

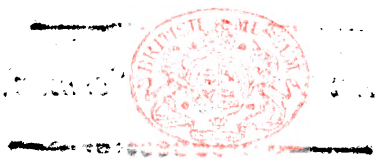
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An Ordination Sermon.



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DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED OCTOBER 10, 1810,

AT THE

ORDINATION OF THE

Rev. Nathan Perkins, Jr.

TO THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY; OVER THE

SECOND CHURCH AND SOCIETY OF AMHERST,

COUNTY OF HAMPSHIRE, COMMON-

WEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

By NATHAN PERKINS, D. D.

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WILLIAM BUTLER PRINTER,

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1810.

AN ORDINATION SERMON.

JOHN vii—46.

“The officers answered, never man spake like this man.”

THE success of our blessed Saviour in preaching his own gospel, the spreading influence of his doctrines among multitudes of the people, who, from time to time, collected together, in different places, to hear him, alarmed the rulers and highly offended the Pharisees. The number and splendor of his miracles, the instructive nature of his public discourses, and as the necessary consequence, his growing fame excited both their hatred and anger. The mighty works which he wrought, the sanctity of manners which he maintained, and heavenliness of the doctrine which he preached, were unable to prevail with them to receive and acknowledge him as the promised Messiah, the son of God, and Saviour of the world. So great were their prejudices and blindness that, against all reason and evidence they resolved to consider and treat him as an impostor, and to send the officers of their government to apprehend him.

Having resolved to seize and punish him, they adopted the necessary measures; and sent officers to apprehend him while he was instructing the people in the truths and doctrines of his religion. In the midst of his preaching they went to accomplish their purpose. Having never heard him, being filled with violent prejudices; and supposing him to be a bold and blasphemous deceiver, but having now so favorable an opportunity to gratify their

curiosity, they embraced it to hear him. And how unexpected and astonishing the effect! They were so moved and wrought upon with what they heard, that they either dared not, or could not execute their orders, but returned to the Rulers and Pharisees, without him. The latter surprised and enraged asked the former why they had not brought him to them, according to their orders. Their answer was, *never man spake like this man.*

Then came the officers to the Chief Priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, why have ye not brought him. The officers answered, never man spake like this man. No man ever taught such glorious, sublime, and new doctrines; or spake with such power and force, authority and solemnity, tenderness and affection. Our ears were never witnesses of such spiritual and heavenly strains. We could not seize him and bring him to you, agreeably to your orders. We dared not. What a noble testimony to our Lord's method of preaching was this, from prejudiced and violent enemies!

But it made no salutary or saving impression on the unfeeling Rulers and Pharisees; because they were previously resolved not to be convinced, but to consider him as an Impostor. By way of reproach, they accordingly asked the officers, if they were also deceived by him.— *Then answered them, the Pharisees, are you also deceived? Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are accursed. Then Nicodemus saith unto them, the same that came to JESUS by night being one of them, doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth? They answered and said unto him, art thou also of Gallilee?— Search and look, for out of Gallilee ariseth no prophet.— And every man went unto his own house. Far were they from suspecting that one of their own number was in heart among our Lord's followers. For Nicodemus had not as yet, it seems, made known to his brethren, his belief. It was by his means that the purpose of the*

Rulers and Pharisees to apprehend Christ was, at this time defeated.

Though our divine Lord spake, in his public preaching, as no man ever did, and exceeded all that is human, yet we may on this occasion, very profitably employ our thoughts, and offer a few observations with respect—to the subjects upon which he spake:—the manner in which he spake—and the effect which followed his speaking.

A due attention to these will serve to exalt our ideas of the Saviour; to instruct us in the nature of his kingdom: to convince us of the truth of his pretensions: and to guide and animate his ministers in their duty and the business of their office. But it must be acknowledged that all our best endeavors to realize how he spake will fall far below the truth; and nothing, indeed, can reach it, except having been eye witness of his divine person, and ear witness of the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.

In regard to the subjects, upon which he spake, the first thing to be considered, in our proposed method of discourse, we may remark that all of them were the most interesting and important which can be contemplated by the mind of man: many of them new and peculiar, different from any which were ever exhibited before to the world: others set in a new and clearer light: and others the most grand and sublime which can enter the human mind: and could only be revealed by God, being in themselves so mysterious and incomprehensible as to be above reason to discover. As he came to institute a new religion, at least, new in a great number of important particulars, so in his discourses or public preaching, he must necessarily enter upon and explain new truths: truths peculiar to his kingdom, which is not of this world, and which consists not in meat and drink but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. He received his commission immediately from God, acted altogether,

as Mediator, by his authority, and, of course, delivered the doctrines which he had in charge to deliver, revealed the whole counsel of his father, and glorified him, in every step he took, for he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him: He accordingly consulted not with man either what to speak, or how to speak: *Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught: And the Jews marvelled, saying, how knoweth this man letters, having never learned? Jesus answered them and said my doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* As his kingdom was not of this world, so he spake nothing relating merely to worldly concerns, whether politicks, or legislation, or forms of government, or commerce, or agriculture, or philosophy. The whole and sole purpose of his preaching was to teach us the way to eternal life—to teach us to know and do our duty—to acquaint us with the true character of God and the right way of salvation—what we must believe and do in order to be blessed in heaven after death—all the truths, which he delivered, related to our spiritual and eternal interests. He never undertook to instruct mankind, in any thing, but what respected the glory of his Father and their salvation.

Some of the subjects, upon which he spake, were not new, but were often taught and inculcated in the Jewish church and scriptures. Salvation was of the Jews. The constitution of their church was essentially the same as the christian. God never had, or will have but one church. The basis of his church must uniformly be one, in the nature of things. The Jews had the true religion. What was essential to a holy life, and the true worship of God was revealed unto them, but as it were, in types and shadows, legal sacrifices and purifications. The important doctrines of the being and attributes of God—moral obligations—man's accountability and moral agency—the odious nature and dangerous tendency of sin—the amiableness of religion—the shortness of human life—frailty

of human nature—necessity of personal holiness—a final judgment—and an endless state of existence beyond the grave, in which all the righteous would be happy, and the wicked miserable are to be found abundantly in the Hebrew scriptures, in the writings of Moses and the prophets. But on all these interesting doctrines a new light is shed by Christ. He spake on them in a more plain, clear, and affecting manner than ever man did.—He gradually opened truths as men could bear them, and discovered new truths of supreme importance. Indeed he spread a new and heavenly glory over the whole of man's duty and happiness, stating the one with the utmost accuracy, and precision, and fixing the other on the right basis. He clearly revealed many things wholly undiscovered before, or not distinctly understood, among which are the love of enemies—forgiveness of injuries—the spiritual nature of God—the nature of acceptable prayer—the manner of prayer—the resurrection of the body—the person of the final judge—and the kind of blessedness to be enjoyed in another world. He rescued the moral law from the corrupt glosses and false interpretation current in his day, and restored it to its true meaning and purity, spirituality and extent. He clearly laid open the way of our acceptance with a holy and a sin-hating God through himself and his atonement. *JESUS saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*

The doctrines of self denial—humility—repentance—regeneration—and the impossibility of entering into heaven without holiness are all placed in a new light. Many particulars, extremely interesting, concerning the last judgment, wholly unknown before; he explicitly revealed. Upon the entire wickedness of man's heart, or the total corruption and depravity of human nature—the necessity of regeneration, and special grace to effect it of; the holy spirit—the sovereignty—wonderful mercy and grace of God—the infinite evil and awful danger of

fin—the richness of heavenly felicity—and exquisiteness and agony of the misery of all finally impenitent sinners throughout an endless eternity, he dwelt much. These all-important doctrines were the main subjects of his preaching, as every one may see to his full satisfaction, by a diligent and faithful perusal of those short sketches of his public discourses recorded by the four Evangelists; and should also be, of all his ministers, in all the ages of his church, if they would most successfully build up his cause and kingdom.

It may be very useful, as well as proper; more particularly to state some of the most essential and peculiar doctrines, which as a Teacher come from God, he constantly preached, and which, of course, should, be chiefly dwelt upon by his ministers; and which likewise, must be believed in order to salvation. Among these is the doctrine of the entire corruption and depravation of human nature: that man is wholly destitute of any principle of holiness, naturally; wholly inclined to evil; having no love to God in the heart,—*That which is born of the flesh, says he, is flesh—I know you, that the love of God is not in you.—Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.* No words can, more markedly and definitely, state the doctrine of the entire wickedness of the human heart—and, also, wherein it consists, not in a defect of the mind or understanding, as distinguished from the heart, but in the total alienation of the will and affections from God, or enmity against, and hatred of him, infinitely glorious as he is. The absolute necessity of regeneration, consisting in a total radical moral change of the heart, he declares in the most solemn and peremptory manner. *JESUS answered and said unto him, verily verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.—Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.* The immediate and all powerful agency of the Holy Ghost in accomplishing this moral change, of the heart, he always urges. To his special power and

influence, he uniformly ascribes all holiness in the creature, in its beginning and continuance, till completed in glory ; to his awakening, convincing, regenerating, and indwelling influence. His words are, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh—and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.—And when he is come, he will reprove or convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.—* This is a peculiar and essential point, in his religion ; and in proportion as it is either denied or concealed, vital godliness languishes. Divine sovereignty in nature, providence and grace, is another doctrine, which he abundantly inculcates, and which is so much opposed by unrenewed sinners. He is full and clear in stating the wife, holy, and gracious sovereignty of his heavenly Father, in all events, in the universe. *Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.—Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? is thine eye evil, because I am good ? So the last shall be first, and the first last : for many are called, but few chosen.* The doctrine of election so often abused, and so much misrepresented and opposed, he most explicitly taught. Indeed he always took special care to let his hearers know, that, in infinite wisdom and goodness, sinners were chosen by the mercy of God to eternal life, as the end, and to holiness, as the means.—*For many are called, but few are chosen. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* The doctrine of divine decree, also so often perverted and misrepresented, as well as violently opposed, he urges every where, in the plainest manner. That Almighty God rules and reigns, over all worlds ; and that, in boundless mercy and goodness, his dominion and purposes extend to all events, both in the natural and moral world, directing the motions of the one, and controlling the actions of the other, he most

solemnly and definitely avows. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing : and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father : But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.* The intelligent hearer will take notice that I speak of these two great gospel doctrines, of election and divine decrees, as violently opposed by sinners ; and as always mis-stated and grossly misrepresented by all, who, reject them, without one exception. I take the liberty on this solemn occasion, publicly to aver, that I never knew either of them rejected, till mis-stated, and awfully misrepresented. They are so reasonable in themselves—so consonant to the nature of God—so purely evangelical—nay, so glorious and consoling, that no man can deny or reproach them, who understands them, till he work himself up to be willing to mis-state and pervert them. The usual way to reject the truth is first to mis-state and mis-apprehend it. For proof of the fact above asserted, I appeal to all Church history—to all controversies on the points themselves—to every day's experience—and to all oral disputes, among christians, respecting them. The doctrine of the perseverance of saints, that they shall neither, totally nor finally, fall from a state of grace, is another peculiar doctrine, which he largely urges. He is clear and full, every where, on this important point.—*And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.—My Father which gave them me is greater than all : and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* Moral agency—man's accountability—the importance of the means of grace—necessity of personal holiness—nature of love to God and man, as the sum of his religion—faith—repentance—and new obedience, as the grand condition of the covenant of grace—his own divinity and work as Mediator—the divinity of the Holy Ghost—of necessary consequence, a Trinity of persons in the Godhead—our acceptance with God through him—the purity, perfection, and extent of the

divine law---the constant worship of God, in all its forms---the resurrection of the dead---the final judgment---that all will be judged according to their works---eternal happiness for the righteous---and endless misery for the wicked, are the doctrines he always preached. And he exhibited a system of the purest and sublimest morals. In his system of morals, we find the love of enemies, and forgiveness of injuries, duties never taught in the schools of Pagan philosophy and morality. The above doctrines make the best creed---the creed of the orthodox, in all ages of the church, and in all parts of the christian world. They are our creed, in our churches, in this land---the basis of all genuine religion---and a constituent part of gospel salvation---as well as cause of all revivals of piety and reformation. They are Christ's own doctrines, taught and revealed by him. They are, what are called, the doctrines of grace---the doctrines of all approved confessors. They are the common faith, essential to salvation, and no novel tenets, or philosophical and metaphysical subtleties :---and what is worthy of particular notice, are all self-consistent, plain and rational, easy to be understood ; and we cannot be christians indeed, and deny and reject them. THESE are the subjects in general, upon which Christ spoke.

From THESE, we may naturally pass, as was next proposed, to the manner in which he spoke.

Here, likewise, we shall be convinced that he spoke as never man did. His manner was all his own. It was peculiar to himself ; and never equalled. With regard to his stature, air, feature, and exterior person, no particular authentic accounts have been transmitted to us by co-temporary authors. There is, indeed, a letter extant, which professes to describe particularly his person. But what credit is to be attached to it, need not now be considered. Suffice it just to remark, that the holy Evangelists, the writers of his gospel, and divine memoirs, are wholly silent on this point. Had they however giv-

en us the fullest detail, it would have been of no use to our salvation ; and would only amuse fancy or gratify curiosity. And, it was no part of their design to do this.

The delightful and pleasing manner, in which our Lord spoke, did not arise from the polish of a learned education, or rules of rhetoric. The advantages of only a common education were his lot. He was not taught in the schools of the law or of philosophy. His hearers perceived the extent of his knowledge. He, indeed, knew all things. When the Jews had heard him preach, *they marvelled, saying how knoweth this man letters, having never learned.* His manner was the perfection of propriety. It was natural and easy--grave and solemn--commanding and powerful--feeling and benevolent--distinguishing and particular--beautiful and correct. No man ever spoke like him in these respects.

No man ever spoke in so easy and natural a manner. His plainness of speech was eloquence and simplicity united. All who heard him, could distinctly understand him. He spoke often in a figurative and ornamented style. In expounding the things of his kingdom, he made great use of parables and similitudes. But they were all natural and easy. He spoke from his feelings. His language flowed from his ideas. The truths he wished to convey and impress, he chose the very best words to convey. We never find, in his preaching, ill-chosen words---unnatural figures of speech---or any labored magnificence of diction, or false oratory. All persons, who have any correct taste, or feelings of propriety, will admire and be delighted with his easy and natural manner of speaking. An easy and natural manner of speaking is always pleasing. It can never disgust or be tedious. And, it is impossible to be too plain on the essential and discriminating doctrines and duties, ordinances and experiences of religion. It may be added---

No man ever spoke in so grave and solemn a manner. We cannot read what he said, without a lively impres-

sion on the mind of his gravity and solemnity. He avoided every thing that was unimportant, and uninteresting : of no use to man's salvation. He was in earnest, and deeply engaged in all his discourses. He spoke as feeling the whole weight of the truths, which he was delivering and pressing upon his hearers. Unquestionably his very air and manner were adapted to the sublimity and grandeur of the doctrines of his religion. We may form some idea, though a faint one, of the grave and solemn manner of his speaking, from what is recorded of it, in the beginning of his sermon on the mount.—
And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. A greatness and dignity of manner seem to have accompanied every word he spake. Again.—

No man ever spake with such commanding authority and power. Every word, which fell from his lips, seemed to be clothed with a divine power. It was not like the word of man, but of God. The divinity spoke thro' him. He was not offering conjectures to amuse the hearer, or forming subtle and nice theories—or curious speculation—or dark and mystic things ; but was speaking to guilty sinners—to poor dying men on subjects the most momentous—on their everlasting state. He spake, therefore, with all the authority and majesty becoming such subjects, and becoming a divine Teacher. He said nothing but the living truth, the words of eternal life, what might directly contribute to advance the divine glory, and further his gospel kingdom. *And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as*

the scribes. No man ever spake like this man, as to the commanding influence and power of his speaking. Nothing was further from him than stateliness and distance. He did not wish to overawe by any exterior splendor. He spake directly to the conscience---and spake with an energy and force, truly irresistible. His enemies felt. He, also, spoke in a most feeling and benevolent manner. There was a tenderness and affection in his preaching, over-powering. Benevolence and tenderness were his very nature. *The law came by Moses, but grace and truth by JESUS CHRIST.* His religion is a system of benevolence directly opposed to all selfishness ; and accordingly he himself was full of benevolence and grace. He felt all the serious importance of the doctrines he taught. He perfectly knew how much mankind were concerned in them. He knew that they must perish forever, in their sins, unless they repented and believed in him. He knew that life and death were set before them. He knew that happiness and misery eternal were depending. He knew that he alone was the great physician of souls. In a word, he knew that he alone could reveal the will of God for our salvation. *No man, hath seen God at any time : the only begotten Son of God, who is in the Father's bosom, he hath declared him.* As the necessary consequence, he must feel all he said. His heart being full of benevolence, his words would show how much he pitied a dying world. How tender and pathetic his lamentation over Jerusalem ! *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it. Saying if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee ; how often would I have gathered thy children together as an hen doth gather her brood, under her wings, but ye would not. Behold your house is left unto you desolate.* He wept at the grave of his friend. *And Jesus wept.* Tears ran down his cheeks at a prospect of the

awful ruin coming on an ungodly world. With what tenderness did he warn! With what sweetness did he instruct! With what grief was he affected when men would not hear, or receive counsel! How feelingly and affectionately did he persuade! No man ever spoke so *feelingly* and *affectionately*. It is obvious to remark, further—

No man ever spoke in so distinguishing and particular manner. He never concealed, or kept back the truth, in condescension to the taste, or whims, or errors of his hearers. He did not ask what would be pleasing and agreeable to them---nor what would be popular or acceptable, but what they needed to save them, and would be the most profitable to them. Savingly to benefit them was his ruling object, in his preaching. He, accordingly, never covered over the truth with fine and florid language. He, in a most discriminating manner, delivered the truth. And he was particular in his address to the conscience. He delivered the naked truth, having no desire to deceive or mislead the most artless or simple. He always spoke, honestly and fairly, that all might learn the truth, the right way of salvation. Influenced by prejudices and violent passions, he was, sometimes by his hearers misunderstood. They would not receive the truth. The fault was not his, if he was ever misapprehended. Prejudice and the want of candor may blind the mind. He spoke, so distinguishingly and particularly, that none need to mistake him, or could, with honest hearts, be deceived. It is only subjoined he spoke, in a most beautiful and correct manner. There was always, in his manner, a delicacy, a beauty---a correctness of language, as well as pertinency and appositeness. He never spoke, on any point either of doctrine or duty, incorrectly or absurdly. He never, in his public preaching, spoke an improper word, or in his life, did an improper action. When he had occasion, as he often had, to speak of himself, of his mission into this world---of his union to humanity---of his work

as Mediator---of his divinity---and of the gift and influences of the Holy Ghost, he always spake with perfect meekness, openness and beauty. There was an originality---a perspicuity---a luminous clearness---a plainness---a simplicity indescribable. With him, there was no wandering from his subject---no obscurity---no false ornament. His very stile was wonderfully correct and pure. When assailed by his enemies and the learned men of his day, in artful questions, he always extricated himself from the snares laid for him, with such address as to astonish us. As pieces of composition his Parables and Similitudes are inimitably beautiful. His sermon on the mount---his allegories--& his description of the final judgment are the best specimens of elegance and simplicity, of happy metaphor and sublimity, which can be produced from any of the most admired antient writings. Give me leave to select the few first verses of his excellent sermon on the mount---his parables of the good Samaritan---of the talents---of the prodigal son---and his description of the general judgment as beautiful pieces of composition. They cannot be read, even under all the disadvantages of a literal translation, without being admired. To these, I add the prayer, which he taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer. We know not which to admire most the heavenliness of the matter, or beauty of the language. Was ever so much crowded into so few words. How full its petitions---how clear---how well adopted to all ages and countries---to all christians in all conditions! How comprehensive! It will bear repeating every day of our lives. Nothing out of all the writings of the antient philosophers can compare with it. What glory does it give to God! What benevolence to man does it contain! How pertinent in its petitions! How devotional in its frame. *Never man spake like this man.* Well might those, who heard him, wonder at the gracious words which proceeded out of his lips. *And all bear him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.*

Having briefly considered the subjects, upon which he spake ;---and the manner in which he spake ; it only remains, in our proposed method of discourse, to remark on the effect of his speaking. Here it is not designed to enlarge.

Many great orators, both in ancient and modern days, have there been in the world. Many impressive and eloquent speakers have arisen in the various departments of science and life. By their oratory they have had wonderful influence on mankind. But we are particularly to remark, that they had not all the passions, prejudices, and sins of mankind, and power of rulers against them, as our Lord had. He came to set up a new religion ; to supersede and abolish the religion of his country. And consequently all that is powerful in this world was combined against him---malice---hatred---superstition---prejudice---slander and civil power. Still he had amazing influence over his hearers by his preaching. Multitudes and multitudes forsook their sins, and were brought to deep repentance, and complete reformation. They gathered around him. They followed him from place to place. They became his professed disciples. They marvelled at his doctrine. They wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. They rejoiced in him. They believed in him for pardon and salvation. Miracles, indeed, and the power of the Holy Ghost gave force to his doctrines. But aside from these, *never man spake like this man*, as to the effect of his speaking. Some marvelled at his doctrine. Some said he spake as one having authority. Some, while he opened the duty of self-denial, went away sorrowful.---Some, at his call, forsook all worldly considerations and followed him. At a word speaking, Matthew, leaving all his lucrative employments, as a publican rose up and followed him. A woman, as he was preaching, being so affected with his discourse, could not contain herself, but exclaimed in wonder and joy, blessing even the womb that bear

him, with a loud voice. *And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company, lift up her voice, and said unto him, blessed is the womb that bear thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.*

But I forbear to mention any more particular instances of the effect of his speaking. Thus Christ spake as *never man spake*, in regard to the subjects, upon which he spake---the manner, in which he spake---and the effect that followed his speaking. *The officers answered, never spake like this man.*

In the review of what hath been said, the very first inference which seems naturally to present itself, is that JESUS CHRIST was more than mere man. He was what he claimed to be, the son of God, and only saviour of a lost world. He was more than man. He was more than a creature, though the most exalted. He was really and truly God. His proper divinity lies at the foundation of his religion. With his education and advantages could he have spoken, as we have seen he actually did, on such subjects---in such a manner---and with such effect, if a mere man. *How hath this man letters, having never learned?* To this query his reply was, *my doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.* Can we believe him to have been a deceiver of the people, when we see what works he wrought---what truths he revealed---what piety he maintained---what a holy life he led? Can we conceive that he who preached the sermon on the mount---composed the Lord's prayer---and denounced on the finally wicked such woes, could himself be a wicked impostor? For such he must be, if an impostor at all. We have, then, in his doctrines---in his sermons---in his prayers---and in his life a full proof, nay more, a demonstration of his celestial mission, and of the truth of his religion. Compare, my hearers, his life and doctrines with those of any impostor that ever appeared on the stage of the world to institute a religion; for example, with those of Mahomet, the most noted of all im-

postors. And I shall do it, in the words of Bishop Sherlock ;---addressing an infidel. “ Go, says he, to your natural religion ; lay before her Mahomet and his disciples, arrayed in armor and blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword. Show her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirement ; shew her the prophet’s chamber ; his concubines and his wives ; and let her hear him alledge revelation and a divine commission to justify his adultery and lust. When she is tired of this prospect, then, shew her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men. Let her see him, in his most retired privacies ; let her follow him to the mount, and hear his doctrines and supplications to God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare ; and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross, let her view him in the agony of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors, *Father forgive them for they know what they do.* When natural religion hath thus viewed both, ask her, which is the Prophet of God ? But her answer we have already had, when she saw part of this scene, thro’ the eyes of the Centurion who attended at the Cross. By him she spoke and said, *truly this man was the son of God.*”

We have likewise, in our subject, a perfect example for all Christ’s Ministers. On him should their eye be continually fixed as their great pattern, as well as atonement and hope. How faithfully did he warn ! How diligently did he instruct ! How severely did he reprove ! How tenderly did he exhort ! How affectionately did he invite ! How plainly did he set truth before the mind ! How sweetly did he encourage the broken

hearted and penitent ! How feelingly did he comfort the afflicted ! How solemnly did he declare to the finally wicked, that everlasting punishment, which should be inflicted on them. The Pastor elect, now to be set apart, agreeably to the gospel, over this people, and generally to be clothed with the office of the holy ministry, may here see his duty ; and so may all the Ministers of Christ present. To introduce one, who has in the judgment of those, who are to determine, the requisite qualifications, into the gospel ministry, is a solemn and joyful work. And, to the Pastor-elect, how affecting and solemn the day and hour of consecration. He will be ready to exclaim, who is sufficient for these things. With a trembling of mind, he will look round upon the people, to whom he is to preach ; and break the bread of life. He is to teach them by his doctrine, to bless them in his prayers, and go before them in his example of good works----to do all in his power to promote among them vital experimental piety. *Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. And how shall they preach except they be sent ? as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.* Finally——

From what hath been offered, a people may see how, carefully and diligently, they should attend to the words of Christ. If Ministers must take heed to themselves and their doctrine, then people are to take heed how they hear. If the one be bound to preach the word, faithfully and diligently, the other are to hear it, faithfully and diligently. The duties of preaching and hearing the word are reciprocal. A people are to receive Christ's true Ministers in a tender, kind, and affectionate manner ; and seriously and conscientiously attend on their ministrations : to honor them for their works sake ; and feel it a duty to afford them a decent and adequate support. Hear how Christ himself speaks on this point so important to the flourishing, and even existence of his

gospel kingdom. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward.* Much depends, respecting your salvation, and the flourishing of religion among you, on the manner of your attending a preached gospel; incalculably more than a people are ready to imagine. It is God's instituted method of saving sinners. How highly should you esteem it! And how dear to you should public worship and divine ordinances be. Never---never needlessly absent yourselves from the house of God. Let your Minister have the pleasure of meeting you there, on each returning Sabbath. What exalted ideas should you have of the gospel and its glorious author. How should you extol and bless his name; admire and honor him in your thoughts; believe his religion; and chuse him as your hope and salvation. You cannot have too high or exalted thoughts of him as a Teacher come from God: as sent of God: as able to save you; as full of grace and truth: as having the words of eternal life. You should say with Peter, *Lord to whom should we go, for thou hast the words of eternal life?* The words that he spake, *they are spirit, they are life.* You cannot hear him speak, who spoke as never man did, with your ears. You may almost envy the happiness of those, who personally enjoyed the benefit of his ministry---that saw his face---that conversed with him---that heard the preaching of the meek and lowly Jesus. Precious advantages, indeed, had they. But you have his word---his ordinances---his Ministers---the doctrines he preached---may come to worship before him---may celebrate his ordinances---hear his word---pray in his name---plead his righteousness and merits---rely on his interposition---and behold his life, as the object of your imitation. Realize your obligations, diligently and faithfully, to improve all these advantages. To the church and congregation, who usually worship in this place, as well as the Pastor elect, this is a solemn hour---an impressive scene.

Matters are now transacting that respect your happiness, and his---your spiritual good and his---nay, and that look quite beyond all the things of time, over into a boundless eternity ! Joyful interlocking day ! We wish you a blessing out of the house of the Lord. *Jehovah bless you and keep you. Jehovah make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. Jehovah lift up his Countenance upon you, and give you peace. Finally brethren, farewell, be of one mind, and live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

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 Let all the numerous concourse of people here assembled feel the importance of a preached gospel---of hearing Christ, who spake as never man did. We never shall all be assembled again, till we stand before his awful bar at the end of the world. Allow me, in the conclusion of my discourse therefore to urge you all to accept of the offers of life, pardon, and peace in the gospel---and I will do it, in the impressive language of an admired preacher--
 "I beseech, I implore you my brethren, in the bonds of friendship and in the bowels of the Lord ; by the tender mercies of the God of peace : by the dying love of the crucified Redeemer ; by the precious promises and awful threatenings of the gospel ; by all your hopes of heaven, and fears of hell ; by the worth of your immortal souls ; and by all that is dear to man, I conjure you to accept of the offers of mercy and fly from the wrath to come. Behold now is the accepted time ; behold now is the day of salvation. All the treasures of heaven are now opening to you ; the blood of Christ is now speaking for the remission of your sins ; the church on earth stretches out its arms to receive you ; the spirits of just men made perfect are eager to enroll you among the number of the blessed ; the angels and archangels are waiting to break out into new Alleluiahs of joy on your return ; the whole Trinity is now employed in your behalf ; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, at this instant, call upon you, weary and heavy laden to come that you may have rest unto your souls."

