A Sermon Delivered at Penobscot, District of Maine, November 22, 1809

Kiah Bailey

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A

SERMON,

Delivered at Penobscot, District of Maine,

November 22, 1809.

At the

Ordination,

Of the

Rev. Philip Spaulding,

Over the Congregational Church and Society,

In that place.

By Kiah Bailey, A. M.

Congregational Minister in New-Castle.

Buckstown:

Printed by William W. Clapp.

1810.
PUBLISHED,
AT THE REQUEST OF THE
COUNCIL AND THE CHURCH,
AT
Penobscot.

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake.

Thessalonica was anciently the capital of the kingdom of Macedonia. The Gospel was early planted there by the great Apostle of the Gentiles. His call into this region was extraordinary. On his second mission from Antioch he came to Myfia, and would have gone into Bithynia; but was prevented by the Holy Spirit who had called him unto this work. He then came to Troas. "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia, and help us." Having seen this vision, our Apostle immediately endeavoured to pass over into Europe, and soon arrived at Philippi. Here he began his labours, and made a successful attack upon Satan's empire in Europe. Nor could all the efforts of that apostate spirit prevent him from extending the triumphs of the Cross. At length he came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews. "And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging, that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead: and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ. And some of them believed, and comforted with Paul and Silas: and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few."

Thus the gospel was planted in the capital of Macedonia, and a pure church erected, which became
eminently useful to the cause of truth in that region. For our Apostle in his epistle to them, says: "Ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you founded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God ward is spread abroad." But, notwithstanding they were so exemplary in all their conduct, they were persecuted by their heathen neighbours; and suffered like things from their countrymen, as the believers in Judea did from the Jews. Our Apostle, being absent from this Church, was greatly troubled, lest the tempter should tempt some of them, and induce them to renounce their religion, to escape these afflictions. Hence he sent Timotheus to establish them and to comfort them concerning their faith. The account which he brought back, respecting their faith and charity, was highly pleasing to this eminent servant of Christ, and induced him to send unto them the first epistle, addressed to that Church. In this epistle he expresses the most tender regard for them, endeavours to comfort their hearts with the consolations of the gospel, and directs them how to conduct, both among themselves, and towards those, who are without. But he knew that all his labours and counsels would be lost, if the adversary by any means could derac them from their Pastors, and persuade them to despise their spiritual Guides; hence he endeavours to prevent them from taking so rash and destructive a step, and to persuade them to know and esteem them. Feeling the importance of the subject he says: "We beseech you, brethren to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you. And to esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake."

From the words of our text it is evident, that special and important duties result from the relation, which subsists between ministers and their people. And, in prosecuting the subject, it will be proper to notice,

I. What is applicable to Ministers, or Pastors: and
II. What is applicable to the people.

I. We are to attend to what is applicable to Ministers, or Pastors.
The Apostle speaks of them in our text, as being Labourers, Rulers, or Overseers, and Monitors.

1st. Gospel ministers are Labourers. "We are" faith our Apostle, "labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

The Church is God's building, a Temple, which he is creating to the praise of the glory of his grace. Gospel ministers are employed by him to collect materials, Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, for this building. They are workmen employed to search out and add living stones to this Temple.

The Church is God's vineyard, where his choicest plants and richest vines are collected. Gospel ministers are set to water and cultivate these, that they may bring forth much fruit.

But are gospel ministers to labour only in the vineyard? Look abroad, and behold the fields already white to the harvest. The world is God's field, and must by no means be neglected. From this the materials must be collected for God's building, from this the vines must be transplanted into his vineyard. Here, then, the labourers will find ample employment, and they must attend to it with skilfulness, faithfulness and diligence.

Who would employ a man to erect a lofty mansion, that was ignorant of the first principles of Architecture? Who would send a man to cultivate his vineyard, that could not tell a vine from a bramble? Every wise man will endeavour to find and employ such labourers, as are well acquainted with their business.

When erecting a temple for the God of Israel, Solomon took pains to obtain skilful workmen. Is it, then, possible to suppose, that he, who is far wiser and greater than Solomon, should be indifferent what workmen he employs, when erecting an everlasting temple for himself to dwell in?

I know that many contend that ignorance is the mother of devotion; that the unskilful workman is the best builder. But such sentiments never came from the Fountain of wisdom; nor will they ever conduct us to him.

Scribes should be well instructed; and the priest's
lips should keep knowledge. Hence, Paul directs Timothy to give himself to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine. And those pastors which God gives his people, will feed them with knowledge and understanding. Gospel ministers must, then, be skilful labourers. They must be well acquainted with the Master they serve, with the instructions he has given, with the business in which they are engaged, and with the eternal consequences, that are to result from their labours. They must be skilful in the word of righteousness, be able to distinguish between the precious and the vile, that they may be such workmen as need not be ashamed.

But here it is to be observed, that they will not be qualified to build up God's spiritual house, unless they are spiritual men. It will be well, if they have been for a season at the feet of Gamaliel, but they must sit at the feet of Jesus, before they can become skilful labourers in his vineyard. They must be taught by the Spirit of God, and acquire that wisdom, which is from above, or they cannot be qualified to teach others the things, that pertain to the kingdom of God. "Though I have all knowledge, and could speak with the tongue of men and angels, yet have not charity, I am nothing."

Gospel ministers must be faithful, as well as skilful labourers. Some, who enter into the vineyard, pay no attention to the instructions, which Christ has given to his servants. They run where they were never sent, enter into other men's labours, and endeavour to pull up and destroy every thing in the vineyard, which has not been planted according to their direction. Others destroy the wheat, and cultivate the tares. Vital religion withers under their hands, and a heathenish morality flourishes. They preach themselves, and not Christ Jesus our Lord. And others, in their zeal to build the temple, will add hay, and wood; and flubble, to the building.

There are unfaithful workmen. They do not attend to the instructions of their Master. They do not build according to his directions. It is said of Moses, that he was faithful in all God's house. He obeyed the divine command, and made
all things according to the pattern showed him in the Mount. These things are written for our instruction. We ought to go and imitate his example.

It is required in stewards, that they be found faithful. And Christ says to his ministers, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of righteousness." Gospel ministers must, then, confult the mind of Christ, go where he sends them, labour where he stations them, and speak what he commands them. They must endeavour to please him, who hath called them into his service, by declaring the whole counsel of God. But they cannot do this, if they accommodate their preaching to please men, if they keep back the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, if they oppose the doctrines of special and sovereign grace, if they deny the new-creating work of the Holy Ghost, if they rob the Lord Jesus of his divine honours and eternal glory. They must then declare the whole counsel of God, whether the people hear or whether they forbear. And they will endeavour to keep back nothing, that may be profitable to their hearers. Hence, they must be very diligent in the work, whereunto they are called.

Those, who are sent into the vineyard, are not sent to be idle, but to labour. There is work enough to employ their heads, and their hearts, and their hands. They must prepare the ground, sow the good seed, water the tender plants, and cultivate every vine, that grows in the vineyard. From the vineyard they must pass to the field, and sweat, and toil, and labour, to gather in the harvest. Thus labouring night and day, they must preach the gospel unto their hearers, and beseech them with many tears to become reconciled unto God. Do they not, then, need divine support and assistance? What can they do, if Christ does not strengthen them?

2. Gospel ministers are rulers, or overseers, in the Church of God.

I am not insensible, that some will dispute this proposition, that they wish to strip the ministers of the gospel of all rule and authority. We are not disputing for the civil sword; let those, who bear it,
use it as the ministers of God: but let not king Uzziah invade the Priests-office.

If gospel ministers are not appointed to rule in the Church, why are they invested with the oversight of the flock? Why are the keys of the kingdom committed to them? Why is it said, that the Holy Ghost hath made them overseers? A Bishop must rule well his own house, otherwise he will not be capable of taking care of the Church of God.—Let the elders, that rule well, faith our Apostle, be counted worthy of double honour. And again it is said, "Remember them that have the rule over you; obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." What shall we say to these things, if gospel ministers have no authority, or rule, in the Church? Why did the Apostle exhort the Thessalonians to know them, that were over them in the Lord?

It is granted, that gospel ministers are not authorized to lord it over God's heritage. They must not abuse the authority, which Christ has given them; but use it, according to his direction, to preserve the order, and promote the peace of the Church. And while they do this, he will approve of their conduct, and condemn those, who oppose, or resist, them.—For he has engaged to ratify what they do in his name; and says, "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me."

3. Gospel ministers are Monitors. A Monitor is one, that warns others of their faults, or informs them of their duty. He is called by office to reprove and instruct.

It is a pleasing consideration, when the brethren of a Church are full of good nets, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another. And they ought always to endeavour to admonish one another in songs, and hymns, and spiritual songs. But still it is the peculiar duty of those, who are set apart to the sacred office, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort. They are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather to reprove them. And they are authorized to re-
buke them, that sin, before all, that others may fear.

When Christ sent out his apostles, they were directed to go, and teach all nations. And Timothy was directed to commit the mysteries of the gospel to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also. Ministers are, then, teachers by office, and ought in meekness to instruct those, who oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. They must instruct their people, both in private and in public, set life and death before them, and press upon them the importance of becoming immediately reconciled unto God. And they must testify to all, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence they must exhibit the character of God, explain the nature and universality of his government, and maintain the authority of his law in its utmost extent; must point out the evil nature & awful consequences of sin, and endeavour to fasten blame on the sinner; must hold up Christ as God-man, the way, the truth, and the life; and testify to all, that there is salvation in none other. Indeed, they must endeavour to convince their hearers, that they have destroyed themselves, and that there is no hope for them, but in the mere and sovereign mercy of God, as revealed in the gospel; and that they cannot be made partakers of this hope, unless, they are renewed by the Holy Ghost, united to Christ by a living faith, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in glory.

If gospel ministers exhibit these important truths, and those, which are necessarily connected with them, they may be instrumental in saving both themselves and those that hear them. But here it must be remembered, that all the efforts of ministers to benefit their hearers will be in vain, unless the people are disposed to attend on their instructions, and to encourage their benevolent efforts. For even an angel could not instruct, where there are no ears to hear. Ministers can never get their hearers to heaven, unless they are willing to go there. Hence it will be proper for us to notice.
II. What is applicable in our text to the people. They are exhorted to *know* their Pastors, and to esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake.

1. People are to *know* their Pastors. This implies, that they should become acquainted with the persons, and conversation of their Pastors, and maintain a friendly intercourse with them. There are some, who live where Christ ministers are labouring, who hardly know their persons. Others, who may barely know them, take no pains to become acquainted with them, to visit them, or to cultivate any friendly intercourse with them. They keep at a distance from their ministers, and appear unwilling to form any particular acquaintance with them, lest they should reprove them. Others again, who treat their ministers with great civility, feel no inclination to become acquainted with their religious views and sentiments; and never pay any attention to the business in which they are engaged. Now when this is the case, people do not, in any proper sense, know their teachers. For they ought to be well acquainted with them, to enquire into their religious views, and to attend to the business in which they are employed, that they may be able to understand the nature and importance of religion.

This, however, is not all, that is implied in a people's knowing their Pastor. In doing this it is implied, that they acknowledge him in his pastoral relation, treat him with due respect, and perform the duties, which they owe to him as a minister of Christ.

Many act, as tho' they did not acknowledge any one as their Pastor. They pay no respect to the judgment, or to the feelings of those, who are set over them in the Lord. They never consult them on any religious subject; but heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. Without any regard to the peace, or to the usefulness of those, who labour among them, they encourage every vagrant preacher, and run after every ignorant pretender, who has craft enough to make them believe, that he is immediately sent to them from heaven. Dupes to those, who lie in wait to deceive, they leave their
spiritual guides, to follow those false apostles, who wish to transform themselves into the ministers of Christ. Surely those, who do thus, know not their pastors. They conduct like sheep, that have no shepherd. And it is much to be feared, that they will fall into some fatal snare, and perish with those blind guides, which they follow.

The relation, which subsists between ministers and people, is mutual, and the duties, which result from it, are reciprocal. Does Christ send a minister to a people, he requires them to receive him as his ambassador. Is a minister bound to preach the gospel to his people; they are bound to hear and receive the gospel at his mouth. Must he labour among them, they must attend upon his labours. Is he over them in the Lord, they ought to submit to him. Is he to admonish them, they are to receive his admonitions. Is he bound to them, they are as much bound to him. Is it wrong for him to leave them, it is as wrong for them to leave him. The obligation is as strong upon the people, as upon the minister, and no good reason can be assigned, why one should be allowed to violate this obligation, more than the other.

Should a minister leave his people without consulting them on the subject, he would be very generally, and that too, justly, condemned. On what principles, then, can those people be justified, who leave their ministers, without ever consulting them? Can that be right in the one case, which is wrong in the other?

To know a person as our friend is to acknowledge and treat him as such. For a people to know a man as their Pastor implies, that they acknowledge him in this character, and treat him accordingly; that they receive him as a man of God, treat him with respect, and make suitable provision for his accommodation and comfort. They must be careful of his person and character, pray for him in their closets, and support his influence in their families. And they must attend to his instructions, hearken to his counsels, submit to his reproofs, and endeavour to profit by his labours. If they do not, they
will not comply with the apostolic exhortation, "To know those, who labour among them, and are over them in the Lord."

But this is not all, that our apostle has to say on this subject. He exhorts people,

2. To esteem their Pastors very highly in love, for their work's sake.

Paul never had a very high opinion of false teachers himself. And, I take it, he never took any pains to induce others to esteem them. It must, then, be granted, that those Pastors were such, as Paul himself would approve, faithful men, and able also to instruct others.

Have a people been favoured with such a Pastor, they ought to esteem him very highly in love, and to manifest their kind regard for him in every proper way: not because ministers are beings of a superior order; but for their work's sake. Considered, as in themselves, they are but earthen vessels, men subject to like infirmities with other good men, and have often reason to condemn themselves. But still they are employed in the most benevolent, arduous, and important work. They are workers together with God in the great work of salvation, are sent to publish the gospel, and proclaim peace on earth. Heralds of divine mercy, they come to make known the way of access to God, to turn sinners from the error of their way, to save them from death, and prepare them for eternal glory. Ambassadors of Jesus, they are commissioned to pray sinners in his name to become reconciled to God. Ought they not, then, to be highly esteemed for their work's sake? And will not every one, who feels any proper regard for his own salvation, or for the salvation of others, be ready to comply with the apostolic exhortation in our text? What, then, shall we think of those, who act a contrary part?

From what has been said we shall make the following reflections:—

1. Gospel ministers ought to be men of great self-denial.

It is true, that they serve a good Master, and are
employed in a most important and honourable work. And they ought to be thankful, that God has counted them faithful putting them into the ministry. But still their work is as difficult, as it is important. They have rough stones to hew, and a hard soil to cultivate. And they will often find to their grief, that all their labours have been lost; that many of the stones, which they hoped were almost polished for the building, must be thrown back again into the quarry as unfit for use; and that much of the soil, which they have cultivated, will never bear any thing but briars and thorns.

In the world ye shall have tribulation, said Christ to his apostles. And gospel ministers must expect opposition from the world, the flesh, and the devil. They must meet with cold neglect and open persecution; must stand in the front of the battle, and receive the most violent attacks of the enemy. Moreover, false brethren will often creep in among their people, and, by encouraging dissatisfaction and promoting divisions, occasion them much trouble. Hence, they will often be called to take up their crosses, and must learn habitually to deny themselves. They need, then, to be men of great self-denial, that labouring night and day with many tears, they may preach the gospel, and through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

2. Those, who preach the gospel, ought to live of the gospel.

Is it not a dictate of common sense, and of common honesty, that the labourer is worthy of his hire? Ought not the husbandman, who laboureth, to be a partaker of the fruits? Who goeth a warfare at his own charges? Such must be supported, or they will plunder. Mark it when you please, and you will find, that those, who profess to preach the gospel for nothing, will seize on all they can get. Try them, and see, if they are not as willing to be fed and clothed, as other men.

Why, then, do we hear so many complaining about supporting ministers? Did not God make ample provision for the support of his ancient ministers? And has not Christ ordained, that those, who
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preach the gospel, should live of the gospel? Alas! many are still lovers of the world, more than of God. Covetousness is idolatry. And where this passion reigns, men will always be unwilling to support the gospel.

3. It is a sad symptom, when ignorant men are introduced into the ministry.

The preacher is not insensible, that he is exposing himself, by making this remark, to be shot at by a certain kind of archers. And he would not have made the remark, had not many embraced wrong ideas upon this subject, did not many, who scarcely know what human learning means, make such an out-cry against it.

Gospel ministers are employed in a most difficult and important work. They are builders, labourers, overseers, and teachers. Will ignorance make them wise builders? Will ignorance qualify them to be skilful labourers? Will ignorance prepare them to rule in the house of God? Will ignorance enable them to instruct the ignorant, and convince gain-sayers? But it is said that God does not need human learning to build up his kingdom. We grant it; and then ask, whether he needs human ignorance? The question is not, what God wants, but what men want. The priest's lips should keep knowledge; but the ignorant and unlearned, when they set up for teachers, will wrest the scriptures to their own destruction. And when blind guides lead those, who are equally blind, both will fall into the ditch. Hence we may be sure, that none but ignorant and designing men, will speak against ministers being men of learning. And all candid men must be sensible, that, if a learned ministry is despised, and ignorant men encouraged, the most baneful consequences will follow, both to individuals and to societies.

4. It is a great privilege to have a gospel minister settled in a place. Some indeed, bear this character, who are only wolves in sheep's clothing. It is not a privilege to have such settled in a place; but a sore judgment. I speak not of such, but of gospel ministers, such as are labourers together with God.
Such are an invaluable blessing, and ought to be highly esteemed.

It looks well to see labourers in the field. We then rationally hope that there is a harvest to be gathered in. But if no labourer is to be seen, there is reason to fear, that the land is barren, and that no fruit is expected from it. Admitting, however that the fields are already white unto the harvest, and yet there is no labourer to be seen, what can be expected? Who shall reap, and take care of the precious grain? Is there not reason to fear, that much of it will be destroyed by the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air? “Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his vineyard.”

5. Those, who are not favoured with the gospel ministry, would do well to exert themselves to obtain such an invaluable blessing. How can they expect to be added to Christ’s spiritual temple, if there is no builder employed among them? Is it not by the preached word, that God is pleased to save them, that believe? What can those expect, then, that are destitute of the word of life? ought they not to reflect well upon the consequences of living without the gospel, and, as they value their own souls and the souls of their children, endeavour to obtain it? “What will it profit a man, should he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

6. Those, who disregard the apostolic exhortation contained in our text, cannot expect to be benefited by their ministers.

It is too evident, that many do disregard this exhortation at the present day. They do not, in any proper sense, know their pastors; nor do they teach their children to know them. If they do not openly revile and oppose their teachers, they pay no attention to their instructions, never pray for their usefulness, never strengthen their hands, or encourage their hearts. While people conduct in this manner, they have no reason to expect a blessing. And it will be a great wonder, if the gospel does not become a favour of death unto them. Let every one, then, who wishes to derive any benefit from
the labours of Christ’s ministers, attend to the exhortation of our apostle.

7. Those, who flight and oppose gospel ministers, act a most unreasonable and wicked part.

Gospel ministers are employed in the most benevolent work. They are not seeking their own ease or advantage, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Being sent into the vineyard by their Master, they labour to promote the good of others. As ambassadors of Christ, they are employed to reconcile sinners to God. It must, then, be extremely unreasonable to flight, and oppose them. And it is as criminal, as it is unreasonable. I will add, it is as dangerous, as it is criminal. For he, that despiseth Christ’s ministers, despiseth him. And, verily, it will be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment, than for Sodom and Gomorrab.

The subject will now be closed with the address usual on such occasions:

To the Pastor Elect,

Dear Sir,

In the providence of God, you have been called into this part of the vineyard; and are this day to be inducted into the sacred ministry. Behold, the elders and messengers of the churches assembled to set you apart for the work, whereunto God has called you. Behold the people waiting to receive you, as their pastor.

You are now to commence a steward of the mysteries of God. It is required in a steward, that he be found faithful. We would not commit these sacred things to you, did we not hope, that your name is faithful.

The work, in which you are engaging, is important, arduous, and difficult. You must endeavour to prepare materials for God’s house, and add such as are proper to the building. With great skill and diligence you must labour, both in the field and in the vineyard. And you know, that you must labour, as one, that must give an account. We hope, that you will be able to give up your account with joy, and not with grief.

From the scriptures you may learn, how you
ought to conduct yourself in the House of God.—
And you will find them “profitable for doctrine, for
reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;
that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished
unto all good works.”

You are sensible, that without Christ you can do
nothing; but remember, that his grace is sufficient
for you. And the more simply and entirely you de-
pend on this, the better. “For those, that wait on
Him, shall never be confounded.” It is fidelity and not
success, which Christ requires. “Be thou faithful un-
to death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Animating
words! Behold the crown, and press for the immor-
tal prize. May you be found a skilful workman, a
labourer that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly div-
ing the word of truth, and giving to every one
his portion in due season. We commend you to
God, and to the word of his grace. And when the
chief Shepherd shall appear, may you be approv-
ed of him, and have many of your hearers as your
crown of rejoicing.

The Church and People in this place will allow
me to address them on this pleasing solemn occasion.

Brethren and Friends—

We rejoice with you in the transactions of this
day. Behold the man, that is to be set over you in
the Lord, and receive him, as an ascension gift of the
Lord Jesus.

When that bright star,* that once shone in
this golden candlestick, was removed, we sympathiz-
ed with you; we feared, that the candlestick would
also be removed, that grievous wolves would enter
in among you, and destroy the flock. Have you not
heard some of them prowling round the fold? Blest
be God, they have not been able to devour you.
May the great Shepherd of Israel keep you from all
harm, and enable you to avoid those, who would
cause divisions among you.

The unanimity, which has appeared among you,

in the steps, which have been taken to obtain a gospel minister, is a pleasing token for good. Endeavour, if possible, to preserve this unanimity, for the good of yourselves and of your children. And let that man, who rashly, or wantonly, interrupts your peace, remember, that he must be answerable for the consequences, be they never so dreadful.

This day, your eyes behold your Teacher. He cannot instruct you, if you do not attend upon, and receive, his instructions. You cannot reasonably expect a blessing, if you do not know him, as your pastor, and esteem him in love for his work’s sake.—Cultivate an acquaintance with him yourselves, and endeavour to establish his influence among your children. Go to him for instruction, and ask the law of the Lord at his mouth; but do not follow the voice of every stranger, that may come in among you. I beseech you to know him, who labours among you, and not break his heart, and disappoint all his hopes, by neglecting him, leaving his ministrations, and turning after those, who do not stand in such a relation to you.

"Let him, that is taught in the word, communicate unto him, that teacheth, in all good things." This precept is founded in reason, and clothed with divine authority. But there are many who regard neither the dictates of reason, nor the voice of God. We hope better things of you, my friends.

Your minister is set for the defence of the gospel, and he must tell you the truth respecting yourselves and respecting God, must preach to you the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. He must give an account how he preaches, and you how you hear. If you hear, you will live; if you refuse, you must die. For if he is not a favour of life unto life, he will be of death unto death. Do, then, take heed, and see, that you receive not the gospel in vain, that you reject not the great salvation, that you despise not the ambassador of Christ, who comes to you with messages of peace. Pray for him, that he may be found faithful. May you long enjoy his labours, and finally meet him in the kingdom of God.

I look round upon this assembly with painful e-
motions. Life is but a vapour. A few revolving 
suns, and our only state of probation is forever clo-
osed. How important, then, that we seize the pre-
fent moment, embrace the gospel, and flee from the 
wrath to come.

Our next meeting, in all probability, will be at 
the bar of Christ. This will be a solemn meeting, 
both for ministers and people. If ministers are un-
faithful, what must be the consequence? If they are 
faithful, they will obtain a crown of glory. If those, 
to whom the gospel is sent, receive the truth in the 
love of it, the Judge will admit them into his king-
dom; if they reject the gospel, he will doom them 
to hell. Let ministers and people, then, remember, 
that eternal consequences are depending, and pre-
pare to meet their God. For meet him we must. 
All nations shall appear before him; but alas, what ac-
count can they give of themselves to their Judge?

To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your 
hearts. To morrow, the door may be shut. Amen.
THE CHARGE,

By the Rev. Jonathan Fisher, of Bluehill.

DEAR BROTHER—

GOD in his providence has called you to the work of the ministry; by prayer, and by laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, you are this day set apart to the solemn office of an overseer over the flock of God in this place. It is an office of unspeakable consequence, of high responsibility; the duties of it are many and arduous; the effects must be lasting as eternity! It is not then a vain thing, that on this day of solemn transactions you should receive serious exhortation, and a faithful charge concerning the duties devolving upon you. This day, on such an interesting occasion as the present, your heart may be peculiarly susceptible of deep impression. We, therefore this day, CHARGE thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom, take heed to the ministry, which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.

To this end, Take heed to thyself. Look at the state of your own heart; see that you have experienced yourself the happy influence of those doctrines you are called to preach to others. See that your motives be pure; that you are actuated especially by a regard for the divine glory, the honor of the name of Jesus, and the salvation of the souls of men. See that your deportment be such, that by example you may enforce, what by precept you would instil.

Take heed to thy doctrine. Show in it uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity; sound speech, which cannot be condemned. Let it be the pure doctrine of Christ, drawn from that sacred source, the holy scriptures, preferred without mixture of human inventions, and declared in its full scope, without fear of man, and without mental reservation. Urge especially those truths of the divine word, which are most weighty, and urge them with a sincerity, which will not need to tremble before the eye of the great teacher of hearts, the omnipotent God.

Feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. Watch for the souls committed to your charge, as one, who must give an account. Faithfully warn the impenitent of their
danger; open to them their true character; set life and death before them with a feeling of interest in their welfare, which cannot conceal itself. Explain to them the nature of sin, and hold up to view its consequences; point them to the way of salvation, point them to Jesus. To the trembling, wounded spirit, bring forth the balm of Gilead—the all-sufficiency of the Saviour.

**Feed the sheep of Christ.** Labor to edify believers. Constantly teach and affirm, that they, who have believed in Christ, be careful to maintain good works. Explain the nature of true holiness, administer the practice of it, hold up to view its benefits. In the case of backsliders, reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and meekness. Faithfully administer the sacraments of the new covenant; break to the children of God from time to time the symbol of the bread of life, and pour forth to them the symbol of that precious blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins.

**Feed the Lambs of Christ.** Not only to believing, professing adults, who have not received it, but also to the children of believers administer the seal of baptism. In this ordinance let them be brought to Christ, remembering the everlasting covenant, under which the seal of believers were anciently sealed with the sign of circumcision, and remembering also the words of Jesus, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. As the little ones advance, give them spiritual instruction, and urge it upon their parents to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

**Study to show thyself a workman, that needest not to be ashamed.** Give yourself much to reading; be diligently studious. Remember that Christ would not send forth his disciples to teach others, till they had been taught in his school, nor would he finally suffer them to depart from Jerusalem, till they were endued with miraculous power. Unless we give our minds to the study of the things of God, it will be found that, when for the time we ought to be teachers, we shall need that one teach us what are the first principles of the oracles of God.

**The things which are this day committed to thee, the same commit thou to faithful men, able to teach others.** Lay consecrating hands suddenly on no man; but to those who appear to be well qualified for the ministry, who appear to be faithful and approved of God, to such what you have this day freely received, that freely communicate.

This do, and you shall not be ashamed. But who is sufficient for these things! The grace of Christ is sufficient for you, and his strength is made perfect in weakness, to this grace and strength we commend you, and the souls committed to your charge; may it be effectual to you and to them for salvation, and the glory be to the Father, Son and Divine Spirit forever and ever, AMEN.
THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

By the Rev. Mighill Blood, of Buckflown.

The ultimate object of Jehovah in all his works is his own glory. To display his perfections and promote this grand object, He decreed the salvation of sinners, by Jesus Christ, in the ages of eternity. Hence, man was created, suffered to be tempted, and permitted to fall, into a state of sin and misery.

The Deity began to unfold his councils, reveal his love, and make bare his arm, for the recovery of lapsed man, immediately, upon his apostacy from him. Having declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and by the gracious declaration, saved him from utter despair, in the day, on which he drove him from the garden of Paradise, he commenced the grand chain of events, in the world, which was to effectuate the salvation of his people. The giving of the covenants, the promulgation of his laws, the erection of his Church, the institution of sacred ordinances and the sending of holy men, Priests and Prophets, to teach and administer in holy things according to his will, were some of the means Jehovah employed for the recovery of sinners to himself, and to prepare the way for the more illustrious display of his grace, in the coming and meditation of his Son, in the flesh.

The wisdom of God has fixed upon certain means, by which to carry on his work, and accomplish his designs among men, suited to their condition and information, in every age. And tho' the prophets prophesied only till John, and the antient priesthood, which was typical, was terminated by the death of Jesus Christ, yet, when the Redeemer set up his kingdom in the
world, he ordained both sensible rituals, and pastors and teachers, in it, for its comfort, instruction, and spiritual welfare. These are specially designated and described in the gospel.

The character and qualifications of gospel ministers, and the manner of their introduction to the pastoral office are not left to the will of Councils. They are to do all things, relative to Christ’s Church, according to the instruction, he has given them. When they set apart one to the work of an evangelist, they should consider themselves as acting for God.

You, Dear Sir, have just received ordination as an evangelist, and been solemnly consecrated, by prayer and the laying on of hands, to that sacred office. You have received a solemn charge, as the pastor, or bishop of Christ’s Church, in this place. We salute you as an ambassador of the Prince of Peace, and expect fidelity in you, as such. We welcome you to the Streets of Zion, and give you the Right Hand of Fellowship, my Brother, as an acknowledgment of your pastoral character and relation, in the Church. We feel what it means. You will consider it as expressive of our Christian and brotherly affection towards you, and of our readiness to advise, assist, and co-operate with you, in the gospel ministry. You succeed a faithful servant and minister of Christ, who has gone to give account of his stewardship; and we trust, to hear from his Saviour and Judge, well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Follow him, as he followed Christ.

In return, we receive your hand, as a token of your cordiality towards us, and as an engagement to take part with us, in the ministry of our common Lord. We wish you much success and consolation among the people of your charge. We commit you to God and the good word of his grace. And may the affection, and fellowship, we have mutually expressed, increase with years, until we shall be called from our labours, in Christ’s militant Church, to join his Church triumphant, there to enjoy the most perfect, delightful, and endless harmony, and love.

THE Church will permit me to address them in a few words:

Beloved—

WE have felt for you, and mourned with you, in your bereaved, afflicted state. It was with heart felt sorrow we walked into the field of graves with you, to commit the remains of your late pastor, to the dust. He was an affectionate, successful, minister of Christ, a faithful man of God! Many of you are his spiritual children. But he had accomplished what God had assigned him to do, in building up his Church, and he called him home to receive his reward. We rejoice, that the golden candlestick has not been removed. We rejoice, that the Great Head of the Church has given you another Pastor.
Behold the man, who is charged with your spiritual concerns! Receive him as an almenion gift! Receive him in love, and regard him highly for his work's sake. He is to watch for your souls, as one that must give an account. We are confident he already cares for you, and loves you! Give constant, and prayerful heed to his ministry. Use him with kindness, affection, and candour, that he may be a blessing to you, and your children; and be an instrument of advancing the glory of God, and the interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom, in this part of the vineyard. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." AMEN.