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A

SERMON,

AT THE

ORDINATION OF THE REV. THOMAS ROBBINS,

APPOINTED A MISSIONARY TO THE COUNTY OF TRUMBULL,
IN THE STATE OF OHIO;

DELIVERED AT NORFOLK, JUNE 19TH, 1803.

BY NATHAN STRONG,
PASTOR OF THE NORTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN HARTFORD,

TOGETHER WITH

THE CHARGE,

Given by the Rev. AMMI R. ROBBINS, Father of the ordained;

AND THE

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

Given by the Rev. NATHAN PERKINS, D. D. Pastor of the Church
in West-Hartford.



HARTFORD :

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1803.



ORDINATION SERMON.

MATTHEW XXVIII. 19, 20.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

THESE words are the commission given by our divine Lord to his disciples, and through them to all his ministers, to preach the gospel and administer its ordinances through the whole world, until the time of his second coming. They were spoken after he had given sufficient evidence of his resurrection from the dead, and immediately before his ascension to glory.

Although the church was small, composed only of the disciples and a few others, the scene was solemn. The means were such as men would judge inadequate for propagating a new religion through the world, and the instruments, in themselves, were weak, despised and persecuted ; but the cause was the Lord's, the Redeemer was passing to his exalted state on the Father's right hand, all power both in heaven and earth being given to him, therefore success was certain. The works of God both in na-

ture and in grace, from the beginning have been wonderful, and we may look back on every period of time, with adoring apprehensions of divine power and wisdom in governing the nations and preserving the church; but in no period, were so many wonderful events crowded into a short compass, as in that, to which the text carries back our reflections.

It was the time, to which all the ancient fairs, had looked forward in faith, and the desire of nations had come. The Son of God had made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant. He was born, he lived, he suffered as a man. He became our example as well as our righteousness. When he had gathered a little church around him, and by his mighty works, and his glorious doctrines and pure practice evidenced his divine and holy character, he died on the cross by the hands of sinful men. His death was necessary, to make an atonement for the sins of the world, and it is only through his blood that a righteous God can be reconciled. And while in the pains of death, he exemplified the nature and power of a benevolent temper, in the prayer which he offered to his Father, for those who then took his life, and for us who have often crucified him afresh. Father forgive them, they know not what they do. We who have a complete revelation of the scheme of grace, and the means of everlasting redemption, sometimes wonder that the disciples should be ignorant of the necessity that he should be a suffering Saviour; but when we look more considerately on the scene, and observe how rapidly the great events of the divine counsel unfolded and passed, how great and wonderful they were in their very nature, and how different from the wisdom of men, it ceases to be strange, that even the disciples should say, we trusted it had been he who should have redeemed Israel. We can come with them to the cross and to the tomb, and wonder to see him expiring as a

criminal and shrouded in death, whose spiritual glory and sufficiency, we have seen, and felt, putting hope within us. But blessed be the divine name, blessed be the treasures of divine love and grace, that we are soon called from scenes of affliction to a prospect of joy and glory. We can commune with them in the joy which they expressed, when they said, "But certain women, also, of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre, and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive:" And this astonishment was soon changed into faith and joy, which made the most cautious of the disciples cry out, "My Lord and my God." We can also unite our joy with theirs, when we read the account of his resurrection, the evidence which was given of the reality of this wonderful event, the dignity which he assumed, and the love which he displayed in the commencement of his exalted life, the concise but comprehensive direction which he gave to the first ministers of his kingdom, and his ascension to glory on the Father's right hand, where he intercedes for his church and governs the world.

My brethren, as the occasion naturally directs, let us fix our attention on the commission he gave to his disciples, and through them to us, before he ascended to his glory, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo ! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

By these words, we might be led to reflect on the exalted character of him who gave this commission ; on his divinity ; on his glorious offices as mediator ; on the peculiar doctrines of the gospel of reconciliation ; and on the ordinances and institutions ap-

pointed in the Christian church : but appropriating them to the present occasion, the two following truths which they contain, particularly merit our notice.

I. The obligation which is on all Christians, and especially on the ministers of Christ's church, to propagate the gospel, in its doctrines and practice, through the whole world.

II. The divine promise, that Christ will be with his church and those who are the instruments in this undertaking, and lo ! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

I. We will consider the obligation which is on all Christians, and especially on the ministers of Christ's church, to propagate the gospel, in its doctrines and practice, through the whole world.

All who have heard the holy gospel of Jesus Christ, are solemnly bound, both by the commandment of our Lord, and by the benevolent spirit of Christian piety, to communicate the tidings of salvation ; to spread a knowledge of the treasures of divine love, the merits of a Saviour's blood, the blessedness of a holy temper and practice, and the glorious and eternal life and immortality, which are brought to light in the gospel. Perhaps many, who are real Christians, or who have a conviction of the reality and importance of the Christian religion, have often read the words of our text, without considering the obligation on themselves. They have read, and perhaps seriously meditated on the command ; they have admired its fulness, its grace, its extension to the whole world and to the end of time ; they have viewed it as a direction to Christ's ministers, and especially to the apostles ; but little thought that it was a command of the Redeemer to themselves, and that all Christians had

a duty here assigned them. But, my brethren, what other construction can we put on the words of Christ? or how, when we consider the nature of the case, and the necessity and use of means in dispensing divine knowledge, can we suppose any Christian to be exempted from the obligation, in his place, to use means that this gospel may be preached to all nations? Are not the words which are spoken directly to Christ's ministers, in many cases, to be considered as spoken to his church and to all who read his word? The church and its ministers cannot be separated, and all the precepts of our ascended Lord consider them in a relation, implying mutual bonds, obligations and duties. If it be the duty of Christ's ministers to reprove, rebuke, exhort and teach in the name of the Lord, and according to his holy oracles, it is the duty of men to hear the truth unto the obedience of faith. If it be the duty of Christ's ministers as evangelists to go and teach all nations, it is the duty of their Christian Brethren, to set them apart for this purpose, to aid their necessities with the bread and clothing of the world, and to pray without ceasing that their way may be made prosperous. There is no other reasonable understanding of the divine command in the text, and in many other places of a similar nature.

Truly it is strange that Christians have been for many ages, so little sensible of the duty, and it can be accounted for, only by that blindness and formality, which is natural to the human heart. It is strange that Christians have read the history of the divine incarnation, the Redeemer's compassion to souls, his diligence, his passion, his command to teach all nations, and seen the connection there is between the use of means and a divine blessing, and made so few and such small exertions, that the favor of his name, of his laws and of glory to come should be spread through the world.—We very well know that all cannot be evangelists; that all are not qual-

ified, either by natural gifts, human acquirements; or the qualifications of sanctifying grace, to be employed as teachers in the vineyard; still this doth not free any from an obligation, in their places, to aid the gracious, the glorious design.

That this is a right explanation of our duty, may also be learned, in the second place, from the nature of the Christian temper.

To be a Christian is to be benevolent, to wish the extension of happiness in the salvation of men, so far as it pleases sovereign goodness and infinite wisdom to diffuse the blessings of grace. If we are in the temper of our minds the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will not be difficult for us to understand in its largest extent, the command of the divine Redeemer, to teach all nations in our faith and the nature of our hopes for eternity. To do good, and to communicate; to go and do as the good Samaritan did to a stranger, be he ever so distant in a heathen land; to teach benighted men the knowledge of a glorious Saviour, and bring them to communion with him in the joys of his kingdom, and in the adoration that is offered him as king on the throne; to be the instruments of bringing to their knowledge life and immortality and a weight of eternal glory, purchased by the blood of Christ, will be our most pleasing employment, if we are the disciples of Christ. Neither is this an accidental part of the Christian temper: but the very essence of conformity to our divine Redeemer. As the Son of God came to seek and to save that which is lost, so his people, partaking of his Spirit, wish and pray for all the blessings of divine grace on the whole world of mankind. They pray for those who are thoughtless in the midst of the visible Zion, that their eyes may be opened to see against how great light they sin, and that there will be no escape, after they have abused by impenitence, the means and the calls of divine love. Their compassion yearns over those parts of Christendom, where the spirit

and practice of pure Christianity is lost, while the name is retained ; over the heathen lands, where Christ is not named ; over the unbelieving Jews, who continue to reject unto their own judgment, him whom their fathers pierced. But if this be the true Christian spirit, why have we remained so long unfeeling to the perishing state of men ? The very question ought to humble us, and no solution can be given, but our imperfection in the Christian spirit and practice, and because our Lord hath permitted, that blindness, in this respect, should, for many ages which have past, happen to his church. We shall go no further, we shall do no more than Christ assists us. Like his disciples in the garden, we shall be heavy and sleep, until he cometh and awaketh us. The spirit and the life as well as the reward and the crown are from him. Glory be to his name, that we have so much cause to think, he is causing this film of ignorance concerning their duty, to fall from the eyes of his church. Glory be to his name, that we have so much reason to believe his chariot wheels are near, when by his coming, new fervor shall be given to his church, and his praise will be spoken by nations of people called from the depths of heathen ignorance.

But that there is this obligation on Christians may be inferred, thirdly, from the unhappy state of those who have not the stated institutions and ordinances of the gospel, and especially such as know not our Redeemer's name. Reflect, my brethren, on the unhappy condition of many in our new settlements, who are our brethren and our children. We are the persons who have consecrated them to God in infancy ; we have taught them the first principles of Christianity, and told them to believe in Christ, to keep his laws, and reverence his Sabbaths ; but without our Christian aid, they cannot yet have the means. Doth not their condition claim our assistance, and if we do not grant it, can we be called their fathers and brethren in Christ ?

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But lo ! the situation of the Heathen is more pitiable than these. In the midst of the sorrows and pains of life, which need a comfort from the gospel, and being guilty sinners like ourselves, going annually by millions into eternity, they know not God, nor his law, nor its awful penalties ; they know not the treasures of divine grace, nor a Redeemer's sufficiency, and the method of forgiveness through his blood ; they know not the instructions which Christians have from the holy scriptures, which enjoin repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and the good works that flow from these dispositions of the heart ; they have never heard of the throne of God and the Lamb, nor the praises around it, which are like mighty thunders, and the sound of many waters ; they do not know the merits of the Redeemer's blood, nor the holy temper, the glory and eternity of heaven, and its worship.—Doth not the situation of these, our brethren by nature, show the obligation which is on us, to adopt all the means in our power, that the gospel may be preached to every nation under heaven. If we feel the blessings of a Christian faith, of a Christian life, and of piety ; if we consider the unhappiness, both in this and the world to come, of those who know not a Saviour's name ; or if it delight our hearts to hear of his praise and of Christian communion in distant lands, we shall feel the obligation which is on all believers in Jesus, that this gospel be preached to every creature ; and we shall be humbled that we have done so little, as instruments, to carry our Redeemer's promise into glorious execution.

But here I am sensible the unbelieving heart begins to show itself, and to say, it is a great work, it is an impossible and hopeless undertaking. But why should any say thus ? If we can explore new regions, if we can cultivate and fertilize them, can we not plant the gospel with these improvements ? If we can in multitudes, take possession of a wilder-

ness, to improve the worldly interest of ourselves and our children, can we not also lay up the treasure of heaven for them and for ourselves? If we can spread through all the native tribes for the purposes of an enriching traffic, can we not send and support a few brethren among them, to declare the name of him, who died for his enemies on the cross, and whose blood and merits are as sufficient for them as for us; among those, to whom a glorious eternity will be as valuable as to us; those, whose voices might be as sweet in heaven, and whose praise and eternal glory would be as dear to the Redeemer as our own? Certainly, the excuse of difficulty in the undertaking ought to vanish, until we have faithfully and with long continuance made an effort to communicate the blessing. Nothing but this ought to set us at ease on the subject. We know the work is great, and so was the work of first promulgating Christianity; but our Lord, both in the propagation of the Christian faith and in preserving his church, often uses weak means for producing great events. Heaven will be peopled thro' weak means, although it be almighty grace and sovereign love which brings the least of his saints to a crown of glory. But why do we say the work of propagating the gospel is great or hopeless, when we consider, which was next proposed for consideration,

II. The promise that Christ will be with his church and those who are instruments in spreading his faith through the world, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

If this work were left to us, it would never be done; but it is the Lord's and shall be accomplished. Although there hath, through the foreordination of infinite wisdom, been a long delay; although the professing Christian church hath experienced the deepest corruption, and for sundry ages the Hea-

then have remained in deep ignorance, and many been darkened by the imposture of the bottomless pit ; the promise remains, and is sure, and he who made it is on the throne. Seated in the midst of his Zion, he rules all the nations ; the fulness of the Gentiles shall flow to him ; the darkness which hath happened to Israel shall be cleared away ; pure hands shall be lifted, and a pure incense shall be offered to his name unto the ends of the earth ; and all the nations of the world shall know him, who hath purchased redemption with his blood.

If this work were left to us, truly there would be cause to despond ; for we are utterly insufficient, except so far as we are assisted by sovereign grace. If left to ourselves our hearts would sink and be unfaithful ; if left to ourselves we could not convince or change the course of one obstinate sinner. But still in the scheme of divine grace it was wise, it was good for us, and it hath pleased infinite wisdom to appoint means. Without them there is no reason to expect a blessing, and where a blessing is decreed, the Lord always raiseth up the instruments, whom he determineth to use as means for building his kingdom, and bringing immortal souls to a knowledge of his precious and glorious salvation.

That Christ will be with his ministers is a truth, not without witness from the providential dispensations of his grace. From the time the gospel was first preached, men have been employed as instruments in its propagation. Earthen vessels have been used in the sanctuary. The spirit of Jesus hath been poured down, sinners have been convinced and made to cry, What shall we do ? Churches have been formed, and the sons and daughters of the Lord have been edified, and all through the weakness of preaching.

Those who have labored in the churches of ancient establishment, can bear their testimony that the Lord hath been with them ; he hath been with

them in troubles, in labors, in seasons of darknes, in the time when their own hearts were weak, and in times of attack from enemies of the true faith. He hath been with them to give patience under perils innumerable, to support their minds under afflictions, to assist them in their studies and in their public performances, to cheer their hearts by seasons of sweet communion with himself, and to give power to the word dispensed from their lips. And how often have there been remarkable dispensations of providence, to preserve the church and its friends against the stratagems and enmity of the gates of hell? When we read the history of the world, and its opposition to the truth of Christ, a most astonishing evidence arises, that God is in the midst of his church, although it be unworthy of his grace; and that he hath been with his ministers, to give efficacy to his word. The word is his own and it shall have power; the grace is his own and it shall be glorified; sincere Christians are his own chosen and called and sanctified ones, and he will bless the weakness of means to bring them to eternal life.

Let not this cause be judged, nor its purity impeached, nor its eventual success be doubted, from the weakness of its means. Because the ministers of religion are men of like sinful passions with their brethren, always imperfect and sometimes openly erroneous and sinful in their practice, let it not be thought that the promise, Lo! I am with you to the end of the world, is fallible; for the Lord can improve the unworthy, and bring good out of evil: Neither let it be thought that the infinite power and wisdom of divine grace is limited, by the impotence and imperfection of its instruments. And shall not the evidence that the promise is unfailing, which is taken from the truth of him who made it, and confirmed by the experience of so many centuries, be trusted by us now living, who from experience know, that if divine grace had not been infinite and almighty, such sinners as we are, never could

have had a right to hope? Yes! the evidence is enough, it is all we need to convince us, that the time is near at hand, when Jesus shall reign king of all the nations. He will be with his future ministers, and will raise up of our children and the children of the church, to preach his name and his law to the ends of the earth. He will go with them and make his gospel glorious; and whatever difficulties they may meet from an opposing world, and the sluggishness of their own hearts; how often soever they may be driven to their closets and to their knees to beg divine direction when their way is hedged up in thick darkness, he will be with them, he will hear them, he will encourage their hearts and say to them, my strength shall be perfected in your weakness; the glory shall be mine, and it shall be your blessedness to behold it.

My Christian brethren, there is a very pleasing and solemn use may be made of this subject.

1. It teaches us to rejoice in the Lord our Redeemer, and in his kingdom.

He is a Redeemer all-sufficient for us and for the church. The kingdom which we profess to love, by the power and grace of its king, shall be established through the earth. The dark ages which we behold shall pass away, and men every where shall know and praise his name. Is there any true Christian, whose heart doth not leap within him for joy, in reading the promise, Lo! I am with you my children in all your difficulties, and I hear all your prayers. I am with thee my church, and though the mother may forget her fucking child, yet will not I forget thee, for thou art graven on the palms of my hands, and sealed in my heart; thou art my praise, I purchased thee with my blood and thou shalt reign with me in glory, and soon all the nations of men around thee, shall say, come let us go up to Zion with a song. This, my brethren, is our joy

and our hope, and we are not ashamed to have the unbelieving world hear us speak of the glory of Jesus of Nazareth, and declare our hope of offering up praise before the throne of the Lamb.

2. Let us not in these prospects forget the state we are now in, and the arduous duties we have to perform.

We are not yet come to the crown, nor are all the elect gathered in; we have yet to fight with beasts at Ephesus, and there are many Alexanders who will do much evil to us and the cause of our Lord. We have to wrestle with flesh and blood, with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. It is yet a time for wrestling and prayer and much tribulation. The beast is yet making war against the saints, and the dragon continues to cast waters out of his mouth after them. While we trust in him, who is called faithful and true, and hath a name written on his vesture, King of kings, and Lord of lords, let us abound in faith, in prayer, and in good works.

Two things are necessary for the faithful performance of our duty. The first is, to seek that we may grow in the Christian temper and practice, and by our faith and humility be lights in the world; and secondly, that we strive to spread a knowledge of this salvation to the ends of the earth. If we live in a manner unworthy our profession, we must expect that men will stumble over us to perdition; and if the time approaches, that he who ruleth in righteousness, will arise from his place to gather the world into his church, it is our duty to institute such means as we may expect him to bless in so great and glorious a work.

3. How solemn and encouraging is this subject to those of us, who have received a charge, in all faithfulness, and without the fear of men, to preach the gospel of Jesus. "To us who are less than the least

of all saints is this grace given, that we should preach among the Gentiles the unfearchable riches of Christ : to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God : according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord : In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." But who is sufficient for these things ? Who can feel the weight of this commission and not tremble for himself ? Who can reflect on the glory of God, which is connected with our fidelity ; and on the worth of those souls to whom we minister, without saying, " Woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips." But it is one of the wonderful works of sovereign grace, that the church hath this treasure in earthen vessels, and that God blesteth his word from the mouths of men who have like passions with others, and whose ministrations must be quickened by the Spirit, and cleansed in the blood of Christ. How humble, how circumspect, how studious, how diligent and prayerful we ought to be in this work ! How faithful to declare the whole truth ! How impressed with a sense of the worth of men's souls ! How weaned from the world and elevated to the kingdom of Jesus ! But while every discerning mind, in view of human weakness, would shrink back from the work ; for our encouragement we hear our Lord's promise, " Lo ! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." If we speak his word he will be with us. If we are humble he will strengthen us, and glorify and make himself powerful in our weakness. The cause, the crown, the glory, the eternal praise are his ; let us, therefore, neither be afraid nor unbelieving. If these souls, around us, may be saved through means so weak, greater glory will accrue to the divine name, than if angels were heralds of his law and grace. Let us never enter the sacred place of dispensing truth and grace, without humbling ourselves before

our Lord, and feeling the greatness of the duty we have to perform. Let us never look on the congregations to which we minister, without thinking, these souls are destined to life or to death eternal. Under all our darkness, coldness of heart, ministerial insufficiency, and personal troubles thro' the weakness of grace and from a world opposing the truth ; let us by much study of the scriptures, and much prayer, seek communion with our Lord, and wisdom and fidelity from him to do our duty. He is a gracious Redeemer and King, and if we thus do he will not forsake us.

I must conclude this tedious discourse, by particularly addressing our young Brother, who is now to be solemnly consecrated to the work of an Evangelist.

My young Brother in the faith of our dear and glorious Redeemer,

You are come, perhaps, to the most solemn period of your life, except it be that, in which you must leave the world to give an account of your stewardship. We doubt not but he who gave the promise, that he will always be with his church and bless its institutions, is present with us in these solemnities. You are now to receive a most important office, to take on yourself a weighty charge, and accept a commission for which you must give an account. You are to receive a commission and a charge, which, in its effects, will probably be a favor of life unto life, or death unto death to many souls. This work, to which you are called by the providence of the King in Zion, is the most difficult to perform and the most interesting in its consequences, of any to which man can be devoted. We do not promise you the honors of the world ; we do not flatter you with the prospects of earthly ease ; for you are entering in a state, in which there is much

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duty to perform. The Lord of Zion, by the authority of his name, vested in his church, will soon set you apart as an Evangelist, commissioned to declare Christ's name and his grace, wherever he shall call you by his providence. You are now to receive solemn views, from which, through light causes, you can never innocently go back; and from which you cannot dismiss yourself, without some very peculiar and visible leading in his providence. You are to receive the right as a minister in his kingdom, to reprove, rebuke and exhort; to preach the gospel in all its holy and gracious doctrines, to teach the mysteries and the grace of eternal life and of the kingdom of heaven purchased by the precious blood of Christ; to resist the enemies of our Redeemer and his truth; to apply the solemn admonitions of his word; to convince sinners by the authority of God and the reasonable arguments and awful sanctions of his law; to detect the false hopes of the hypocrite, and declare an eternal judgment, to the ungodly and unbelieving; to bind up the broken heart of the penitent, and assure those who believe, of the promises of grace and eternal life. Be faithful in all these duties, that you may win souls by displaying both the awful majesty and the grace of a dying and a reigning Saviour, who in his time, will come to judge the world and receive his saints to glory. But who is sufficient for these things? You must give yourself to prayer, to study, to meditation, to an examination of your own heart, and to a faithful search of the holy scriptures, which things are the means of an intimate communion with God and of receiving his assistance. You must go through evil as well as good report, and be prepared to meet trouble and affliction for the sake of our Lord and the souls of men. Be hardy as a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ; at the same time, exercising that patience, that diligence, that

benevolence, that love of souls, that ardent zeal for the glory of God of which Christ himself was an example.

My young Brother, You are going forth as an Evangelist. The commission we give you is more solemn and extensive than is commonly committed to our younger brethren. While you remember to invade no man's particular charge, you will also remember, that every perishing soul claims your love, and that you must leave no place where there are not the stated institutions of the gospel, until the name, the grace and the laws of our divine Redeemer have been preached.

We should not dare commission you, if we did not believe, and if we had not, at some times, experienced the truth of our Saviour's promise, "Lo! I am with you." We assure you of our hearts and our prayers; but rely only on the promise. When you find yourself weak; when you need assistance in the public duties of the church, or in private cases of difficulty; when you feel too imperfect to direct others, and are either bewildered or borne down with any difficulty, go to your closet, and let not your knees rise from before him, who never failed to hear his ministers and his people, until you can trust in his gracious direction. May the Lord be with and bless you.

Let the greatness of this assembly remind us all of a greater one, where each soul, must give an account of itself; and in the solemnities before us, may we join with one heart, to adore our God and Redeemer, and pray for the prosperity of Zion. AMEN.

THE CHARGE,

Given by the Rev. AMMI RUHAMAH ROBBINS, the Father of the ordained, and Pastor of the Church in Norfolk, Connecticut.

SIR,

YOU having been now separated to the work of the evangelical ministry, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of this Presbytery ;—and ordained an Evangelist to go forth into the vineyard of Christ; invested with authority to perform the duties of a gospel minister in its various branches.—

It remains that we exhort and charge you, faithfully to fulfil the ministry now committed to you.—We do, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing; in the presence of the elect angels, and this numerous assembly, solemnly charge you THOMAS, to be a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. And as you have now devoted yourself to his service, so, “Do thou the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

Take heed to your own soul ;—and watch for the souls of those to whom you may minister, and with whom you may be called to labor in the gospel. See to it that you know and supremely love the true God and Jesus Christ. That you feel and experience the power of his sanctifying grace in your heart. That, in the view of the glory of Christ, you can say with Thomas, “My Lord and my God.” Maintain, daily, a humble intercourse with heaven, and put your trust in Christ your divine Master. Hereby you will derive grace and strength to support you in the trials, temptations and burdens, which ever await a Christian minister.

We charge you to be faithful in your work, in all its duties. *Pray* much: alone, and with others. “*Preach* the word; be instant in season and out

of season." Preach plainly and faithfully, opening and inculcating the great doctrines of the gospel, and urging its duties and precepts. Seek not to please men ; but Christ, who hath chosen you to be a soldier.

We need not descend to a particular consideration of the doctrines and precepts you are to preach and urge. They are revealed. They are before you. Take this sacred book ; [giving him a Bible.] Keep it near your heart. Meditate therein, and " Study to shew thyself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed ;" and giving to every one, a portion in due season.

Declare, plainly, the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear. The importance of this you will readily feel, when you reflect that " Faith cometh by hearing," and that it " pleaseth God that by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Warn the wicked, and sound the alarm to the secure, stupid, sinner.—Reprove the vicious, with a spirit of meekness. Instruct the ignorant, and endeavor to convince the erroneous.—Guide the doubting,—comfort the desponding.—Invite the weary and heavy laden to Christ,—speak comfortably to the people of God, and endeavor to establish them more and more in his truth, and in his love.

We also charge you to administer the seals of the covenant of grace, Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; to those who appear to be the proper and qualified subjects. Affix the seal of Christ to those who profess to believe in him, and to their dear offspring whom they desire to dedicate to him. Exhibit the sacred Emblems of Christ crucified, to his followers : commune with them around his table ; and sweetly recognize the dying of the Lord Jesus.

Be an example of faith and holiness, to all around you ; wherever you go, and with whom you reside. That they may take knowledge of you, that

you have been with Jesus.—Visit the sick and wounded, both in body and spirit; and let your sympathy, instruction and counsels, be mixed with prayer.

And whenever you may be called to exercise the minister's trust, in ordaining and setting apart others to the holy ministry;—see to it, that on a faithful examination and due acquaintance, in a judgment of Christian charity, they be men of God; and experimentally acquainted with the religion of Jesus. Sound in the faith, of good ability, and able to teach others: that the ministry be not blamed, and the gospel contemned by the subtle artifices or open attacks of the enemies of God. Mind therefore, the direction of the holy apostle, and "Lay hands suddenly on no man." Thus we charge you, faithfully to perform all the duties of your office, as a Christian minister; devoting yourself to this great and good work, with assiduity, constancy and perseverance.

And now if you shall be enabled by divine grace and assistance, to keep this charge; you will be accepted of Christ, when you shall have finished your course; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory.

And now, MY SON, having given you this charge, in the name of Christ, and by the direction and appointment of this venerable council; I shall now, while you stand here before God, on this solemn occasion; take the freedom, to exhort and counsel you; as I have often done, from your childhood to this time.

Dear Child, Remember you was early devoted to God. You have been trained up with care and sollicitude, that, by the blessing of heaven, you might be enabled to do some service for Christ, in your day and generation. Consider the peculiar obligations you are under, to live near to God; to be humble and thankful; and do all in your power, for the honor of Christ, the advancement of his

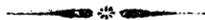
great kingdom, and the conversion and salvation of your fellow-men. Maintain a humble walk with God, and daily commune with the Lord Jesus. Watch against the enemies of your soul, and "Fight the good fight of faith."

You may expect trials, both inward and outward. But, exercising a humble trust and fixed confidence in God, you will be supported and carried through them. Be little in your own view, sensible of your weakness; but "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Let the honor of God ever lie near your heart; and be kindly affectioned to your fellow-men.

You are now called to go forth,—to preach and administer, to catechise and instruct in the wilderness far remote. There you will find people of every description; the friends and the enemies of the cross of Christ. You are sent and employed, under God, by those, who have the management of an institution; the most sacred, the most auspicious and favorable to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the souls of men; that has ever existed in our land. And, on which the smiles of heaven have been conspicuous, to the great joy of all the friends of Zion. Love and pray for the Missionary Society, for its Missionaries, and all its friends; and we will also pray for you.

Go, my Son, and the Lord be with you. Be not afraid; be not discouraged. It is safe to go, where Christ the Master calls you. Cleave to him, in all your journeyings and itinerations, from place to place, or in the lonely desert. Look up to Christ, cast all your burdens upon him, and he will be your help and support; and as your day is, so shall your strength be. In your preaching, conversation, visits, and all your ministerial instruction; be prudent, be cautious, be watchful. What shall I say more? "Be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove."

I desire now, renewedly, to give you up to Christ. May you be the Lord's and faithfully serve him. And when I am dead, and gone to give an account of my stewardship ; may you live many days ; and do eminent service in the church of Christ. May a double portion of his blessed Spirit rest upon you that you may long live to be a faithful, and (God grant it,) a successful Minister ; an instrument in turning many to righteousness. And may you thro' infinite, sovereign mercy, not be a castaway, after you have preached to others ; but be graciously accepted of your eternal Judge, and give up your account with exceeding joy. I conclude in the words of David to Solomon ; " Now, my son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thee."



RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

Given by the Rev. NATHAN PERKINS, D. D. Pastor of the Church in West Hartford.

AMONG the people of God, peace and love are virtues in themselves unspeakably amiable, and in their tendency blessed. Accordingly, in the sacred volume, they are recommended with frequency and earnestness, and celebrated with the utmost beauty of expression. Union among the friends of Christ in general, and especially his ministers, is of the highest consequence in order to their happiness and the prosperity of his cause, in the midst of abounding errors and infidelity.—*Behold, how good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity ! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, even Aaron's head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down the skirts of his*

garment. As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion : for there the Lord commandeth the blessing, even of life forevermore.—If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies ; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord—of one mind.

A scene of thankful joy is now before us, and peculiarly interesting.—As friends to the diffusion of the glories of the gospel, the present solemnity is such as to awaken our tongues to praise the Lord the fountain of light and blessedness, who presides over all the concerns of the children of men, and whose hand is especially conspicuous in all their spiritual concerns, and in the prosperity and welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom.—What but the rich goodness of a gracious God hath disposed his young servant, on whom the hands of the Presbytery have now been laid and ordination conferred agreeably to the usage of our churches, and, we apprehend, the will of the great head of the church, to accept of an appointment from the MISSIONARY TRUST, to an arduous and distant field of missionary labors and services : to go, and break the bread of life to our brethren in the wilderness—to proclaim peace and pardon, the glad tidings of redeeming love and grace to perishing sinners—to gather churches—to dispense the holy ordinances—and to invite his fellow-immortals along the path to the heavenly Zion.—Behold this young servant of the Lord, endowed, we trust, after a careful examination, with a gospel-furniture of gifts and graces, now devoting himself, on this, to him important day, never to be forgotten, to the help of the Lord as an Evangelist ; about soon to leave his native home, his father's house, to encounter the fatigue and hardships of travelling through a wilderness—to a distant wilderness of infant settlements to preach a crucified Jesus—to offer

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