



Mr. Pemberton's SERMON

ON I Cor. ii. 2.

*For I determined not to know any thing among you,
save Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified.*



THE KNOWLEDGE
OF
CHRIST
Recommended,

IN
A Sermon

Preach'd in the Public Hall

AT
Yale-College

IN
NEW-HAVEN :

April 19th, 1741.

By E. PEMBERTON, A.M.

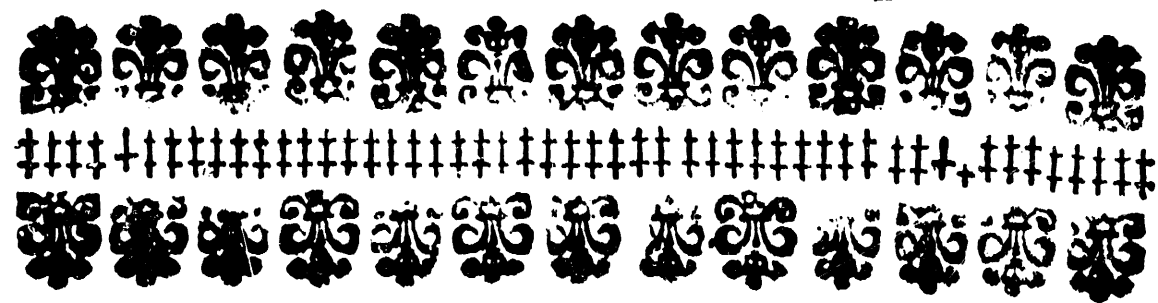
Pastor of the Presbyterian CHURCH in the City of
NEW YORK

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CHRIST IS ALL.

NEW-LONDON,

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T H E

Knowlege of CHRIST RECOMMENDED.

I C O R. II. 2.

*For I determined not to know any thing among
you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

AN unquenchable thirst after knowlege was originally implanted, in the nature of Man, and design'd by our all-wise Creator, for the most excellent and valuable end. — This thô innocent and commendable in its self, prov'd an unhappy temptation to the first Apostacy, and involv'd the race of mankind in universal ruin. A Criminal Ambition to be wise above the privilege of their natures, allured our first Parents, to violate the law of their creation, and eat of the fruit of the forbidden tree — by which they forfeited the divine favour and incurr'd the dreadful penalty of eternal Death. Aspiring to become Gods discerning between
A 2 good

2 *The Knowledge of CHRIST*

good and evil, they fell from their exalted station, and rendered themselves viler than the beasts that perish.

BUT (Blessed be God) there is a knowledge by which we may be delivered, from the ruins of our Apostate state and recover our forfeited felicity. — This is not an acquaintance with the secrets of Nature or the intrigues and policies of Art, but a knowledge of *Christ and him crucified.*

THIS the Great Doctor of the Gentiles determined to make the principal scope of his public preaching, and private conversation, *He counted all things but loss and damage, for the Excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord* — This Blessed subject fill'd the Apostle's heart and triumph'd in all his discourses — To know Christ himself was his first concern, to bring others to a saving Acquaintance with him, was his highest ambition, and the great design of his Ministry. This resolution was not a sudden flash of tho't, occasion'd by some present surprize — It was not taken up in a melancholly disposition of mind, when his understanding was disordered with the fumes of Enthusiasm — But was the Effect of calm and mature deliberation.

HE was bro't up at the feet of Gamaliel, and instructed in the doctrine and traditions of the
the

R E C O M M E N D E D.

3

the Jewish Rabbi's. He was acquainted with the celebrated Authors of Antiquity ; their Orators, Philosophers and Poets — But when his eyes were opened by a divine Illumination, he saw the vanity of these boasted attainments, and became an humble Disciple of the despised J E S U S. — From henceforth therefore, avoiding the enticing words of mans wisdom, renouncing the empty flourishes of humane eloquence, he resolves to preach the Gospel with great plainness and simplicity, and recommend divine truths, in their native excellency and glory.

THO' the doctrine of the Cross was *to the carnal Jews a stumbling block*, and to the Grecian Philosophers *foolishness*. Yet St. Paul was not ashamed of *this foolishness of preaching*, but determines in Corinth it self the seat of Learning and politeness, *to know nothing but Christ and him crucified*. In speaking to these words (by Divine Assistance) I shall

First, EXPLAIN the nature of this knowledge of which St. Paul had so high an Esteem.

Secondly, RECOMMEND it to your diligent study and practise.

Thirdly, APPLY my discourse to the Students of this College, and in an especial manner to those of them that are design'd for the service of the Church Ministry.

First,

First, I am to explain the nature of this Knowledge. And,

I IT certainly Implies a doctrinal knowledge of Christ & the important truths reveal'd concerning him in the Gospel. This supposes that we are by nature in a guilty, polluted, and condemn'd state; enemies to God the bounteous Author of our beings, transgressors of his Laws which are holy, just and good, and upon this account heirs of eternal damnation — It includes a knowledge of the wise and condescending methods of Heaven, to redeem the Apostate progeny of Adam from the se dark & disconsolate circumstances, and to restore his Chosen People to a state of endless felicity & joy — That to accomplish this wonderful design, the Eternal Son of God, the Heir of his Father's Love and Glory; became the Son of man, and cloath'd himself with the sinless infirmities of human nature. — That in our nature he perfectly obeyed the moral law, that everlasting rule of righteousness, fulfilled the entire will of God in our place and stead, and died a sacrifice upon the Cross for the sins of men. — That this same J E S U S who was arraign'd at the bar of the Roman Governor, and executed upon a cross as a Common Malefactor, was the promis'd Messiah, the only Saviour of the world. — And accordingly when he had finished the work of redemption,

rise

rose again by a divine power, ascended up into heaven in the presence of his disciples, and sits at the right hand of God for ever and ever. — That *all power in heaven and earth is committed to him*, and who ever believes in him, shall obtain the remission of sins, thro' the vertue of his atoning blood, — be sanctified thro' the powerful influences of his Spirit, Justified at the tribunal of God thro' the imputation of his invaluable merits, and finally bro't to the full possession of ineffable Glory.

THESE are doctrines clearly reveal'd in the Gospel, which every Christian must in some measure be acquainted with. But tho' a doctrinal knowlege is an essential part, yet it is by no means the whole, of what the apostle intends. The most exalted degrees of knowlege, unless it purify the heart and influence the conversation, serves only to aggravate our Guilt and will in the end, heighten our future condemnation.

THE Devils themselves are acquainted with many of the doctrines of the Gospel, for *they believe & tremble* — And many who have had their understandings inlightned with divine truths, have had their hearts fill'd with inveterate enmity against the power of Godliness. Men who have explain'd the Mysteries of faith with the greatest clearness, and defended the

truth with convincing strength & Evidence, are oftentimes found enemies to the cross of Christ, and obstinately refuse to have him to reign over them. Therefore,

II. IT Implies a practical and experimental knowledge of Christ. A knowledge that is not confined to the head but seated in the heart. A knowledge that is not produc'd by the powers of human reason or the common methods of education or instruction, but is the effect of a divine illumination, a spiritual discovery of Christ to the Soul—— When Christ is fully known, the Blessed Spirit of divine grace takes away the vail from our understandings, causes the scales to fall from our eyes, and gives us such a view of the Glory of God and Christ, as has a transforming efficacy upon the whole man, and *changes us into the divine Image.*

THEREFORE St. Paul prays for the Ephesians, *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the*
 Eph. I. *spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the*
 17, 18, - *knowledge of him : The Eyes of your*
understanding being inlightned, that you may know
what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches
of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints. This knowledge is clearly distinguish'd from all other knowledge by the following effects.

1st. IT

1st. IT humbles the sinner before God and fills him with a deep sense of his own unworthiness. Human knowledge puffs up the mind, raises the natural vanity of man, and is apt to fill them with scorn and contempt of others. But the knowledge of Christ opens the sinner's Eyes to see his Native Guilt and deformity; and covers his face with the deepest confusion in consideration of his Innumerable offences.

NO man ever attains to a saving acquaintance with Christ, until he is convinc'd, that he is a guilty, condemn'd malefactor, destitute of every qualification to recommend him to God and the deserv'd object of his everlasting displeasure.

AND the clearer Views any person obtains of the Excellency and glory of a Saviour, the more abasing apprehensions he entertains of his own deformity and vileness. When the

It is in any measure drawn aside, and he beholds the Blessed J E S U S, seated upon a throne of Grace, clothed with the garments of salvation, with peace and pardon in his hands; he is immediately struck with awful admiration at his astonishing Condescension, falls down at his feet with transport and surprise—and cries out with Holy

Job — *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine Eye seeth thee:* Job XLII. 5, 6.

8 *The Knowledge of CHRIST*

Wherefore I abhor my self and repent in dust and ashes. And this knowledge not only humbles the soul before God but——

2dly. **ENGAGES** the soul to trust in Christ intirely for pardon and salvation. To know Christ is to believe in him as our Saviour, whose invaluable blood has redeem'd us from the curse of the fiery law, and the dreadful displeasure of almighty God ; thro' whose immaculate righteousness, we have a title to the inheritance of the Saints in light, and may stand with safety at the tribunal of offended Justice.

WHENCE is it that the Lord Jesus is no more valued and an Interest in him so seldom sought after, by the perishing sons of men ? -- *Because the God of this world hath blinded their Eyes, that they should not see his excellency and Glory——* But when the Sinners Eyes are Opened to see the fulness of his Merits, the boundless compassions of his Nature, and the wondrous riches of his Love he immediately cries out —— “ This is such a Saviour
 “ as my necessities demand, and the circum-
 “ stances of my guilty polluted soul require.
 “ O J E S U S ! how delightful is thy Name !
 “ how transporting is thy voice, that brings
 “ the glad tidings of peace and salvation ! with
 “ Joy I accept the condescending offers of
 “ thy

“ thy grace, and with humble gratitude com-
 “ mit my precious soul into thy almighty
 “ and saving hands.

THUS *they that know his Name will certainly put their trust in him.* While others are depending upon their own righteousness and endeavouring to pacify the offended Majesty of Heaven by their duties and endeavours, — These will renounce all confidence in every thing but Christ, and build all their hopes of happiness upon this unalterable Rock of Ages. They will depend upon the value of his Merits, the prevalency of his Intercession, the riches of his Grace and the power of his Spirit, — To cleanse their guilty Souls and sanctify their polluted Natures — To Guide them thro’ the howling wilderness of this world, and finally bring them safe to the heavenly Canaan. *I know whom I have believed, faith St. Paul, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* 2 Tim. I, 12.

3dly. **THIS** humble trust in Christ as our Saviour is for ever attended with an everlasting hatred against Sin which is so justly displeasing unto him. The malignant nature & destructive tendency of Sin is visible upon the face of the whole creation — This has destroyed the beauty and stained the glory of
 this

this lower world — This has introduced all those distresses and disorders, which its guilty inhabitants are groaning under, and which have rendered this earth a valley of tears, a stage of affliction and darkness.

BUT never was the evil of Sin so fully discovered, never was its fatal tendency so astonishingly revealed, as by the death and sufferings of our Blessed Redeemer — For it was this that bro't him down from heaven to earth; from the pleasures of his Father's bosom to a state of a Servant—— This was the accursed cause of all the distressing sorrows of his Life, and all the tormenting agonies of his Death.

NOW when this is clearly manifested to the Soul and it feels the refreshing influence of the Redeemer's blood, taking away his guilt, and absolving him from the sentence of the law; it will certainly open all the springs of godly sorrow and fill him with an everlasting hatred against those sins which were the cause of these sufferings —— Such when *they*

Zech. XII.
10. *look upon him whom they have pierced, they cannot but mourn -- as one that mourneth for his only Son ——* They

must needs break out in such language as this,
“ Did my Dearest Lord die a sacrifice for
“ those sins which I had committed, and shed
“ his

“ his invaluable blood upon the cross, that I
 “ might not suffer the terrors of Eternal
 “ death --- O that my head were waters, and
 “ my Eyes fountains of tears, that I might
 “ weep for my ingratitude & rebellion against
 “ him ! Were my sins the thorns that pierced
 “ his sacred Head and the cruel spear that
 “ wounded his Blessed side ! Was it for my
 “ sake that he was nailed to the cursed tree
 “ and executed as one of the vilest sinners ! --
 “ Let me then for ever renounce those sins
 “ which were the guilty cause of his sufferings.
 “ Let me for ever abhor those murderers of
 “ my best friend and benefactor.

4thly. THIS knowledge enkindleth in the
 soul the highest affection to Christ. Ignorant
 and besotted sinners, whose eyes are dazzled
 with the pomp and glitter of the world, and
 whose hearts are captivated with the pleasures
 of sin and sense, --- they can see *no form or*
comeliness in Christ wherefore he should be admired,
 hence they argue, --- *What is thy beloved more*
than another beloved ? ---

BUT a soul enlightned by the Spirit of
 God, is immediately struck with a View of his
 divine and amiable glories, and at once pro-
 nounces him, *fairer than the children of men ---*
the chiefest among ten thousands ---- altogether
lovely --- But when they consider all the ama-
 zing

zing evidences of his Love to them, they are swallowed up with wonder and surprize, and break forth, into the most affectionate strains of gratitude and praise — “ *What manner of Love is this wherewith the Son of God hath loved us? --- Who can comprehend the height, the depth, the length and breadth of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge? — What Obligations art thou under O my soul! to this Lovely Saviour! What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits! Unto him that hath loved me, and washed me from my Sins in his own blood ---- To him be Glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.*

Finally, THIS knowledge engageth us to an Entire & everlasting dedication of our selves unto him. They that know Christ will acknowledge him as their Lawgiver, Lord, and King ---- and chearfully bow to his Authority and Government. They feel the attractive influence of his Love, binding them to his service by soft but powerful bands. By the endearing Charms of his Grace they are persuaded, to present their whole man, soul and body, an holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice, which is but their reasonable service.

MEN under the dominion of Sin and sense, esteem the Yoke of Christ an intollerable burden, and Obedience to his Commandments

ments an unprofitable severity — But those who have tasted that he is gracious, are convinc'd of the Justice & Equity of his Government, esteem his service as their highest honor, and account none of his commandments to be grievous, -- They are willing chearfully to forego their dearest interest for his sake, & to take up their cross, and follow him, in the face of ten thousand dangers. They unfeignedly join with the devout Psalmist, " O Lord
 " truly I am thy servant, I am thy ^{Psalm.}
 " servant, thou hast loosed my bands. ^{CLXVI. 16.}
 " I am thine O Blessed Saviour by the most
 " indissoluble Obligations. I acknowledge thy
 " sacred Authority. I bow my neck to thy
 " gracious Yoke, and swear Allegiance unto
 " thee for ever. Let thy kingdom be set up
 " in my soul, reign absolute in my heart, and
 " let every rebellious passion be subject to thy
 " just and righteous Government. Let all
 " the faculties of my soul be employed in thy
 " delightful service, and all the members of
 " my body be improved as instruments of
 " righteousness to thy Glory. Let it be my
 " continual Employment to glorifie thee up-
 " on earth, and my everlasting happiness to
 " enjoy thee in Heaven. " -- These are the
 genuine Effects of a saving knowledge of Christ,
 and distinguish it from a barren and empty
 speculation,

I now proceed,

Secondly, TO Recommend this knowledge of Christ and him crucified to your diligent study and practice. And,

I. THIS is the most sublime and excellent Knowledge. Christ is the sum and substance, both of the Law and Gospel. The design of both Moses and the prophets, was to point out him as the Saviour of a guilty world. In him all created and uncreated glories meet, as in their proper centre; and render him most worthy of our attentive study and regards. What a scene of wonders are united in his Person! What a series of miracles attended his Birth and Life, his Death, Resurrection & Ascension! What more astonishing than that the universal Lord of heaven and earth, should be confined in a Virgins womb — That he who governs the nations by his powerful influence, and orders all the affairs of the upper and lower worlds according to his Sovereign pleasure, should appear upon earth, in the character of a Carpenter's Son, and submit to the condition and figure of a servant — That the Lord of life should die, and the immaculate Lamb of God be made a sacrifice for sin — That by dying he should conquer death, and him that had the power of death, and by rising again make way for the eternal triumph and victories

victories of his People. These are astonishing mysteries fit for the Entertainment of the most inlightned understandings.

THE Wisdom of this world is employed upon inferior vanities, and useful only for this transitory life. But the knowlege of Christ contains the treasures of divine Wisdom and Grace, and unfolds the secret counsels of heaven for the recovery of a wretched and miserable world.

HERE all the divine perfections shine forth in their united Glories, with a bright and charming lustre. The designs of mercy are accomplish'd without any disparagement to the sacred claims of Justice — Here the personal and mediatorial excellencies of the Lord Jesus are discovered, who was from all Eternity, *the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express image of his person* : but in fulness of time appear'd *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, and was clothed with the infirmities of human nature. — Here a way is opened for our deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, and a sure foundation is laid for the enjoyment of all the privileges of a justified adopted and sanctified state — Here the Glories and felicities of the heavenly world are presented to our view, and the methods described in which we may be recovered from the miseries

of the Apostacy, and advanc'd to an happiness, large as our capacities, and immortal as our souls. Surely these are subjects worthy of our most rais'd tho'ts and suited to the entertainment of the sublimest spirits.

BUT why should I expatiate upon a subject, boundless and inexhaustible — A Subject fitter, to employ the eloquence of an Angel than the faltring tongue of a feeble mortal. Yea the Angels themselves look into these things with wonder and adoration — And they unite their songs with the happy company of the redeem'd in heaven — *Ascribing Blessing, honour, and Glory and power, unto him that sitteth upon the throne and to the L A M B for ever and ever.*

II. THIS is the most useful and Necessary knowledge. Men are apt highly to value themselves upon the account of their human knowledge and to look down with contempt upon others, whom they esteem ignorant and unlearn'd : But the wisest Philosopher, the greatest Scholar, if ignorant of Christ and the way of salvation appointed by him ; will be finally rejected by God, and with all his attainments lie down in everlasting sorrow.

THE wisdom of this world can attain no higher, than to gratify a present inclination, or secure some slight, temporal advantage :

But

But the knowlege of Christ aims at a nobler end — advances the Glory of God, and promotes the universal happiness of man. — The Voice of Nature proclaims our Guilt, fills the mind with anxious fears, and soon convinces us, that we are miserable and mortal sinners. But all the writings of the gentile sages, all the directions of their celebrated moralists are insufficient to recover fallen man, from the ruins of his Apostate state, and restore him to his Original integrity and happiness. — This is the peculiar glory of the Gospel, and can be attain'd only by an experimental knowlege of Christ, and a lively faith in him.

WITHOUT this men may be instructed in the Doctrines of Grace and discourse of them with propriety and elegance, but all their knowlege is but specious ignorance, and is esteem'd by God no better than foolishness. — Without this thô men are adorn'd with many amiable qualities, and lead sober, regular, and to all appearance religious lives, yet they remain under the condemning sentence of the Law, and perish at last in a state of un-sanctified nature. — *For there is no other Name given under heaven by which we can be saved but the name of J E S U S* — and no salvation by him, until he is inwardly reveal'd in us by his Spirit.

WE

WE may bear the character of Christians, be diligent and devout in our attendance upon the duties of divine worship, but unless our persons are justified thro' the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness, and our natures are quickned by a principle of new life deriv'd from him; we are no better than ——whited Sepulchres —— painted Pharisees —— and disguis'd hypocrites. —— Justly then does the great Doctor of the Gentiles, place so high a value upon this divine, and excellent knowlege —— With the highest reason does he determine, *to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.* And his example is certainly worthy to be diligently imitated by us.

WHAT infinite madness is it then for the guilty Children of men to spend their time and strength in the pursuit of those things, which will leave them, naked, destitute, and miserable; and neglect the knowlege of Christ which will justify, sanctify, and save them. Why O sinner will you waste the lamp of life, in these specious follies & amusements, which belong only to the present world and despise those things, which concern your eternal welfare? —— Would you not stand amazed to behold a condemn'd Malefactor, under a sentence of Death, and in continual danger, of being dragg'd out to execution, spend his time in mirth and diversion, or at best in worldly cares

cares and business, without any concern, to prevent the execution of the Law, or prepare for his approaching Death? --- And this is the daily madness of tho'tless & inconsiderate sinners. Every Soul in this Assembly, that has not an experimental knowlege of Christ, is under the condemning sentence of the divine Law, and exposed to an infinitely more terrible execution, than any human power can inflict; there remains but a short and uncertain time to fly from the amazing danger and escape the vengeance of eternal fire. ---- Is it not then worse than brutal stupidity to Neglect the present season and trifle away those flying moments, upon which an eternity depends. Rouse up your selves therefore, My Dear Brethren, --- Awake out of this fatal Security ---- Cry earnestly to God that he would bestow upon you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, *That you may know him ---- whom to know is Life eternal.* ----- Resolve to make this your chief study; Your great and principal business. Other knowlege may recommend you to the Applause of men, but this will restore you to the favour of God, and enable you to stand with safety at the awful tribunal of Christ. You may be ignorant of many things, and yet wise for salvation. But if destitute of this divine knowlege you are Sons of death and must dwell in the melancholy

choly regions of eternal darkness. Other knowlege will be shortly unprofitable and Vain --- It will afford you but a feeble support against the Assaults of the King of terrors; But an experimental knowlege of Christ, will inlighten the dark valley of the shadow of death, and enable you to meet your last enemy with joy and triumph. If you truly know Christ, tho' ignorant of every thing else, you know enough to make you happy in time and thro'out Eternity. ---- For such as are justified by faith, have peace with God, and are Heirs of immortal Glory. ---- Neither the reproaches of an accusing Conscience, the demands of a broken Law, nor the flaming sword of divine Justice ---- Neither former sins or later transgressions, shall ever be able to separate them, from their supreme and eternal felicity.

NOTHING now remains but

Thirdly, TO Apply this discourse to you my Dear Young friends, the students of this House, and in an especial manner to such of you as are candidates for the service of the sacred ministry.

YOUR united requests have bro't me into this desk at this time, and for your service this discourse is peculiarly design'd. Suffer me then with a tender concern, for your present
usefulness

usefulness and eternal welfare, earnestly to exhort you, to the diligent practice of the duty recommended in my text — Resolve with the great Doctor of the Gentiles to know nothing save Christ and him crucified.

BLESSED be God there are many of you Enquiring with the Young man in the Gospel, *What shall I do that I may enter into Life Eternal.* This we trust is a token for good — a happy sign that God has mercy in store for future Generations.

IN your present Circumstances you will easily find the insufficiency of all human teaching — to deliver you from that depth of misery in which you are involv'd, and to guide your feet in the way to peace & safety. If you have a lively sense of your Guilt and Misery you will soon perceive, That neither the writings of Plato or Seneca, the celebrated Philosophers of Rome and Athens : nor the most accurate delineations of the religion of Nature by the admir'd teachers of morality in the present Age, will afford you a solid foundation of peace and comfort — To a Conscience truly awakened, these will be found *miserable comforters — Physicians of no value !*

“ ALAS what will a knowlege of the secrets of Nature ? what will an acquaintance
D “ with

“ with the Myſteries of Art, or the moſt elo-
 “ quent Harangues upon the beauty and ex-
 “ cellency of moral Vertue avail me, while
 “ I am perishing under the guilt of Sin,
 “ and ſubject to the diſgraceful ſervitude of
 “ Satan ? ——— What if I had a genius ſo
 “ ſublime, as to contain the whole circle of
 “ learning in my capacious mind ; a capacity
 “ ſo extenſive that I could *count the number of*
 “ *the Stars and call them all by their names* : Tho
 “ I underſtood *all manner of Languages*, and
 “ *could diſcourſe with the tongue of men and An-*
 “ *gels*, yet if I know not Chriſt and him cru-
 “ cified — all theſe will profit me nothing
 “ --- Theſe ſplendid attainments which are ſo
 “ highly valued by the learned and polite
 “ world, will but render me a richer prey to
 “ Satan and lead me with ſo much more
 “ pomp and ceremony to the land of dark-
 “ neſs.

“ Let me then never any more waſte my
 “ time in the ſearch of that knowledge which
 “ will not ſupply the wants of my immortal
 “ Soul, nor ſpend my ſtrength in ſeeking after
 “ thoſe things which will at laſt leave me,
 “ blind and wretched — Ignorant of my
 “ duty and happineſs. Let me ſeek after
 “ that knowledge which will reſtore peace to
 “ my troubled mind ——— that will rectify
 “ the diſorders of my corrupted nature —
 “ that

“ that will deliver me, from the tyranny of
 “ Satan to whom I am inflaved, and from the
 “ terrors of Death of which I am in continual
 “ danger. ——— In fine that will rescue me
 “ from that unutterable Misery, which I
 “ have deserv’d, and restore me to the Joys
 “ of Paradise which I have forfeited.

THIS O My Brethren is that knowlege
 which alone is worthy of the study of a ratio-
 nal and immortal Creature. This is that
 knowlege which is recommended to you in
 my text. Other knowlege may brighten and
 adorn the understanding ; but this alone will
 purify the heart. An acquaintance with the
 Arts and Sciences, may advance your Credit
 among men, but this alone renders you a
 Child of God and gives you a title to the
 Kingdom of heaven. The Study of other
 things may entertain and amuse You, while
 you are flourishing in health and prosperity---
 but this will comfort you when Languishing
 on a bed of Sickness, and revive and support
 you in the gloomy hour of approaching
 Death.

BUT O ! what darkness and horror will
 surprize the secure and inconsiderate sinner ?
 who has spent his time in the empty specu-
 lations of science falsely so called, and the idle
 amusements of the gay and fashionable world,

when he comes to stand upon the awful confines of the grave, and finds himself just stepping into the amazing gulph of eternity. With what sorrow and regret will he reflect, upon those many hours he has wasted upon unprofitable vanities, while he has neglected, the one thing needful, the knowledge of Christ, and the way of Salvation by him? With what anguish and despair will such look up to the mansions of the Blessed, and behold many whom they once despised as Ignorant and unlearned, triumphing in endless Joy and felicity, when they with all their boasted attainments, are thrust down into unutterable darkness and misery.

ALLOW me my Dear Brethren to go on and say, that not only your own personal welfare, but the prosperity of the Church of Christ is greatly concern'd in your compliance with this Exhortation.

YOU are the hopes of our Churches and the flourishing of religion in future times depends, upon your having this saving knowledge of Christ. You are many of you design'd for the Service of the Sanctuary, & if you lay the foundation of your preparations for the work of the ministry, in an experimental Acquaintance with Christ — You will doubtless prove extensive blessings in your day, and be
the

the happy Instruments of propagating, pure and undefil'd religion to late posterity. — But if you enter upon this sacred Charge under the influence of Carnal motives — while you are strangers to that Christ, whom you are to preach to others, You will in all probability be the plagues of the Church, and the Unhappy occasion of the damnation of multitudes.

REMEMBER then that the Eyes of God Angels and men are upon You, to Observe with what temper and disposition — with what views and intentions you engage in the service of the Gospel: Methinks I see the happy Spirits of Your pious Ancestors, who have fought the good fight of faith, and finish'd their course with Joy, look down from the lofty battlements of heaven, to observe your conduct, and see whether you will prove faithful to the cause of Christ, for which they forsook the pleasures of their native land, and encountred with all the difficulties of an howling wilderness. Methinks I hear them calling to you aloud from their exalted seats in Glory, and solemnly adjuring you by all that's sacred and serious — To Choose the God of your Fathers for your God, — to keep the sacred depositum of the Gospel uncorrupted in this day of prevailing degeneracy, and transmit the knowledge of Christ, without any
Erroneous

Erroneous mixtures to their Childrens Children for ever.

TO propagate the Kingdom of our Great Redeemer and not to promote the designs of a party, was the Blessed Cause in which our Fathers were happily engaged, and for which they underwent numberless hardships and trials. And this should be for ever dear to their posterity, who now stand in their place and stead, and reap the fruits of all their expence and labour.

LET me therefore with the Authority of a Minister of Christ and with the tender affection of a friend zealously concerned for your and the Churches welfare, entreat and perswade you to make this divine knowledge the Great design you have continually in View; and let all your other studies be managed in such a manner as may subserve this noble Intention. This the honour of your profession as Christians, Your Usefulness as Ministers, and the Necessities of the perishing Souls of men, loudly demand from you.—— See that you have a saving knowledge of Christ your selves before you pretend to preach him to others. *For if the blind lead the blind, what can be expected, but that they both fall into the pit of everlasting darkness and misery?*

AND when you enter upon the Work of the Ministry, Let Christ and him crucified be the favourite

favourite subject, of your private meditations and public administrations, without which your sacred performances, how beautifully soever they are contrived, how artfully soever delivered, will be no better than *the sounding brass and tinkling Cymbals*. Remember the Character you are to bear is that of a Minister of Christ, and the Commission you receive, is to *preach his unsearchable riches*—— to proclaim the Glories of the Amiable J E S U S —— A Commission that would dignify an Angel, and adorn the Character of the brightest seraph. — Let his Name therefore triumph in all your discourses, and let it be the height of your ambition to bring Sinners to a saving acquaintance with him.

THIS was the method made use of by the Apostles in the first ages of the Church, which was own'd and honoured of God, with vast & surprizing success ---- This was the practice of our Venerable Fathers in the early days of NEW-ENGLAND, and they were the happy Instruments in the hands of God of filling his Church with numerous converts, and preparing multitudes for the Kingdom of heaven. And if you imitate these Blessed Examples, and with sacred Courage and Zeal endeavour to promote the practical knowledge of Christ in the world, You will have the same Almighty power to assist, and the same Glorious rewards to

28 *The Knowledge of CHRIST Recommended!*

to Encourage You — Yea if You will unfeignedly give up your Names to this glorious Redeemer, and heartily engage in his Service --- You will be standard-bearers in the Camp of Christ, and under the Influence & Conduct of the great Captain of our Salvation, shall lead forth the Armies of Israel to Certain victory and triumph.

THO' this may expose You to the reproaches of Your friends & acquaintance, tho' you may be called to Oppose the united Endeavours of Earth & Hell. Yet be faithful unto the Death and then you shall receive a Crown of Life. Yet a little while and that Saviour in whose Cause you are engaged, and whose Kingdom you promote, shall appear in the Defence of his despised Interest, and fill the whole Earth with the Glory of his Name.----- Yet a little while *& he that shall come, will come and shall not tarry----* Then shall the Wise men & disputers of this world who with all their learning, remain Ignorant of the Mysteries of Salvation, be found *wandering Stars for whom is reserved blackness of darkness for ever.* While you who have determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, and made it the business of Life to make him known unto others, shall shine with Uncommon brightness in the firmament of Glory-- While they shall be clothed with everlasting shame & Contempt, You will appear in distinguishing Circumstances of dignity and honour, shall receive the Applause of Your Lord and Judge and Enter into Your Master's Joy--To which, &c. AMEN,
F I N I S,



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