

4485

h.49



4485. 2. 119.

6405
*A PREACHED GOSPEL THE GREAT INSTITUTED
MEANS OF SALVATION;*

ILLUSTRATED

IN A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED JANUARY 20th, 1808,

AT THE

ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. ELIJAH G. WELLES,

TO THE

WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

OVER THE

CHURCH AND CONGREGATION

IN

SCOTLAND,

A Parish in Windham.

BY NATHAN PERKINS, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN HARTFORD.

HARTFORD:

LINCOLN AND GLEASON, PRINTERS.

.....
1808.



John Webb's Book

AN ORDINATION SERMON, &c.

ACTS xi. 14.

Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.

IT is most desirable that all people, in a land of gospel light, should form correct ideas of the nature, and rightly appreciate the importance of the *instituted means* of grace, in the business of our salvation. They are not only *highly* useful, but *altogether* necessary. We may rationally conclude that they would not have been *appointed*, by infinite wisdom combined with infinite goodness, had they been either unimportant or unnecessary. For the Supreme Being does nothing in vain. He never enjoins what is of no significance, or requires us to do, what is unreasonable in itself, or when done, is attended with no salutary effects. But he has enjoined, with all the weight of his authority, the diligent and faithful use of the *means* of grace. In the most full and explicit manner, he requires us to attend upon them, as we have opportunity in Providence, on the pain of suffering all the ill-consequences of disobedience. In either a *total* neglect, or *careless* use of them, we have no justifiable grounds to expect divine influence to renew, or divine mercy to forgive us. But in a faithful and serious *attendance* on them, we have not only *great*, but *abundant* encouragement to hope for spiritual blessings.

In the passage of holy writ now read, this truth is most clearly exhibited: *Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.* The occasion of it is this, Cornelius, a centurion of a band of Roman soldiers at Cesarea, was duly solicitous about his future happiness, and awakened by the convictive operations of grace, to attend, with great earnestness, to religion; and was led to enquire after the right way of the Lord. *He was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.*

He saw a vision—And, in it an angel of God came to him, and directed him to send men to Joppa, which was at a considerable distance from Cesarea, to call for Simon Peter. He lodged with a friend of his, by the sea-side. *He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do:* shall give thee full instruction concerning the way of salvation—concerning all the important and fundamental doctrines of the gospel to be believed, and all the duties to be performed. The angel, though immediately from heaven, and, of course, abundantly able to teach Cornelius, all things essential to salvation, nevertheless, does not undertake the pleasing task. A regular minister of the New Testament must be the instructor. An Apostle must be sent for. Men are to go after him. They are told, *where* they shall find him. He is to open the way of life to this enquirer after truth and duty. From him, is *Cornelius* to hear the gospel. An unauthorized teacher would not answer, who had assumed the office, without coming in, at the door of a regular Ordination, which is by *fasting, prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.* For God *appoints* his own means. He will see that they are duly honored and observed. *Naaman* the leper, if he would be healed, must wash in the waters of Israel, not in Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus. Peter must preach the gospel to Cornelius, and open to him all that was necessary for him to *know*, in order to be saved. *He shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.* He shall dispense to you the word of God; and, *this* dispensed

word will be the instrument of your personal salvation, and that of your family. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But how shall people hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent? A *preached gospel* is the great instituted *means* of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and comfort and edification of saints.

That we may have the best understanding of this most useful and important truth, it will be necessary to prove, that God, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has *expressly instituted* the *preaching* of the gospel.

And, then, enquire *how*, or in *what way*, a preached gospel is the *means* of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and of the comfort and edification of saints.

It is proposed, *first*, to prove that the supreme Being, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has expressly instituted the *preached* gospel, as the *means* of our salvation. The intelligent hearer will, at once, perceive that my subject is peculiarly adapted to the present solemn occasion; and, as seasonable, in the present state of our country, not in a political but moral and religious view, as any that can be named. It is, alas! fashionable *with many* to undervalue, and even, contemn moral and religious institutions; both to think *lightly*, and to speak *lightly* of a preached gospel, and divine ordinances. The prevalence of infidelity and gross errors has had a fatal tendency to depreciate the means of grace. If ever the pure and benevolent system of Christianity shall flourish, an attention to religious institutions will be revived. Among the most important of these, is that of a *preached* gospel.—The ministry of the word is a *divine* institution, and not a mere *human* device. It is not the work and invention of men. It has too much wisdom, for man to claim to be the Author. The *expedient* of an order of men, whose peculiar and appropriate work should be to investigate and communicate truth—to open the nature and dispense the ordinances of religion, is so excellent, and well adapted to answer the end proposed, as to be beyond human sagacity and foresight. It

bears not upon it, any of the marks of imperfect man's work. It is what man would never have either invented or undertaken. It is admirably calculated to preserve, continue, and promote religion in the world. Without it, unquestionably, the lamp of the gospel, would long since have become extinct. A pious, learned, and orthodox ministry is the richest blessing to a people, and nation. As long as a church is favored with such a ministry, religion will be, in a degree, held in reputation, and will prosper. The institution of a preached gospel is an equal display, therefore, of divine goodness and wisdom. Like all the Deity's other works, it conspicuously exhibits both his overflowing beneficence, and unsearchable wisdom. The *great ends* to be answered by it, are man's salvation; his present and future happiness; the building up of the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom; the promotion of moral virtue; and advancement of the honor of God. One end, no doubt, also is the peace, order, and welfare of civil society. Whatever contributes to secure and promote the *religious*, in the same proportion, contributes to the *civil* and *temporal* well-being of society. *Morals* avail more, to preserve peace and order in communities, than *laws*. By strengthening the ties of conscience and moral obligations, you lay a solid foundation for blessing man, both in an individual and collective capacity. Destroy religious principles, and moral, cannot long be retained. Every attack upon *revealed*, is, consequently, an attack upon *natural* religion, though the most violent enemies of the former, have uniformly professed to be the admirers and friends of the latter. All the institutions of a gracious and merciful God are intended to *do good*—to be salutary and beneficial to the world—to secure and establish all the *best interests* of men, as connected in society;—are calculated to make us *happy* on earth, as well as *blessed* in eternity. Such, *eminently*, are the design and tendency of the institutions of the Christian ministry, Christian sabbath, and Christian worship. They are all calculated to civilize and bless the world; to promote our *civil*, as well as our *spiritual* interest.

There are so many passages of sacred scripture, which either *directly* affirm, or *necessarily* imply that the gospel ministry is an *appointment* of a gracious and merciful God, that a few only can, or need be recited. *And he gave some apostles ; and some prophets ; and some evangelists ; and some pastors and teachers ; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Here,* we have an account of the divine *appointment* of the gospel ministry, and of its gracious and important designs. We are informed that the ministry of reconciliation is *given* or instituted by God. *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation.* The gospel ministry is here termed the *ministry of reconciliation* ; and is said to be *of God*, or his own appointment. The remarkable phrase, the *ministry of reconciliation*, clearly ascertains the grand design of a preached gospel. It is to reconcile sinners to God's moral character, to his law, to his government, and to the conditions of pardon. God is ever ready to be reconciled. Reconciliation on the sinner's part is what is needed. The carnal mind is enmity against God : directly opposed to his true character ; and its disaffection is *totally* groundless.—Ministers are commanded *rightly to divide* the word of truth. *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* They are appointed to preach by God. *Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher. Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.* The gospel ministry is of a divine appointment. " Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not working in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commend-

ing ourselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God." All gospel ministers are *sent* of God ; are clothed with the office agreeably to his appointed method ; are *called* of God as was Aaron. He did not take the office upon himself, of his own accord ; or because he, through pride and ambition, judged himself qualified. " 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." A real minister of the New Testament is one that God has put into office, by his infinitely wise rules. He gives him his word ; and he preaches not himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. " The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream : and he that hath my word, let him speak my word *faithfully* : what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord ? Is not my word, like as a fire ? saith the Lord : and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?"

It is needless to adduce more proof from scripture. Suffice it to say, that all the *directions* to gospel ministers about their duty ; such as to give themselves to reading, meditation and prayer—to study—to speak the things which become sound doctrine—to rebuke—to take heed to themselves and doctrine—to administer the holy sacraments, prove the *divine* institution of the evangelical ministry. The same important point is, also, convincingly established by all the directions and exhortations to people to attend upon, and hear the preached word—to obey, support, and respect the ministry of the New Testament ; and, likewise, by our blessed Lord's parable of the sower. The seed of the word is to be sowed by the divinely constituted agents. It must be clear, then, to all, as a certain truth, that God, in his infinite wisdom and mercy, has instituted the gospel ministry, and that no man may take upon him this office, at pleasure. It is a divinely appointed office.

The *next thing* to be considered is, *how*, or in *what manner* the preaching of the gospel is the *means* of the

conviction and conversion of sinners, and comfort and edification of saints.

It is appointed for this very end ; and is most wisely adapted to bring it about. Considering the structure of the human soul, our moral agency, and accountability to a final tribunal, we shall be struck with the wisdom of the method, which a gracious God has adopted, to carry into execution the designs of his mercy, in this perishing world, by a *preached* gospel. As it is so well fitted, in its very nature and tendency, to accomplish the proposed end, our salvation, it is a remarkable manifestation of the divine wisdom, as well as goodness. “ For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we *preach* Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

“ What are the outward and ordinary means, whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?” “ They are the word preached, sacraments and prayer, all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.”

The grand instituted means of salvation, is the stated dispensation of the word, on the holy sabbath. And,

1. The preaching of the gospel, the appropriate work of the regular ministers of Jesus Christ, is God’s appointed means of salvation, as it is so *admirably well calculated* to give the requisite doctrinal light and knowledge. The understanding must be enlightened. Man needs, *first of all*, to be taught the things of religion ; and what essentially concerns his salvation. Considering the natural darkness, blindness, and ignorance of people, respecting the nature and duties of religion, doctrinal light and instruction are absolutely essential. “ Ye were sometimes darkness,” says the apostle Paul, to the Ephesian Christians, “ but

B

now are ye light in the Lord." The apostle Peter speaks of Christians as "brought out of darkness, into marvellous light." Duty must be known before it can be practised, and doctrines understood before they can be received. The heart cannot be good without knowledge. Great or entire ignorance of divine things is incompatible with salvation. The first business of the preacher, consequently, is with the understanding. A main purpose of a preached word, is the instruction of mankind, in their duty. Doctrinal light must be conveyed to the understanding. There must be doctrinal knowledge of the Being and attributes of God:—of the purity, extent, and penalty of the law:—of the work and offices of Christ, as our teaching prophet, atoning priest, and ruling king:—of his divinity, and the fulness of his merits:—of our entirely lost state by nature:—of the worth of the soul:—of the infinite malignity and danger of sin:—of our need of the free and sovereign mercy of the Deity:—in a word, of all the essential truths, duties, and principles of Christianity. The business of the holy ministry is to *teach* mankind the *way* of salvation, as well as to *persuade* them to a life of piety and morality. They must first be *taught*. They cannot be saved without some good degree of doctrinal acquaintance with the distinguishing principles of the gospel. And the preaching of it, is a most wise expedient to *teach*. Go teach all nations, is the original commission. The great body of mankind are necessarily employed about the concerns of this world, and engaged in the laborious occupations of life. They have, consequently, little time or leisure to study, and enquire into the nature of moral and religious truths. But by the preaching of the gospel, they have once a week, the benefit of a whole weeks' study and researches of *one*, who is devoted to the business of study. There could not, in the nature of the case, be a more easy and compendious method for a people to gain all needful light and instruction about duty and divine things. As the understanding is the *leading* faculty of the human soul, so we must *first* be taught. It must first be illumina-

ted. A darkened understanding, the effect of enmity of heart against God, is to be instructed. And the wisdom, as well as mercy of God, is conspicuously exhibited, in devising and instituting such a rational, and easy plan for the body of the people to receive all necessary religious instruction. The wisdom of the plan must deeply impress every attentive mind.—
Again,

2. The preaching of the gospel is the great *instituted means* of salvation as it powerfully tends to *polish* and *refine* society. Man is social in his *nature*. He was made to live in society. *Merely* the *assembling* together of people, *once*, in the revolution of seven days, in the same place of worship; jointly engaging in the same solemn exercises; hearing the same truths; looking forward to the same eternity; and expecting to stand, ere long, before the same tribunal, wonderfully conspire to produce friendly and humane feelings. Public worship and the Christian sabbath conduce mightily to civilize and humanize people. I add, also, *meeting* together for sabbath-work and worship—to pray unto and praise the Fountain of all blessings, tends, *directly* and *immediately*, to banish from the worshippers, prejudice, envy, hatred, variance, and animosity; to diffuse a seriousness and solemnity over the mind; to excite candor, compassion, charity, and humanity; to prevent cruelty, barbarism, brutal rudeness, and unsocial distance. I go further, and affirm, that, considering the make of man, the very structure of the mind, *barely* the *assembling* together of people to hear *the word*; to hear doctrines of equal importance to all—of equal necessity to high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, has a powerful influence to preserve and promote *civil* liberty, to *secure* the inalienable rights of conscience, and to *nourish* moral feelings. No measures, equally efficacious, have been ever devised to civilize, moralize, and Christianize man, as a preached gospel, public worship, and the holy sabbath. Did we consider this world as our only place of existence; and were we to admit that the soul dies with the body—that there is no

God to observe us—no Saviour to redeem us—no Holy Ghost to sanctify us—no bar of judgment, before which to stand—no place of happiness, in which to remunerate the righteous, or place of misery, in which to punish the wicked, and no world to come, these religious institutions would be of incalculable moment to the *well-being* of society, in the present life. It would be worth while to maintain them were it only for political considerations. Only reflect, how much preferable, and more happy the state of society is, where they are maintained, and punctually attended upon, than where they are unknown. The difference is immense. But, we are destined for an eternal existence. Yes, we are to live *for ever*, either in a world of perfect blessedness, or of intense and interminable woe. Oh, solemn thought ! We have souls to save or lose ! In this view, how high does the importance of a preached gospel rise. Energy of language fails to describe it. Further,

3. The preaching of the gospel is the grand *instituted means* of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and comfort and edification of saints, as it tends to *move* and *affect* the mind with an abiding impression of the reality and importance of divine things. To the hearer, it is a constant exhibition of truth and duty. So excessively attached to worldly interest ; so addicted to sensuality and vice ; so surrounded with sensible objects, are mankind, that they are prone to forget God—to forget a Saviour—to forget duty—to forget a dying hour, a judgment day, and an approaching eternity, and therefore stand in eminent need of reiterated admonition. In a preached gospel is this *reiterated* admonition. The most weighty, solemn, and practical doctrines are expounded and urged. Motives, arguments, and expostulations are addressed to the hearer. At stated seasons, and at the distance only of weekly intervals, merely *hearing* arguments in favor of virtue and piety, is not without some good effect, though the effect be imperceptible. Hereby a sense of moral obligation—of duty, and of another world is cherished :—vice is discountenanced :—errors repro-

ved and lamented:—all sin both in heart and life, dissuaded from, by the terrors of the Lord:—and tender addresses made to the affections to pre-engage them in the cause of God and piety. Every thing which can interest—which can move—which can rouse the mind is dwelt upon. The hearer is pressed by all that is great—by all that is dear—by all that is solemn—by all that is sacred—by all that is dreadful to forsake the paths of sin, to flee, on the wings of faith unfeigned, and repentance undelayed, from the wrath to come, and to give himself up to a life of piety, sobriety, and righteousness. In a preached gospel, therefore, there must be *every thing*, which can be necessary to instruct the ignorant—to reclaim the vicious—to rebuke the froward—to satisfy the candid enquirer after truth and duty—to rouse the thoughtless—to console the sorrowful—and to establish the doubting. You will be pleased to observe,

4. Besides all that has now been urged, that the preaching of the gospel, stately on the weekly returns of the sabbath, and other suitable occasions, is the great *means* of securing and promoting the spiritual good of people, as it *directly tends* to keep up, on their minds, a sense of an omnipotent God; an atoning Redeemer; a dying hour; a judgment day; and a never-ending state of existence beyond the grave. *Convening*, in a solemn and public manner, to worship the one only, living and true God, conduces more than any thing else, to impress on the hearer, a deep and realizing belief of his being, attributes, glories, laws, government, and ways: of the works, offices, merits, divinity, love and grace of a Saviour: of the awful and solemn hour of death—the infinite importance of preparation for it, and for standing at the bar of the final Judge, and for the felicities of the celestial paradise. It may be again subjoined,

5. That the *preaching* of the gospel is the grand *instituted means* of salvation, as there is in it, an *adaptedness* to fit and prepare the soul for the reception of the regenerating influence of the Holy Ghost. All God's means, appointed by his wisdom, are in their

own nature, *proper*. Were they of no special use, they would not have been ordained by the will and purpose of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. There is, unquestionably, in the *means* of grace, a moral adaptedness to put the mind in a meet situation for the reception of the renovating influence of the Holy Ghost, whose peculiar appropriate office-work, in our salvation, is to *awaken, convince, and renew* all that are given to the Son, in the covenant of redemption, by the Father. The tillage of the field, in the world of nature, fits it for the sowing of the seed. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith, the Lord: and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." What power, in the preaching of the gospel, to put people upon a consideration of their ways—to move and affect them? There is the *natural* preparation of the soul for regenerating grace. You are *carefully* to remember that the dispensed word, and other means of grace do not perform the *work* of regeneration; do not, as the efficient cause, *change* the heart: neither do they prepare the heart for the regenerating influence of the Spirit, by *gradually* lessening its enmity against God and his law, Christ and his gospel: or by making it more and more *friendly* to holiness: or by laying God under any bonds to communicate his *saving* grace: but they prepare the mind for *regenerating influence*, by *doctrinal* light: by leading it to see, with clearness, and feel with force, its opposition to God and holiness; and the *absolute need* of a work of sovereign mercy to renew, humble, bow, and save it. To regenerate the heart is not the work and office of men or means—or motives and arguments, "moral swasion," but, exclusively, the work of the Holy Spirit. He alone has power to change the heart. The heart is the seat of regeneration.—"Which were born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God. Not

by works of righteousness which *we* have done, but according to his mercy, *he* saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. For we are *his workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them." The doctrines of the *efficacy* of means, the *power* of sovereign grace, and *man's moral* agency, are altogether consistent, and perfectly reconcilable; are agreeable to reason and philosophy, as well as *abundantly* insisted on, in the inspired volume.

6. We may further argue the point before us, that a *preached* gospel is the *divinely instituted* means of salvation, from the *repeated* command to all people to *hear*, and *constantly attend* upon it. The stated and devout attendance upon the ministrations of the gospel is as expressly required, and as solemnly enjoined, as the duties of faith and repentance, or the moral virtues of righteousness, sobriety, and temperance. The word is commanded to be spoken—Teachers are authorized, and ordained to preach it—are to be faithful and diligent, plain and fervent. But to what purpose, if the word spoken is not to be heard? *Speaking* and *hearing* the word are reciprocal duties. As ministers of the gospel are to *take heed to themselves* and *doctrine*, so people are to have the hearing ear, the seeing eye, and understanding mind. The *command*, which enjoins the dispensation of the word, *necessarily* involves the duty of a diligent and devout attendance. "And he said, yea, rather *blessed* are they that *hear* the word of God, and keep it. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Wo unto those, who refuse to hear! such disregard God's *instituted means* of salvation. The nature and use, the end and efficacy of the *means* of *grace* merit the deep attention of all. Few subjects are of greater moment, in divinity. It will be allowed, by the candid and intelligent, that much light has been shed on this interesting point, by the labors of divines, of the first respectability. Whilst *some*, through fear lest the means of grace should be under-valued, and, of course, neglected, have exalted them into the place of the *efficient* cause, in our sancti-

fication: *Others*, vibrating to the opposite extreme, through pious concern lest the *free sovereign* grace of God should be *too much* kept out of sight, have unduly depreciated them. We add, alas! the most of hearers have *too low* an opinion of their importance and necessity. We should put them in their proper place, and do them justice. We actually put them in their proper place, when we put them, where the word of God puts them. A preached gospel is the grand appointed medium of the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding and edification of saints.—The ministrations of the gospel are the *instituted means* of salvation. Where the *means* are either *partially* or *wholly* neglected, the *end* cannot reasonably be expected. *Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.* The word of God preached is, then, the *means* of salvation, ordained by infinite wisdom and mercy, in the counsels of eternity. Indeed, it is an established truth, that the all-wise Author of the universe, in his whole system of administration, acts by means. His kingdom is a kingdom of means. He works, by putting second causes to operate, according to their nature. In Providence, in his government of all creation—of all worlds, and in *man's salvation*, he constantly works by *means*. And his power, sovereignty, grace, wisdom, and goodness are as conspicuously manifested in working *with*, as *without* them; and are, even, more *gloriously* displayed. What can exalt our ideas more of the great *Almighty disposer* of the created universe, than his *bringing* about all his infinitely wise purposes by means! He delights to put an honor on his own appointed means. And he would have *us honor* them. The constant, faithful, and devout attendance on all the means of grace, and especially on the preached word, is *required*. They are rendered *effectual* to our salvation, by the *influence* of the blessed Spirit. Separate from the divine blessing and co-operation, is there any inherent power, in the means of grace, to awaken, convince, and *change* the heart, to accomplish man's salvation? Are we to look to, and depend on them to save us: Or are we to

look, through all means and ordinances, to the *God* of means and ordinances, for the accompanying power of his Holy Spirit? This is a question of no inconsiderable moment. Divine influence *alone* renders the *means* of grace successful. God must bless his own means. His wisdom and goodness instituted them. His power and mercy must make them *effectual*. His wisdom and goodness shine, exceedingly bright, in the institution of them. We have *abundant* reason for this, and all his other works of mercy, to ascribe to him, praise, honor, and glory. We are to admire and adore his wisdom, in the *appointment* of the Christian sabbath, Christian worship, holy sacraments, and a preached gospel. Had it not been for these, religion would long ago, have been expelled from the earth; and mankind been involved in general moral darkness, in all the horrors and glooms of paganism. The gospel-scheme of salvation has *always* had, enemies to hate, revile, and oppose it; as well as false friends to pervert and essentially corrupt it. Mankind will always have some sort of religion. They will never all become *Atheists*. If the gospel were to be annihilated, *paganism* would be its substitute. The attempts of foolish philosophers to prevent mankind from having any religion, can never succeed. No improvements of science—no age of reason—no refinements of philosophy—no diffusion of information can exterminate all religion. As long as man has a soul, or believes he has, he will feel the *need* of some kind of religion. The pure, the peaceful, the rational, and philanthropic system of the gospel is the only true religion. And, what reason have we to bless the name of God, that, in his all-wise Providence, he has taken care to preserve the memory of himself, and the glorious gospel in the world, to be a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths:—that we see its cheering light, and hear its joyful sound! But the external call of the gospel must be accompanied by the internal call of the Holy Spirit. Means of themselves cannot renew the heart. *Sovereign free grace*, the *all-powerful* influence of the Holy Ghost must regenerate the heart, or give the new heart,

and new temper. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, but *God* giveth the increase. We are *his workmanship* created anew in Christ Jesus.—Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The seed of the word must be sowed—*Paul* must *plant*. *Apollos* must water. The fallow-ground must be broken up. The sinner must be awakened, and convinced. The law of God and conscience must condemn. The need of a Saviour must be felt. But *God's* voice alone can reach the heart. *Man's* voice can only reach the ear. The most powerful motives laid before the mind :—the most solemn addresses to the conscience :—the most influential arguments :—the most persuasive oratory applied to the will, to persuade, cannot accomplish the work of regenerating the soul. *This work* is effected by the all-conquering power of the Holy Ghost. When the word preached is, at any time or place, in any heart, or among any people, successful in awakening—convincing—and converting sinners, it is made so, by the attending influence of the Holy Spirit. God gives, or withholds the blessing, at pleasure. Where are we to look for success to the ministrations of the sanctuary? To *him*, who has the residue of the spirit—to him, who can clothe his own *instuted means*, with a divine power, and change the hardest heart—bow the stoutest will—humble the proudest look—cause the mountains to sink—and the vallies to rise. This being allowed, still much is to be done, on our part, that we may reap all the benefits of Christ's death and purchase. God works by exciting us to work,—to reflect—to consider—to examine. We are moral agents and rational creatures, and *always treated* as such. All-mighty grace changes the heart; but are we to do nothing? How is the word preached to be *heard*, that it may become effectual to salvation? While careless in our sins, and wilfully neglecting the gospel, may we hope for mercy, peace, pardon, and

justification? Certainly not. Much is to be done by us. We must attend upon the dispensation of the gospel with diligence, preparation and prayer, if we would have it rendered effectual. The word is to be spoken, *faithfully, plainly, solemnly, and experimentally*. The hearing ear, seeing eye, and understanding heart are necessary, as well as the *faithful* dispensation of the word. *He* who dispenses it, must give to all, and each a portion in due season. *Those*, who hear, are to receive the portion. *Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved*. They must attend, diligently, and *hear*, or they could not be saved, by the words spoken by Peter. *He* was obliged to preach, and *they* to hear. Cornelius' house or family were to attend, as well as himself. Neglect the preached gospel, and it will do you no good.—Neglect the cultivation of the field, and the most favorable seasons will be to you in vain. Human industry and exertion are as requisite, in religion, as in the *concerns* of time. No man can reasonably expect to prosper, in any employment, without his own care and diligence. Such as *refuse* to hear, deprive themselves of the offered salvation. Our Lord affirms, and he could not be mistaken, *blessed* are they that *hear* the word of God, and keep it. Again, reflect—

That they who are savingly profited by the preached gospel, receive it in faith and love. We must hear it, believing it to be the word of God and not of man.—We must rely upon it as true—as revealing to us those doctrines which are essential to salvation. We must *hear*, with sincere affection and friendship. We are to receive the truth, in the *love* of it. We must *love* the word spoken; be pleased and delighted with it; cordially embrace, and do all in our power to *hear* it. We are to receive it with a meek, humble, teachable disposition. “For unto us was the word preached, as well as unto them; but the word did not *profit* them, not being mixed with *faith* in them that *heard* it.” If we would have the preached gospel *instrumental* of our spiritual and saving benefit, we must remember, and reflect upon what we hear. If we would get good from

the *word spoken*, we must lay it up in our hearts.—“Receive,” says St. James, “the ingrafted word with meekness, which is able to save the soul.” Our Lord’s own caution is, “take heed how ye hear :” with what views, aims, and intentions.

A preached word is to be attended upon *statedly, seriously, solemnly, affectionately*, and with an *honest design* to practise according to it, in order to *be blessed* for our salvation. We cannot be saved by the preached gospel unless we obey. “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation, unto all them that *obey*.” Religion is a system of practice, as well as belief. We must have a good heart and a holy life. A *right* faith, and a *right* practice. Our creed must be *right*, and our conduct *right*. It is all-important to our salvation, that we believe *right* and practise *right*. A good life cannot be found, where there are *essential* heresies. “A wicked life,” says Archbishop Tillotson, “is the worst heresy.” Essential errors in our belief uniformly lead to an unholy life. We must then have an orthodox belief, and a correspondent practice in order to be saved. If it be no matter what a man believes, then it is of no consequence to have a revelation of God’s will :—to translate the holy scriptures into other languages :—or to take any pains, by missionary labors or institutions, to spread the gospel, where now unknown. A late British writer of some celebrity, says, “all belief in religious opinions is equally good ; and *all religions* acceptable to the one impartial and infinitely benevolent God : that he views with equal complacence the *groves* of the Bramins in India, on the banks of the Ganges ;—the *mosques* of Mahometans ;—the *synagogues* of the Jews ;—the *mystic rites* of the Mississippi or Florida Indians, and the *temple* of Christians.” A more consummately absurd position, perhaps, never was advanced. No, *brethren* and *friends*, we must *know* the truth—*believe* the truth as it is in Jesus—and practise according to it. “Blessed,” says our divine Master, “are all they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” We must conform unto, obey, and practise. “Be ye doers,” says St. James, “of the

word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Wherefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that *heareth* these sayings of mine, and *doth* them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall.”—There must be the *doing*, as well as *hearing* the sayings of Christ. They must be *heard*, and *conformed* unto. The word of God must be *preached*, *heard*, and *obeyed*, then our salvation is certain. Religion is a practical system. Faith without works is dead. Good works are essential.—*Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved.*

Few duties are so important as a regular and decent, devout and constant attendance on *divine institutions*, whether we consider our present good—the peace and order of society, the welfare of civil government, or the *blessedness* of the celestial world. Religion is the basis of all good order, and morality. Take away religion and its institutions, and you take away the pillars of public justice and felicity.

A deist of respectable rank in society, in the capital town of a sister state, was remarkably regular, in attending with his family, the worship of God in the sanctuary, on Lord’s-day. He was never absent, let the season be what it might. He was asked by the Pastor of the church and congregation, what *could be his* inducement, being a disbeliever in the gospel, to so regular an attendance on the public offices of religion on Lord’s-day. His reply was this; and worthy of being remembered, and felt by all:—“I see that religious institutions are essential to the peace, order, and well-being of civil society, and civil government. I feel myself, therefore, indispensably bound, as a good citizen, and member of society, to contribute my pro-

portion of influence, to the support of good order, by a constant attendance on public worship."

It may give the hearer abundant satisfaction to know, whether the scriptures *amply* bring in their verdict, in favor of the leading idea of this discourse. The great truth attempted to be above established, is, that a *preached* gospel, is the *means appointed* by God to save sinners; or the necessity, importance, and use of the means of grace.—A subject of the highest moment—a subject seldom largely considered—a subject exactly suited to this days' pleasing and joyful solemnities; and eminently seasonable, in the present languishing state of religion, and the abounding of error and immorality. The scriptures most plainly, unequivocally, and fully declare, that the preaching of the gospel is appointed and ordained by God, to be the grand *means* or instrument of the salvation of sinners.—Hear attentively the following passages, and you will be satisfied, if proof can avail to this purpose. "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thine house shall be saved. Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine; continue in them; in doing this thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee.—Sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth.—Receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls.—But he that receiveth seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.—Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.—Born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, the word of God, that liveth and abideth for ever." Many more testimonies from scripture, might be brought, but the above are deemed sufficient.—From our subject many important and interesting inferences might naturally be drawn, such as the *unspeakable privilege* of a preached gospel, and dispensed ordinances—the *use*, and *value* of the *means* of grace—the *necessity* of an assiduous and prayerful use of them—the *infinite importance* of a plain, faithful, and orthodox ministry of the word—the *great exertions* which people, when destitute, should put forth,

to obtain a minister of the gospel, who will be plain and faithful, distinguishing, and particular. And, that an unsound, erroneous, and heretical preacher, is worse than none ;—but waving those, the discourse will be closed by a short address to the Candidate for ordination, and to the church and congregation, now to be committed to his pastoral care, in the *only* scriptural way, that of *prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.*

A few words may be addressed, to the Candidate for ordination to the evangelical ministry.

To you, this is a most interesting and solemn day. The occasion of setting apart one to the pastoral office, is great and affecting. The Pastors of the churches are now convened by special request to ordain you to the work of the holy ministry ; for to them does it alone appertain to consecrate to this work, as a part of *their office-work.* The delegation from sister churches signify their concurrence and approbation. *Behold* the people, who are now to be solemnly committed to your charge. How anxious will this day be to you ! You are about to enter on an arduous and difficult work. Let your *first* care be to seek the spirit of vital religion for yourself. The faithful minister must be a good man, a regenerated man, a disciple of Christ indeed. Devote all your powers to religion. Give yourself to reading, meditation, and prayer. Let your life be a life of hard study. Spend much time, and exert all your strength in your *weekly preparation* for the sabbath. Let your discourses from *this sacred desk,* be solid—instructive—doctrinal—experimental, and practical. Study much the *manner,* as well as *matter.* Much depends on the *manner,* in the composition and delivery. Few public speakers attend enough to the *manner.* The best discourses badly delivered, are heard with indifference, or little effect. The *manner* is less attended to, by *many,* than its importance requires. The *matter,* however, is most to be regarded.—Be a man of prayer. The study improves the head, and the closet the heart. Be abundant in seeking to God for his assistance and blessing.

Let your general strain of preaching be highly evangelical. Avoid metaphysical subtleties. Dwell on the plain, peculiar, and distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. Determine to know nothing among your people but Christ and him crucified; let him be *all in all* in your ministry. Think for yourself. But never once imagine that true independence of sentiment consists in differing from others, or in a contempt of their opinions. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Endeavor always to feel your subject, and your accountableness to God. Be what you preach. A holy life recommends religion, by a force, peculiar to itself.

To the church and congregation now to have a pastor set over them, the above discourse suggests the most important instruction. A preached gospel is God's *instituted means* of salvation. Brethren and friends in the Lord, we congratulate you, on this day's solemnities. You have been an organized church and society about 73 years. You have been favored with the labors of three worthy pastors. Your first was the Rev. Ebenezer Devotion. He took you in your infancy, and ministered unto you in word and doctrine nearly 36 years. Death closed this mortal scene to him, in the midst of his usefulness. He was a man of superior powers of mind. Greatly esteemed, as far as known, a man of sound judgment, and solid sense—of extended reading—and rich science. His memory is dear, I make no doubt, to some to whom I now speak. He was a man of distinguished talents.—Soon after his greatly lamented decease, the Rev. James Cogswell was removed from a neighboring church and society, to take the pastoral care of this. He, also, was a *minister* greatly esteemed; his preaching was solid, edifying, in a gospel strain, and practical. He labored among you 33 years, till the infirmities of age took him off from his work. He lived to very advanced life, and beyond his usefulness. As a man, he was agreeable and pleasant—as a scholar, excelling—as a divine, judicious and correct—a friend and advocate for the doctrines of grace: beloved and esteemed by

his brethren in the ministry ; and was honored, by our University, with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.—Your *other pastor* was the Rev. Mr. Adams. He continued with you, but a few months. Death ! ah, cruel death, laid his cold hand upon him in youth, and separated him *for ever*, from his dear people, and dear family. In him you anticipated, a faithful and good minister. “Our fathers, where are they, and the prophets do they live for ever ?” This short sketch of your own history, no doubt, will affect you, as it ought.* This day you have one more Pastor to be set over you, in the Lord. *Behold* the man, now to be your minister. Be united. Let him be dear to you ; remember him in your prayers daily at the throne of grace. You will be *dear* to him, and be remembered by him, in his daily devotions. Encourage his heart. Strengthen his hands. Diligently attend his ministry. Meet him always in the house of God. Be candid—be anxious to know the truth as it is in Jesus. Be willing to have him faithful to you ; and to preach the clear and peculiar doctrines of Christ.—Brethren and friends, we wish you a blessing out of the house of the Lord.

Finally, brethren, farewell. *Be of one mind, and live in peace ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.* Let the numerous concourse of people now convened, learn the *importance* of the means of grace, and ministrations of the gospel. Make such an use of them as that they may render you happy. We shall never all be assembled again, in this world. Perhaps, curiosity, or the occasion, may have brought *some* here, to day, who *wholly* or *greatly* neglect a preached gospel. I beseech you to consider. I shall never again, probably, speak to you, on the behalf of religion. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. To all who hear my voice, let me preach a suffering,

* Windham, Scotland Society—The Church in this place was organized 22d-December, 1735. Rev. Ebenezer Devotion was ordained same day, and died 16th July, 1771. Rev. James Cogswell was installed to the work of the gospel ministry, 16th February, 1772, and died January, 1807.—Rev. Cornelius Adams was ordained 5th December, 1805, and died 28th November, 1806.—And the Rev. Elijah G. Welles was ordained 20th January, 1808..

dying, risen, and exalted Saviour. Choose his religion now, and you shall be happy in life, happy in death, and happy in eternity. I beseech, I implore you, my brethren, in the bonds of friendship, and in the bonds of the Lord; by the tender mercies of the God of peace; by the dying love of a crucified Redeemer; by the precious promises, and awful threatenings of the gospel; by all your hopes of heaven, and fears of misery; 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 amongst the number of the blessed; the angels and ach-angels are waiting to break out into new Alleluahs of joy, on your return; the whole Trinity is now employed in your behalf; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, at this instant, call upon you, weary and heavy laden, to come unto them that ye may have rest unto your souls!"

THE CHARGE

GIVEN BY THE

REV. MOSES C. WELCH,

Mansfield.

IN great mercy to this fallen world, our God has sent his Son to destroy the works of the devil, and purchase a church with his own blood. The glorious Redeemer has seen fit to use men, and not angels, to minister to his church in his name. "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Those commissioned, immediately, by Christ, have put others into office, with a solemn charge to commit the same treasure to faithful men.

We the ministers of our Lord, who have been called for the purpose, having obtained a good hope of you, our young brother, as a friend to the great Redeemer, and called of God, have, at the request of this flock, by prayer and laying on of hands, solemnly consecrated and set you apart to the service of Christ, in the good work of the gospel ministry in this place. This church, therefore, we commit to your charge. These immortal souls are, now, according to divine institution, your particular flock. And we charge you before GOD and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who shall judge the world at his appearing and kingdom, that you fulfil the ministry you have received, and watch for these souls with persevering fidelity. We exhort and charge you to "do the work of an evangelist," and to "make full proof of your ministry." In doing this you are to "preach the word." You are to publish and declare those things which become sound doctrine. Preach the word of God, and not the word of man. Preach it understandingly. Preach it plainly. Preach it convincingly and experimentally. Remember you are a minister of the Lord Jesus, and that it becomes you to know nothing among your people, save Christ, and him crucified.

As a minister of Jesus, it becomes you to read often, and meditate with affectionate attention upon the sermons of Christ, and his first ministers. You will endeavor to enter into the spirit of those most excellent sermons, and make the sentiments they contain the leading ideas, the prominent features, of all your public discourses. You are to preach the existence of one God, one in essence, and yet a mysterious union of three distinct persons, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST. As you would be found a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus, you must preach the real divinity, and the co-equality of each person in the godhead. You are to teach the character of this mysterious and incomprehensible God, pointing out his natural and moral perfections.

Preach the character of fallen man,—the total depravity of the human heart,—that men are in a state of moral death,—dead in trespasses and sins.

Preach the doctrine of regeneration, pointing out the nature, as well as the necessity of the new birth.

Preach the doctrine of divine sovereignty, manifested and exercised in particular, personal election,—in changing by special divine grace, the hearts of those who are “the called according to his purpose.”

Preach Christ as “the way, the truth, and the life;” as the only foundation of hope to lost man; and, carefully, point out the nature of “repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Preach the certain perseverance of the saints; even that every one who is regenerated and sanctified will, certainly, be kept, by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.

You will not fail to preach, in the most unequivocal terms, the future condition of the finally impenitent; that they are to suffer, (however awful the idea) in a literal sense, “the vengeance of eternal fire.”

These doctrines, and others, necessarily connected with them, as you would “declare all the counsel of God,” and be “pure from the blood of all men;”—these doctrines, as you would avoid the doom of those who “walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully,” we exhort and charge that you preach in a clear, pointed, and intelligible manner. Prove yourself “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

You are, also as a minister of Christ, to dispense the sacraments of the New Testament, baptism and the Lord’s supper. These you will administer to meet subjects, the supper to those who, in a judgment of charity, are the friends of Christ, keeping the door shut against his enemies, and thus make a distinction between the precious and the vile. You will also administer baptism to the believer and his household.

The discipline of the church, you will always consider as a very important institution of Christ. As the vine bears no fruit, unless attended to by the husband-

man, and the dead branches are cut off and removed ; so religion cannot flourish while vicious, immoral, and scandalous offenders are continued in the bosom of the church. We charge you, therefore, attend carefully to this matter. Maintain the pure and salutary discipline of Christ's family, and see that the laws of his house are honored, and put in force. "Them that sin, rebuke before all that others may fear." As Paul to young Timothy we say to you, "Be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." Visit the sick, and attend the chambers of distress. Administer the reviving cordials of the gospel to the dying Christian, and keep not from the view of the wicked their awful danger, even in their last hours. Treat each character in such a manner, that you may safely meet them at the bar of Christ.

When called to put others into office, see to it that none but faithful men are introduced. Lay hands suddenly on no man. Never invest any one with the sacred office who will disgrace the order, and wound the cause of the Redeemer. Remember, *a bishop must be blameless, prudent, wise, discreet ; not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

Be faithful, diligent and persevering in the work and service of Christ. *Let no man despise thy youth ; but be thou an example to the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith in purity.* Endeavor always to recommend that holy religion you are called to preach.

Be a man of prayer. Pray for yourself—pray for your people—bear them continually on your heart before God in public, in private, in secret. Keep this charge, thou man of God, that thou mayest both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Remember you watch for souls, and must give account to the chief Shepherd. Remember that you and your people, when "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and the trump of God : " Oh ! remember,

that at that solemn—that awful day, you, and these souls must appear before the judgment seat of Christ! Oh! consider that, if a good and faithful minister, you will be “unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life.”

Finally, my brother, may the Lord himself be ever with you, and make you faithful, that you may render an account of your stewardship with joy unspeakable, and receive the plaudit of your Judge in a “Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

THE
RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

BY THE
REV. LUDOVICUS WELD,

Hampton.

THE practice of giving *the right hand of fellowship*, to those who are inducted into the ministerial office, has the sanction of apostolical precedent. For, *When James, Cephas, and John, perceived the grace that was given unto Paul, they gave to him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.*

This practice therefore, being supported by the example of holy apostles, will not be considered, by a Christian assembly, an unmeaning, useless ceremony. Although it be not an essential part of ordination solemnities, yet it may be viewed an important, interesting appendage. It is designed and calculated to show that among ministers of the gospel exists no pre-eminence in office. *For one is their master, even Christ; and all they are brethren.* They stand on the same ground with respect to responsibility; with respect to honors and privileges; duties and dangers; trials and consolations.

In presenting the right hand of fellowship, we offer our influence, assistance, and advice, as circumstances require; not however for a political purpose, not to support a particular sect or party in religion, but to promote the spiritual kingdom of our divine Lord. In the concerns of this kingdom we hereby acknowledge a community of interests and obligations; and promise faithfulness to each other, to the souls of men, and to the Lord Jesus.

But on what ground can Christian ministers consistently present, to a fellow laborer, this appropriate sign? Upon no other

ground than a prevailing hope that he is a subject of experimental religion, esteems *all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus*, and will *very gladly spend and be spent* in his sacred cause.

James, Cephas and John, proceeded upon this principle in relation to Paul. *Perceiving the grace that was given unto him, they gave to him the right hand of fellowship.*

We are commanded to *lay hands suddenly on no man*. We may not welcome into this important service any, except such as appear to be volunteers in the cause of Christ, cordial followers of *the Captain of salvation*. It is hazardous to repose confidence in the mercenary soldier. He may be easily persuaded to desert to the enemy, and to betray the most important interests. So likewise it is hazardous to repose confidence in the mercenary preacher. *He is an hireling, he careth not for the sheep*, and, like Judas, is liable to betray *the Son of man with a kiss*.

But, Sir, we hope *better things of you, and things that accompany salvation though we thus speak*. To pronounce infallibly upon your moral state, we do not presume. To search and to know the heart, is the exclusive prerogative of God. *To your own master you stand or fall!*

But the relation you have given respecting your experimental acquaintance with the truth, and respecting your motives in entering upon the work of the evangelical ministry, furnishes ground of hope that it hath *pleased God to call you by his grace, and to reveal his Son in you*.

We trust you are induced to take *part of this ministry*, not from sinister considerations, but from a desire to be improved as an humble instrument of promoting the kingdom of our divine Lord. Charitably hoping that you are governed by this noble motive, I do, my dear brother, in the name, and by the appointment of the council, convened upon this occasion, and before this *cloud of witnesses*, present you with this right hand. By this we testify our affection for you. By this we acknowledge you a *minister of Christ* regularly introduced to office by prayer and *the laying on of the hands of the presbytery*. By this we tender you our friendly salutations; our prayers for your prosperity and success in the arduous, though benevolent and honorable work upon which you are entering; our sympathy in your afflictions; and our assitance in your difficulties. And since obligation is mutual, we presume, when called by the indications of Providence, you will afford us your prompt and cheerful aid.

We cordially welcome you, Sir, into this part of the Christian vineyard. We feel interested in your respectability, in your faithfulness, in your prudence, and success. We wish you may enjoy much of the divine presence; that you may preach with accuracy, clearness and affection, the distinguishing doctrines of grace and *all the counsel of God*. We wish you may be a *burning and a shining light in this golden candlestick*, lead many sons and daughters to glory, and meet the plaudit of your judge, *in that day when he maketh up his jewels*.

Brethren of this Church, and friends of this Congregation,
 This day naturally calls to your remembrance that venerable man* of God, who, for a long succession of years, preached unto you *the unsearchable riches of Christ*. He has gone, we trust, to receive the reward of a *good and faithful servant*. We hope the seed which he so plentifully scattered in this vineyard will yet spring up and produce an harvest.

This day, also, very naturally, brings fresh to your recollection, our younger brother,† who, about two years since, was *set over you in the Lord*. Your united affection for him, and his affection for you, connected with his hopeful piety, furnished an happy presage of future usefulness. But alas! He was *not suffered to continue by reason of death*. The prayers, tears and peculiar attention of a tender companion, and of an affectionate people could not shield him from the shafts of the mighty conqueror. The grave is *without any order*. How true it is that the treasure of the gospel is committed to *earthen vessels*! While you acknowledge the righteousness of a sovereign God in disappointing your raised expectations, we hope you will notice, with grateful praise, the kind hand of Providence in dissipating your fears of being *scattered as sheep upon the mountains, having no shepherd*.

Though *the Lord hath given you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction*; though he hath *visited your transgressions with a rod and your iniquities with stripes*; yet his *loving-kindness he hath not taken from you*.

Your eyes, this day, behold the man of your choice, regularly constituted your spiritual guide. We trust he is a friend to the great Shepherd, consequently to the sheep and lambs of his flock, and that he will feed them *with the sincere milk of the word*. If wise for yourselves, you will *esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake*; you will afford him a competent and honorable support, remembering, *The Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel*. We hope you will constantly meet him at the sanctuary and receive, *into good and honest hearts*, the messages which he bringeth you from his master. In this way you will greatly *strengthen his hands, and encourage his heart*. We hope you will remember him constantly, at the throne of grace, in your closets and in your families. Holy, humble, persevering prayer, ever has been, and ever will be, efficacious. But should *Paul plant and Apollos water*, all would be in vain without a divine blessing. Through the medium of prayer this blessing is to be expected: *For thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to do for them*. May it therefore be your fervent and unceasing prayer that your Pastor may be enriched with every ministerial qualification, and that divine influence may be shed down copiously upon you and upon your children. And O that God in infinite mercy may grant, that *when the chief Shepherd shall appear both he who soweth and you who reap may rejoice together in glory*.

* Reverend James Cogswell, D. D.

† Reverend Cornelius Adams.

