

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION.

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE CIRCULAR CHURCH,
CHARLESTON, DECEMBER 17, 1819,

AT

THE ORDINATION

OF THE

REV. JONAS KING,

AND

REV. ALFRED WRIGHT.

BY THE

REV. LOAMI FLOYD,

PASTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT CHURCHES
OF BETHEL AND WILTON.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

THE CHARGE,

DELIVERED ON THAT OCCASION,

BY THE

REV. BENJAMIN M. PALMER,

PASTOR OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN CHARLESTON.

Charleston:

PRINTED BY T. D. STEPHENS, NO. 8, TRADD-STREET.

A SERMON.

2 TIMOTHY ii. 2.

“THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST HEARD OF ME AMONG MANY WITNESSES, THE SAME COMMIT THOU TO FAITHFUL MEN, WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO TEACH OTHERS ALSO.”

AMONG the means of grace which God has appointed for our salvation, the ministry of reconciliation holds an important rank. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” The word of God points out to sinners the way of salvation. And in order to call their attention to this holy word, and to explain and apply its important doctrines, God has instituted the gospel ministry. By this ministry sinners are made acquainted with “the only true God,” and with “Jesus Christ whom he has sent.” And this knowledge prepares them for the enjoyment of eternal life.

God could, if he saw it best to do so, communicate to every man the knowledge necessary to salvation by immediate revelation; for with him is “the residue of the spirit.” Or he could commission angels from heaven, to preach the everlasting gospel to men, with celestial eloquence. But, in his infinite wisdom, he has preferred a different method of communication. He has given a divine revelation of his will concerning us; and appointed a ministry, consisting of men of like passions with those to whom they are sent, to proclaim the doctrines of this revelation to the world. “We have this treasure in earthen vessels; that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” Such a ministry

God has been pleased to institute, in order to turn sinners from darkness to light, and to reconcile them to himself through the mediation of his Son.

Our text contains the instruction of Paul to Timothy respecting the instrumentality which he was required to exercise in the perpetuation of this sacred ministry. "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

From this passage of holy writ, we learn,

1. That it is the will of God that the gospel ministry should be perpetuated by means of ministerial ordination ;

2. The qualifications required of those who are candidates for this ministry ; and

3. The weighty charge committed to those to whom is given the right of ordination.

We may very clearly perceive, in the first place, that it is the will of God that a gospel ministry should be perpetuated by means of ministerial ordination.

It is evident that by the things which Timothy had heard of the Apostle, were meant the doctrines of that "faithful word," which he observed to Titus, a bishop ought to "hold fast." And it is equally evident, that by committing these things to faithful men, who should be able to teach others, was meant more than ordinary instruction in the doctrines of the gospel. Such instruction was to be given to all indiscriminately to whom Timothy was called in Providence to exercise his ministry. But the commission mentioned in our text was restricted to men of a particular character, whose consequent duty it would be to become *teachers of others*. This distinction very clearly points out the ministerial commission, which Timothy was charged to confer upon such as, on examination, were found to be suitable candidates.

Hence it appears, that the ordination of ministers does not, as some have supposed, rest with the churches, over which they are constituted pastors. Timothy, not the churches, was charged to commit the ministerial office to proper persons.

But although the charge was addressed to Timothy alone, it was intended as applicable to all who might be called to act in concurrence with him in the ordination of candidates for the ministry. And as he himself had been ordained by “the laying on of the hands of the presbytery,”* who concurred with the apostle Paul in this important transaction, it is reasonable to suppose that this was the usual method of ordination; and that Timothy would of course understand that his proceedings were to be regulated by this apostolic model.

The current testimony of the New Testament corroborates the doctrine of our text. The commission given by Christ himself to the apostles, taken in connexion with the promise annexed to that commission, is of great importance in illustrating this subject. He “spake to them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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.*”† Is it not evident, that this commission was given to a ministry which was to continue to the end of the world? Were it not so, what would be the meaning of the promise?

It is true, the apostles, by this commission, exercised an extraordinary office; as they were divinely inspired ministers, and possessed such gifts as were necessary to attest their divine inspiration. But they held and exercised, likewise, the ordinary office of presbyters in the church of God. This is evident from the words of Peter: “The elders which are among you I exhort, *who am also an elder.*”‡ And this is the office which from them, and by their authority, has been conferred upon ministers of the gospel in all ages.

“The laying on of hands,” appears evidently to have been the outward form used by the apostles, in

* See 1 Tim. iv. 14. and 2 Tim. i. 6.

† Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

‡ 1 Pet. v. 5.

conferring this office. The imposition of hands was not, indeed, **peculiar** to the act of ordination to the sacred ministry. It was anciently used in conferring patriarchal benedictions, and it was used by the apostles in communicating the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost. In short, it appears to have been a common mode of expressing the instrumentality of holy men in communicating blessings and gifts of a spiritual nature. There was therefore a striking propriety in its being adopted in setting apart those who were duly called to the office of the gospel ministry.

Our text leads us, secondly, to consider the qualifications required of those who are candidates for this ministry. It was required by the apostle, that they should be faithful men, who were able to teach others. “The things which thou hast heard of me,” said he, “the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” *Faithfulness* is indispensable; but faithfulness is not a sufficient qualification for the ministry, without the *ability of teaching*.

In order to be able to teach others, men must themselves possess a competent degree of knowledge. It is impossible for them to teach what they do not understand. It is therefore necessary, that those who are to teach others the doctrines of religion, should first make these doctrines a subject of diligent and successful study. It is not sufficient to possess a knowledge of one or two doctrines, however important, or of a few favorite points in theology; the whole gospel must be studied, as a system of divine truth, which God has revealed to man, as the only means of his restoration to holiness, and everlasting felicity. The doctrines of the gospel form a system of truth, the various parts of which have a mutual relation and dependence; by which they illustrate each other, and add beauty and strength to the whole. Those, therefore, who are to teach these doctrines ought to study and understand them, in all their relations, and in all their consequences.

It is from the scriptures only, that we can derive a competent knowledge of the doctrines of religion.

We should indeed avail ourselves of every aid to which we can have recourse, in ascertaining the true meaning of the oracles of God. But after all, we must appeal "to the law and the testimony;" and, if those to whom we have recourse for instruction "speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." None but God himself can make us acquainted with his true character, and with his will concerning us, in our present state, and future destination. Therefore, as he has given us a divine revelation, as the rule of our faith and practice, we should consider this revelation as our only authoritative guide in acquiring a competency of theological knowledge. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, *thoroughly furnished* unto all good works."

But speculative knowledge alone, however correct and systematic, is not sufficient to enable us to teach others the true nature and design of the gospel. "Though we had the gift of prophecy, and understood all mysteries, and all knowledge," we might be nothing, and worse than nothing, in our attempts to teach others the way of salvation. Without an experimental knowledge of the efficacy of the gospel, it is impossible that we should understand it in its most interesting import, or teach it in a manner calculated to make men "wise unto salvation." It is therefore necessary, that those who are set apart as teachers of others, should have a knowledge of religion which is confirmed by their own experience of its truth.

It is necessary, not only that candidates for the ministry possess such a competency of knowledge as will enable them to teach others, but also that they be "faithful men." Ministers are "stewards of the mysteries of God;" and *faithfulness* is essential to the character of a good steward.

It is required that they should be faithful in searching the scriptures, in order that they may ascertain, as far as possible, the precise meaning of what is revealed in these oracles of truth.

As we are not infallible in our judgment, we are liable to mistake the meaning of what God has spoken. It is evident that many good men have fallen into such mistakes. Were it not so, all true christians would have been of one mind with regard to the doctrines of religion. But every error in religion is, in proportion to its magnitude, injurious to the souls of men. Therefore a teacher of theology is highly culpable, if he does not guard against error, by searching after truth with impartiality and diligence. This he must do by searching the scriptures, with a sincere desire of ascertaining their true meaning.

If we go to the scriptures with prejudiced minds, and search them, not in order to form our opinions, but to support a preconceived system, our prepossession will operate as a great temptation to unfaithfulness. We shall be tempted to warp the pages of holy writ to a conformity with our views of truth and propriety; instead of conforming our opinions to the truths which God has revealed. Such unfaithfulness in ascertaining the doctrines which God has revealed is chargeable with a high degree of criminality. It is not only treating his authority with disrespect, but it sets us afloat on the wide ocean of error, and endangers the souls of those whom we are commissioned to teach the way of salvation.

In order that we may be preserved from error, we should pray, earnestly and constantly, for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all our researches; that by his enlightening influence we may be led into all truth. As God has promised the Holy Spirit to those who ask him, if we are at all sensible of our weakness and fallibility, we must acknowledge that we are not faithful in our search after truth, unless we with humility and earnestness solicit the aid of this Divine Teacher. We should pray that our "understandings may be opened, that we may understand the scriptures."

It is required that teachers of religion should be *faithful* in explaining the scriptures.

They must not conceal any truth which God has revealed in his holy word. They may be tempted

to do this, either because some truths are displeasing to themselves, or because they suppose them displeasing to their hearers. But let us recollect, that it is our duty to "declare all the counsel of God." If we have entire confidence in his moral character, and love him on account of the glorious perfections of his holy nature, we shall be pleased with every truth which he has revealed. And if we love the souls of our hearers, we shall feel disposed to "keep back nothing that is profitable to them." And we are bound by the most solemn obligation to declare the word of God faithfully, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." We must do this, "not as pleasing men, but God, who searcheth our hearts." For if we seek to "please men, we are not the servants of Christ."

It is farther required, that ministers of the gospel should be *faithful* in applying the doctrines of scripture.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God," said the apostle to Timothy, "*rightly dividing* the word of truth." Those who are "ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God," should endeavor with faithfulness to "give to every one his portion in due season."

They are set as watchmen upon the walls of Zion; and they are required to "watch for souls, as those who must give an account."

In order to awaken sinners, they must proclaim to them the holy law of God, with the awful sanctions by which it is enforced. To trembling penitents they must proclaim the joyful sound of the gospel, and invite them to the Redeemer, who gave himself a ransom for their guilty souls. They must instruct believers in every part of christian duty. And to all they must show the necessity of holiness, as a preparation for the holy felicity of heaven.

It should be our aim to make our hearers acquainted with themselves, and with the peculiar duties of their respective stations. And in order to this, we must "be instant in season, out of season, and reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine." Great must be our ministerial faithfulness.

to enable us to take the people of our charge to record, "that we are pure from the blood of all men."

Are we not then ready to ask, "who is sufficient for these things?" None, surely, but those whose "sufficiency is of God." He only can make men "able ministers of the New Testament." And to him must be ascribed all the success which attends our ministry.

Let us then, thirdly, attend to the weighty charge committed to those to whom is given the right of ordination.

We have heard, that acceptable candidates for the ministry must be men, whose theological knowledge, and evangelical experience, will enable them to become teachers of others: and that, in addition to this qualification, they must be faithful, in searching, in explaining, and in applying the scriptures. It rests with those whose office it is to officiate in their ordination, to judge with respect to these qualifications. And when we consider, how much depends on the correctness of the decision, we may well tremble at the responsibility attached to the office. When we consider, that on our judgment, and consequent proceedings, it greatly depends, whether God shall be glorified, and his church built up and enlarged, by a faithful ministry; or the desolating influence of error and irreligion lay waste the fair fields of Zion, and rivet the chains by which the prince of darkness is leading the souls of men to destruction; must we not be sensible of the necessity of deliberating and acting with the most impartial caution, with the most disinterested views, and with the most earnest prayer for divine direction? How needful and important must the apostolical admonition appear! "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure."

We are required to commit the ministry of reconciliation "to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Of course, it is implied, that we ought to withhold it, so far as our authority is concerned, from candidates whose characters do not correspond to this description. We can form no judgment respecting the future conduct of candidates, except by

their present characters and professions. If the tree be good, we may fairly presume that the fruit will be good. But if we act on the groundless presumption, that an evil tree may bring forth good fruit, we incur a responsibility which will confound us at the judgment seat of Christ.

It is true, after all that we can do, we may be deceived, for we cannot search the heart. Men who have not the requisite qualifications may "creep in unawares," by assuming a garb to which they are not entitled. But although this shows the necessity of caution, it should not discourage us from acting on our best judgment. If, in this important concern, we aim disinterestedly at the glory of God, and the salvation of the souls of men, we may with humble confidence hope for acceptance in the work committed to our hands ; notwithstanding the imperfections, in consequence of which we sometimes labor in vain.

My brethren in the ministry, the ordination of those who are suitable candidates, and desire to participate in the ministry with us, is a part of the important charge which is attached to our office. It is a pleasing work ; and it presents to our view a prospect highly delightful. "The harvest is great, and the laborers are few." After having long prayed that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more laborers, how pleasing must it be to officiate in setting them apart to their important work, as, one after another, they are called into the field ! Let us engage in this duty under a deep sense that we are acting for God, and for the salvation of immortal souls. And let humility, faith, and prayer, characterize our proceedings on the important occasion.

It is peculiarly pleasing to be engaged in the ordination of those who are about to be employed in evangelizing the heathen, or in supplying the destitute with the gospel of peace. It is more especially pleasing at this time, when already "the wilderness and the solitary places are beginning to be glad, and the desert to rejoice, and blossom as the rose." The present aspect of the world, when viewed in connexion with the prophecies of scripture, encourages our perseverance in sending forth men to "do the work of

evangelists." May the God of all grace crown with success the efforts which are made to illumine "the dark places of the earth," and to extend the bounds of the Redeemer's kingdom! And to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we will acknowledge the glory to be due; "as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." *Amen.*

THE CHARGE.

HAVING been solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry by prayer, accompanied with "the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery," in conformity with the usage of the church, we proceed to charge you in the name of your Lord and ours, to "take heed to the ministry that you have received and to fulfil it." Better directions we cannot give you than are contained in that venerable and holy volume, which you have publicly acknowledged as the sole arbiter of truth, the only and the sufficient rule of faith and practice. With those sacred oracles given by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you are, we are persuaded, already in a good degree familiar.—But too familiar and extended an acquaintance with them you cannot have. For they are called emphatically "the Scriptures," and their divine Author has charged it on men in general, and much more binding of course is that charge on the ministers of reconciliation, to "search them." For, declares he, "in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." Testimony to Christ is among their grandest objects and most sublime designs; and whatever variety of parts they consist of, whatever diversity of interesting and useful topics they embrace, he is the centre towards which they all converge: he is the focal point in which they all unite. Christ was preached by patriarchs and by prophets, by evangelists and by apostles. Christ was preached in the types, promises and predictions of the ancient Jewish scriptures. Christ is preached in the evangelic narrations and in the apostolic epistles.—Christ was the Jehovah who conducted ancient Israel through the perils of the wilderness, and against whom their impious rebellions were expressed. They "tempted Christ" says the Apostle Paul, (1 Cor. x. 9.)

and warns the Corinthians against tempting him in the same manner. Christ was the Jehovah, whose glory Isaiah saw, when he witnessed the bending Seraphim before the throne of the great Supreme, and heard their loud and willing acclamation of "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." (See Isa. vi. 1—10, compared with John xii. 40, 41.) You then as ambassadors of Christ, appointed and ordained to "preach his unsearchable riches," must pray sinners in Christ's stead, as though God did beseech them by you, to be reconciled to God. And the more simply, plainly, and scripturally you deliver the message, the more ground you will have to expect benediction of him, who commissioned the first heralds of the cross, and all their successors, to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." At the very commencement of your work therefore, take up the resolution of Paul, and act upon it. Determine with him, that "you will know nothing among the people to whom you go, but Jesus Christ and him crucified"—in season and out of season, in converse with individuals, and in proclamation to the assembly, exalt the Saviour, preach him as "God over all blessed forever"—as "the man Christ Jesus"—as "the Mediator of the new covenant," as the supreme and final Judge of the universe; speak of him in the language of prophets and of apostles, proclaim his glory in strains used by himself and employed by his Father in relation to him.

In preaching the gospel, or in preaching Christ, its leading theme, a vast compass of duty lies before you, and to the acceptable and successful declaration of "the truth as it is in Jesus," the various parts of this extended field must be travelled over; "keep back nothing that shall be profitable," and shun not to declare the whole counsel of God." Human depravity, regenerating grace, redemption by the meritorious blood of Christ, justification by faith, repentance, and the nature and necessity of new obedience and practical holiness, in addition to what have been named already, appear in the inspired writings to be topics of primary importance in the

christian scheme. Publish and proclaim "the grace of God which brings salvation ;" proclaim and publish at the same time, the genuine operation of that grace: let all men know, that those who truly possess it, must be characterized by such marks as these, "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." You will find, as Paul did, some who will turn this grace of God into licentiousness. While this circumstance will not deter you, as it did not prevent him, from continuing to magnify that grace ; it will lead you, as it influenced him, to dwell much on christian character, on personal piety ; to shew such as "continue in sin that grace may abound," that their "damnation is just."

Inculcate truth, and assail dangerous and soul destroying errors, whatever fair and plausible covering may be thrown around them. In this period of Christian union, do your part to strengthen the bands that join in holy compact all that "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," though different forms, and modes, and rites are found among them. In this period of christian union, do your part in detecting and exposing that infidelity, which, having been driven from the field of open combat, now covering itself with the name of christian, aims its secret blow at the very fundamentals of christianity; which denies the very object of christian worship, and, while pretending to honor Christ, is never once heard addressing that voice of prayer or praise to him, which saints and angels readily and joyfully utter ; and which, in its downward course, sweeps away, one after another every thing distinctive in the christian system.—Set as high an estimate on truth, as you find the inspired writers doing, who urge men to "buy the truth and sell it not," to "contend earnestly" for it. The minister of Jesus is to "take heed to his doctrine," as well as to himself, since it is only by so doing, that he can expect to "save either himself or those that hear him."

If Christ found it needful to pray, that his disciples might be sanctified through *the truth*, it is of high consequence, that his ministers should declare that

truth, by whose influence this sanctification is to be produced. Dispel the anti-christian delusion of *the innocence of error*, especially on topics of such essential consequence, as the proper object of christian worship and the foundation of a sinner's hope. Inculcate the christian temper and christian practice, and place them both on a scriptural foundation.

The sphere, which one of you,* my brethren, is immediately called to occupy, though it may appear humble, is extensive and important. Research into the subject has shewn, that in cities there is "much ground to be possessed," and much good to be effected. Many churches there are, but many, very many individuals and families are either too destitute, too indifferent, too prejudiced, or too proud, to occupy a seat in them. In either case, they are to be pitied and assisted. But few churches in our city have made any thing like a complete provision for those numbers of the destitute, who are, or think themselves, too indigent to support the gospel. And even when some provision is made, many are too indifferent in religious matters to avail themselves of its benefits. Shall we suffer these thousands, (for to thousands their number amounts) to go year after year down to the chambers of death, without an effort to rescue them? Many of the objections, which may be urged against religious efforts of a missionary nature in a city, might be alledged, with equal force and reason, against similar efforts in regions less compactly populated. In the latter, are there many destitute of the means of grace, because they cannot afford to attend upon them? The statement is almost equally applicable to the former case. If some provision is made to afford them religious privileges, it is only very partially adequate to the extent of their necessity. Is it said, that even to the degree in which provision is made, the necessities, from indifference, will not avail themselves of the privilege? This is equally true of many districts of the country. In the one case, as well as in the other, it is found necessary, not merely to invite men

* Rev. Mr. King, endowed with a special view of labelling in the City among the poor, and others, destitute of the stated means of grace.

to come to the gospel, but to convey the gospel to their very doors, "and compel them," as it were, "to come in." There are "highways and hedges" in the city, as well as in the country, whose tenants need to be looked after by those who act under the great "Shepherd and Bishop of souls." Vast multitudes, and among them some, piously descended, and in their early years piously instructed, are to be enquired out, and brought into the fold of Christ. Besides the individuals and families, who, though residing in a city, are in "the region and shadow of death," there is a company of mariners, whose home is on the waters, where no church is found, and where no ordinances are enjoyed. These occasionally appear on land. But they are strangers in the midst of strangers, and no man "careth for their soul." Let these but know, that they may stately enjoy religious instruction, and even to their hearts, supposed to be impenetrable to religious impressions, access may be had; and out of materials so unpromising, monuments of grace may be reared to the honor of the Saviour. Every city, too, has institutions of a public nature, where are the poor, the lame, the halt, the blind, the criminal, the temporally and the spiritually miserable, to whom the declaration of Christ crucified may prove "glad tidings of great joy." Amongst all these classes your labours will more or less lie, and amongst these various objects of spiritual charity, you will find work enough to do for Christ, and for the souls of men. Divine Providence having opened before you this field of labor for the present, enter it, my brother, in the name and strength of Emmanuel, and "spend and be spent" for the welfare of those souls for whom Christ has died. He can make his gospel prove the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation to those who enjoy your personal and public labors. And both here, where you expect immediately to be employed, and wherever else you may in future go on the holy errand of your Master, bear in mind the solemn import of this day's transaction. Forget not that you have implicitly declared to day "Thy vows are upon me, O God." While others of us are la-

boring in folds of more regular and compact enclosure, be it yours to seek the wandering, and convey gospel light to such as would not otherwise be likely to come within its reach. As to the immediate object of your present mission, you will consider yourself as belonging to no denomination exclusively, and pledged to promote no particular views of external order. You will belong to every denomination, whom you can regard amidst all their diversity of forms, as building on Jesus as the foundation laid in Zion. To bring men to faith in Christ, to newness of heart, and newness of life, will be your sole employ. To declare publicly and privately the leading truths of the New Testament in relation to God and to man, and to turn men from the error of their ways, will be your duty; and we feel assured, we may add, your delight.

And now, brother, we commend you to God and to the word of his grace; we "bid you God speed," and promise to give you the aid of our countenance, counsels and prayers. May the Head of the church prosper your way, give you to see the fruit of your labor, and dispose you to ascribe the glory of all you are and all you may accomplish, to his abundant grace, who, "though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." To him be glory forever more.

The other of you,* my brethren, whose expected sphere of ministerial action is different from that which has been just described, and in some respects novel and interesting, we would urge to "go forward" in the name and strength of Jehovah Jesus. Your special designation is to a savage tribe in our western wilderness, upon whom the light of the gospel has lately begun to gleam; on whom the sun of righteousness is rising with peculiarly promising omens. You are going, to assist in planting "the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations;" among a nation hitherto scattered and peeled, cor-

* Rev. Mr. Wright, ordained with a view to his joining the Missionary establishment at Ellice, under the superintendence of the Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury.

rupted by the intercourse and by the vices, and destroyed by the sword of white men, of beings called christians. Your embassy unto them is of a different nature. You go to afford them spiritual redress for temporal wrongs ; to shew them the difference between men with a christian name, and men with a christian nature ; to aim at conquering them with the " sword of the spirit," and thus subdue them to " the obedience of faith." We bless God, that he has inclined your heart to so self-denying, yet so important a service ; that he has rendered you willing to become a debtor to a people, whom, from their savage habits and untutored state, the mouth of infidelity has declared it impracticable to civilize and christianize. Go, my brother, and prove the accusation false—go, and obtain evidence for yourself, and present it to others, that " Barbarian and Scythian" are just as capable of being brought under evangelical influence now, as when an inspired apostle not only presumed the thing possible, but proclaimed it as fact. The Choctaws, with a liberality and gratitude which does them honor, are already pouring such treasures as they possess at the feet of that Jesus, whom all nations shall one day crown " Lord of all," to whom " every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess." Go, since the voice of Providence and grace has called you to it, and join that worthy but still too feeble band of brethren and sisters, who have forsaken civil enjoyments and social comforts, to give to listening and wondering Indians the needful and interesting information that Jesus died for them. Go, and our prayers and our alms shall follow you, and we shall blush, we trust, that remaining at home in the midst of comforts and of privileges, we feel so little and do so little for a people, whose claims upon our christian efforts are so well founded, whom we have so fair an opportunity now effectually to benefit. And, during the few months which shall elapse before you set out upon your errand of christian love to these children of the wilderness, be diligently and faithfully employed in endeavouring to repair the desolations of Zion all around us.

Brethren, in your separate spheres, "do the work of evangelists," to which you are set apart to day, and "make full proof of your ministry;" and when "the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away." To him, who is the "true God and eternal life," "who is, and was, and is to come," "the same yesterday, to day, and forever," even "the Lamb that was slain," be ascribed, as his most righteous due, power, and wisdom, and honor, and glory, and blessing, by all in heaven and all on earth, now and evermore. *Amen.*