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Archibald Alexander

ART. I.—*The Established Church of Scotland, with an account of the secession from the same.*

By a statistical table of the established Church of Scotland, published in 1720, the number of ordained ministers is 948; by a similar table of 1833, the number of pastors is 967; and the number of parishes 957. The increase of the clergy, therefore, in a space exceeding a century, does not amount to twenty; although, in that period, the population of the country must have been nearly doubled. It must be remembered, however, that the secession, which now includes one-fourth of the population, has occurred in this period; and other dissenters have also multiplied their numbers. These tables also, it is believed, do not include the ministers of the chapels of ease, and such as are without pastoral charge; such as professors in colleges, and tutors in private families; for we observe, that in the table of 1833, no minister is entered on the list, who is not the pastor of a parish. The reason, therefore, why the clergy are more numerous than the parishes, is that some parishes have more ministers than one.

In the former table, the number of synods is thirteen and the number of presbyteries sixty-seven; in the latter

struction, in ecclesiastical proceedings, may, no doubt, be derived from the enlightened study of the statute and common law of the land. But there is danger of being led astray by too much devotion to the principles and precedents of secular courts.

There is, perhaps, some reason for begging pardon of the readers of these remarks, for dwelling so long on a point so exceedingly plain. But respect for a venerable synod has led to an examination of the new doctrine, more extended and more careful than would have been thought proper, if it had been the speculation of an individual only.

ART. VI.—*The Lord Jesus Christ the example of the Minister.* J. N. Alexander

FROM the first months of childhood much that we learn is from imitation. What we see others do is thenceforth easier to ourselves, and in accordance with this principle of human action, God addresses us as imitative beings. We are told to be “imitators of God as dear children;” but lest the splendour and incomprehensibility of the divine model should confound us, “God manifest in the flesh” is made our example. The words of Christ have a wider application than to the eleven, “I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” And all secondary or intermediate patterns, (though Paul himself sit for the picture,) are to be compared with the lovely original. It is true of believers in general, that they ought to imitate the example of Christ and all coincident examples. It is true in a higher sense of ministers. To them Paul says, as to the Corinthians, “be ye imitators of me,” or rather of Christ in me. For observe, the holy apostle represents himself as only the reflector of Christ’s radiance; and therefore we are justified in leaving the mirror, and directing our views to the Sun.

The Lord Jesus Christ is in some way, nay in most respects inimitable. The two natures must be distinguished. In his divine nature Immanuel has no ministerial work;

and we can imitate him only in that looser sense in which we imitate Jehovah. In his sacerdotal character Christ cannot be imitated, for "there is one mediator only between God and man." But in his human nature, and more particularly as a teacher and preacher, he is imitable; he was imitated by Paul, and he must be imitated by us. Do we deny or forget that Christ is very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father? God forbid. To deny this, is to take out the corner-stone of our faith; to forget it, or withhold it, or mask it, or undervalue it, in our ministry, is to betray the truth of God. But, at the same time, we maintain that the exalted person who is very God, is also very man, and that his human nature united to the divine, was sanctified and anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure; and that we may safely and reverently copy his example, in the whole course of our ministry. The commission has in it something awful: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "He that receiveth you receiveth me." Ministers "are ambassadors for Christ," and it is becoming that they should resemble him whom they represent. They are ministers, or servants, and he has said, "If any man serve me, let him follow me." They are pastors, or shepherds, and he is "the chief Shepherd," "the good Shepherd."

We trust that to none of our readers will it seem needless or inappropriate, to exhibit to pastors the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, with respect to its subject, manner, and spirit. The subject of Christ's preaching may be dismissed with a few words, for it is the subject of all ministerial labours; and his manner is partly unknown to us, and partly evinced by the spirit of his work; so that we shall pass lightly over the first two points, in order to contemplate the third. But that these may not seem to be slighted, let something be remarked: First, of the *matter* of our Lord's instructions. It was truth; as he was primeval, uncreated truth. It was accordingly divine truth, from God, concerning God, leading to God. It was revealed truth, the same which had streamed in rills or rivers from the prophetic fountains of the Old Testament. And as it was meant for the faith of men, that they might be saved, it was the sole subject of our Lord's communications. It will appear in the sequel, that his wisdom always dispensed it fitly, where and when it was needed. It may be here said, that while Christ was authorised to originate revelations, and while every

thing he said was vouched by miracle, he still honoured all prior revelation, and that his preaching had reference to the record; it was *scriptural*. The scriptures were commended to the search of his hearers: "I have given them thy word:" and when hearers were misled, Jesus thus explained it, "ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures." He expounded the law in its severe extent and penetrating spirituality; he held up the divine testimony as the standard; and he died to fulfil its predictions. Our Saviour preached those truths which are *most valuable*. We find in his recorded discourses, no refinements, no ingenious impertinencies, no temporal trifles. They contain no disquisitions on natural science, though by him all nature was created; no entertainments for mere taste, though his sermons are unparalleled in exquisite beauty; no metaphysical subtleties, though "all the churches know that Jesus is he who searcheth the reins and hearts." When he began to preach, he cried Repent. He taught that the law had now introduced the Gospel, and the grand truth was his death. His discourses were searching, faithful, often tremendous in their denunciation. And if we do not find within the four gospels the same fulness and precision of statement and definition, which occur in the apostolical epistles, we are to remember that Jesus gave the seed rather than the fruit of many doctrines; that he purposely retained some things, enjoining silence on his disciples; and that a great number of his sayings were absolutely unintelligible to his intimate followers, until his death and resurrection made them plain. We may imitate our Saviour, in not giving strong meat to babes, and in not pressing truth prematurely; but we shall greatly err, and sin against the church, if we confine our mature hearers to the milk of elementary principles, or do not, on suitable occasions, bring forward the whole counsel of God, as now revealed in the completed canon of the Scriptures. We are, however, to follow Christ, even as Paul followed him, in the subject of our teaching.

II. A few words will suffice, concerning the *manner* of Christ's preaching and ministry. So far as this is separable from the spirit of our divine Master, we may observe that it was attractive and lovely, but at the same time, simple, clear, unaffected and solemn. Admiration and awe filled the multitude of his hearers. While the rich and great derided or questioned, "the common people heard him gladly." Where he meant to be understood on the spot, the manner

of his teaching was eminently and inimitably perspicuous. His language, yea his very idiom, was that of the mass of the people: and what he had said obscurely, he explained with patience. Yet the plainness of his words was not that inelegant rudeness which discards ornament. Lovelier ornament than that of the parables, we challenge all human literature to produce. Our Saviour dealt much in illustrations from every-day life, and scenes then under his eye. These were not for embellishment but elucidation; and the result was not so much pleasure, as force. For he was mighty, and there is a pregnancy in his concise observations, which has astonished even the infidel critic. The minister of the gospel will learn more by reading the four gospels, with the simple purpose of asking *how Christ preached*, than by all the volumes of critics, and all the schools of rhetoric.

III. But we gladly pass to our third and principal topic, which is the *Spirit* of Christ's ministry. Thousands have been successful preachers by following *Paul*; he was the professed model of Chrysostom, Augustin, and Luther. But all that was good in these, is in its source in *Jesus*.

The spirit of Christ's ministry is to be made the special directory of the preacher's spirit. Could we walk among men as he walked; could our lives breathe as his life breathed, the gentle hallowed influence of heaven, the church which we serve would be in spirit as it is in doctrine and order, a primitive church. When we contemplate the radiance of this character, we are dazzled; and we must needs sit down and take successive glimpses, inadequate indeed but delightful, of a glory which cannot be comprehended at one view. Cast your eyes towards the Son of God in his ministerial work, passing through the throng of a polluted world, as a purer being, from a higher sphere. Catch the traits of soul embodied in his walks of painful beneficence; and you shall see among them, love, candour, prudence, courage, tenderness, zeal, lowly meekness, toil, devotion, and self-denial.

1. *Love*. To give the proofs of Christ's love, would be to repeat the whole evangelical history. It shines in his eternal purpose, it irradiates every path of his life, it melts at his cross. In that part of the Redeemer's course which his ministers may imitate, there is a most affecting manifestation of benevolence, compassion, grace, mercy; in a word, all the kindly and charitable outgoings of the soul. The bodies and the souls of men were both his care. With equal sin-

cerity of heart he spake long and often to the multitude, or aided in the handicraft of his disciples, or hung over the bier of the departed. Are any of his wondrous works, miracles of vengeance—is there one of them which was not a miracle of mercy? Is there one sufferer whom he thrusts away? When crowds hemmed him in, some to perplex, some to deride, and some to murder, did he ever decline to teach the inquiring? Who among us can number up the list of his benefactions? What book could contain the history of his cures? While he healed he preached; yea, while he gave truth, he gave health, life, salvation. He seemed to repulse a Syrophenician woman. He seemed to reject her as a heathen—to cast her out among the very dogs; but it was only to enhance the weight of love in that closing word, “O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” It was the spontaneous compassion of Jesus, and not the cry of the multitude, which twice led to the feeding of the thousands. And their need of spiritual food also reached his bursting heart; for “when he saw the multitudes he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.” How prompt was his beneficence! My son dieth, said a certain nobleman. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth. He was a son of woman, and how much of tender manhood, of social, *human* affection breaks into view in all his intercourse with the family at Bethany—his sadness at the tidings about Lazarus, his condolence, his tears—for *Jesus wept*. As love was his great—his new—his last injunction to the disciples, so it was the reigning grace in his treatment of them: the very inspiration of his farewell discourse, and the crowning characteristic of his conversations after he had risen. Love embraced the infant; actuated his itinerancy, on foot, over the rough hills and torrid plains of Palestine; and flowed out to the poor and the dying in streams of relief; and breathed invitations wide as human woe; and uttered that lamenting cry: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not; behold, your house is left unto you desolate!” It was love that wept over the same city, in view of the very Golgotha where he was to die. It was love that was personified and held up to the view of angels and of God on that “place of skulls,” and that cursed cross. And we may take any discourse, any sentence,

any word of Jesus Christ, and find in it the signatures of the same affection. In public and in private, the minister of Christ may walk in these steps, moistened by the toils and the agonies of his loving Saviour. And we might hold your minds for hours upon this single point; but must proceed to name secondly, his

2. *Candour.* In the Son of man are manifested, openness, ingenuous frankness, transparent sincerity, freeness from guile, craft, finesse, concealment. Is it not superfluous to say so? It might be, if ecclesiastics, in some ages, pretending to follow Christ, had not made church-policy another name for insidious worldly statesmanship. Our blessed Lord has left an example for his ministers, that they should not endeavour to smooth the ruggedness, variegate the sameness, or expand the straitness of that thorny, direct, narrow way which leads to heaven. No converts need to be sought by false pretences. Christ makes no promises of ease, no offers of exemption from the cross; he refrains from no pungency of rebuke in order to gain favour; he wafts no flatteries to the great or the rich. Some would have followed him, whom he dismissed by simply showing that he was more homeless than the birds and foxes, or by explaining that all must be abandoned. "Think not I am come to send peace on earth—I came not to send peace, but a sword; for I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household. I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled!"—There went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said, "If any man come to me and hate not his family, yea his own life, he cannot be my disciple." "It is impossible but that offences will come." Christ denounced woes against every class of popular leaders, sects, rulers, and cities: and to the wealthy scrupled not an instant to say, "A rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom." And in proportion as we try to make the way easier than the Master has made it, we alter it, to the corruption of the church, and the ruin of souls.

3. But in all this, there was no austerity or pride; none of the distant reserve and haughty rigour of the contemporary philosophers; for we discern as a third aspect of Christ's ministerial spirit, his *condescension*. As a man, and as a divine instructor, Jesus has taught us to "condescend to men of low estate." It was a token of his mission that

he preached to the poor; and a taunt of his foes that he received sinners. Where good was to be done, there Christ was found, whether in the fishing-boat of Tiberias, the supper of the publican, or the tumult of the lower people. "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" asked the Pharisee. "Because, (answered the Master for himself,) the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." So far was he from the affected pomp of monkish virtue, and ascetic moroseness, that men pointed at his company, and falsely cried, "Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" This gentle condescension took the part of children when his followers would have sent them away, for he folded them in his arms, he laid his hands on their little heads, and said, of such is the kingdom of heaven!

4. In this, as in all the deportment of our Lord, there was as much wisdom as grace, as much knowledge of human nature as philanthropy. For we do not derogate from his spirit, when we attribute to it, in the fourth place, heavenly *prudence*. In all our vocabulary, there is scarcely a word more wronged than this. While the wiser heathen enrolled it among the cardinal virtues, the men of our day seem ready to tear it out as synonymous with timid cunning, which is the wisdom of weakness, or politic craft, which is the artifice of the wicked. It is no such thing, for in the words of Chief Justice Hale, prudence is used "principally in reference to actions to be done, and due manner, means, order, season, and method of doing them." Prudence is wisdom applied to practice. It is of God: "I wisdom dwell with prudence." It is predicated of God, who "hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." The minister of the gospel is as a sheep among wolves, he therefore needs to be wise as a serpent, while he is harmless as a dove. The great Exemplar should be his daily object of contemplation. The whole ministerial activity of Christ was governed by a wise reference to time, place, and circumstances. We do not find him using the same instrument for every work, or meeting all emergencies with an unalterable method. This is the way of the empiric. His discourses were adapted first to the hearers, then to the occasion. As Paul in following Christ, did not quote the rabbins to the Athenians on Mars' Hill, or Aratus and Epimenides to the Hebrews, so the Master himself was wise in observing time and opportunity. He taught, not to cast pearls before swine,

nor to put new wine into old skins. Remember the instruction of Nicodemus, the melancholy conference with the young man, the frequent disputations with lawyers, and the memorable dialogue at Jacob's well. Mark the fitness to the occasion of his lessons on humility when "he took a child and set it by him" and made it the text of a sermon: or on the bread of life, when the multitude followed him for loaves and fishes.—Jesus came into the world to die, but he did not expose himself to untimely peril. "No man taketh my life," said he. His unbelieving brethren would have constrained him to go to a feast of tabernacles; but he said, "My time is not yet come; the world hateth me; I go not yet up to this feast." And at the passover following, though his soul knew not fear, he departed and did hide himself from them. The Pharisees would fain have entangled him in politics, and made him out a leader of sedition. "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites," said our Lord, and with a simple coin baffled their malice, so that "they marvelled, and left him, and went their way." The Sadducees would gladly have caught him in the meshes of their Antinomian sophistry, but the scribe who asked him concerning the law, received in the sum of the decalogue a conclusive confutation. It would be endless to trace this quality in all its manifestations; if our eyes are open we shall descry it every day in the history of the Evangelists. And if we are wise, we shall use the lesson, to prevent our needlessly raising opposition, laying offences in men's path, bringing gratuitous contempt on the truth, or outraging the useful decorum of life, or precedent of the church. True, in many cases, the proximate effect will be the imputation of pride, lukewarmness, or cowardice; but in the end, and when a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

5. But there are extremes in religion, and the extreme of timorous caution is scarcely less to be deprecated than that of reckless fanaticism. When we turn our eyes to our divine example, we behold the golden mean. While our Lord was wise, he was undaunted. *Courage* is the fifth particular in which he is imitable. Not to dwell on the thought, that the whole mediatorial work of our incarnate God was a fearless assault upon the powers of evil, we may observe that holy boldness shone in his ministry. It is no sufficient reason for withholding truth, that it is disagreeable to ungodly men; and our Saviour sometimes so spake that not

only were his *adversaries* filled with rage, but “many of his *disciples* went back, and walked no more with him.” Under his piercing discriminations, and his claims to a divine character, the Jews were indignant and even frantic, so that, not content with reviling, they sought to kill him on the spot, and failing of this, obtained their hellish wish by a more circuitous method. Nevertheless he went right onward; boldly, yet full of love. If we observe the connexion, we shall see, that his tears over Jerusalem immediately preceded his fearless expulsion of the traders from the temple: so nearly allied were his courage and his love. Again and again, before large assemblies of the most learned, noble, and arrogant leaders, did he inveigh against them as hypocrites, deceivers, and doomed to unutterable woe. *His* teaching was the reverse of theirs: the people were astonished at his manner of preaching, “for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” This authority, so far as it pertained to Christ’s mediatorial character, the preacher may not assume, but he may, under his commission, “speak and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority,” letting no man despise him; and rebuking them that sin, before all, that others also may fear. There are times, even now, when hearkening to God more than unto men, he may be bold in our God: for if we seek to please men we are not the servants of Christ.

6. Alas! how easily such tempers, in the earthen vessels become mingled with human passions, so that the gentleness of Christ is scarcely recognised among the turbulence of wrathful, proud, and untender feelings. The spirit of our Master’s ministry, was eminently that of *tenderness*. It is the sixth in this constellation of graces. Where shall we begin, where all is the very ideal of gentle, sympathizing affection? It was predicted, “a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench.” It is impossible to imagine that such sentiments as his were ever uttered with the frown of menace, or the rudeness of oburgation. When his ministry was for the time without effect on some, he gently alludes to a game of Israelitish children, and says, “we have piped unto you and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you and ye have not wept.” When a rich young noble turns away, Jesus does not pursue him with a fulmination, but is very sorrowful. The mother of the sons of Zebedee makes a request, so startling, that “the ten were moved with indignation against the two brethren,”

but Christ simply, and tenderly, uses the incident to repress ambition. And the spirit of his preaching is well expressed in the kind invitation "come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

7. In order to show, however, that the tenderness of Christ was not incompatible with fervour, let us further adduce his *zeal*. Zeal is not good in itself, being simply, passionate ardour, which may be for good or evil. Much that passes under the name is strange fire. Such was that of the beloved disciple when he forbade a certain person to cast out devils in Christ's name; or of the same apostle and his brother, when they seemed ready to call fire from heaven to consume the inhospitable Samaritans. But our Redeemer "turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what spirit ye are of." The ardour of Jesus was a serener glow, yet it was not inefficient. Under its impulse, he overturned the tables of the money-changers, and scourged them from the temple; but even here it would seem to be only another aspect of love, for it is instantly added, "and the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them." His disciples remembered that it was written: "the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Even when suffering for food, he declared that it was his meat and drink to do the will of the Father. And in this spirit he lived and died. Could we, brethren in the ministry, catch the holy ardour which bore forward our Master through cares and anguish—could we, like him, forget our selfish interests in the great work of rescuing souls and glorifying God—could we even, like an humbler model, stand immoveable amidst danger and flattery, so that we might finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus, we might justly hope to number a hundred converts where we sadly welcome one, and expect to shine as stars in the firmament of glory.

8. Passing now to other characteristics, let me observe, that *Humility* and *Meekness* are nearly allied, and that they both adorned the ministry of Christ. It was his oft-repeated maxim, "whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." And he taught that even little ones were not to be despised. How touching was his exemplification of this lowliness. "The Son of man (such was the language of his conduct) came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He humbled himself, and made himself of no reputation: he took upon him the form of a servant; and we are exhorted by

Paul to let the same mind be in us. "Whether is greater,"—he once affectingly asked—"he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth!" And when he bowed down to the menial service of washing his disciples' feet, just when he was about to die for them, he said: "Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am: If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." Under injuries, our Lord was exemplary in meekness: "who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He was derided, he was maligned, he was pursued, he was encompassed with insults. "Reproach," said he in prophecy, "hath broken my heart." He was accused of sedition, taunted as a madman, a Samaritan, a demoniac, a blasphemer, yet he resented not. See him in his last sufferings, "he was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." Let this move us to pardon affronts from whomsoever received, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: "*even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.*"

9. A ninth particular, is the *laborious and painful assiduity* of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this he was followed by the Apostle of the Gentiles. In this he must be followed by us, if we would stand clear of the blood of souls. A minister must not only not be slothful; he must be above the suspicion of sloth. Paul's language to Timothy conveys the idea of rapid and pressing activity: "preach the word—be instant—in season—out of season." Be wholly in these things. That is, be in nothing else. The minister of Christ is not called to be a scientific inquirer, a politician, an agriculturist, a literary devotee—though the parsimony of the churches or the desire of avoiding offence, have sometimes forced holy men into secular pursuits; still less is he called to be a convivial companion, a fashionable flutterer, or a habitual idler; but to give himself *continually to prayer and the ministry of the word.* To such a life he

has the sacred incitement of example. *He* went about doing good. On the mount, on the lake, on the strand, in the field, in the highway, in the house, by night, by day, in Galilee, in Samaria, in Judea, in the synagogue, and in the temple, Jesus was labouring. When the plot was maturing, when life was ebbing, when the last passover was almost begun, he spent his nights on Olivet, and his days teaching in the temple. We read that he began "early in the morning." "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." Wearied with the greatness of his way, he nevertheless taught the Samaritan woman, as he leaned upon the well. And even when apprehended, he turned aside from his own woes, both in Gethsemane and on his way out of the city, to drop gracious words on his followers. In the forty days previous to his ascension, he still taught, and the language of his whole example to each of us is, "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

10. To sustain a gospel minister in such labours, something is necessary beyond habitual diligence, or mere professional zeal. There may be great stir and bustle, and activity, and yet no gospel efficiency. What we need is a spring of holy influence always within us, gushing out like a river-head of living waters. What shall secure this? Answer, the grace of God in the heart, working *holiness and devotion*—the tenth trait in our Lord's ministerial character. Oh that every pastor could say to the people whom he serves, or has served, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." Paul could say so, for he followed Christ; and Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." After a certain tour of preaching and healing, we are told, "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and he taught in the synagogues, being glorified of all." The indwelling Spirit was in the head, as in the members, a spirit of grace and supplication, and frequent are the incidental but pathetic notices of our Lord's retreats for private devotion. By these Olivet and Gethsemane were signalized, long before his final agony. Here he "rejoiced in spirit," here he doubtless groaned and wept, here he cried, "even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." How often did he, after days of weariness, spend the nights in solitary watching and prayer! While the storm was on the lake, Jesus, having dismissed an immense audience was gone "up

into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone." When the fame of him increased, "he withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed." The seventeenth chapter of John is a blessed fragment of his intercessions. In the garden he prayed in agony: he was sorrowful, sore amazed, very heavy, yet he prayed "with strong crying and tears." And in that very hour of darkness he exhorts us, "watch and pray." On this point we need say no more.

11. Finally. Let us detain the reader only to hint at our Redeemer's *self-denial*. Christ died upon the cross, but his whole foregoing life was a life of cross-bearing. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." We are not called to expiatory sufferings, and we are forbidden to attempt neglecting of the body in the sense of meritorious penance. But hear the declaration to all believers, and preeminently to ministers: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." When tempted to indolent self-pleasing—the bane of ministerial fidelity—let them remember that "even Christ pleased not himself." If the unpleasantness, the shame, the toil, the pain, the danger of any duty, is sufficient to keep them from its performance, they are therein practically renouncing the yoke of Him, who has said, "he that loveth his life shall lose it." It is, or ought to be understood, that every step of ministerial life is against the course of this world. Is it not enough for preachers to be as their master? "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" And every minister has reason to suspect himself, when any day occurs in which no tide of opposition, mental or external, is opposed: for he who floats with the current, floats away from God.

May God, of his infinite mercy, make our ministers in the matter, manner, and spirit of their ministry, the followers of all who follow Christ, and especially of himself, whom they call Master and Lord, and who was loving, sincere, wise, undaunted, tender, ardent, lowly, laborious, devout, and self-denying. Whether successful or unsuccessful, they shall then be pleasing to God: for they are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one they are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?