselves, and so far drowned in the common deluge of perdition and destruction, as to need his help, as well as the rest, who came to seek and save them who are lost; and to stretch out to him craving hands, with that crying voice, Lord, save us, we perish.

2. The common stupidity of this wretched world, is here-upon most observable and amazing, that so few such cries are sent up to heaven! Men are involved in a common ruin, overtures are made to them of common salvation, but they are in reference hereto destitute of a common sense, that is, of such sense as is common in less important cases. Their misery lies in their having lost God; but little do they apprehend this loss. Amidst their other miseries, they cry out when some that are mightier oppress others, but none says, Where is God my Maker? Job 35. 9, 10. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if any will understand, and seek after God; but they are every one gone back; or are in an averse posture, none doth this good, no, not one, Psal. 14. and 53. None, till he give an effectual touch to their drowsy spirits; and say, inwardly and vitally, to their hearts,

seek ye my face, so as to make their hearts answer, Thy face, Lord, will we seek. Psal. 27. 8. Preventing grace doth this, otherwise they feel no need of God, they miss him not, are content to be without him in the world; yea, say to him, Depart from us. Distance from him is chosen and desired: from him whose offspring we are, who is the Father of spirits, their parent, their life, their blessedness; of whom they are, and to whom if they tend not, they cannot but be miserable. It is the salvation of the soul that is the end of faith, (1 Pet. 1. 9.) that faith by which we are to come to God, believing that he is, and will be, the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; being redeemed to God by the blood of his Son, (Rev. 5. 9.) and who suffered once, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, (1 Pet. 3. 18.) and who upon his suffering intercedes for the same purpose; and is able to save to the uttermost them that come to God by him, because he ever lives to make intercession for them. But this salvation of the soul, this coming to God, or redemption by Christ, and his intercession thereupon, who looks after? Neither the end, the salvation of their souls, coming back to God; nor his method for attaining this end, are regarded, or so much as thought on. To have this flesh saved from any thing that is grievous to it, every one covets, and endeavours in vain: it must, however, rot in the dust, and be, in the mean time, a prey to worms. Its own father, mother, and sister, will devour it, Job 17. 14. The Father of their spirits would save and satisfy them, but him they shun, and will not know.

Who that observes how men spend their days, even under the gospel, which makes their time a day of grace, wherein they should be working out their salvation, can think they have any concern to be saved? Their life is continual trifling, some pass their days in mirth and jollity; doth this signify any sense of misery, or fear of perishing, and that destruction from the Almighty is a terror to them? These are not more idle, than others are idly busy to get estates, and a name on earth; but what is this to their being saved? They are liable to the common more sensible miseries of life, and they are without God; but this is no misery with them. This misery is their element, and burdens them not. Were their present case, and future danger, in this respect apprehended and felt, how full of outcries would this world be; O we are lost and perishing! Such cries would ring through the earth, and pierce heaven! But the same carnality that is death, (Rom. 8. 6.) and makes them miserable, makes them stupid too, and insensible of their misery. And are these reasonable souls, intelligent, immortal minds and spirits, that are thus stupidified! turned into such

clouds and stones! O deplorable case! Methinks such an office set up in the world, of men that are to save their own and other men's souls, should make them consider, and bethink themselves, What is it for? It must have had an original, and so it hath a divine aspect, a taste of heaven upon it; and must have an end suitable to the wisdom and grace of heaven, which claims to be entertained otherwise than with neglect and contempt! And indeed this leads to take more notice expressly, in a further inference;

3. That there is a saving design on foot in the world: set on foot by the blessed God himself. Otherwise in so great a ruin as is come upon this wretched world, what could it signify? For any man to offer at saving either himself or others? How vain an attempt were it for any man, out of so deep and horrid a gulf, of impurity, misery, darkness, and death, to think of lifting up himself, and of plucking up others as high as heaven! This intimation carries hope with it. It is a voice from heaven to such as are so employed, as Timothy was, O save thyself, and as many as thou canst besides. It takes away all pretence for despair: God puts not men upon vain attempts. A lively hope ought to spring from hence: and we are saved by hope, (Rom. 8. 24.) as without hope no man would ever design for salvation, or any thing else. Hope is the engine that moves the world, keeps the intelligent part of it in action everywhere. No man could rationally stir in pursuit of any design, whereof he despaired. But as to other designs, men's hopes are commonly self-sprung, and end in shame. But when one can say, Lord, thy word hath caused me to hope: thou hast put me upon aiming to be saved, and to save others, it speaks this to be a just and hopeful undertaking. I will therefore set about working out my own salvation (and with my own, other men's, as far as is within my compass) expecting he will graciously set in with me, and work in order hereto, to will and to do of his own good pleasure, without which all mine will be lost labour.

4. We further collect, That the blessed God is most intent upon this design. That which this supposes, and that which it imports, speaks him intent. It supposes he hath appointed a sovereign Saviour set over this work; otherwise there could be none subordinate. It imports he hath settled an office on purpose; made it some men's special business, to intend (as every one ought) his own salvation, and withal to give himself up to this great work, the saving all he can. An office set up for the saving of souls ought to be a great thing in our eyes; and is a standing testimony for God, how willing he is men should come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved.

5. They that bear this office should be highly honoured for their work's sake. For how glorious an employment is it to be instrumental to salvation! to be in any kind saviours! I could tell you of some great princes in the pagan world, that to their other splendid titles have had the addition of *soter*, *a saviour*; as to some others, the destroyer of cities, hath been given as a name of reproach. And you do know who hath the name of Apollyon, or Abaddon, Rev. 9. 11.

6. It highly magnifies the wisdom, power, and sovereignty of God, that he can, and will make use of so mean instruments, for so high and glorious a purpose. For what end and purpose can be greater than the recovery and salvation of souls, so deformed, miserable, and lost, as the souls of men universally were? And what instruments could be meaner, or more vile, than such as needed to be saved themselves, with the same salvation? That God should make use of them who were darkness, (Eph. 5. 8.) to enlighten the world, (Mat. 5. 14.) of such as were but sinful flesh, (John 3. 6.) to be able ministers of the Spirit, (2 Cor. 3. 6.) of such as had minds that were enmity against God, (Rom. 8. 7.) to reconcile men to himself, (2 Cor. 5. 20.) these are some of the wonders he works among the children of men. When he hath converted some to use them (first for the converting of others, and then) for the strengthening of their converted brethren.

7. The ministers of Christ are to be examples to them over whom they are set. They are to be so in the beginning of their course, in their first turn to God, though then in a more passive sense, That I might be a pattern, &c. saith the apostle, 1. Tim. 1. 16. and in their after-course, as in this context, ver. 12. Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, &c. They must be leaders in the whole way of salvation, from first to last.

8. Pride in the ministers of the gospel; and in them that live under a gospel-ministry, is a most monstrous absurdity: for what are we, all of us, but a company of wretched creatures, just perishing; and only (at the best) but in the way of being saved! What have such to be proud of?

9. Both Christ's ministers, and their flocks, are under the greatest obligation imaginable unto union. For their case is one and the same, their miseries were the same, their dangers the same. They must all have the same Saviour, the same way of salvation, and the same end; the same state of salvation, which all the nations of the saved are to be brought to at last, Rev. 21. 24.

10. It is an unquestionable thing, that salvation is to be designed for by all sorts. Ministers must aim to save themselves and their hearers, And is the minister to design his people's salvation, and not they their own? They have mean thoughts

of salvation that stumble here, as if they were only to be saved from hell-flames! But to be saved from sin which makes us unlike God! to have his image and his love perfected in us, to be with the rest of the elect, partakers of salvation, with eternal glory, is that mean? 2 Tim. 2. 10.

11. The ministers of the gospel must, some time or other, be taken away from their work. It is time, a limited duration, within which their work and business lie, for the saving themselves and those that hear them. They are to save themselves. This end they are to pursue; and it must sometime be attained. They are not always to labour, and never rest: sometime they are to receive the fruit of this their labour, and the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. As more time passes, their salvation draws nearer than when they believed; they are not always to be in saving, and never saved. In mercy to them, God will translate them; and may it not be in judgment to many, whom they earnestly laboured to save, but who rejected their counsels, and strove against their own salvation! That they may not always labour in vain for themselves, and because they have laboured in vain for many others, they must be withdrawn from their hard and toilsome labour, and enter into rest.

12. The loss is great, and grievous beyond all expression, above all our lamentation, when such are taken away as have made it their business to save themselves, and those that heard them. In their endeavour to save themselves they have been great examples. In their endeavour to save others, they may have been great instruments of much saving good to many a soul. How few are they that drive such designs! How fast doth their number decrease! How fitly may we take up that of the Psalmist, when the godly man ceases, and the faithful fail from among the children of men? And what could be said with greater pathos, Psal. 12. 1. Help, Lord as in a common ruin: Help, help, for God's sake, help, Lord, help! My friends, you are not sensible you have lost such a one, even while you are not yet saved! While you yet need to be working out your salvation! The effectually called, it is true, are saved, 2 Tim. 1. 9, Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling.— And (which is in substance the same thing) the regenerate are saved; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy be saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; Tit. 3. 5. But if this were the case of you all, how much yet remains to be done, in order to your full and consummate salvation! You have yet mighty difficulties to overcome; a body of death, which you are not yet delivered from. For are not these some of your groans, in reference to it, O who shall deliver us? A

world full of troubles and snares ; your adversary the devil, that goes about seeking whom he may devour : all the principalities and powers of the kingdom of darkness, that you are to contend with, and with whom you are to dispute every step of your way to heaven. And do you not need such a leader in that way ? And if any are fallen into drowsy slumbers, do you not need his awakening ministry ? If dead, how often hath the blessed Spirit breathed life into you, by his quickening ministry ? How often hath God used him to enlighten you, when you have been in the dark ; to clear up the great doctrines of the gospel, when you have not distinctly understood them ; to establish you in the faith, when you have wavered ; to resolve you in matters of practice, when you have been in doubt ; to encourage you in your fears and faintings, to comfort you in your sadness and sorrows ? I wonder not that there are many weeping eyes, and should much wonder if there be not many aching trembling hearts among you, for what you have lost, and from an apprehension how hard, and almost hopeless it is, your loss should be soon or equally supplied.

He was long in preparing, and forming to be what he was, when you lost him. His station among you in this neighbourhood, when first he undertook the pastoral charge of this church, over which the Holy Ghost made him overseer, required a man of as much wisdom and grace as any such station could well be supposed to do : considering how numerous, how intelligent, and well instructed a people, he was to take the care of. I well remember, that about three or four and forty years ago, being desired to give some help, on a Lord's day, to that eminent servant of Christ, Mr. Greenhill, whose praise is still in all the churches, I then first heard him preach : and (if my memory fail not) he had about that time in hand some part of that excellent discourse of the Almost Christian : I had then the opportunity of beginning an acquaintance with him. His excellent good natural parts, his ingenuous education, his industry, his early labours in preaching the gospel of Christ in his native country, in the city, and in this place : his conjunction and society, for some years, with that excellent servant of God before named ; above all, the gracious assistances he had from heaven, gave him great advantages to be a minister of Christ, approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. And his multiplied years, unto the seventieth, with the continual addition thereby, to the rich treasury of his experiences, still improved him more and more : so that there being no decay of his natural endowments, and a continual increase of his supernatural ; you had the best of him at last : whereby indeed, your loss was

the greater, but your obligation was also the greater, that God continued to you the enjoyment of him so long; and that in a serviceable state. But when he could be no longer serviceable in his stated, delightful work, it was by the decay not of the inward, but the outward man; so that when he could preach to you, and converse with you no longer, he could earnestly and fervently pray for you to the end. And God did not afflict you, by leaving long among you only the shadow, the outside of the man, and of such a man!

He took little pleasure in embroiling himself or his hearers, in needless and fruitless controversies. The great, substantial, doctrines of the gospel, were his principal study and delight; such as lay nearest the vitals, and the very heart of religion and godliness; and most directly tending to the saving them that heard him. The subjects which he chose to insist upon, from time to time, in the course of his ministry, shewed as to this, his spirit and design. Having formed from the holy Scriptures that scheme of thoughts which satisfied him, and gave him a clear ground, whereupon to preach the gospel with an unrecoiling heart, he loved not to discompose it. His judgment in things which had that reference, being constantly moderate, and unexceptionably sound; remote from rigorous, and indefensible extremities, on the one hand and the other. Hereupon he drove at his mark without diversion; not so much aiming to proselyte souls to a party as to Christ. And to engage men, as much as in him lay, to be sound and thorough christians. Hitherto tended his sermons from year to year. The great subject he had in hand, and which he left unfinished, when God took him off from his public work, was manifestly pointed this way; namely, of the covenant of God in Christ. And his annual course of preaching a sermon on May day, to young men, had the same manifest scope and aim, with which his public labours were concluded. God so ordering it, that his last sermon was this year on that day.

His judgment in reference to matters of church order, was for union and communion of all visible christians, namely, of such as did visibly hold the head, as to the principal *credenda* and *agenda* of Christianity. The great things belonging to the faith and practice of a christian, so as nothing be made necessary to Christian communion but what Christ hath made necessary; or what is indeed necessary to one's being a christian. What he publicly assayed to this purpose the world knows; and many more private endeavours and strugglings of his for such a union, I have not been unacquainted with: the unsuccessfulness of which endeavours, he said, not long before his last confinement, he thought would break his heart. He having openly,

among divers persons, and with great earnestness, sometime before expressed his consent to some proposals, which if the parties concerned had agreed in the desire of the thing itself, must unavoidably have inferred such a union, without prejudice to their principles; and on such terms, as must have extended it much further; else it had signified little. But this must be effected, as is too apparent, not by mere human endeavour, but by an Almighty Spirit poured forth, which (after we have suffered awhile) shall καταγρῖσαι, put us into joint, and make every joint know its place in the body, (1 Pet. 5. 10.) shall conquer private interests and inclinations and over-awe men's hearts by the authority of the divine law; which now, how express soever it is, little availeth, against such prepossessions. Till then Christianity will be (among us) a languishing, withering thing. When the season comes of such an effusion of the Spirit from on high, there will be no parties. And amidst the wilderness desolation that cannot but be, till that season comes, it matters little, and signifies to me scarce one straw, what party of us is uppermost: the most righteous (as they may be vogue'd) will be but as briars, and scratching thorns; and it is better to suffer by such, than be of them. In the mean time, it is a mark of God's heavy displeasure, when persons of so healing spirits are taken away. And if it awakes any of us, that will tend to prepare us for the effects of it; which preparation seems a thing more to be hoped than prevention.

But this worthy servant of Christ sees not the woful day, whatever of it he might foresee. His removal makes to many, indeed, a woful day, and that all about him did long foresee. He was long languishing, and even dying daily: but amidst surrounding death, as a relation told me, there was no appearance of any the least cloud upon his spirit, that obscured the evidences of his title to a blessed eternity. Being asked how he did, he said, Going home, as every honest man ought, when his work is done. He was much in admiring God's mercies under his afflicting hand, saying, Every thing on this side hell is mercy: that the mercies he received were greater than his burdens, though in themselves grievous: that he rested upon that promise, that his Father would lay no more upon him than he would enable him to bear: that he expected to be saved only by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him. Though he well understood, as I had sufficient reason to know, that Christ's righteousness is never imputed to any, but where, if the subject be capable, there is an inherent righteousness also; that is no cause of our salvation, but the character of the saved. And having before precautioned some as were about him not

to be surprised, if he went away suddenly, he repeated the ejaculation, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; and renewing the former caution, by saying, Remember what I said before, as he sat in his chair, with all possible composure he bowed his head, and without sigh, or motion, expired in a moment. The sighing part he left to others, that stay behind: and I do even feel the sorrows of his most afflicted family, his mournful widow: his sorrowing sons and daughters, his destitute church, with all others that got good, or might have done by his quickening, spiritfui, piercing ministry; or had the advantage and satisfaction of his acquaintance and converse.

Your grief cannot but be measured by your love; and your love by his in the several kinds and objects of it: his conjugal, paternal, pastoral, friendly love, as he was an affectionate husband, a tender father, a vigilant pastor, and a pleasant friend. But withal, let your consolations be measured by the proper grounds thereof. It is a most improper, irrational, unchristian way of being comforted in such a case, only to let time wear away our sorrows. It is but a negative, a heathenish, yea a worse than heathenish method of receiving comfort. For I have observed it to be animadverted on, as an intolerable absurdity, by some among the heathens, that time should work that cure of grief and sorrow, which reason and prudence work not. And thus it is plain we shall be relieved, not by holy thoughts, but by not thinking. So it may in time be forgotten, that ever such a man as Mr. Mead, was minister in Stepney! And what is this to Christian consolation?

But we need not wander from the text, for a positive and a solid ground of comfort. Remember it was his business to save himself, and those that heard him. As you have no doubt of his salvation, which I believe none of you have, make sure of your own. Put on, with the breastplate of faith and love, that helmet, the hope of salvation. You are of the day, watch and be sober, as those that are not appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. 1 Thes 5. 8, 9. And then consider (as I doubt not many a soul will bless God for him forever) how glorious a sight it will be to see him, one day appear in the head of a numerous company of saved ones; and say (as a subordinate parent in the apostle's sense, 1 Cor. 4. 15.) Lord, here am I, and the children thou hast given me.

In conclusion. For you of his dear and beloved flock, this may be directive to you as well as consolatory; would you have a pastor, after God's heart? Put yourselves under the conduct, as much as in you is, of such a pastor, as you apprehend will be intent, in all his ministrations,

upon this double end, to save himself and them that hear him. And labour to be perfect, be of one mind, and live in peace, so the God of love and peace shall be with you. 2 Cor. 13. 11. And remember him as one that hath had the rule over you, and hath spoken to you the word of the Lord, and follow the faith of such, considering the end of their conversation; and that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. As you change pastors you will not need to change Christ's, so as to have one yesterday, another to-day, and a third to-morrow. Pastors under the gospel, as well as priests under the law were many, because of death: but our blessed Lord, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, Heb. 7. 24. Therefore do you never think of another Christ, as their doubt was, (Mat. 11. 3.) but cleave to this your great Lord with purpose of heart, till he give you at last, an abundant entrance into his everlasting kingdom.

Let his mournful relatives, and all of you to whom he was dear, consider what our Lord offered as matter of consolation, in the most trying case of this kind that ever could occur to poor mortals; that is, when he himself was to be taken away from his sorrowing family, and followers. It is but a little while; as if he had said, my words have a plain meaning: a little while, and you shall not see me, and again a little while, and you shall see me; and because I go to my Father. Ye now have sorrow, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy no man taketh from you. John 16. 20.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will: working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.