

THE NATURE OF
ORDINATION,

WITH

Its APPENDAGES opened;

Lai-Ordination examined and refuted,

AND

The Validity of *Presbyterian* ORDINATION
vindicated :

In a DISCOURSE delivered immediately after the foregoing
SERMON, and previous to the *Ordination* of

Mr. BENJAMIN TALLMAGE,

At Brook-Haven, on Long-Island, October 23, 1754.

To which is added,

The CHARGE.

By EBENEZER PRYOR, A. M.
Pastor of the *Presbyterian* Church in *Huntington, Long-Island.*

1. Tim. IV. 14. *Neglect not the Gift that is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery.*
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NEW - Y O R K :

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A DISCOURSE, &c.

Christian Brethren and Friends,

✻✻✻✻✻ N the Sermon just now deliver'd from this awful Desk, we have
✻✻✻✻✻ been entertained, from the Word of God, with many precious
✻✻✻✻✻ Truths, well adapted to improve our Minds, and affect our
✻✻✻✻✻ I Hearts, at such a Season as this. And Duties of very great Im-
✻✻✻✻✻ portance have been urged, both upon Ministers and People,
✻✻✻✻✻ with an agreeable Pertinency and Pathos, suited to the Solemnity
before us : So that the Discourse we have heard at this Time, may
be considered as a sacred Prelude to the Ordination by and by to be attended, in-
Case no Bar shall appear to be in the Way.

But, inasmuch as Ordinations to the Work of the Gospel Ministry, are not fre-
quent in these Parts of the Country ; and, it may be presumed, that few, compara-
tively, even of this large Assembly, have well studied the Point : I conclude there-
fore, that it will not be tho't improper nor unseasonable, and hope, not altogether
unprofitable, if I should introduce the solemn Transaction before us, by opening
the Nature of Ordination, with the Grounds and Reasons of its Appendages ; and
then add something concerning the Right and Power of Ordination, pointing out
that Order of Men to whom it belongs, under the New-Testament.

In Pursuance of which Purposes, I would observe, that the true Ministers of the
Lord Jesus Christ, are a sacred Order of Men, separated to the special Service of
God and his People, in the Gospel of his dear Son ; according to the Laws and
Orders of his House, *which is the Church of the living God.* † For it is undoubted-
ly a Truth, That the Office of the Gospel Pastor, is as really a sacred Inclosure
under the Christian Dispensation, as the Aaronical Priesthood was, under the Law ;
and doth not lie open to those bold intruders, who, in the enthusiastick Heats of a
blind and intemperate Zeal, vainly and presumptuously imagine, that they have a
Call to the Work of the Ministry, from some strong Impulses or uncommon Impress-
ions made upon their Minds ; which (considering the Disorders and Exorbitances
Men of this Sort of Spirit and Complexion run into) are much more likely to come
from beneath than from above ; it being certain, that no Man may take this Ho-
nour to himself, but he that (in a Sense) is called of God ; as was Aaron : § And
so,

† Heb. iii. 6. 1 Tim. iii. 15.

§ Heb. v. 4. Altho' the Apostle applies this Text, referred to above, to our
blessed Saviour's being invested with the Office of Mediator, as appears ver. 5. and
has no special or immediate Reference to the Ordination of Gospel Ministers : Yet,
if Jesus Christ, the great Minister of the Sanctuary, and true Tabernacle, which
God pitched and not Man, (Heb. viii. 2.) was solemnly called, and introduced into
the Office of his Mediation, by God the Father ; even in some Sense, as Aaron,
who was not only qualified and fitted for the Office of the Priesthood, but consecra-
ted to the Duties and Services of that Office, by a Compliance with those Ordinan-
ces, and an Observation of those sacred Rites, in that Case and for that Purpose
appointed by God to be observed, under the Law, *Exod. xxviii. xxix.*—then, cer-
tainly, no Man now, upon any Pretence of an extraordinary Call, may venture up-
on the Duties of the Pastoral Office, under the Gospel ; but even Persons duly qual-
ified and regularly called, must be separated to those sacred Services by Ordination,
according to Scripture Precedents, and Divine Institution ; without which they have
no Right to discharge the Duties of that Office.

so, according to the Gospel Constitution, enters by the Door into the Sheepfold; for all those that climb up some other Way, are Thieves and Robbers.

This Door by which the true Ministers of Christ enter into the sacred Inclosure, is Ordination, performed according to the Direction of the Holy Scripture, by those who are allowed of God, to be put in Trust with the Gospel, and enjoined to commit the same to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others. § In this Way a Succession in the Gospel Ministry has been, and is kept up in the Christian Church; and will (no doubt) be continued to the End of the World: || By ministerial Ordination, of which you may take this Description, in a few Words; as followeth;

That Ordination to the Work of the Gospel Ministry, is the solemn Inauguration, or Scriptural Introduction of a well-qualified Candidate for the Ministry, into the publick Profession of that sacred Calling, and regular Exercise of that ministerial Power and Authority, which the Gospel Pastor receives from Jesus Christ, the great King, and supreme Head of the Church; to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given, by God the Father. * So that the Candidate, upon his Ordination, is invested with all the Powers of a Gospel-Minister, according to the Constitution of Christ's evangelical Kingdom in the World.

This Power, in all the Branches of it, being conveyed by Christ's Commission, in the Gospel, to all his Ministers, comes alone from him whom the Father hath given to be Head over all Things to the Church; † and not from Man, no, nor from any Number or Order of Men under Heaven, whether King, Bishop, Presbyter, or Laick. In this Sense, every Gospel Minister may be said to be not of Men, nor by Man; But, as Paul says, of himself, by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the Dead. Gal. i. 1. ¶

And yet, there is another Sense in which all the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel may be said to be by Men; inasmuch as their Investiture (requisite in order to a regular Exercise of that Power which they receive from Jesus Christ) is by Men, in their Ordination. One of the most solemn Transactions we are concerned with in this present World! And accordingly, it is to be attended and solemnized, with great Seriousness and Devotion, by Fasting, Prayer, and the laying on of Hands. Thus Paul and Barnabas were separated to the Ministry, of the Gentiles; as St. Luke informs us, Acts xiii. 3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. †

As

† John x. 1. 2. § 1 Thes. ii. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 2.

|| Mat. xxviii. 20. * Mat. xxviii. 18. John vii. 35. † Eph. i. 22.

¶ Jesus Christ, as Mediator, being made Head over all Things to the Church, by Delegation from the Father, the ordinary Ministers of Christ derive all their Powers from him, as really as the Apostles did; tho' they cannot exercise those Powers in an orderly Way, as the Apostles did in their extraordinary Character, without Ordination by Men. But yet, as to the Source and Origin of their Power, they are not of Man, nor by Men.

† Altho' the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and an immediate Call from Heaven, were esteemed sufficient Qualifications, to justify the Apostles and their Fellow Labourers, in performing all the Duties of the ministerial Office among the Jews and their Profelites: Yet when the Gentiles were to be called and grafted upon the Jewish Stock, the Holy Ghost was pleased to appoint a mediate Way of introducing God's Servants into the Office of the Gospel Ministry, by Ordination. And as this was the Ground and Reason, of the Ordination of Paul and Barnabas, tho' extraordinary Ministers before; so it was to be the standing Method of separating Men to the sacred Service of the Ministry, thro' all the succeeding Ages of the Church.

As solemn Prayer, with Fasting, in this sacred Transaction, appears to be agreeable to divine Institution, it having been practised in the Apostolick and purest Age of Christianity, so it is highly reasonable ; in as-much as those that are devoted to the important Services of the Gospel Ministry, need not only those divine Influences and Communications, which are necessary for Christians in a private Capacity, during their warfare State here below ; but those special Aids of the Holy Ghost, and more plentiful Communications of Light, Life, Grace, and Power, requisite to a faithful and successful Discharge of the sacred Trust committed to them, as Ministers of Christ, (a) For the obtaining of which precious Blessings, it is fit we should, upon such solemn Occasions, humble ourselves before God, and pray, with Fasting. (b)

Imposition, or the laying on of Hands, is a sacred Rite or Ceremony, that has been used on various Occasions, and to diverse Purposes, in Times past. Such as the conferring the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost ; (c) and working miraculous Cures. (d) Sometimes as a Token of an Execration or Curse ; such was the Case of the Priests laying their Hands upon the Heads of the Beasts, that were slain as Sin-Offering under the Law : (e) And yet, more frequently, as a Rite of Benediction ; as might be shewn in a Variety of Instances. (f) But for the most Part, it has been used as a sacred Rite of Consecration ; whereby the Person upon whom Hands are imposed, is dedicated and devoted to some sacred Function ; immediately relating to the Service of God and his People. Thus *Moses* laid his Hands upon *Joshua*, when he set him over the Congregation of *Israel* ; then under a Theocratical Government, and gave him a Charge, *Numb. xxvii. 23*. And thus (as has been already observed) *Paul* and *Barnabas* (though extraordinary Ministers before) were ordained to the Ministry of the Gentiles, as Multitudes have been since in the like sacred Form.

Laying on of Hands in Ordination, seems to be designed partly as a Token of the Candidate's Consecration, or solemn Separation to the sacred ministerial Function ; and partly as a sacred Rite of Benediction, pointing out the particular Person, who, in this solemn Transaction, is recommended to the divine Blessing, in Conformity to ancient Patterns of this Kind, both under the Old-Testament and the New. In both, the Ministers of Religion engaged in the Solemnities of an Ordination, observe a divine Institution, and thereby express their Dependance upon God's Presence and Blessing, to succeed the Person upon whom they lay their Hands, in the great Work to which he is thus devoted. For which Purpose, by solemn Prayer, with Fasting, they offer up their Requests to God, that he might be made an able, faithful and successful Minister of the New-Testament, not of the Letter but of the Spirit ; (g) thereby recommending him to the Grace of God, (h) that by Help obtained from Heaven, he might fulfil the Ministry he receives of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. (i)

This sacred Rite of laying on of Hands in Ordination, tho' it may be look'd upon by some, to be a Matter of little Weight and Consequence ; and, indeed, setting aside the Consideration of divine Institution, it is small, in comparison of the other solemn Acts of Devotion, that go into the Constitution of a regular and scriptural Ordination : Yet, it cannot (as I conceive) be neglected without Sin. For it is of such Importance, in the solemn Transaction, that the Whole of Ordination, is sometimes express'd by it ; as may be seen in *St. Paul's* Caution to *Timothy*, with Respect to the Persons he should ordain, *1 Tim. v. 22. Lay Hands suddenly on no*

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(a) *1 Tim. i. 11. vi. 20.* (b) *Act. xiv. 23.* (c) *viii. 17. 18. 19.* (d) *Mark vi. 5. Act. xxviii. 8.* (e) *Exod. xxix. 10.* (f) *Gen. xlviii. 14. Mark x. 16.* (g) *2 Cor. iii. 6.* (h) *Act. xiv. 26.* (i) *Col. iv. 12. Acts xx. 24.*

Man :—And probably the Holy Spirit has seen fit to make Use of this sacred Rite, as expressive of the Whole of Ordination, to put an Honour upon the Institution ; and to add Force and Weight to it, as an Act and Token of Office Power in the Ordainers.

Thus much of the Nature of Ordination ; the Essence of which lies principally in the Things I have mentioned.

But then, as to the Appendages of Ordination, it may be added, That the Candidate being thus solemnly separated to the sacred Function of the Gospel Ministry, by Fasting, Prayer, and the laying on of Hands, is now to be considered as one invested with all the Powers of the Gospel-Pastor and Teacher. And, accordingly, it is not only reasonable, but agreeable to Scripture, that a solemn Charge should be addressed to him, in the Name of the Lord.

The Work of the Ministry is of vast Weight and Importance ; the Difficulties, Discouragements and Temptations that Ministers meet with, in this arduous and difficult Work, are many, very many, and very great : And Ministers are Men of like Passions, Infirmities, and sinful Imperfections with other Men. § How expedient then, and necessary is it, that the great and important Duties of their sacred Calling, should be urged and inculcated upon them, by a solemn Charge, agreeable to Scripture Precedents. Such as that of *St. Paul to Timothy*, in his 2d Epist. 4th Chap. at the Beginning : Which you may take as a Specimen, in these Words, *I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge both the Quick and the Dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom: Preach the Word, be instant in Season, out of Season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-suffering and Doctrine.*

Consequent upon the Charge, usually follows the Right Hand of Fellowship, † The Purport and Meaning of which (as I conceive) is this ; A publick Declaration and Acknowledgement of the ministerial Power and Authority of the Person ordained, as one regularly invested with all the Office Powers of the Gospel-Pastor and Teacher ; including in it, an Admission into ministerial Fellowship and Communion ; with an Engagement of mutual Assistance, both on the Part of the Ordainers, and on the Part of the Ordained, as there shall be Occasion, in the Service of one common Lord, and Advancement of one grand Interest, even that of the Redeemer's Kingdom among Men. For all the true Ministers of Christ, are Brethren and Companions, in the Labours and Tribulations of the Gospel ; and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ : || And accordingly should, with one Heart and with one Soul, pursue the important Design of their sacred Mission.

Now, whatever Diversity of Practice there may be, as to Form ; yet (as I humbly conceive) these Things included in the Right Hand of Fellowship, may, without Impropriety, be expressed in a suitable Address, directed, especially and particularly to the newly ordained Minister ; accompanied with a giving the Right Hand, as a Token of such a Relation acknowledged, and such mutual Engagements stipulated.

This (I apprehend) was the Meaning of that friendly and fraternal Treatment, which *Paul and Barnabas* met with from three of the Apostles, after they were ordained to the Ministry of the Gentiles ; of which *St. Paul* himself gives the following Account ; *Gal. ii. 9. And when James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be Pillars, perceived the Grace of God that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas*

§ *Act. xiv. 15. Gal. iv. 13. 14. Jam. v. 17.*

† Tho' this Order has generally obtained by Custom ; yet, in my humble Opinion, there would be a greater Propriety in giving the Right Hand of Fellowship before the Charge. Forasmuch as the Candidate ordained, should be owned and acknowledged to be a Minister of Christ, before a Charge is addressed to him as such.

|| *Philem. 7. Rev. i. 9.*

Barnabas the Right Hands of Fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the Circumcision.---Accordingly, whatever Part of Christ's Vineyard his Ambassadors are employed in, whether as fix'd Pastors, itinerant Ministers, they ought to own, esteem, and treat one another as Fellow-Labourers, § Fellow-Helpers, * and Brethren beloved; † and should be received by all the Churches of Christ, wherever they are called to labour, whether statedly or occasionally, as Messengers of God, ‖ and Ministers of Christ. ‡

Furthermore, in-as-much as there are Duties of very great Importance, incumbent upon a People towards their Pastor, and upon the Churches of Christ, towards the Ministers of Religion; it is tho't proper by many, that as a solemn Charge is given to the Minister upon his Ordination; so a particular Exhortation should be addressed unto the People, over and above what may have been offered to these Purposes in the Ordination Sermon. And I persuade myself, that none will think such an Exhortation unsuitable or unseasonable upon an Ordination Day.

Thus I have given you some Account of the Nature of Ordination, with its Appendages: The various Articles of which, you may see exemplified, in the Ordination before us.

I shall now (with as much Brevity as is consistent with any good Degree of Perspicuity and Evidence) say something concerning the Office and Character of those that have a Right, according to the Gospel Constitution, to separate others to the sacred Service of the evangelical Ministry, by such an Ordination as I have described, or shew who have Power from Christ to ordain others to that sacred Service. And I hope you will afford me an attentive Ear, with an unprejudiced Mind, while I endeavour to shew you how this important Point is settled in the Holy Scriptures; which should be our dernier Resort in all Matters of religious Controversy: Those especially, that relate to positive Institutions, which ought to be determined by a *Thus saith the Lord*, or what is equivalent thereunto; and not by the Suffrage of Antiquity, or Judgment of Men, be they of never so great Fame.

And here, being persuaded that I have good Ground, not only from Reason but Scripture, I scruple not to assert and declare, negatively,

That the Right and Power of Ordination does not belong to the Laity, so called, by Way of Distinction from the Clergy, who are invested with the Powers of the Gospel Pastor and Teacher. For, altho' Prayer be a moral Duty incumbent upon all Men, according to the Dictates of the Light of Nature; and expressly enjoined in Holy Scripture, upon those that enjoy the Light of divine Revelation, even solemn Prayer, with Fasting, upon some special Occasions: Yet, such solemn Prayer, with the Imposition of Hands in Ordination, has something in it of positive Right; and is an Act and Exercise of Office-Power in the Church of Christ: Consequently, cannot belong to Laymen, who have neither Part nor Lot in this Office-Power. All the Pleas therefore that have been or can be made in Favour of Lai-Ordination, will not justify those Laymen, nor clear them from a profane and presumptuous Invasion of the ministerial Office, who venture upon the solemn Formalities of Ordination; since there is not so much as one Precept or Precedent for it, in all the Scriptures of the New-Testament: But it is plain enough limited to those that are invested with the Office of the Gospel-Pastor, as one special Article or Branch of their Office-Power. (a)

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§ *Thef.* iii. 2. *Philem.* i. 24. * *2 Cor.* viii. 23. † *2 Pet.* iii. 15.

‖ *2 Chron.* xxxvi. 16. *Mal.* ii. 7. ‡ *1 Cor.* iv. 1.

(a) As *Moses* was admonished of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle, to make all Things according to the Pattern shewed to him in the Mount, *Heb.* viii. 5. compare *Exod.* xxv. 4. nothing was left to his own Invention, nor to the Fancy of the Workmen, or to the People's Humour: But the Will of God,

I go on therefore to shew you, positively, who the Right and Power of Ordination does belong to ; or who are invested with Power from Christ to ordain others to the sacred Service of the Gospel Ministry. And

was to be religiously observed in every Article and Punctilio : So, undoubtedly, it is the Duty of the Gospel Church, and her Ministers, exactly to observe and strictly to adhere to all the Institutions of Christ made known, either by himself or his inspired Apostles, under the New-Testament. All his Orders must be observed, and Ordinances administered according to his Appointment ; which is to be learned, either from Precepts or Examples, or both. That *Instruction* of Christ to his Ministers and Churches, *Mat. xxviii. 20.* to observe all Things whatsoever he has commanded us, is of the same Import with that Admonition to *Moses*, mentioned above ; and is solemnly enforced by those awful Words wherewith not only the Book of *St. John's* Revelation, but the sacred Canon of Holy Scripture is closed, *Rev. xxii. 18, 19.* *For I testify unto every Man that beareth the Words of the Prophecy of this Book, if any Man shall add unto these Things, God shall add unto him the Plagues that are written in this Book. And if any Man shall take away from the Words of the Book of this Prophecy, God shall take away his Part out of the Book of Life, and out of the Holy City, and from the Things which are written in this Book.*

Now it is certain, that Gospel Churches, and the Office of Gospel Ministers, as well as the publick Ordinances they administer, are Matters of Divine Institution ; and tho' in them the Duties of natural Worship are attended and performed, yet that which relates to Modes, Orders and Ordinances ; is principally, if not wholly, Matter of positive Right ; being founded in, and springing from the sovereign Pleasure of the great Head and King of the Church.

This is the Case with Respect to Gospel Ministers, whether ordinary or extraordinary ; they are Christ's Ascension Gifts, *Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.* God, by him, hath set them in the Church, *1 Cor. xii. 28.* Now how should we have known what Officers Christ hath set in his Church, had not he revealed it ? Or that any one, as well as another, might not have been a Teacher, contrary to that of the Apostle, *ver. 29, 30.* *Are all Apostles ? Are all Prophets ? Are all Teachers ? &c.* And then, tho' Reason may dictate some Things, with Respect to their necessary Qualifications, as divine Revelation has more fully done : Yet, how should we have known in what Way and Manner, and by whom, they are to be introduced into the sacred Function, if the Mind of Christ herein, was not made known to us in the New-Testament ? Surely we must have been at a Loss. But as *Moses* was faithful to him that appointed him, in all his House, as a Servant, so Christ being more so, as a Son over his own House, (*Heb. iii. 2, 5, 6.*) hath given us sufficient Direction, not only as to the Manner of, but also, as to the Order of Men that are to transact this solemn Affair.

And if we should examine all the Ordinations of which there is any Account in the New-Testament, we shall find that they were performed by Gospel Ministers, either ordinary or extraordinary, and not the least Intimation of one Layman concerned in them as an Ordainer. Even the first Seven Deacons chosen by the Church were ordained by the Apostles, *Act. vi. 6.* And they (the Apostles) no doubt, ordained many others to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, &c. until the Church was furnished with a sufficient Number of Ministers, to manage this Branch of the ministerial Office ; and then we find the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, engaged in the solemn Work of Ordination, according to divine Direction. For thus *St. Paul*, under the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, writes to *Timothy*, as one allowed of God, to be put in Trust with the Gospel ; and directs him to commit the same to faithful Men, who should be able to teach others also, *2 Tim. ii. 2.*

compared

And here, let it be remembred, that the whole of Ordination is sometimes expressed by the sacred Rite of laying on of Hands, as has been already observed from 1 Tim. v. 22. to which may be added, Heb. vi. 2.

Now the laying on of Hands in the solemn Business of Ordination, is expressly spoken of, as belonging to, and an Act of the Presbytery; as is plain in St. Paul's cautionary Admonition to *Timothy*, with Respect to his own Ordination, in these Words, *Neglect not the Gift which is in thee, which was given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery*; 1 Tim. iv. 14. Not a Word here, nor elsewhere in the Holy Bible, of the laying on of the Hands of Laity:—No, nor of the laying on of the Hands of the Episcopacy, or Consistory of Bishops, as superior to the Presbyterian Order. St.

compared, 1 Thes. i. 1. ii. 4. And he tells *Titus*, that this was one End for which he left him in *Crete*, to ordain Elders in every City, *Tit. i. 5.* or rather in every Church.---- Now, what Need of this, if the Right and Power of Ordination is in the Church, or belongs to Laymen. The Church might have ordained their own Ministers, and there had been no Occasion of St. Paul's leaving *Titus* at *Crete* upon this Account; nor giving those Directions to *Timothy*, which carry in them the Force of a Precept being given by divine Inspiration.

Moreover *Paul* and *Barnabas*, when destined to the Ministry of the Gentiles, tho' extraordinary Ministers before, were ordained not by the Church at *Antioch*; but by the Ministers of that Church, according to the Direction of the Holy Ghost *Act. xiii. 1, 2, 3.* Now there were in the Church that was at *Antioch*, certain Prophets and Teachers.--- As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the Work whereunto I have called them.* And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their Hands on them, they sent them away. Here is an express Commission to those Presbyters in the Church of *Antioch*, to ordain *Barnabas* and *Saul*, alias *Paul*, but not a Word to the Church or Laity: And here is an Example of Presbyters ordaining according to the Direction of the Holy Ghost; and consequently (as St. Paul's Directions and Orders to *Timothy* and *Titus*, mentioned above) carrying with them the Force of a Precept, is a sufficient Warrant for the Ministers of the Gospel, in every Age of the Christian Church, to ordain others to the Work of the Ministry, when duly called to it. But a plain implicit Disapprobation of Lai-Ordination, since there is neither Precept nor Precedent for it in the New-Testament; nor so much as the least Hint of any Layman's being concerned in any of the Ordinations, we have an Account of in the Gospel, as an Ordainer.

It was a celebrated Saying of Dr. *Usher*, that *Ordinis est Ordinare*: And I think it is evident, from what has been said, that it belongs to the ministerial Office, as an inseparable Branch of it. And if we examine the principal Pleas made in Favour of Lai-Ordination, and lay them in the Ballance against what has been offered above, we shall find them to be light and trivial.

If the Church's Right of Election, be pleaded in Favour of Lai-Ordination, against what has been said above, as it is by some, who say, If the Church or People have a Right to chuse their own Minister, which is the Greater, then they have a Power to ordain him which is the Lesser: I answer,

Tho' it be allowed that the Church or People have a Right to chuse their own Pastor, under proper Limitations; such in particular, as submitting the Qualifications of the Candidate, to the Examination, Judgment, and Approbation of the Presbytery, or proper Ministers of Religion, who must be allowed to be the most proper Judges: Yet, it is a Matter of Dispute, whether Election be, in every Respect, greater than Ordination; I trow not.---But yet, allowing it to be so, It will not

St. Paul, it is true, speaks of the Gift of God which was in *Timothy*, by the putting on of his Hands. His Words are these, *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the Gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my Hands, 2 Tim. i. 6.* If by the Gift of God here, be meant the Gift or Office of the Ministry, (which undoubtedly is the Gift spoken of in the forecited Text) then either *Timothy* was ordained twice, once by the Presbytery, and another Time by St. Paul, or else the Apostle and the Presbytery were united, and acted in concert in his Ordination. But the former, *i. e. Timothy's* being ordained twice, (I think) can, by no

thence follow, that the Laity have a Right and Power to ordain, since (as I have shown) this Work is peculiarly limited to the Ministers of the Gospel, as belonging to their Office-Power: And not the least Countenance, either by Precept or Precedent, given to Ordination by Laymen. So that the Comparison between chusing and ordaining, little affects the present Argument.

If any object against what has been offered, and in Favour of Lai-Ordination, say, that in Case of Trespases or Offences, we are directed by Christ, to deal with an offending Brother privately in the first Place; and if the End of fraternal Admonition is not answered by this Method, then to tell it unto the Church, *Mat. xviii. 15, 16, 17.---If he neglect to hear thee, tell it unto the Church.---* And from hence conclude the Authority of the Church or Laity, to be so great, that they are invested with the Power of Ordination. To such I would say,

That as there is a Diversity of Opinions about the Quality of the Church here mentioned; so it may be somewhat difficult to determine who, or what Church it is that Christ refers to here. If by the Church here be meant (as some would have it) only *Cætus Fidelium*, or the Church distinct from her Officers; it cannot be supposed that there is any Thing more than a Power of Judgment allowed unto them; surely not an Office-Power: For this would be a blending the Clerk and the Laick together; and a confounding the Distinction between Pastors and People, those that rule, and those that ought to be in Subjection, who are plainly distinguished in *1 Thes. v. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 7, 17 et alibi.*---Hence I think it is evident, that the Church to which Christ refers here, is the Church to whom he has committed the Keys, and a Power of exercising them; and this cannot be meant of a Church without her Officers: For the Keys both of Doctrine and Discipline, are committed to the Church as organized, and so capable of exercising them, as is evident from *Mat. xviii. 18.* or rather to the Ministers and Officers of the Church, see *Mat. xvi. 19.* And if this be the Case (as undoubtedly it is) the objected Text will be so far from favouring, that it will militate against Lai-Ordination: For it is the Ministers and not the People that are to exercise the Power of the Keys. As in other Instances, so in this of opening the Door, and introducing well-qualified Candidates into the sacred Inclosure of the Gospel Ministry by Ordination.

But some may further object, and plead the Necessity of Lai-Ordination in some Instances; as particularly, in the Case of a Number of Christians being cast on a desolate Island, or providentially removed from the Rest of the Christian World, at such a Distance, that Ordination by Ministers cannot be obtained, tho' they have one among them otherwise qualified to be their Teacher. To which I answer,

That I very much Question, whether any such Case ever has been or ever will be true in Fact, of a Number of Christians, so separated from the Rest of the Christian World (in a Place where they might have the Liberty of attending the Ordinances of Christianity) that Ordination by the Hands of Presbyters, might not be obtained in due Time, tho' not so soon as might be wish'd. And that which very much strengthens the Doubt is this, that Jesus Christ, who not only knew what the State

no Means, be allowed as true in Fact ; for this plain Reason, because a Person ordained once, according to the Gospel Constitution, is, by Virtue of that Ordination, invested with all the Powers of a Gospel Minister. It would therefore be absurd and unreasonable to repeat the Solemnity, if not wretched trifling, and an impious Profanation of the sacred Ordinance, there being no Occasion for it. And if the latter be admitted, as some would have it, that the Apostles and Presbytery were united, and acted in Conjunction in *Timothy's* Ordination ; then, since we find no Marks of Distinction between the Apostles's Power, and the Power of the Presbytery in this Ordination, there is good Ground to conclude, that *St. Paul* acted in his ordinary Capacity, as a Presbyter or Elder ; for so the Apostles, (and *St. Paul* among the Rest) sometimes did, as might be made evident from sundry Passages in the Acts of the Apostles. § It is indeed evident, beyond Dispute, that they

of the Christian Church in all its Branches, from its first Erection, and of all the Children of God, even to the End of the World, would be, but was faithful in all his House as a Son ; has made no Provision for any such Case. But if such a Case is, or should be, (in my humble Opinion) it is the Duty of a People, under such Circumstances, to wait upon and worship God, in such Duties of Religion as they may and ought to attend without a Pastor, and not to profane a sacred Institution, that they might enjoy special Ordinances ; which would be doing Evil that Good might come of it.

But then, there is another Case in which some plead a Sort of Necessity : It is this, There are not a few in the late tumultuous Seasons of Separation and Division, who say the standing Ministry is corrupt, dead, formal, conformed to the World, immoral, &c. And therefore, they must come out from among them, be separate, and set up the Ministry among themselves. To such as those I would say,

That Corruption in Principle, a dead Formality, Conformity to the World, and Immorality, are much to be lamented, in professing Christians of a private Character ; but much more so in those that sustain the sacred Character of Gospel Ministers. And indeed, Heresy and gross Immorality, will disqualify them for the sacred Function ; and a Separation from them may be justified, if they are not suspended ; which ought to be done. But then, is this the Case of all ? No, blessed be God, there is a goodly Number of orthodox, pious, zealous and judicious Ministers of Christ in the Land, even in this corrupt Age. And it is very evident, that those who make this Plea, to justify their sinful Separations, and impious Invasions of the ministerial Office, not only run into such wild Extravagancies as are a Reproach to Reason and human Nature ; but some of them into gross Immoralities. And it certainly concerns them, to consider how they shall be able to account to the Judge of all, for their unjustifiable Separations, and unscriptural Ordinations, when this Enquiry shall be made, By what Authority dost thou these Things ? And who gave thee this Authority ?

§ As it is indisputably evident, that the Apostles, as Ministers of Christ, sustained a two-fold Character, the one extraordinary, which was that of an Apostle in the Scripture Sense of that Office, and the other ordinary, namely, that of a Presbyter or Elder ; so it may be made sufficiently plain, by a Variety of Instances, that they acted in both these different Capacities, sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other. One or two Instances in both Cases may be mentioned here. The first is that of *St. Peter*, who, in the Case of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, acting in the extraordinary Capacity of an Apostle, under the immediate Direction of the Holy Ghost, discovered their Sacrilegious Fact, and wretched Falshood, discerned the Wickedness of their Hearts, and, by the apostolic Rod, punished them

they sustained the Character of Elders or Presbyters : St. *Peter*, that eminent Apostle of the Circumcision, expressly calling himself so in his first Epistle, 5th Chap. at the Beginning ; and St. *John*, the favourite Disciple too, in his 2d and 3d Epistles. And it is more than probable, that they frequently acted in that Capacity. And if this was the Case of St. *Paul* in *Timothy's* Ordination, it was no more than a Presbyterian Ordination : For tho' St. *Paul* was an Apostle, yet his Hand, in the supposed Case, is to be considered as that of a Presbyter.

But the Gift of God, which *Timothy* received by the putting on of the Apostle's Hands, was (as I humbly conceive) something distinct from his Ordination : I say quite distinct from his Ordination ; which, according to the Prophecies that went before of him, || was performed by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. † But he received the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, by the putting on of the Apostle's Hands ; and this I conclude, is the Gift intended in the last cited Text to *Timothy*. † And if this was the Case, (which is most probable) then St. *Paul* had no Hand at all in *Timothy's* Ordination, as an Ordainer. But the whole Solemnity was managed and performed by the Presbytery ; and so (strictly speaking) it was wholly a Presbyterian Ordination.

And accordingly, all the Ordinations we have an Account of in the New-Testament, were performed by Presbyters, or Men acting in that Character and Capacity. By such were *Paul* and *Barnabas* ordained, tho' extraordinary Ministers before, as I have already observed, *AA.* xiii. 1, 2, 3. § And as such they ordained others, *AA.* xiv. 23. By such was *Timothy* ordained, as is abundantly evident from what has been already said. Such were *Timothy* and *Titus*, and as such they were directed to ordain others ; See 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. *Tit.* i. 5.

Now

them with immediate Death, *AA.* v. 1.---10. Of the same Kind, tho' different in Degree, was the Punishment inflicted by St. *Paul* upon *Elymas* the Sorcerer, for perverting the right Ways of the Lord, *AA.* xiii. 8,---11. To which I may add, that the Apostles acted in their extraordinary Character, when they conferred the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, it being a Power and Honour peculiar to them, *AA.* viii. 14,---21. But then, at other Times, we find the Apostles acting in their ordinary Capacity, as Presbyters. This is clear in that famous Synod or Council, held at *Jerusalem*, to decide the Controversy that had risen in the Church of *Antioch*, concerning Circumcision, and the Observation of the ceremonial Law : Of which we have an Account, *AA.* xv. The Members of this Council, were the Apostles and Elders of the Church of *Jerusalem*, ver. 6. The Matter of Controversy (it seems) was largely debated in this Synod ; and to ripen Things for a Determination, we find sundry of the Apostles, first *Peter*, then *Paul* and *Barnabas*, after that *James*, reasoning upon the Case, and after that giving their Judgment, ver. 7,---29. Whereas, had they acted in their extraordinary Character, they might, as infallible Guides of the Church, have determined the Case by their apostolick Authority, under the immediate Direction of the Holy Ghost ; and added some extraordinary Confirmation of their Determination, if needful.

|| 1 *Tim.* i. 18. It seems there had been Prophecies before of *Timothy*, that he should be taken into the Ministry, and prove eminent in the sacred Calling ; and for this Reason, I conceive, the Gift of the Ministry is said to be given to him by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. † 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. † 2 *Tim.* i. 6.

§ They were not Apostles nor Diocesan Bishops, but stated Ministers in the Church at *Antioch*, of equal Authority, tho' some, if not all of them, might be endued with extraordinary Gifts, in that Age of Miracles.

Now, from these Scripture Precedents, without the Addition of any more, it is evident, that the Right and Power of Ordination does belong to Presbyters as such; or to the ordinary standing Ministers of the Gospel; such as are called Pastors and Teachers, *Eph. iv. 11.* But most frequently described by the Character of Presbyters or Elders; † and sometimes called Bishops: * For the same Persons that are called Elders in one Place, are called Bishops in another; they being only two distinct Names or Characters for one and the same Officer, in the Church of Christ; as may be seen in *AA. xx. ver. 17.* compared with the 28th, *Tit. i. 5.* with the 7th, and elsewhere. †

And these are the Officers to whom the Right and Power of Ordination does belong, as I observ'd but just now.

And, indeed, it must belong to them, or to none. For altho' human and civil Constitutions have multiplied, and made a great Distinction of Officers, with which some Churches are burdened, if not corrupted; § and which the Holy Scriptures know nothing of: Yet, by divine Institution, there are no Officers in the New Testament Church, invested with the Powers of the Gospel Pastor, superior to Presbyters or Elders; nor have there been any since the apostolick Age. For the apostolick Office expired with the Persons of the Apostles; and they have no Successors in their extraordinary Character, as Apostles, but in their ordinary Capacity as Presbyters only.

This being a Point of no small Importance in the present Subject of Enquiry, deserves some particular Attention: And it might be argued, with a satisfying Degree of Clearness, from the Way and Manner in which the Apostles were sent forth upon their extraordinary Ambassy, as Apostles; there having been none from that Time to this, that ever received the same Mission immediately from Christ, in that extraordinary Way and Manner as the Apostles did; of which we have an Account in *John xx. 21, 22.*

But lest I offend by too great a Degree of Prolixity, I shall wave this Argument here, and put the Evidence of the Point upon a Consideration of two extraordinary Qualifications,

† *1 Tim. v. 1, 17, 19. AA. xiv. 23. xv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 1. et alibi.* * *Pilip. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2.*

† As the Names of Bishop and Presbyter are promiscuously used in the New Testament, as descriptive of the Gospel Pastor and Teacher, or the ordinary standing Ministers of Christ; so from an Identity of Names, may be argued an Identity of Offices. Thus in *AA. xx.* St. Paul having sent to *Ephesus*, and called the Elders of that Church to *Miletas*, where he then was, *ver. 17.* gives them this Charge, *ver. 28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you OVERSEERS (Bishops in the Original) to feed the Church of God, &c.* From which it is evident, that the Government of the Church of *Ephesus* was committed to a Plurality of Elders, or Presbytery, and not to a single Person, or Diocesan Bishop; and consequently, that Presbyters have a Power of Ordination, since the Powers of Ordination and Government go together. Yea, that they have a Right by Scripture to all those Powers which Christ has granted to any of his standing Ministers, by what Character soever they are described.

And the Apostle having (in *Tit. i. 5, 6.*) laid down some of the Qualifications of the Elders, whom he left *Titus* to ordain in every City or Church at *Crete*, gives this Reason (*ver. 7.*) for insisting on those Qualifications, *For a Bishop must be blameless, as the Steward of God, &c.* which would be no Reason at all, unless the Apostle intended the same Officer by the Bishop, *ver. 7.* as he did by the Elders, *ver. 5.* and invested with the same Powers; both of Ordination and Jurisdiction.

§ Archbishops, Diocesan Bishops, Deans, Chapters, Prebends, Archdeacons, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, &c.

Qualifications, essentially necessary to constitute an Apostle, in the Scripture Sense of that Character; which have long since ceased, and are not to be found among any Order of Men upon Earth.

One of which Qualifications, was a Sight of Jesus Christ, with the Eyes of the Body after his Resurrection: Not that all those who thus saw Christ were Apostles: * No, they must have an apostolick Mission, with other essential Qualifications belonging to an Apostle. But without this none could be Apostles, in the true Scripture Sense of that Character and Office. For one main Article of that Business, which the Apostles were sent forth upon, was to be Witnesses of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Important Facts, upon which the Truth, the Hopes, and the Comforts of our Holy Religion eminently depends! Now it being requisite that Witnesses should be able to testify to a Truth or Matter of Fact, from their own personal Knowledge; it was therefore one necessary Qualification of an Apostle, that he had seen Jesus after his Resurrection, that so he might be a good Evidence of his having declared himself to be the Son of God, with Power, by his Resurrection from the Dead. †

Hence, when the Vacancy in the College of the Apostles, made by the Treason of Judas, † was to be filled up, it was required as a necessary Qualification in the Person that should supply it, that he was one who had accompanied with the Apostles, all the Time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them; beginning from the Baptism of *John*, unto that same Day that he was taken up from them; that he might be a Witness with them of Christ's Resurrection: See *AA.* i. 21, 22.

Upon this Account, the Apostle *Paul* had an extraordinary Vision of Christ, after his Resurrection; not only in his Journey to *Damascus*, ‖ but when he was caught up into the third Heaven, § where we may suppose his Sight of Christ, was more immediate and full. And he, as a Witness of Christ's Resurrection, could say, last of all, *He was seen of me also, as one born* (i. e. to the apostolick Office) *out of due Time*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 8. And upon this Footing, challenged those that disputed his Apostleship, in such Language as this, *Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?* 1 *Cor.* ix. 1.

Thus much for the present, of the first extraordinary Qualification of an Apostle, in his peculiar and distinguished Character.

Moreover, that the Apostles might be enabled to produce incontestible Credentials of their extraordinary Mission and Authority; another pre-requisite Qualification, was their being furnished with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost, that so they might have Power to confirm the new and sublime Doctrines they should preach, and the surprising Facts they should declare by miraculous Operations and Effects.

That Branch therefore of their Commission, by which they acted in their extraordinary Character, as Apostles, seems to be the most plainly and fully expressed, by our Lord Redeemer, in the forecited xxth. of *John*, ver. 21. where, speaking to the Apostles, he said, *As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you*. For it follows, ver. 22. *And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost.* ¶ Which must be meant of the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and

* Christ was seen after his Resurrection, by many that were not Apostles, *Mat.* xxviii. 9. 1 *Cor.* xx. 6. † *Rom.* i. 4. ‡ *AA.* i. 25. § *AA.* ix. 3, ---8. § 2 *Cor.* xii. 1, ---7. And as St. *Paul* had an extraordinary Vision of Christ at both those Seasons, so he had an extraordinary Mission: See *AA.* xxvi. 16, 17, 18. correspondent to that *John* xx. 21, 22.

¶ In the strictest Sense (says Mr. *Henry*) this is a special Commission to the Apostles themselves, and the first Preachers of the Gospel; who (being endued with the

and not of his sanctifying Influences ; for they had received the Holy Ghost, as a Spirit of Sanctification before this : But now had a Specimen and Earnest of the more plentiful Effusions of the Holy Ghost, in his extraordinary Gifts and Powers after Christ's Ascension.

Accordingly, we find that they were not allowed to enter upon their extraordinary Ministry, until they had received those extraordinary Gifts, in a more plentiful and superabundant Measure. Our Blessed Lord, therefore, (a little before his Ascension) said unto them, *Behold, I send the Promise of my Father upon you : But tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with Power from on high ; as St. Luke informs us in the xxivth, Chap. of his Gospel, at the 49th Verse. And referring (I suppose) to the same Time, in Act. i. 4, 5. tells us, that He (Jesus being assembled with them (the Apostles whom he had chosen) commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, which, said he, ye have heard of me. For, John truly baptized with Water ; but ye shall be baptized with the holy Ghost, not many Days hence. * And then adds, ver. 8. Ye shall receive Power, after the holy Ghost is come upon you ; and ye shall be Witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost Part of the Earth.*

In Obedience, therefore, to their divine Master's Command, the Apostles waited in the City of Jerusalem, till the Day of Pentecost ; and then entered upon their publick Ministry, as may be seen in the Acts of the Apostles † ; being plentifully furnished with the miraculous Gifts of the holy Ghost ; such as are enumerated by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10. *For to one is given by the Spirit the Word of Wisdom ; to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit ; to another Faith by the same Spirit ; to another the Gifts of Healing by the same Spirit ; to another the Working of Miracles ; to another Prophecy ; to another the Discerning of Spirits ; to another divers Kinds of Tongues ; to another the Interpretation of Tongues.*

Thus, I have set before you, two of the extraordinary, but yet essential Qualifications of an Apostle (considered in his proper and distinguishing Character) as appears from what has been said ; with this View, to show you that they, as Apostles, have no Successors in the Christian Church ; but that their apostolick Office being extraordinary was temporary, and expired with their Persons, as was observed before.

For, as it is not consistent with the Wisdom of God, to continue an extraordinary Office in the Church of which there is no special Occasion, so it is not agreeable to the good Pleasure of God's Will that any Person should be employed in such an Office, or indeed in any other, in the Church, who wants the essential Qualifications, respectively belonging thereunto. By Consequence there can be no just Claim made, by any, to a Succession in the apostolick Office, who are destitute of those extraordinary but essential apostolick Qualifications, that have been under Consideration,

the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost) could distinguish who were in the Gall of Bitterness and Bond of Iniquity, and who were not. By Virtue of this Power, Peter struck Ananias and Sapphira dead, and Paul struck Elymas blind.

* As the Promise of the Messiah's coming in the Flesh, was the great Promise of the Old Testament : So the Promise of the holy Ghost, in a greater Measure of his extraordinary as well as sanctifying Influences than had been known before, is the great Promise of the New. And as the Spirit comes from the Father in the Name and by the Mediation of the Son, so Christ had frequently put his Disciples in Mind of this Blessing as the Promise of the Father, *John xiv. 12, 16, 17, 26. xv. 26. xvi. 7, --- 14. therein referring to such Promises of the Father as those, Isai. xlv. 3. Joel ii. 28, -- 30. confirmed by the Prediction and Testimony of John Baptist with Reference to Christ, Mat. iii. 11. and by St. Peter, Act. ii. 33. † Act. ii.*

deration, & whoever therefore puts in a Claim to such a Succession, is but a Pretender; boasting of a false Gift, like Clouds and Wind without Rain, unless he can justify the Claim, by being able, with Truth, to declare, that he has seen Christ since his Resurrection, as the Apostles did;---that he has the Gift of Tongues, Healing, working Miracles, &c. But where are the Men that can justify a Pretence to any of these Extraordinaries? Hence (I think) it appears evident, beyond any rational Dispute, that a Succession to the Apostles, in their extraordinary Character has long since ceased; or to speak more properly, there never was in Reality any such Succession, in an ordinary Way. ¶

But, altho' the the Apostles have no Successors, in their extraordinary Character, as Apostles, yet all the true Ministers of Christ are Successors to them in their ordinary Capacity, as Presbyters, or Gospel Pastors. And, upon their Ordination are invested with the same, yea, and all the Powers granted to the Apostles, as ordinary Ministers of Christ, by his Commission, in *Mat. xxviii.* which he introduces with this Preface, ver. 18. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven and in Earth.* And then follows the Commission, ver. 19, 20. in these Words, *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.*

I have had Occasion, more than once, to mention that divine Mission, by Virtue of which the Apostles acted in their extraordinary Character, as is recorded in *John*

§ There was undoubtedly Occasion for those extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Powers, wherewith the Apostles and first Ministers of Religion, under the Gospel, were furnished in that Age; they being necessary to qualify and fit them for the important Service of erecting and building up the Christian Church, in the tender Age and critical Period of an infant State, when violently opposed by the united Force of *Jews and Pagans*; and the Mind of Christ, with respect to his Church was not, as yet, fully made known. But when the Canon of Scripture was completed, the Doctrines of the Gospel sufficiently attested by Miracles, and the Christian Religion established in the World, there was no further need of continuing those extraordinary Gifts and Powers. It was therefore the Will of God, according to the Dictates of his infinite Wisdom, to withdraw them. And as it is probable that the superior Authority, which the Apostles exercised over other Ministers of the Gospel in their Day, was founded, if not wholly, yet more, in those extraordinary Gifts of Infallibility, discerning Spirits, and other miraculous Powers wherewith they were furnished, than in any special Superiority inherient in their Office, or coming from any other Quarter; so those extraordinary Gifts ceasing, that Superiority of Power ceases too. And it is a vain Thing for any to pretend to a Succession to the Apostles, in their extraordinary Character, who are destitute of those extraordinary Gifts and Powers.

¶ It is true *Matthias* did, in a Sense, succeed *Judas* in the Apostolate, inasmuch as he took Part of the Ministry and Apostleship, from which *Judas* by Transgression fell, *Act. i. 25.* But then as *Matthias* was qualified to be a Witness of Christ's Resurrection, having accompanied with the Brethren and Apostles all the Time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, Ver. 21, 22. so he was chosen by Lot, (a divine Determination) and not ordained by the Imposition of Men's Hands, but by the holy Ghost, as they all were not many Days after, Ver. 23, 24, 26. compare *Act. ii. 1,---4.* Thus the Number of the Twelve was made up; as afterwards when *James*, another of the Apostles was martyr'd, *Act. xii. 2.* *Paul* was made an Apostle, not by human, but divine Ordination, in a very extraordinary Way, of which he gives us an Account, *Act. xxvi. 15,---18,* and therefore calls himself an Apostle, *not of Men, neither by Man, but by Jesus and God the Father, who raised him from the Dead, Gal. i. 1.*

John xx. 21, 22. Which Mission they received from our Lord Redeemer, the Night after his Resurrection. But the Commission just now recited, it seems, was given some Time after this, probably but a little before Christ's Ascension into Heaven †, it being the Magna Charta of all ministerial Power, in his Gospel Church. Indeed, as it was primarily given, and personally directed to the Apostles, &c, there seems to be something in it peculiar to them, as they had the World for their Diocese, and all Nations committed to them as their Cure ‡ : Whereas upon the Introduction and Settlement of Christianity in a Country, or Land, it appears to be agreeable to the Gospel Constitution, that particular Pastors should be set over particular Churches therein erected upon the Gospel Plan, as their special Charge. * Nevertheless, inasmuch as there are many Nations in the World Strangers to the Gospel, and even in Christian Countries there may be, as there are at this Day, many Churches and Congregations destitute of fixt Pastors, I can see no Inconsistency with the Gospel Constitution in ordaining Ministers at large, and sending them forth to disciple Heathen Nations ; or to preach the Gospel, even

† *St. Paul*, in *1 Cor.* xv. 5,---8. reckons up five several Appearances of Christ after his Resurrection, besides that to himself after his Ascension. The first was to *Cephas* or *Peter*, then to the Twelve, called so, tho' *Judas* was no longer among them, because this was their first constituted and usual Number : Then to five hundred Brethren at once. After that he was seen of *James* singly, and then of all the Apostles, to whom he appeared more than once. Now it is evident they received their extraordinary Mission, recorded in *John* xx. 21, 22. the Night after Christ's Resurrection, *Luke* xxiv. 33,---36, compare *John* xx. 19,---21. But I think it is more than probable, that the grand Commission in *Mat.* xxviii. 19, 20. was not given till some Time after this : For it was given to the Eleven together, *Mat.* xxviii. 16,---20. But *Thomas* was not present, at the first Interview, and when his Brethren gave him an Account of his Appearance to them the Night after his Resurrection, he would not receive it for Truth, being under the Power of Unbelief, as to the important Fact of Christ's Resurrection, *John* xx. 24, 25. And therefore, eight Days after this, Christ appears to his Disciples again, *Thomas* being with them ; and gives him the most sensible Proofs of his Resurrection, ver. 26, 27. After this Interview, Christ discovered himself to *Peter* and sundry other Apostles at the Sea of *Tiberias*, *John* xxi. 1,---14. This was the third Time that Jesus shewed himself to his Disciples after that he was risen from the Dead. After this he appeared to the whole Body of his Disciples at the Mountain, where he had appointed them to meet him in *Galilee*, *Mat.* xxviii. 16. *Mark* xvi. 7. And, after this he met them several Times at *Jerusalem*, and discoursed with them concerning the Affairs of his Kingdom, *Act.* i. 1,---8. And last of all, he was seen of them on Mount *Olivet* : But while they beheld, he was taken up, and a bright Cloud received him out of their Sight, *Act.* i. 9,---12. *Luke* xxiv. 50, 51. Now I think there is good Ground to conclude, that at some of these last Seasons of Christ's Appearance, and conversing with his Disciples, a little, if not immediately before his Ascension, he charged them with this grand Commission, which from hence appears to be the standing Basis of all ministerial Power in the Church ; whereas the former, in *John* xx. 21, 22. was temporary and peculiar to the Apostles.

‡ But this has nothing in it peculiar to them, unless it be the Extensiveness of their Charge, being sent through the World to preach the Gospel to every Creature, *Mark* xvi. 15. or to disciple all Nations, *Mat.* xxviii. 19. For in all other Respects, it belongs to all the ordinary standing Ministers of Christ in all the successive Ages of the Church ; and there may be Cases in which the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel have a just and loud Call to disciple the unconverted Nations of the World. * *Tit.* i. 5.

even in a Christian Country, and do the Work of an Evangelist § in supplying destitute Churches and Congregations, as there shall be Occasion. For, emergent Circumstances may be a just Ground of varying from the general Rules of any Constitution.

But whatever circumstantial Variations, in such like Matters of Liberty may be made by christian and ministerial Prudence, which is profitable to direct : Yet the Commission under Consideration, being the grand Basis of all ministerial Power in the Church, therefore as the Apostles did, so all their Successors do receive their Office-Power and Authority from Christ by this Grant ; as is apparent from the Promise annexed to this Commission, by our divine Master, in these Words, *And lo I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World, Amen.* * A plain Evidence that this Commission was not given only to the Apostles personally considered ; because they are long since dead. And therefore, since (as I have shown you) they have no Successors in their extraordinary Character, as Apostles, it must belong to their Successors in their ordinary Capacity as Elders or Presbyters ; that is, to the ordinary standing Ministers of the Gospel who receive their Office-Power and Authority, from Christ by this Commission.

And indeed they must receive their Power from Christ by this Commission, or by none at all ; for there is no other divine Constitution in this Case provided by him, who is the only supreme Head, King, Lord and Lawgiver of the Church.

Now if this, which is the only standing Commission, belongs to Presbyters, or the ordinary standing Ministers of the Gospel (as it evidently does) then it must belong to them in the full Extent of it, unless Christ has limited it, and given all the Powers to some, and Part only to others. But no such Limitation or Division is to be found in the holy Scriptures of the New Testament, wherein Christ has given us the Pattern and Orders of his House. And if Jesus Christ, to whom all Power is given in Heaven and in Earth, § has not made any such Limitation or Division of the Powers granted in his Commission, then certainly no Man, or Order of Men under Heaven have a Right to do it, unless Christ has given them this limiting and dividing Power. But no such Grant of a limiting and dividing Power made to any Man, or Order of Men, is to be found in the holy Bible. Consequently all the ordinary Powers granted by this Commission, must belong to Presbyters, as such, or to the ordinary standing Ministers of the Gospel, invested with the pastoral Office.

And accordingly, if every true Minister of the Gospel has all the Powers granted by Christ's Commission to the Apostles, considered in their ordinary Character as Presbyters, then certainly they have the Power of Ordination committed to them ; because Ordination belongs to the ministerial Power, as an inseparable Branch of it.

And indeed they either have all the Powers granted by Christ's Commission under Consideration, or they have none of those Powers. If the former, then they have no Superiors under Christ in the ministerial Office ; and so cannot be exempted or bared from exercising any Part or Branch of the ministerial Power. If the latter, then they have no ministerial Authority at all, but only an empty Title, without the least Branch or Degree of Office-Power ; which is an Absurdity that can by no Means be admitted of. For a Commission from the supreme Head, or Source of Power, always derives Authority with it, peculiar to the Office wherewith any one is invested by it : Yea, all the Branches of Power belonging to that Office. ||

Therefore,

§ 2 Tim. iv. 5. * Mat. xxviii. 20. § Ver. 18.

|| As it is evident beyond any rational Controversy, that Presbyters receive their ministerial Power from Christ by that Commission, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. given primarily

Therefore, either Presbyters have no Power to baptize and administer the Lord's Supper, or they have Power to ordain. For as the Power of an Officer is derived from the proper Source of Power, by that Commission which impowers him to discharge the Duties of his Office, and can come in no other Way, nor from any other Quarter ; so the Powers granted, by Christ's Commission, to all the true Ministers of the Gospel, are full, undivided, and may not be curtail'd or abridged.

Hear then the Conclusion of the whole Matter : If Presbyters, or the standing ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, have not a Right and Power to ordain others to the Work of the Ministry, none have : For as there is no standing Order of Ministers in the Church of Christ, superior to Presbyters by divine Institution ; so there is but one undivided Commission, by which all the Ministers of the Gospel are empowered to act in the Discharge of their Office. And if none have Power to ordain, (which appears to be the Consequence of denying this Power to Presbyters) then the Ministry of Reconciliation must sink and cease under the New Testament : Nay, it would long since, have terminated and come to an End. But as it has been continued through past Ages, ever since the Death of the Apostles, and their immediate Successors, by a Succession to them, not in their Apostolick but Presbyterian Character ; so the great Head of the Church, (*who holds the Stars in his Right Hand, and walks in the Midst of his golden Candlesticks,* &c.) has assured us that it shall continue to the End of the World. †

And therefore, as we are persuaded, on the one Hand, by such Reasons as have been assigned, that the Right and Power of Ordination does not belong to Laymen ; so on the other, we are satisfied by such Scripture Arguments as have been offered, that we, who as Presbyters have the sacred Trust of the Gospel Ministry committed to us, are invested with a Right ; and when duly called to that solemn Service, are in Duty bound to commit the same, by Ordination, to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also. † And may in this, as well as other Instances of our Ministrations, rely upon that gracious Word of Promise, upon which our divine Master has caused his Servants to hope : † *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World, AMEN.* §

Accordingly a Number of us, sustaining the sacred Character, being called to attend the Solemnities of an Ordination this Day, we (with a Dependence upon the gracious Presence of the glorious Head of the Church) purpose to proceed to that solemn Service, in case no Barr shall appear to be in the Way, when the proper public Preliminaries shall have been attended. N. B.

marily to the Apostles, considered principally in their ordinary Character of Presbyters ; --- a Character they seem to take Pleasure in distinguishing themselves by, as tho' it were on purpose to anticipate all Pretences to Preheminence among the Ministers of the Gospel, by Virtue of a Succession to them : So there is nothing more evident, than that the same Commission must give the same Powers to 'all that are truly authorized by it ; and consequently, that both the Apostles, in their ordinary Capacity, and all other Gospel Pastors, must be, in all Respects, co-ordinate ; and all of them vested with all and the same Powers, since they are all of them authorized by the very same Commission, if they have any Power at all, as Ministers of Christ.

I cannot therefore see how a Subordination, as to Order and an Imparity of Power, among those invested with the Office of the Gospel Pastor, can be established upon any Scripture Foundation, or defended by any plausible Arguments, from the New-Testament. I think our blessed Saviour condemns it, *Luk. xxii. 25, 26, 27.* And it seems to be derived rather from the Spirit of *Diotrephes*, than from the Instructions of Christ or his Apostles.

§ *Rev. ii. 1.* † *Mat. xxviii. 20.*

† *Thes. ii. 4.* 2 *Tim. ii. 2* † *1st Cor. cxix. 47.* § *Mat. xxviii. 20.*

N. B. These Preliminaries having been attended, and no Barr appearing to be in the Way, the Ordination was then solemnized by Prayer, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, as usual. The Day being ordered to be kept as a Day of religious Fasting.

THE C H A R G E,

GIVEN TO

The Rev. BENJAMIN TALLMADGE,

UPON HIS

ORDINATION.

Dear BROTHER,

✿✿✿✿ S. Paul and Barnabas, when called to the Ministry of the Gentiles, were by the Presbyters in the Church of *Antioch*, separated to that special Service, by Fasting, Prayer, and the laying on of Hands, tho' extraordinary Ministers before; and *Timothy*, a Person of early Piety, and a young Minister of eminent Zeal in the Cause of Christ, according to the Prophecies which went before of him; received the Gift and Office of the Ministry, by the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery: So with the like Solemnities of Devotion, you have at this Time, been separated to the special Service of God and his People, in the Gospel of his dear Son, by the laying on of the Hands of this Presbytery. And being now regularly introduced into the sacred Inclosure of the Gospel Ministry, and invested with all the Office-Powers and Authority of the Gospel Pastor and Teacher, we are, in the next Place, to address a solemn Charge to you, in the Name of the Lord. And surely, it concerns you to attend to it, not as a formal Address from a Number of your Fellow-Servants, frail sinful Men! but as the CHARGE of the Great God, and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

For, as God the Father is the Fountain of all Dominion and Power, so he hath seen fit to put the Scepter of universal Government into the Hands of his dear Son; considered as God-Man, or Mediator; and to constitute, make, and ordain him Head over all Things to the Church. Hence, although it is by us that you have been introduced into the Ministry at this Time, and you now have the Dispensation of the glorious Gospel, as a sacred Depositum, committed to your Trust, by Virtue of your Inauguration, which we have solemnly attended, according to Scriptural Precedents, and divine Institution: Yet, your ministerial Power and Authority is not from us, but from him, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given, and all Judgment committed by God the Father. And he being both Lord and Christ, to him you must, e'er it be long, give an Account of your Stewardship.

Take Heed therefore unto the Ministry which you have received in the Lord, to fulfil it; remembering that solemn Admonition of our blessed Lord and divine Master, recorded in the Gospel; and now speaking to you in such Language as this, *No Man having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.*

The Work which you have now undertaken, is not only a good, but an exceeding great Work; it being even of infinite Moment and Consequence. For the Care not of the mortal Bodies, and temporal Interests of dying Men, but that of their precious and immortal Souls, with Reference to a never-ending Eternity, is now devolved upon you. And, O! with what Weight should this bear upon your Mind, and abide upon your Conscience!

And, as your Work is great, so your Charge is very extensive, being invested with a Power to exercise the Gift which is in you, and which has been given you, by the Laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery, whosoever you shall be regularly called to it. As a Token of which, I now put into your Hands, this blessed Book, the holy Bible, * containing not only sacred Histories, Prophecies and Types; but Christ's Commission to his Ministers, the Charter of the Churches Privileges, and her Laws of Government; the Doctrines of Faith once delivered to the Saints, the sacred Rites of instituted Worship, and the most excellent System of Christian Morality: Which, according to their Nature, Quality and Degree of Importance, and your own and People's correspondent State and Circumstances, must be the main Subjects of your Preaching, and Rules of your christian and ministerial Conduct.

But although your Charge is very extensive, and your Ministry not confined to this Place, yet your stated Labours (at least for the Present) are limited to the special Service of the Presbyterian Church and Congregation of the Lord, in this Town of *Brook-Haven*; the Souls of which we commit to your special Pastoral Watch, Over-sight, and Charge, so long as it shall appear to be for the Glory of God, and the Good of his Church, to continue you in the Ministry here: And such Provision for your Subsistence as to Temporals, shall be made, as to render you capable of attending upon the Lord, in your great Work, without Distraction from worldly Cares and Avocations.

And as you watch for Souls, as one that must give an Account, so remember that the Soul of the meanest and most contemptible Slave, is of more value than all the material and visible World.

How dreadful an Account then will you have to give in the great Audit-Day, if any should perish through your careless Neglect, or allow'd Misconduct; the Guilt of the Blood of Souls being laid to your Charge! And you exposed at the tremendous Barr of the incarnate God, and universal Judge, to that awful Reprimand, *Thou wicked and slothful Servant!* What can be expected, under such dreadful Circumstances of crimson Guilt, but the amazing Execution of that Soul-rending Sentence, *Cast ye the unprofitable Servant into outer Darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth!*

But on the other Hand, how comfortable, how refreshing and joyful will your Account be, if, as a faithful Servant and wise Steward, you improve all your Talents to the best Purposes; and give to every one their Portion of Meat, in due Season? Surely, blessed shall that Servant be, whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing: For he shall find Acceptance, and be favoured with the Approbation of his blessed Master, in such Language of Love and divine Grace as this, *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

Have

* The Bible delivered to the Candidate ordained, &c.

Have you then any due Sense of the Weight, and vast Importance of your great Work ; any Regard to the Honour of Christ, who has committed unto you the Ministry of Reconciliation ; any Compassion for the Souls of perishing Sinners, and Desire of the Edification of Saints ; any Dread of the Wrath of the Lamb, and Desire of appearing with Comfort at the awful Barr of your great Judge, where your Fidelity in the Ministry will have a most strict and impartial Trial, before an assembled World of Angels and Men ! It certainly concerns you to address yourself to your solemn Work with great Seriousness, and to pursue it with the closest Application, assiduous Labours, ardent Zeal, unwearied Dilligence and inviolable Fidelity.

As, therefore, our Hearts Desire, and Prayer to God, for you has been, is, and (by divine Grace) shall be this, That you might come to the Churches of Christ, and to perishing Sinners, wherever you shall be called to labour ; and in particular, to this Church and Congregation of the Lord, in the Fulness of the Blessing of the Gospel of Christ : So let it be your constant Study and Endeavour, (as an Instrument in God's Hand) to impart to them spiritual Gifts, to the End they may be established. And in all Things, behave yourself in the House of God, as becometh a Minister of Christ, and faithful Steward of the Mysteries of God.

Take Heed therefore, take Heed unto yourself, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you an Overseer, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood ; taking the Oversight thereof, not by Constraint, but willingly ; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind ; not lording it over God's Heritage, as though you had a Dominion over their Faith, but as being an Ensamble unto the Flock, and an Helper of their Joy.

And since Necessity is now laid upon you woe unto you, if you do not preach the Gospel ; a Dispensation thereof being committed unto you. And look to it, that the Gospel you dispense, be the pure Gospel of Christ : Not adulterated by Philosophy and vain Deceit, the carnal Reasonings, and unscriptural Impositions of Men of corrupt Minds, who teach for Doctrines the Commendments of Men ; which Things may have a Shew of Wisdom in Will-Worship, though vain in the Sight of God : But let it be the sincere Milk of the Word, and the pure spiritual Food of divine Ordinances, that Men may grow thereby.

We charge you therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge both the Quick and the Dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom, preach the Word, be instant in Season, out of Season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-suffering and Doctrine ; neglect not the Gift which is in you, and which has been given to you by solemn Prayer, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery ; but give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine : Meditate upon these Things ; give thyself wholly to them, that thy Profiting may appear to all. . . . Hold fast the faithful Word as you have been taught, even that Form of sound Words which you have learned from the Holy Scriptures, in Faith and Love, which is in Christ Jesus : That you may be a Teacher of others in Faith and Verity ; and be able, by sound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince the Gainfayers. And let the Doctrine you preach be always wholesome Words, agreeable to the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness ; therein shewing Uncorruptness, Gravity, Sincerity, sound Speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary Part may be ashamed, having no Evil to say of you.

And being allowed of God to be put in Trust with the Gospel, so speak not as pleasing the vain Fancies and carnal Humours of Men, but God, who searcheth the Heart and trieth the Reins. Use not flattering Words, nor a Cloak of Covetousness ;
neither

neither shun to declare to them the whole Counsel of God. Keep back nothing from them that may be profitable to them ; but teach them publicly, and from House to House, (as there shall be Occasion, and you shall be able) testifying unto all, Repentance toward God, and Faith to our Lord Jesus Christ. And let your Exhortations be not of Deceit, nor of Uncleanness, nor in Guile. Indure Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, and keep yourself pure from the Blood of all Men.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth ; and as a faithful and wise Steward, give to every One their Portion of Meat in due Season.

Be wise even as a Serpent, but harmless as a Dove : And labour with all possible Prudence and Fidelity, to make a Distinction between the Clean and the Unclean, the Precious and the Vile. Give not that which is holy unto Dogs, neither cast your Pearls before Swine : But let the Members of Christ's Family, who are of Age, and have their Senses exercised to discern spiritual Things, be fed and feasted with that Bread and that Cup which is the Communion of the Body and Blood of our dear Lord. And be not only ready to baptize adult Persons, who have lived without that Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, upon their making a suitable Profession of Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ ; but let the Lambs of his Flock be solemnly washed in the Laver of Christian Baptism, as is fit : And then, as becomes a Pastor of Christ's Flock, take Care that they be trained up as the Disciples of the compassionate Shepherd of *Israel*, who gathers the Lambs with his Arms, carries them in his Bosom, and gently leads those that are with Young. If thou lovest Christ, feed his Sheep, and if thou lovest Christ feed his Lambs. And for this Purpose, Precept must be upon Precept, Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line, Line upon Line ; here a little, and there a little ; that thou mayest teach them Knowledge, and make them to understand Doctrine, who are weaned from the Milk, and drawn from the Breasts.

Be bold, even as a Lion, in the Cause of God, though meek as a Lamb in your own : And labour with an holy Fortitude and unshaken Resolution, as becomes an Embassador of the King of Kings, to maintain the Honour of Christ's Authority, as the great Lawgiver of the Church, by a regular Government of his House, which is the Church of the living God : For unto you are committed the Keys not only of Doctrine but of Discipline. Whatsoever therefore you shall bind on Earth, (according to the Laws of Christ's Kingdom) shall be bound in Heaven ; and whatsoever you shall loose on Earth (by the same Rules) shall be loosed in Heaven. But take Heed and use this Power, which is given you for Edification and not for Destruction.

Warn the Unruly, that they turn from their evil Ways and live. Comfort the Feeble-minded ; support the Weak : Be patient towards all Men ; in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves ; if God, peradventure, will give them Repentance, to the acknowledging of the Truth, that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taken Captive by him at his Will. On some have Compassion, making a Difference, (according to their Tempers and Circumstances.) Others save with Fear, pulling them out of the Fire. Them that sin before all, rebuke before all, that others also may hear and fear, and do no more so wickedly. And those that duly express and evidence their Repentance, restore in the Spirit of Meekness : Let that which is lame be turned out of the Way.

We charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that you observe these Things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by Partiality.

Give

Give yourself also continually to Prayer, as well as to the Ministry of the Word and Ordinances of the Lord's House; considering your own Insufficiency, not being able of yourself to think any Thing that is good as of yourself, much less to perform the great Duties of the evangelical Ministry: But your Sufficiency is of God, who can make you able Minister of the New Testament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit. As it is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, that Supplications, Prayers, and Intercessions should be made for all Men, so it is your Duty and Interest to be much in Prayer, especially for the Church of God; that his Kingdom might come, and that you yourself might be made an happy Instrument of promoting the Interest not only of his visible, but especially of his spiritual Kingdom among Men. Pray therefore for yourself, and pray for the Flock: Pray over your Studies, and pray over your Labours; remembering that Success depends entirely upon the divine Blessing. For, neither is he that planteth any Thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increase. For he that planteth, and he that watereth are one; and every Man shall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour. How full then will your Joy be, and how bright and weighty your Crown of Rejoicing, in the Presence of the Lord Jesus at his coming, if being found faithful, you shall also be successful in winning Souls to Christ? But if you make full Proof of your Ministry, waiting upon God by fervent persevering Prayer for Success, though you should labour in vain, and spend your Strength for nought; yet surely your Judgment shall be with the Lord, and your Work with your God. Yea, though *Israel* should not be gathered, yet, if in Christ, thou shalt be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and thy God shall be thy Strength.

But be admonished and quickened to take Heed unto yourself, as well as to your Doctrine and the Duties of your Ministry. And whilst you teach others, neglect not to teach and be instructed yourself. Content not yourself with Probabilities and Hopes, but make sure of a vital Union to Jesus Christ, the glorious Head of all divine and saving Influences; that you may be able, with an holy, humble Confidence, to say of yourself, as *St. Paul* once did of himself, *I knew a Man in Christ*: For how dreadful will the Case be, if after you have preached to others, you yourself should be a Castaway!

Nay, be zealous of spiritual Gifts and Graces; abide not in any of the lower Forms in the School of Christ, but with an holy Emulation labour to excel; that being taller by the Head and Shoulders than your Christian Brethren, you might be as a *Jacbin* and a *Boaz*, in the House of your God here below; and at last be eternally fix'd as a monumental Pillar of rich sovereign Grace, in the Temple of God above, and go no more out.

Look well likewise to your Conversation, that it be ordered aright in all Things; not only as becomes a Christian, but a Minister of the Gospel; who should be blameless, vigilant, sober, of good Behaviour, given to Hospitality; not given to Wine, no Striker, not greedy of filthy Lucre, but patient; not a Brawler, not covetous, but one that ruleth well his own House, having his Children in Subjection, with all Gravity.

Let your Speech be always seasoned with the Salt of Grace, and let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good to the Use of edifying; that it may minister Grace unto the Hearers, as well as manifest Grace in the Speaker.

Flee every Thing therefore that becometh not a Man of God and Minister of Christ; and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness, and Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of pure Heart.

Let

Let no Man despise thee, but be thou an Example of the Believers, in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity, that thou mayest both save thyself, and them that shall hear thee.

And as thou art allowed of God to be put in Trust with the Gospel, the same sacred Trust commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also, as there shall be Occasion and Opportunity : But let it be with this Caution, *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, neither be Partaker of other Men's Sins, keep thyself pure.*

And now having engaged in an holy Warfare, intangle not yourself with the Affairs of this Life, unless upon inevitable Necessity ; but as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, fight the good Fight of Faith, lay Hold on eternal Life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good Profession before many Witnesses.

Finally, We give thee Charge in the Sight of God, who quickeneth all Things ; and before Christ Jesus, who before *Pontius Pilate* witnessed a good Confession, that thou keep this Commandment without Spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ ; which in his Times, he shall shew who is the blessed and on'y Potentate ; having on his Vesture, and on his Thigh a Name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, to whom we must all give an Account of our Stewardship, when the Son of Man shall sit in the Throne of his Glory, and with him the Twelve Apostles, upon twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

O *Benjamin!* keep that which is committed to thy Trust, avoiding profane and vain Babbings, and Opposition of Science, falsely so called ; which some professing, have erred concerning the Faith, and made Shipwreck of a good Conscience.

Watch therefore in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of an Evangelist, make full Proof of thy Ministry ; be willing to spend, and be spent in the Service of your divine Master, and the Souls of his dear People, so that you might finish your Course with Joy, and the Ministry you have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.

Then may you, in the happy Close of a useful and exemplary Life, of Service and Suffering for Christ's Sake ; say, with an holy Serenity of Mind, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith : Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day ; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing : For, if thou art faithful unto the Death, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, thou shalt receive a Crown of Righteousness, Life and Glory that fadeth not away.*

In that solemn and glorious Day of Christ's appearing and Kingdom, *they that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament ; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

Grace be with thee ; may the Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit. AMEN.

