

Amber

1919

A SERMON,

Preached, in the college of Philadelphia, at the
ordination of the Rev'd. Samuel Jones, A. B.

By *MORGAN EDWARDS*, A. M.
Minister of the BAPTIST Church in the said City.

To which are annexed, A narrative of the
ordination; and, A charge delivered
on the occasion.

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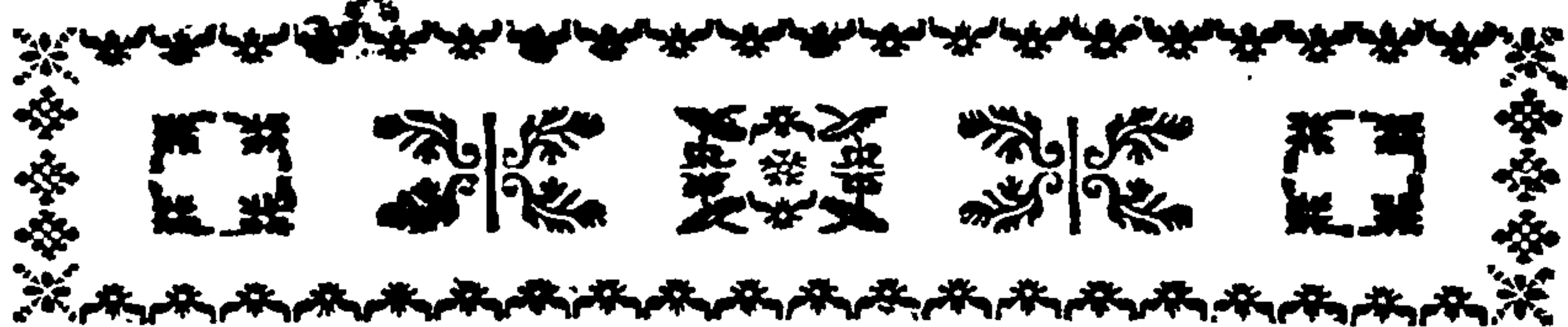
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R O M. xi. 13.

----- *I magnify mine office, or, ministry.*

THAT the sacred 'office' or 'ministry' is the same now, that it ever was, may be argued from the sameness, and perpetuity of the end to be answered by it. And the perpetual sameness of the end, implies, that the present 'officers' or 'ministers' are the same with the first, in all things necessary to promote that end, tho' they be not 'apostles,' 'prophets,' 'workers of miracles,' &c. But a 'sign' of Christ, and an 'audible mission' from his lips, which formed the distinction of an 'apostle'; 'inspiration', or 'a knowledge of future events,' which gave rise to the title of 'prophets'; and a 'belief, that God would immediately bring to pass' what a person commanded, which constituted the 'workers of miracles', were but circumstantial things; and neither essential to the ministry, nor peculiar to ministers. Separate those circumstances from the first officers, and they become like their successors; just as Samson became "as another man" when his miraculous hair was cut off. Tho', therefore, the above titles, and some other, be now extinct, yet it does



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does not follow, that any proper parts or branches of the ministry are lost. Neither are any of its proper branches alienated. Those, occupied by 'deacons', 'evangelists', 'helps', 'governments', &c. were not abdicated by ministers, any more than royal prerogatives are by kings, when they appoint delegates, and commissioners. It was the exigency of affairs that gave rise to those inferior officers in the church; and, where they are not wanted, they become superfluous; and ministers are "all in all". And it is remarkable, that ministers ordain 'deacons', 'evangelists', &c. and not they, one another; which is an argument, that their offices are still comprised in the ministry. And, if these observations be just, it follows, that there is no impropriation in the words "MINE office", which prevents ministers, of the present age, to call it 'THEIR office', in the same full and proper sense that Paul stiled it 'his own'; the forementioned circumstances excepted, which no way touch the essence of the ministry. And if his office be ours, we, like him, should "manifest", or "honour", or "glorify" it; each reading of the Greek verb, in our text, being current in the New Testament. How we shall 'magnify' the office, may be learned, from Paul's remarks upon it---From his deportment in it---From his descriptions of persons who may, and may not bear it---And from the directions he gives to them who are in it.

I. The

I. The remarks, he made on his ministry, are examples of his assertion, "I magnify mine office"; for they amount to the highest praises, and commendations of it.

1. He observed, that the origin of it is divine. "I received it not of man, but of God". Gal. i. 11, 12. And, by this tracing of it to its original rise in heaven, he gives it magnificence, superior to all human offices. So the heroes, of old, magnified themselves above the sons of men, by asserting, that they were begotten of the gods. So the Ephesians magnified their Diana, by giving out, "That the image fell down from Jupiter". The ministry, like the new Jerusalem in the book of Revelation, "Came down out of heaven from God". And Paul, by proclaiming its high descent, honours, and ennobles it. "I magnify mine office".

2. He remarked, that the ministry is an 'embassy'; and that ministers are 'embassadors,' dispatched from the king of kings to negotiate the weighty affairs of his kingdom and government. 2 Cor. v. 10. A remark this, much to the honour of both! for embassies, and ambassadors imply nobility, and majesty. And he that exhibited his office in such a courtly mode; and aggrandized the officers with such a title, might well say, "I magnify mine office". And wonder

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wonder we, after this, that Jews, and Gentiles were wont to stile their priests, ‘princes’? Gen. xli. 45. Isai. xliii. 28.

3. He noticed, the absolute ‘necessity’ of the office. “Thereby it pleaseth God to save them that believe---How can they believe without hearing? and how can they hear without a preacher”? 1 Cor. i. 21. Rom. x. 14. If salvation from hell, and obtaining heaven, be matters of the highest concern to a world of sinners; and if preaching be means of rescuing them from the one, and bringing them to the other, then is the ministry ‘necessary’, and vastly important. And he that affixed indispensability to the office, not only ‘magnified it’ himself; but showed cause, why all, that have souls to be saved or lost, should join him in ascribing magnificence to it.

4. He forgot not to inform mankind, that the office is every way equal to its end, in order to ‘magnify it’ in their esteem. Means are no otherwise valuable, than as they are efficacious. When they are insufficient to produce the expected effect, they are nothing worth. “The weapons of our warfare are mighty, to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; and bringing into captivity every thought to the
the

“the obedience of Christ”. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. And the efficacy of the ministry is the subject he treats on, in the chapter whereof the text is a part. The Gentiles, he shows, were “reconciled, enriched, and saved” by his ministry. ver. 12, 15. And this success, by provoking the Jews to emulation, conduced to save them also. ver. 14. And the marking of this direct, and this collateral operation of his ministry, is the thing he refers to, when he saith, “I magnify mine office”.

And this ‘divine’, ‘grand’, ‘indispensable’, and ‘efficacious’ office, is, my brother, the office wherein you are to be installed this day. In a prospect of which, I could, almost, address you with a “Hail, thou highly to be favoured of the Lord”! The divine origin of it, will denominate you a DIVINE. The nature of it, will raise you to the dignity of an EMBASSADOR. The indispensability of it, will make you one of the NECESSARIES of the laity. And the efficacy thereof, will render you a BENEFACTOR of mankind. And, when you leave the world, you will be missed; and lamented in some such manner as a prophet of Israel was, 2 King. ii. 12. Sir! what gratitude do you owe to him that “counted you faithful, putting you “in the ministry”? What dignity of behaviour does so illustrious an office require from you? “If a little folly, in worldly honour, sendeth
“forth

“forth an ill favour”, how much more, impropriety of conduct, in the honours of priesthood? And as for sin, how “exceeding sinful” must it appear in comparison with the sacredness of the ministry? Surely the contrast, which the office forms between the clergyman, and vice, is very strong.

II. Paul’s ‘deportment’ in the office instructs us, further, how he ‘magnified’ it; for his whole deportment was shaped and adjusted into an aptitude to render the ministry successful; which is the readiest way to make it ‘great’, and ‘glorious’. Success, he made his point. And every sort of behaviour that promised him the gaining of this point, he approved; every course that threatened to impede, or frustrate success, he avoided. This observation I shall exemplify in his ‘Mortification--- Self-denial--- Zeal--- Flexibility--- Passiveness--- and Prayers’.

1. He foresaw that untamed lusts, passions, and inordinate affections, would hinder, nay overthrow his project of ‘saving souls by the means of preaching’; just as domestic rebels, in power, obstruct the enterprizes of a prince against foreign enemies: that his “earthen vessel” must be cleared of such vile contents, lest it should spoil the ministerial treasure; and make men reject it, as they do the best liquor that is tainted with the cask: and that a ministry, pointed
against

against the "deeds of the flesh", must be enforced with examples in the minister himself; lest it should not prevail against fleshly lusts in others. Therefore he injured himself to "mortification". "I keep under my body, and bring it to subjection--- In fastings often". 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Cor. xi. 27. How much the success of the ministry depends on this "keeping the body under", and "bringing it to subjection", will more strongly appear by admitting the opposite case. Suppose, then, that Paul had entered on the ministry with rampant lusts, ungovernable passions, depraved appetites and dispositions; and the very supposition prognosticates the uselessness of his office; and ascertains the contempt, instead of the magnifying of it. Critical circumstances would have brought those unhallowed guests to light. Then his authority would have been gone; and the power of example, lost. The ministry, wherewith he had been invested, would have become "a garment spotted with the flesh"; and have appeared rather like a flag of truce with carnal lusts, than an ensign of war against them. His reproving sins would have had no other effect, than to provoke his hearers to retort upon him with this taunt, "Physician, heal thy self". And his ministry, like that of Moses, would have had no glory; because, upon this supposition, he would have resembled Moses's preachers, "They said, but did not", Matth. xxiii. 3.

2. He perceived, that 'wilfulness,' and 'self-pleasing' ought not to be indulged in an expedition, which has to do with the will and pleasure of many; and which must fail of success, in case their unwillingness and displeasure should continue. Therefore he determined to exercise a thorough 'self-denial,' when the ministry might gain any advantage by it. "I please all men in all things." 1 Cor. x 33. "If meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat flesh while the world standeth," 1 Cor. viii 13. "Who is offended, and I burn not?" 2 Cor. xi 29. The gratification of his own desire he esteemed a thing of nought, in comparison of public good. The expediency of such a conduct will appear more striking, from the mischievous effects that will attend the opposite behaviour. Suppose Paul to have been wilful, heady, bent on self-pleasing, fixed to his own humour, and untutored in the art of self-denial; suppose the laity to have had wills and ways of their own also; and to have been no "wiser than their teacher" in point of obstinate attachment to them, would he not have laboured in vain? No yielding would have taken place. No concessions would have been made. And therefore no good could have been done. His ministry would have taken no effect. Nor could the people have received any benefit. And for this reason a "self-willed man" is precluded the ministry by an interdict of heaven. Tit. i 7.

3. Ob-

3. Obvious it was to Paul, that the ministry required vigorous and incessant efforts ; and, that those efforts must have some strong and lasting motive ; therefore, that his ministry might never want such efforts, he possessed himself with “great zeal.” Than which, no motive could have been more proper ; because of its energy in urging and impelling its possessor. The “thorn in Paul’s flesh” drove him not so forcibly to frequent and fervent prayer, as “zeal” for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, stimulated his mind to labour and adventurousness in the ministry. And, to cherish this zeal, he kept his attention to the misery of sinners ; the crown of joy that was set before him ; and the strict account he must give of his stewardship. Touched with their misery ; inflamed with the glorious reward ; and moved with the fear of that account, his zeal became “as fire shut up in his bones, or as new wine that hath no vent. His heart was ready to burst, like a new bottle.” This restless glow in his bosom, made forbearance wearisome ; and, like a Jehu, drove him furiously to the most hazardous enterprizes, and indefatigable industry “I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren--that they might be saved.” Rom. ix 3. x. 1. Surely, he that could express such a wish as this, must be influenced by a very impetuous zeal for the salvation
of

of sinners ! And that this zeal was necessary, will thus appear. Suppose he had been devoid of such a principle, would he not have been daunted at difficulties, and wearied with labour and hardships ? Would he not have shrunk at dangers ? Would not his efforts have been faint, and few ? And, if he must have preached the gospel, would he not have been content with the opus operatum, or mere performance of the duty, tho' "Israel had not been gathered" ? And how then could his office have been 'magnified' ? It is the want of this zeal, that makes ministers go about their work, as the slothful go to their labour ; that makes them easy whether they succeed or not ; and careless how little they do, provided they get their salaries ; that makes their preaching flat and cold ; and that, at last, makes themselves become "as salt that hath lost its favour".

4. Paul was aware that men are most accessible by persons like themselves ; and are to be gained over in their own way, rather than in any other. So birds will be decoyed, only, by representations of their own forms and plumage, and imitations of their own notes. Therefore he became 'flexible', in behaviour and address, to the conditions, and understandings of all men. Himself, he shaped, as it were, to the forms, tastes, ways, and peculiar casts of all--

“To the Jews, I became a Jew; to the Gen-
 tiles, a Gentile; to the lawless, as without
 law; to the legal, as under the law; to the
 feeble, weak; to the strong, mighty.” 1 Cor.
 ix. 20--22. His preaching, he fitted to the
 ears that were to receive it; and accommodated
 his arguments to the various methods of reason-
 ing, used by them he addressed. To the Jews,
 he preached as the law and the prophets require-
 ed, Act. xiii. Among the Gentiles, he speaks
 as Aratus, Menander, Callimachus, or any
 other, of their authors, who spoke well, Act.
 xvii. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 33. Tit. i. 12. Courtiers,
 he addressed with the delicacy of one “clothed
 “in soft raiment”, Act. xxv. Among the phi-
 losophers at Athens, he touches on nature, the
 subject of their study, and from thence bends
 his discourse to the God of nature, Act. xvii.
 To the weak, his preaching was simple as milk,
 1 Cor. iii. 2. And among the perfect, mysteri-
 ous and profound, 2 Cor. ii. 6. Thus he, like
 Proteus, transformed himself to all shapes,
 “that he might save all”. And, like Echo,
 tuned his voice to all strings, that he might pro-
 duce sympathetic vibrations in every breast,
 “I make my self all things to all men, that by
 “all means I might save some--and become
 “the servant of all, that I might gain the more”.
 1 Cor. ix. 19, 22. The subservience of such
 flexibility and assimilation, to the success of the
 ministry, will further appear from the following
 contrast,

contrast. Suppose Paul had been of a dogmatical disposition, how could he have so ingratiated himself with men, as to gain his design? Had he been uncompliant in things lawful or indifferent? had he opposed what he might have let pass? and stood on punctilios, that might have been given up, would he not have strained at gnats, to the losing of camels? Had he not been a man of "good behaviour" with the well bred; or had he been formal and stiff with them of low degree, would he not have been despised by the former, as a "barbarian"; and by the latter, as a proud priest? And what good could a despised preacher have done to either? Had he addressed the ignorant, as the knowing; and the knowing, as the ignorant, would he not have offered affronts to the understanding of the one; and have "spoken in an unknown tongue" to the other; and so have become useless to both? In a word, if he had not complied, conformed, and condescended; if he had not "made himself all things, to all men; and pleased all men in all things", as far as honesty and consistency allowed; if he had not made himself "the servant of all", could he have 'magnified his office' in the manner he did? A minister is called "a fisher of men". And if a fisherman suite not his baits to the fish; and exercise not the various flights of his art, must he not say, "I have toiled, and caught nothing"?

5. His knowledge of mankind informed him, that they, thro' ignorance, or perverseness, or caprice, or ingratitude, would oppose his endeavours to do them kindness; and would requite him evil, for good; and that therefore, he must either, bear such things; or decline his attempts. But the latter, he knew, would diminish, and not 'magnify his office'. Therefore he resolved to use a most extensive 'passiveness'. "Being reviled, I bless; being defamed, I intreat; being persecuted, I suffer it. I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain salvation", 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. 2 Tim. ii. 10. The Corinthians owed him the honour of a father; yet behaved undutifully. Instead of resenting this, he cries, "My little children--- I will very gladly spend, and be spent for you; tho' the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved", 2 Cor. xii. 12. The Galatians, once, would have "given their eyes for him"; nevertheless they, afterwards, treated him as an "enemy". Instead of upbraiding them, he declares, "Ye have not injured me at all". ch. iv. 12. The Thessalonians behaved to him with the forwardness and folly of children; yet "he was gentle as a nurse among them", 1 ep. ii. 7. 'Passive obedience, and non-resistance', were never so assiduously preached for the service of a state, as they

they were thoroughly practised, by Paul, for the service of the ministry. How this passiveness tended to promote his design, may be illustrated by the reverse thereof. Suppose Paul, when affronted, had been of an unpassive temper; would he not have given way to resentment? And when ingratitude had been shown him, would he not have used railing accusations? Would not these have irritated the offenders; and the offenders, by way of retaliation, have exasperated the accuser? Would not altercations, hatred, shyness, or, perhaps, hostilities then have ensued? Would not he be burning with choler; and the people be lying in wait to do him despite? And thus, he must have become incapable of doing, and they of receiving, any benefit; and the ministry, and people must have suffered through his want of temper. Wherefore, "he that is soon angry" is not to be admitted into the ministry, Tit. i. 7. Epicurus counts him no philosopher; that cannot "bear and forbear" for great ends. Much less is he to be esteemed a minister of Jesus Christ, who will not endure evils, and refrain from revenge for the sake of saving souls. What a French author saith of a minister of state, may be applied to a minister of the Gospel, "He must be absolute master of his passions; or rather have no passions at all". So David and Saul

Saul became, “as men that hear not, and in whose mouths are no reproofs”, in order to gain the sons of Belial, that clamoured and rebelled against them, 1 Sam. x. 27, Psal. xxxviii. 13. And persons in the sacred office, must, sometimes, be as men that can neither hear, see, feel, nor speak; must put up with affronts, and not resent ill usage. The bulk of mankind are too apt to be ungrateful; and perverse; to mistake their friends, for their enemies; their advantage, for their prejudice; their passions and humours, for reason; and their caprice, for conduct. And as these have most need of the ministry, so, the minister will have to do chiefly with such as these. But without passiveness, or bearing and forbearing, it will be impossible to deal with them. Such a meek temper, and gentle carriage, may, by some, be considered as ‘tamefulness’, ‘servility’, and ‘meanness of spirit’; but if they weigh the reason, design, and difficulty thereof, they will rather applaud them, as instances of great heroism, and great goodness of heart. And ministers, devoid of these, can neither act in character, nor ‘magnify their office.’

6. When Paul understood, that men, and all the arts of men, were “nothing, except
C “God

“God should give the increase”; then “his
 “earnest prayers, day and night, were, that
 “God would give that increase”. Then he so-
 licited the churches to join their prayers, with
 his, for the same blessing; as may be seen in
 most of his epistles. And “great, and conti-
 “nual were his sorrow and heaviness”, while
 that exertion of divine power was deferred, Rom.
 ix. 1, 2. How requisite such a conduct was, to
 the success of the ministry, may be made plainer
 by allowing him to have acted otherwise. Sup-
 pose him not to have been convinced “That
 “Paul is nothing, Apollos nothing, and Ce-
 “phas nothing”, in point of rendering the mi-
 nistry efficacious, would he then have depended
 upon “the power which is of God”; or have
 fought for it in earnest? Or would he not, ra-
 ther, have presumed, that his fine parts, learn-
 ing, eloquence, and industry, would be “suf-
 “ficient for this thing”? And could he then
 have “magnified his ministry”, by making it a
 “favour of life unto life” to any? Or, must
 he not rather have been confounded and disap-
 pointed, at last, and have said, with them of
 old, “This is the finger of God”, and I was
 not equal to the task? And must not the world
 have reported of him, in Grotius’s lamentation,
 “He took a great deal of learned pains to do
 “nothing?

“ nothing” ? I am afraid, that the uselessness of some ministers, and, consequently, the dishonour of their office, are owing, either to their indifference about the success of their preaching ; or, to a want of conviction, that without the concurrence of divine power, they cannot convert one sinner ; and therefore it is, that they do not pray for that power, with importunity, and perseverance.

Thus have we taken a cursory view of Paul’s conduct, as a minister, in several of its branches. And have had reason to observe, that it, like a well laid scheme, was an excellent contrivance to render the ministry ‘ great’, ‘ honourable’, and ‘ glorious’, by making it useful. And, if we examine the other parts of his conduct, we shall discover sufficient ground for making the like remark upon them. Desire of success was the director and regulator of his life ; and all the circumstances thereof were disposed to favour that success ; as the several incidents in a dramatic plot, favour the catastrophe. And this, my brother, is the man that cries to you, and me, “ Be ye followers of me” ! And if we neglect the exhortation, and decline the example, shall we not be like them, “ who know how to do good, but do it not” ?

III. The descriptions which Paul gives of persons who may, and may not be admitted into the ministry argue, not only, that he himself "magnified the office"; but, that he was anxious to have it magnified by others, when he should be no more. By one of those descriptions, he points out, and recommends the men who are worthy of the ministry; by the other he specifies, and precludes persons who are disqualified to bear the office. Therefore these descriptions are, in effect, standing tests of fitness, and unfitness for the sacred function.

1. The following description shews us, how anxious Paul was to have the office filled with persons that would be a credit to it. Each candidate, he saith, "must be blameless; the husband of one wife", if a husband; "vigilant, sober; of good behaviour; given to hospitality; apt to teach; patient; one that ruleth well his own house", if master of a family; "a lover of good men; just; holy; temperate; must hold fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught; must be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince gainayers; and must have a good report of them that are without". 2 Tim. iii. 2---10. Tit. i. 7---9. And lest they, who are to confer the

the office, should be deceived with appearances; he advises them, "To lay hands suddenly upon no man"; but to let time ascertain the reality of his qualifications. "Let him, first, be proved".

2. His description of persons that may not hold the office, discovers his concern for the honour of it; for he, thereby, precludes ~~all~~, whose unfitness, whether moral or natural, would, of necessity, sink it to contempt. They, whom he describes, by way of preclusion, are the following. (1.) "Every man that is given to wine; a striker; covetous; greedy of filthy lucre; a novice; a brawler; accused of riot; unruly; self-willed; soon angry". And, indeed, every one that lives in any allowed sin; for "the candidate must be blameless". 1 Tim. iii. 3--6. Tit. i. 6, 7. (2.) He seems, in one place, to preclude every one, on whom former crimes had fixed an indelible scandal. So the sons of Eli, and Barzillai, were thrust out of the priesthood; the one for uncleanness, in the sanctuary; the other, for a commixture with heathens, the evil effects of which were remediless. 1 Sam. ii. iii. Ez. ii. 62. The reason of the above preclusion, may be, that such a person must hold the office to a great disadvantage. His enormities, tho' repented of, will ever be remembered; and, therefore,

therefore, his moral aspect will always appear hideous to men, like a mangled face after the wounds are healed. (3.) Some are, by nature, the “weaker vessels;” and he forbids depositing the ministerial treasure in such. “I suffer not a woman to teach.” 1 Tim. ii. 12. And by parity of reason, he precludes all whom nature intended not for the office, viz. Such as are defective in understanding, utterance, insuperably irascible, &c.

And now, judge ye, if a man who took such care to furnish the ministry with persons, duly qualified; and to keep out of it, all that would disparage it, had not reason to say, “I magnify mine office”? Judge you, my brother, if you be not bound to use the same care, and caution, as long as you call his office, your own?

IV. The directions which Paul gives to persons, in the office, account for what he declares, in our text; for they are directions admirably well calculated to “magnify his office.”

I. He directs them to stand disengaged from secular avocations, and to devote themselves wholly to the ministry. “Give thyself wholly to these things. No man, that warreth, entangleth

“ tangleth himself with the affairs of this life,
 “ that he may please him who hath chosen him
 “ to be a foldier.” 1 Tim. iv 15. 2 Tim. ii. 4.

The reason, of the above direction, is plain; no man can ‘ magnify the ministry’, except he excel in it ; no uninspired man can excel, except he give himself wholly to it. And, that ministers might not be necessitated to incumber themselves with the world, God hath appointed them a maintenance from the people. 1 Cor. ix. 14. He hath also allowed them deacons, that even the temporal affairs of the church, should not engross their time, and attention. Act. vi. 1--7. They, therefore, who unnecessarily embarrass themselves with worldly avocations, must needs dishonour their office. Not only by the poor figure they will make in it ; but also, by their rebellion against the will of God ; the dishonesty they are guilty of ; and the sacrilege they commit. I say ‘ unnecessarily.’ For those good Christians who will do something rather than let the cause sink, and let the people be “ as sheep
 “ without a shepherd ; and who think, a “ wo
 “ will be to them if they preach not the gospel,
 “ and yet can not live of the gospel,” are, in my opinion, objects of divine, and human benevolence. While one hand does the work of the ministry, and the other laboureth for daily bread,

bread, they become worthy of double honour. Therefore Paul shines not so gloriously any where as at Corinth, where necessity obliged him to preach, and make tents. But without necessity, such a conduct involves in it a complication of vices. The ministers expectations are stinted to "food and raiment". 1 Tim. vi. 8. If, therefore, they can "live of the gospel", nothing but discontent with their wages, and the love of money, can induce them to "serve God and Mammon". A master has a right to his servant's time and labour. But if the servant employ that time and labour about his own concerns, he is reckoned a varlet. And is not God our master? Does he not pay us? Do not they, therefore, "rob God", who refuse him their time, and services? Is not their time sacred to the ministry, as the sabbath is to religion? And, if they employ it otherwise, Are they not as culpable as those, who profane the Lord's Day by doing thereon any manner of unnecessary work? Is it not a violation of common honesty, to allow him about the seventh part of our time, who pays us for all? Is it not impious to put God and his church off with the "lame, the blind, and the maimed", viz. the crude productions of few hours; and expect payment even for such offerings,

offerings. Sunday may not pass without getting something; to employ our deacons and ruling elders to do the business of the church, that we might gain time to mind our own interest more effectually; and to confound the clergyman with the layman, that we might gain the more? Do they honour their office, who, by a misapplication of their time and industry, remain "workmen that need to be ashamed"; and continue novices in their profession, while their improvement in the art of husbandry, or in the mystery of trade, or of mechanism, is "manifest to all? Is it a sign of a faithful minister, to join "house to house, and add field to field"; and at the same time, let the cause of God dwindle and decay through slackness of hands? Which, think you, are the honest men? They who "spend, and are spent" in the ministry, and have no more than food and raiment, as appears by the desolate widows and fatherless children they leave to the mercy of the world; or they who, by the said double dealing, viz. making the ministry the business of the Sabbath, and their own interest the business of other days, leave dower to their widows, and portions to their children, and yet would not in their life time, so much as dress decently for the credit of their office?

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2. He directs ministers to *study*, *read* and *meditate*. “Study to *show* thyself a workman &c. Give attendance to reading &c. Meditate on these things &c”. 1 Tim. iv. 13, 15. 2 Tim. ii, 15. We must, pursue these directions, or we shall not be able to magnify our office; for inspiration cannot be expected. Industry, in the use of the above means, accompanied with prayer, is the expedient by which we may advance to the degree of “able ministers of the New testament.” Reading, furnisheth us with a rich variety of ideas, and sentiments. Meditation, helps the judgment to separate and adjust them. Study, like necessity, is a mother of invention. And writing all our discourses, improves our diction. “The preacher, being wise,---sought out acceptable words”. Eccl. xii. 9, 10. Without due observance of the said directions, an uninspired man will never “be thoroughly furnished unto every good word, and work”; but must remain an Ignoramus in his profession, and a mere Battus in diction; having but one set of ideas, and one string of phrases---those, confused---and these, uncouth. Thus, he will perform his ministry in a little circle, ending at the point where he begun, and beginning, again, where he ended; which, like the identical round and clack

black of a man will presently weary, to death, the attention of his hearers. And we must confine our reading, study, and meditations to things that more immediately concern our function; else, we shall commit an error like that of those, who would “serve God and Mammon”. Therefore they, in the ministry, seem to be dissuaded from ‘Philosophy, Science, &c. Col. ii. 8. These, have their professors; and Theology is the profession of the “man of God”. I am aware, that many things have been said against laying so much stress upon reading, studying, meditating, and writing; but I fear, they amount to no more than apologies for laziness, and ignorance.

3. He enjoins frequency in preaching. “Be instant in season, and out of season”. 2 Tim. iv. 2. The end of the ministry is best promoted by “line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here, and a little there”. Time to prepare, we must allow ourselves; else, we shall “offer to the Lord what cost us no labour”; and deliver to the people what deserves no attention. There is a “Scale of duties, a hierarchy of upper and lower commands”, as Milton speaks. And, with a due observance of this scale of duties, a minister should be “apt or forward

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“ to teach”; and not lose ~~an~~ opportunity, which gives him a chance of saving one soul.

4. Our author directs us, also, to avoid indulgence, tenderness, delicacy, and effeminate timorousness, as enemies to the success of our ministry. “ Endure hardness as a good soldier, “ of Jesus Christ”. 2 Tim. ii. 3. He that desists, or abates preaching, by reason of fatigue, hardships, and dangers dishonoureth his office, not only, by making it less useful than it might be; but by showing, that health, ease, safety, and life, are more important to him, than the salvation of souls. A soldier who declines his duty by reason of hardships and dangers, is cashiered as a coward. And a minister, that will flinch through tenderness or timorousness, can no more ‘ magnify his office’, than a coward can do honour to the military profession. Hear the brave and hardy Paul ! “ None of these things “ move me; neither count I my life precious, “ so that I might accomplish my ministry”. Act. xx. 24. And there is a sense, in which a minister must “ Hate father, mother, wife, “ children, brothers, sisters, houses, lands, and “ his own life; or not be worthy of his master.” Matth. x. 37. Lu. xiv. 26.

5. He charges ministers to exemplify their preaching in their practice. "Be thou an example of the believers in word, conversation, charity, spirit, faith, and purity. Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self" ? 1 Tim. iv. 12. Rom. ii. 21. Practice speaks louder than words, tho' every preacher were a Stentor. And he, who lives not up to his preaching, will do little, or no good, tho' he should "speak with the tongues of men and angels".

6. He directs ministers to be cautious whom they ordain. "Lay hands suddenly upon no man--- let him, first, be proved. 1 Tim. v. 22. Haste and precipitation, he forbids ; for the strongest appearances of ministerial qualifications leave the candidate but a "novice", to us, till time, and tryal ascertain the reality of those qualifications. And the preceding discrimination of persons that may, and may not be ordained, would be vain, if circumspection and wariness be not used. The neglecting of this caution ; a dispensing with the want of the forementioned marks of fitness ; and a winking at any of the said tokens of exclusion, have been means of vilifying the office ; and of making the venerable word, PARSON,

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Thus, my brother, have I laid before you fome of the directions, which our author gives to perfons in the miniftry. And as your good fenfe muft have difcovered their tendency to ‘ magnify the office ’ ; fo your piety will urge you to a ftrict obfervance of them more than any thing I can fay. I, therefore, conclude with the words of Paul, to a young man whom he ordained, “ Confider what I fay ; and the “ Lord give thee underftanding in all things”.

[END of the SERMON.]

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Of the ordination of the Rev. Samuel Jones, A. B.
Jan. 2, 1763. Published at the request of them
who were present.

*THE solemnity began with prayer. Then was
sung the 144 hymn, 2d. book, of Dr. Watts.
After that, the foregoing sermon was preached.
When sermon was over, one of the three ministers,
present, stood up and spoke to this effect :*

When the church of Jerusalem, “ the mother
“ of us all,” had chosen men to office, it is re-
corded, “ That they set them before the apostles
“ to be ordained, by laying on of hands and
“ prayers.” We desire, therefore, that this
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The regard which we pay to that sacred charge [“Lay hands suddenly on no man”.] obliges us to use caution. Sir, we would be certified of your call to preach.

The candidate presented a copy of his call, which was audibly read.

We would, also, see your licence; which may be to us a testimony of your good morals; and of the approbation which your ministerial abilities have obtained.

The licence was presented, which was also read.

We would, likewise, be certified of your election to the ministry; and recommendation to us for ordination.

The representative of the church, who stood by the candidate, delivered credentials of the said election, and recommendation, and retired. Those were read. And the said minister proceeded.

Hitherto your advances towards the ministry appear to have been regular and fair. But we are obliged to seek for further satisfaction; which satisfaction you alone are capable of giving.

ing. Permit me therefore to ask, Do you, Sir, “willingly, and not by constraint; out of a ready mind, and not for filthy lucre,” devote yourself to the sacred office?

The candidate signified, that the ministry was, to him, a matter of free choice; and that his view was not lucrative.

Do you believe that you are moved hereto by the Spirit of God, so, that a “necessity is, thereby, laid on you to preach the Gospel, and that a wo will be to you if you preach it not; for no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron?”

Which question, the candidate answered in the affirmative.

Do you take the Bible to be the word of God in such a sense as to hold yourself bound to believe all it declares; to do all it requires of you, as a Christian; and to abstain from all it forbids? Do you consider that book as the only rule of faith and practice in matters of religion; and as a sufficient rule; so that there is no occasion for any other judge of controversies; or for creeds, confessions of faith, traditions, or acts

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of councils of any denominations, to supply its supposed defects ; or to be tests of right and wrong either in the credenda or agenda of the religion of Jesus ? Do you hold that book as your creed or confession of faith. And will you make it your directory, whether in preaching, administering ordinances, exercising government and discipline, propagating or defending the faith once delivered to the saints, or in performing any other branch of your function ?

The candidate intimated, that he owned the divine origin, the indispensable authority, and sufficiency of the Word of God ; and that it was his resolution to be directed by it, as a Christian, and as a minister.

Are you determined to make success in the ministry the object of your constant and greatest solicitude ? And in order to become successful, Will you use fervent prayer, and solicit your friends to pray for you, that a divine blessing may attend your labours ; without which even a Paul, or an Apollos, or a Cephas, would be “ nothing ” ? Will you “ give yourself wholly “ to the ministry ; and avoid entangling yourself with the affairs of this life ” if possible ; and be “ content with food and raiment ” ; for
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a livelihood is all you have a right to expect “by the gospel”? Will you apply yourself sedulously to “reading, studying, meditating”, and other means of making your “improvement manifest to all, and of stirring up the “gift that is in you”? Will you be “apt or “forward to teach, or be instant in season and “out of season” in preaching the word? Will you take care to be an example of piety and virtue to the people, and to practise what you shall preach? Will you “endure hardships” when your duty require it; and ~~the~~ meekness, and passiveness in cases of provocations and ingratitude, rather than forbear your endeavours to save the abusive, and them that are out of the way? Will you keep “under “the body, and bring it to subjection”, lest you dishonour the ministry by “spotting it with the flesh”; and destroy your usefulness in the sacred office? Will you strive to be zealous in the office? Will you, as far as honesty and consistency allow, make yourself “all things to “all men; please all men in all things; and become the servant of all” that you may save the more? And, will you endeavour to maintain the proper character of a minister, which is drawn by the inimitable pens of the apostles Paul and Peter, in 1 Tim. iii. Tit. i. 1 Pet. v.?

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The candidate's answer amounted to an assurance, that all these things should be to him matters of solicitude and endeavours.

There is a confession of faith (adopted by the twenty nine Baptist churches which annually associate at Philadelphia) wherewith you and we are well acquainted, We would know whether you receive that as a confession of your faith ?

The candidate signified, that his sense of divine things was expressed therein ; and that he received it as the only human system he approved.

We do not mean by our question, that you should be bound to that system ; or any way abridged of the rights of private judgment ; and liberty of speech ; for that is an unhappiness attending human establishments, in the kingdom of Christ ; which establishments have put a stop to the reformation before it was perfected ; and have made genius, learning, and industry the tools of parties, and dupes to men of like passions with ourselves ; rather than means of discovering errors, and restoring primitive Christianity. Upon the whole, I see no reason why you should not be admitted into the ministry ; (for your qualifications in point of human learning,

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ng, are well known to us, who were present at your examination in this college) What say you, my Reverend brethren ?

They replied, That they were satisfied. Then the candidate was desired to kneel ; and the three ministers laid their hands on him, and spoke to this effect.

In the name of the Lord Jesus. And, according to the practice of his apostles, and their contemporaries, We lay hands on you our brother ; whereby you are ordained or constituted a PRESBYTER OR MINISTER in the church of Christ ; and impowered to exercise every branch of the gospel ministry, whether ‘ ordaining’, ‘ overseeing’, ‘ ruling’, ‘ preaching’, ‘ feeding the flock of Christ’, ‘ evangelizing’, ‘ baptizing’, ‘ breaking bread’, or whatever else belongs to the character----- And, O thou Head of the church !--- Vouchsafe, that what we now do on earth, may be approved and confirmed in heaven !--- Look down favourably on this thy servant, who on his bended knees dedicates himself to thee, and the service of thy sanctuary !--- Accept of his devoted self, and services ! --- Let this the laying on of our hands, which separates him from the people ; and ranks him with them that minister to thee in sacred things,
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Be attended with a grant of all that he wants !—
That we wish him--- And that thou hast promised to give towards fulfilling the ministry with honour and success ! Even so, Lord Jesus. Amen

Then the Rev. Isaac Eaton prayed to this effect.

O thou who art the “door of the church !
“who openest and no man shutteth” ! Open
to this thy servant, who seeketh, with all good
shepherds, to enter by thee into the sheepfold ;
and not to climb thereinto any other way !
Thou that “clothest thy priests with salvation”,
endow him with that ministry by which it hath
“pleased thee to save them that believe” ! Thou
who hast ascended on high to receive gifts for
men, Bestow, by the laying on of the hands of
the presbytery, all the gifts and graces which he,
as a minister and a Christian, stands in need of !
Make him a polished shaft in thine hand, that
many, by his ministry, may be pricked in the
heart with convictions of sin ! And let the
Lord God anoint him to heal the broken heart-
ed. Add many seals to his ministry ! And, at
last, let him shine with those, who have turned
many to righteousness. Amen !

*Then the Rev. Samuel Stilman, A. M. prayed to
this effect.* O most

O most high and mighty God! Permit us, we beseech thee, to repeat our requests in behalf of this thy servant, whom we, in the most solemn manner, set apart to the sacred office. Let our united supplications reach thine ear, Lord God of sabaoth! Indue him, we humbly pray thee, with the graces of thy Holy Spirit, and every necessary and important qualification; whereby he may become an able minister of the Gospel, and may rightly divide the word of truth! And now, by thine authority, we send him forth: Be thou the guide of his youth; and prepare him for the various vicissitudes through which he will have to pass! May his life be a series of benevolent and pious actions; and his labour attended with a blessing from on high! And, when thou shalt remove him from this transitory scene of things, may he be enabled to say, "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; and receive the crown of righteousness, which thou, the righteous Judge, shalt give thy faithful servant at that day, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the ministers withdrew their hands; and when the ordained person rose up, they saluted him in the following manner.

We

We honour you, Sir, in the presence of all the people ; and give you the right hand of fellowship as a token of brotherhood, and congratulation ; and wish you success in your office, and an answer to those prayers which “ two or three have heartily agreed, upon earth”, to put up for you.

Then the Rev. Isaac Eaton went to the pulpit. And when the charge, hereunto annexed, was delivered ; and the 128 hymn, 1st book, of Dr. Watts, was sung, he dismissed the assembly ; who had shown uncommon attention, and pleasure, though they had been detained long ; and though the weather was very severe.

[END of the NARRATIVE.]

A CHARGE,

A CHARGE,

Deliver'd at the ordination of the Rev. Samuel Jones, A. B. in the College of Philadelphia.

By ISAAC EATON, A. M. minister of the Baptist church at Hopewell, &c.

WHEN mortals attempt to speak or act in the immediate presence of the heart-searching GOD, what awe and reverence should possess their spirits ?

We have this day been called upon to transact some of the most solemn concerns ; not only in attending the means of grace, in a common manner ; but also in hearing some of the necessary qualifications of a gospel minister clearly represented ; and particularly, in setting apart our Reverend brother to the sacred office of a minister of CHRIST, by earnest prayer and imposition of hands.

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The LORD OF LORDS, whose goodness is infinite, and power unbounded, hath, in mercy to his church, placed one watchman more on the walls of Zion ; hath called one more to act in his name and by his authority, for the promotion of his glory and good of mankind.

To close the work of this day, I am now to deliver unto you, my brother, a charge relative to the office wherewith you are invested.

Dear sir, in the NAME OF OUR LORD, I bid you welcome into his delightful vineyard. I congratulate you, that, after proper study and preparation, you are become a fellow-labourer, not only with us, but with Jesus Christ also.

Suffer me now seriously to charge you, to be faithful in the following things.

Make the word of God, contained in the old and new testaments, the constant man of your counsel. This sacred volume is not only able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, but completely to furnish you for every good word and work. Hence you may derive doctrine, reproof, and instruction in all your private studies and public administrations ; evi-
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denced and confirmed by this, how will truth shine, conviction strike the benighted minds of mankind, and consolation flow into the distressed soul ! In duly studying and properly applying these sacred weapons, under the divine influence, how will error flee away, and every thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of the LIV-
ING GOD be cast down and abashed ; and the stubborn wills of mankind, be led in willing subjection.

Strive, to understand these sacred pages, stored with the best of treasures ; and to enter into the life and spirit, of these ORACLES OF GOD. Let these be the rule of all your doctrines and practice. To understand, and live agreeable to scripture, form a character worthy men of the greatest genius.

Need I remind you of the necessity you will be under, frequently to apply to the throne of Grace---A prayer-hearing God giveth liberally, and upbraideth not those, who, sensible of their wants, humbly ask for Wisdom. This is one excellent method to maintain that heavenly mindedness which is necessary for every minister of the gospel--- What can more invigorate your mind, when you are about to address man-
kind

kind in the most serious manner, than to enter upon the work immediately after an holy interview with the father of spirits.----

Prayer is the duty and privilege of Christians in general, but, in many respects, of a minister in particular---In this duty they bear, the different cases and circumstances of those under their care, to the good and great shepherd of souls, who carryeth the lambs in his arms, and gently leadeth those with young.

Let a deep and solemn sense of divine truth impress your spirits---Strive to maintain your evidences, as to a state of grace, clear and comfortable---Meditate often on the awful realities of a future state---Beware of pride, sensuality, and covetousness, those destructive preventatives of a spiritual progress---Take heed of popular applauses, lest they betray you, and prove an impediment to your advances as a Christian ; and success as a minister---While in this body, you may expect to meet with many temptations, and be subject to many infirmities ; you may be called upon to endure hardships, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ---Take care always that you be not led by the blind dictates of unruly passions, but by the deliberate and safe directions
of

of reason--- A proper government of yourself will lay a foundation for all your public relations, and render all your connections with mankind easy, profitable, and delightful.

We charge you to take heed, not only to yourself, but to your doctrine, that it may be according to godliness--- Whatever you preach be well assured that it is contained in the word of God ; and that all your inferences be natural and genuine----

Let the dignity, honors, offices and characters of the mediator be frequently the subjects of your discourses--- Press the necessity of regeneration, sanctification, and an holy life for the eternal comfort and happiness of Men----

Let your preaching be distinct, plain and pungent, that you may approve yourself in the sight of God, and men also, “ a workman that
 “ needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the
 “ word of truth--- Feed the flock of God, tak-
 “ ing the oversight thereof, not by constraint,
 “ but willingly ; not for filthy lucre, but of a
 “ ready mind ; neither as lording it over God’s
 “ heritage ; but being an example to the flock”.

In the administration of ordinances, as to the subjects and modes, adhere strictly to the pattern which is laid down in God's word---

If at any time necessity calls for it, "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints--- Oppose gainfayers, and all such, of whatever name and character, as either reject the truth, or take pleasure in unrighteousness--- Exercise all meekness and gentleness towards the weak--- In a word, as you are now called to minister in holy things, attend diligently to all the services of the sanctuary--- As you are a shepherd, take heed to the flock, that when Christ, who is the great shepherd, shall appear, you may have joy and praise before him---

As you are a watchman, be circumspect and diligent to warn sinners, direct and encourage the weak and comfort the saints,--- As a steward, you are entrusted with great and invaluable treasures, the precious word of God, the gifts of his holy Spirit, and a charge over the souls of men; exert yourself, therefore, in improving the talents which God hath given you, that when you are called to give an account of your stewardship,

rdship, you may be able to say, here, Lord,
re thy talents with usury----

And now, under the awful apprehensions of a future meeting before the august tribunal of the supreme judge of heaven and earth, we charge you to be diligent, faithful and honest in the discharge of the several duties, relative to this important office, which are, or shall be made known unto you--- And this we do in presence of the eternal God; and of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy angels: and we call this assembly to witness, that you are bound by the most solemn obligations to devote yourself, henceforward, to the work and service of God in his church.

Finally, we would enforce these things upon your mind, by arguments drawn from the glorious perfections of God, his inflexible justice, unspotted holiness, eternal truth and rich mercy; from the nature of the everlasting covenant of Grace; from the incarnation of the son of God; from the holy life and bitter agonies of the mediator; from the worth and preciousness of immortal souls; from the glorious reward of the faithful servants of Christ, and the insupportable punishment of the

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the unprofitable ones; from the just judgment which Christ shall pass upon the world at the last day; from the glories of heaven, and the horrors of hell--- And that you may be supported and have success in this weighty undertaking, we recommend you to the Lord, and to the word of his Grace; assuring you of our constant regard; and that our unfeigned desires are, that the author of every good and perfect gift may abundantly supply you with every necessary blessing; and that God may enable us mutually to advance his glory until our last breath. Amen.

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