



Mr. Josiah Smith's
Ordination *SERMON.*

Manuscript



From Mr. Josiah Clarke

^A
DISCOURSE

Delivered at *Boston*, on July 11. 1726.

Then occasion'd by the

AUTHOR's

Ordination.

And now Published at the
Request of several GENTLEMEN, who were present at the Delivery of it.

By JOSIAH SMITH, B. A.
And Pastor of a Church in *Bermuda*.

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P R E F A C E.

THE *Author* of the following *Discourse* is very like to prove a rare and singular Gift of GOD our Saviour to the *Island of Bermuda*, where his lot is cast. In his childhood he was carried thither by his worthy *Father*, who found there a comfortable provision & support for his Family on temporal accounts, but the *Bread of life* (the means of Grace) for his own & the Souls of his household was sadly wanting. This was an insupportable grief to him, under which he pined and languish'd as he well might. But more especially on the returning weekly *Sabbaths* of the Lord, hungry & thirsty his soul pined in him. On one of these sorrowful days, as he was *musings* & looking to the Lord in his trouble, he came to a sudden and strong determination to make a voyage & visit to *New-England*, where he hop'd to find some qualified Person inclined to go over with him & help them. For there were the remains of a *Church* in the *Island* that had been under the Pastoral Care of the Rev. Mr. *Foul*. But Mr. *Smith* fail'd of his Expectation from Us at that time, & return'd without a Minister, to his own & our grief. When to the wise Providence of God unexpectedly brought them a Minister from *Great Britain*, the Rev. Mr. *James Paul*, who was bound to some other part of *America*.

SOON after this Mr. *Smith* brought over this his Son with him to *New-England*, & enter'd him in the

the *Grammar School* at *Cambridge*, where he made that proficiency within the space of a Year that he was admitted into the *College* there; & follow'd his Studies with such diligence & industry that he had a *year* given him, & at the end of *three* years he took his *first Degree*. It was a pleasing surprise to all his Friends to see him come forth at once a *Master* in the Gift & Art of preaching; a kind of finish'd *Preacher*. He soon return'd to *Bermuda* to the great Joy of his *Father*, who now received that from *New-England* in his own *Son*, which he had before sought for in another and had miss'd of. So a Gracious *Providence* has abundantly rewarded him for that travel & *labour of love*, wherein he had before *minister'd* to the Souls of his *Neighbours*, as well as to those of his own *house*. In due season he has reap'd *this*, & his labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

WHEN the Rev. Mr. *Paul* & the *Flock* in *Bermuda* had seen the *Grace* of God given to Mr. *Smith*, and had tasted of his *Gifts* & excellent Accomplishments for *the Work of the Ministry*, He returned to *New-England*, with their *Letters* asking his *Ordination* thereunto; & signifying their Choice of him to be the *Colleague* & Fellow-labourer with Mr. *Paul* in the *Pastoral Office* over them. On the day of his Ordination he preached the following *Sermon* to us, & his mouth was most sweet to us while he spake of the *Beauty* & loveliness of the *Lord Jesus* in his *Prophetic Office*. The modesty, the seriousness, the great devotion, & the soft and happy utterance with which it was delivered, made
great

great impression on the *Audience*, both Ministers and People.

NO one has risen among us & gone ~~for~~ us, so suddenly, with like esteem, affection & applause, as Mr. *Smith* has done. I may the rather say it, because of the *Humility* & great modesty which adorns him, & fortifies him against such a word. Moreover his present *distance* from us, & his having been a *Stranger* among us, makes this freedom the more allowable. It is an honour to our *College* to have such a Son to boast of from among the *Islands*. Nor have any of them sent us at any time a richer *fruit* & produce, than this which we have now received & returned in him. To GOD *the Father of lights & Giver of every good & perfect Gift* be all the glory. And may His blessing more and more rest upon our *College*, in all times to come, & this *her Son* long live a *shining light* in the *Candlestick* where he is fixed.

THERE is something very *fine* in the *turn* given here to the sacred *Text*; but nothing strain'd; nothing more *natural* & familiar, *proper* & pertinent than the *Thought* is. For what could equally convey to us an Idea of the *Loveliness* of Christ in his office of a *Prophet*, as these words — *His mouth is most sweet*? There is to me an inimitable beauty & sweetness in the very choice of the *Text* for such a *Subjett*.

THE like appeared to me in *another Discourse* of the *Authors*, preached with us on the *Lord's-day* before his Ordination, from those words, 1 Thes. 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit*: wherein he

ran the Similitude of the *Spirit* and *Fire*, in His blessed and saving Operations. That *Sermon* is also designed for the *Press*; and I hope *both* of them may be of use to them that read 'em, to convey *light* to their minds and *heat* into their hearts.

IF the *Learned* Reader find any thing *wanting* in these Discourses, he will consider the *Youth* of the Author, but every *gracious* heart must needs *praise* his choice & design to set forth the beauties & *glories* of *Christ*, and the *power* of *his Grace* in these *first-fruits* of his Ministry; and be much *affected* with the Solemnity with which he makes *Application* to *himself* of the Truths he preaches. Let the view hereof here presented before us move us all to join together in our prayers to God for him, that he may more & more *study* to *shew* *himself* *approved* *unto* God, a *workman* that *needeth* *not* to be *ashamed*, *rightly* dividing the *Word* of *truth*; and that he may always come to the *Flock*, over which the *Holy Ghost* hath made him an *Overseer*, in the *fulness* of the *Blessing* of the *Gospel* of *Christ*.

Boston, N. E.
Septem. 28. 1726.

Benjamin Colman.



THE

*Beauty & loveliness of CHRIST
in the Office of a Prophet.*

CANT. V. 16.

His Mouth is most Sweet.



THE Excellencies of *Christ* are the most noble Subject that can imploy a *Minister's* thought and pen. *Paul* the great *ap'stle* of the *Gentiles*, determin'd to know nothing among them save *Jesus Christ* and him crucified. Yea, he counted all things but loss and dung for the excellency of *this* knowledge. *Angels* themselves would rejoyce to mention his Name. And the *Scriptures* which are a testimony from the

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Holy Spirit, have large and frequent *Encomiums* upon him.

OUR *Context* clearly attests this ; Christ's *Spouse*, the *Church*, there borrows the most lively *Figures* to speak his Character. But when nature was tript of it's beauty, and the powers of *Metaphor* could go no further, she closes all with the general description in the *Text*, *His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely*. Which was indeed the best Representation could be given of him. Before she confin'd our thoughts to her own, but now they have leave to range, and take as wide a survey of his lovely Properties as finite Creatures are capable of : The best of which, after their most vigorous and delightful Contemplations of his unsearchable Excellencies can only say, *He is altogether lovely*. He is so in the *highest* sense, and in *every* sense the expression can bear ; considered in the whole or only in part. *Christ* is altogether lovely ; He has all the Excellencies of a *God* ; all the Excellencies of a *Man* ; and all the Excellencies of a *God-Man*, concentrating in him. The *first* of these are incommunicable ; the *second* inimitable, and the *third* mysterious. A transient touch upon *Christ* under *each* of these more general views would be a labour as pleasant and useful as 'tis great. Particularly under the *1st*, to see how wonderfully his *three* Offices, of *Prophet*, *Priest* and *King* are adapted to answer the great designs of his appearing in flesh : by the *first* whereof he cures our natural blindness ; by the *second* removes our guilt ; and by the *third* redeems from bondage.

BUT

BUT the special occasion of this Day's *Solemnity* will confine my present Meditation to the *first* of these, viz. *His Prophetical Office*; which is generally defined under two distinct heads; an *External Revelation* of necessary truths, and the *opening the understanding by 'is Spirit* for the Reception of them. But the time allotted me being insufficient to expatiate in so large a method, I shall discourse of them in their respective order only; as so many particulars comprized in the general name of one individual Office.

NOW that Christ sustains such an Office as *this*, the Scriptures are very express. They stile him a *Prophet* in the very Phrase; *A Teacher sent from God*; *the Apostle of our Profession*, *the Ruler of the Covenant*, *the Wisdom of the Father*, and *a Treasure of Wisdom*; which are only various significant terms connoting the same thing. But not being concerned here in proving what my Text presumes to be true, 'tis my business to consider the excellent Properties of the truth under *this Observation* from the Words now read unto you, viz.

DOCT. THAT Christ is a PROPHET *truly Excellent, and altogether Lovely.*

FOR the Illustration of this *Doctrine* we may consider the *Person* invest'd with this Office, the *Doctrines* he taught, and his excellent Way of teaching.

I. 'TIS a prime *Excellency* in this Office, that 'tis the *Office of Christ*.

A Divine Instructor is an extraordinary thing. A *Pass* could not boast of this, till he saw a light from Heaven, as a candle from the natural sun. He sat down at *Gabriel's* feet, but we hang on the lips of Christ: which puts honour upon us, speaks surprizing humility in him, and both unitedly proclaim his Office lovely. — This is the Teacher, a Divine Person.

II. THE Doctrines he taught were truly Excellent, becoming so great a Teacher, and full of useful Instructions to the scholar.

HERE I shall descend to a few particulars.

I. THEY tend to the Improvement of the Understanding. They convey to us the knowledge of the noblest Objects, give us the clearest views we can possibly have of every of the divine Perfections, and therein some lively apprehensions of the divine Essence. And while they discover God's nature to be unsearchable, they at the same time shew us how reasonable 'tis we should adore what we can't comprehend. The inspired writings, those sacred lessons of Christ, do not only exhibit the nature of God under its various essential Properties; but they describe the nature of these Properties to the best advantage, and set them in the best light. To speak in a word, we are taught by Christ what we could never learn of any humane Teacher what we could never expect from the highest order of concreated Spirits; tho' from their quick and extensive knowledge they bear the name of Intelligences.

THUS (to specify a little) the amazing thoughts of a Trinity of Persons in a Unity of Essence,

that is too high for the flight of reason, is here presented to the eye of Faith. 1 John 4. 7. The *first* of the great *mysteries of godliness*, God *manifest in flesh*, which engages the enquiry and wonder of Angels, *desiring to look into it*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. This is here asserted upon the veracity of God in the plainest terms. Hence also we learn the dark and deep designs of *Providence* which have sometimes stumbled the Faith of the most eminent Believers ; and made a *David* ready to cry out, *Psal.* 73. 13. That he had washed his hands in innocency, and cleansed his heart in vain.

WHAT Objects more excellent than these ! Which derive an excellency to the knowledge, and thence to the Faculty ; greatly improving the intellectual power.

2. *THEY* give the best directions how to worship God in a Way most agreeable to his Will. That God should be worshipped is a desire of universal nature, 'tis from hence that some bowed down to stocks and stones. For whatever Men make a God of, that will they pray to ; with what they think a religious reverence. But nature left to its own weakness, leaves us destitute of any exact rules to regulate this worship. And so every man is govern'd by an implicit Faith or his own apprehensions, and perhaps differs from his Brother to a contradiction ; rendring it impossible both should be right and acceptable. But the *great Prophet* has taught us in general, that *God being a Spirit, he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth*. And then he hath more fully explain'd the particulars of
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of it by a brighter discovery of the divine Perfections than could be made from natural reason. And also he has plainly pointed out the duties resulting from these Attributes; and then given all the particular directions for the manner of their performance, which are necessary to gain their Acceptance with God.

3. *THESE Directions are enforced with the strongest Motives.* We are not left to an indifferent choice, whether we will comply or not; but have the strongest Motives to oblige a Compliance. Promises and Threatnings are annexed, and of such a nature as make them suitable to effect what they are designed for. They are the best that can be thought of, to move the Passions of hope and fear; infinite Rewards and Punishments on condition of Obedience or Disobedience. And when these passions are wrought upon they naturally draw out the Acts of the Will. More especially when the Understanding is convinced. From whence we see the consummate Wisdom of Christ in the Accomplishment of such great Ends, in such due and proper measures. And these Doctrines which honour the Wisdom of their *Author* in so eminent a manner may very well be thought truly excellent.

4. *THEY are of excellent Service to us.* They are principally so in a spiritual Regard; Salvation depends upon them. The Ends of Redemption were lost and frustrate without them. For Christ had dyed to no purpose, as to any service his Death could be of to us, unless the purchase
of

of his Blood were applied to our guilty Souls. And such an application were impracticable on supposition we should remain ignorant of his Dying for us, and of the necessity of his Death to procure our Life; the knowledge whereof depends entirely on a Gospel Revelation. This is the *lamp to our feet*: It leads our thoughts up to the original spring and fountain of Guilt and Corruption; and from the *first Adam* it bring us down to the *second*: not without the discoveries of infinite and matchless Wisdom, Power and Grace, till our Souls rejoyce with the glad Reports of a Saviour; and we become acquainted with the Conditions required of us, to the participation of his Benefits. — So that if a regard to the highest interests of our Souls can speak any Doctrines excellent, these are so.

5. *THEY* carry Morality higher than ever any humane Composition taught us to do. Consult the most celebrated of the Heathen Moralists and you shall no where find Morality arrived to such perfection, as you find it in the *sacred Oracles*. It must be confess'd indeed of the *Heathen* that they would love their Friends, and do good to their Benefactors; but to cherish affection for an Enemy, and to repay a Curse with a Blessing, was carrying the point (they thought) beyond the Power of practice or duty. For *Tully* himself, in his Book (I think) *De Officio*, intimates that 'twas reason enough we should injure a Neighbour if he had first injured us.' But *Christ* expects that we should do *more than others*, and learn another lesson.

Lesson. Christians must even *pray for them that despitefully use and persecute them*, Mar. 5. 44. This is the *Teacher*, and these the excellent lessons he taught. Let us take a further view of this excellent Office, under the *third* general head, viz.

III. THE Manner of his instructing.

Which was,

I. PERSONALLY. The happy time is recorded when he went *about doing good*; sometimes in miraculous *Cures* of the Body, but more frequently instilling knowledge by weighty and instructive *Truths*. While he taught in the *Synagogues*, some were happy under the advantage of an oral or immediate instruction from his lips, that came up to the literal meaning of my *text*, *his mouth is most sweet*. Such was his excellent *Sermon on the Mount* to them that heard it. For *when* he saw the multitude he went up to a Mountain (without dispute for the greater advantage of his Hearers,) and when he was set his Disciples came unto him and he taught them to such a length that *three Chapters* (and these not the shortest) are spent in reciting the substance of his sweet Discourse. — And this *Personal* teaching did then very much recommend his Office; for had he not pursued this method in those early times of Christianity, his Doctrine probably had been less impressive; his Disciples might have had more room to suspect whether the Doctrines were his or not. Or if confirm'd in that point, they might have had too little regard to his Authority by reason

reason of his absence. And be'd s this, had he not taught in his *humane Nature*, the manifestative part of his Mediatorial Person, the visible terrors of his *Divinity* might incapacitate Men to receive his sayings. So that 'twas a method well adapted to the infant state of the Church, an indication of his wisdom, and a confirmation of his gracious humility.

2. *FULLY*. So he tells his *Disciples*, John 15. 15. *All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.* Not *all* things in an *absolute* sense, but all things which *concern'd* them; and which it was expedient they should be acquainted with, whether articles of Faith or rules of Practice, or proper motives to enforce them. In this qualified sense he declared the *whole Counsel of God*: And perfection is lovely.

3. *WITH an unwearied Diligence*. He would frequently make occasions for instruction, and improved all that offered. If he sought rest at *Jacobs Well*, no sooner did the *Samaritaness*s come to draw water, but he forgot his toil and fatigue, and enter'd the nobler Subject of *living Waters*, from the wells of Salvation, *Joh. 4. 6, 11*. And (what demands a more special mention and notice) he told a *Discip'le*, amidst the torture of his *Cross*, *Behold thy Mother*, *Joh. 19. 2*.

4. *IMPARTIALLY*; without regard to characters and distinction. All that came might learn; and he applied himself to their respective cases, even though he ruffled their passions. He would sharply reprove the *Scribe* for his partiality and
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ambition ; the *Pharisee* for his pride and hypocrisy ; the *Sadducee* for his criminal ignorance and error, the *Lawyer* for his severe impositions on Conscience, relieving to himself the *key of Knowledge*. Thus pungent were his applications, as circumstances required. For *he taught the way of God in truth, and regarded not the person of men,* Math. 22. 16

5. *WITH Plainness and Simplicity.* He did not affect the strains of *Eloquence* ; nor make use of unintelligible terms ; but his *style* was nobly negligent, simple and free. And his *method* was remarkably clear. When he must speak of *sublime truths*, he treats them in a *familiar* way, and brings them down to the lowest capacity. 'Twas not unusual with him to fetch *Similitudes* and borrow *Metaphors* from the most common employments of life. And his *Parables* of the *Sower*, the *Net*, the *Leaven*, the *Harvest*, &c. were designed for this. To accommodate his hearers, he clothed divine Mysteries in earthly Language, and rendered things (otherwise difficult) not simply intelligible, but easy to be understood.

6. *WITH repeated Instructions.* This occasioned his multiplied *Parables* on the same subject. To this, to that, and to the other thing, is the *Kingdom of Heaven* likened. He would re-imprint the same truths to make the impression deeper on the mind, lest conviction wear off, and the intended effect be lost. Our memories are not so tenacious, but they need inculcations : And what was so necessary *the Wisdom of the Father* could not omit.

7. *WITH*

7. *WITH Pleasure and Delight.* 'Twas *meat and drink* to him. This was the *meat* his Disciples knew not of, when they prayed him to eat. 'Twas a greater satisfaction to refresh *Men's Souls* with spiritual, than *his own Body* with fleshy food. Christ gave the Soul its pre eminence.

8. *With a tender sense of mens Misery in the want of Knowledge.* He was a compassionate Teacher. When he saw the multitude *as sheep without a shepherd*, he had compassion on them. He was grieved at the *hardness of mens hearts* in rejecting his precious Counsels. Therefore did he express his concern for *Jerusalem* in such a pathetick exclamation, while he dropt his affection over the City ; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! if thou hadst known, even thou in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes,* Words full of sympathy, in the most lively symptoms of grief.

9. *AS consequent upon the former head, With an overflow of joy at the success of his Ministry.* No sooner did his *seventy Delegates* return, and reported the Devils subjection in his Name, but he reply'd with a hasty satisfaction ; *I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven.* And then he *rejoyced in Spirit*, and said, *I thank thee, O Father !*

HIS general Character was wont to be this ; *A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief* : but this success of his Ministry gave a surprizing turn to the whole stream of affection, and made him with an impatient passion rejoyce in Spirit, and

vent his joy in the most sudden and expressive manner.

10. *WITH a pious Example*; every way conforming to his Precepts. What he said he did, He lived the application of his Doctrines. He required nothing of us, but what in its proper place, he would and did practice himself. So that the rules of the Christian life were transcribed in the life of Christ. The virtues and graces he directed to in his teaching, were copied out fair in his Conversation. We have the attractive powers of Precept and Example united to draw us. A property of few Teachers besides Christ, and of none in so high a sense and degree of perfection. Which leads me into the next particular to say,

11. *THAT he taught with Power and Success.* As he rejoiced in his Success. so he had frequent occasions for his Joy. His preaching was accompanied with such extraordinary effects that his inveterate Enemies, who denied him to be God, acknowledged him to be more than a common Man: For *never man spake like this Man*, said the Officers to the Pharisees, John 7. 46. when sent to apprehend him, and could not. The People were *astonished at his Doctrine*, when he taught *as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*. These were cold stiff-necked Preachers, though they sat in Moses's seat: But Christ spake with such an agreeable mixture of light and heat, as had a commanding influence upon the Mind and Conscience.

12. *WITH*

12. *WITH a long Continuance.* His Doctrines did not expire with his Person. He taught for a time with his own Mouth, (and the indeed it was sweet) and when the hour was come that he must go to his Father, (there to engage in a business of higher importance, ever living to make intercession for us) he took all sufficient care for a *standing Ministry*, communicated twelve *apostles* to explain his Doctrines and to administer his Seals; to continue the instructions of their day to the last posterity in writing, and to complement the sacred Canon with such needful additions as they should receive by after Inspirations. And these have been succeeded in their ordinary Powers by *standing Ministers* of the Gospel, with whom he is present to the end of the World. For he gave *some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers*; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; that we all come in the unity of the Faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ Eph. 4. 8, 11. He dropt these Gifts in his triumphant Ascension, as *Elijah his mantle*. He is employed in greater Services for us in Heaven, and now sends forth his *ambassadors* as though himself did beseech us, to pray us in his stead to be reconciled to God. 'Tis an instance of his Care, that he considers our dully frame, and improves not *Angels*, but Men of like passions with us, to instruct and teach us.

us. And yet wisely to prevent the defect of humane Instructions he teaches

12. *INTELLUALLY* by his Spirit. This is the second Branch of his prophetic Office, and highly necessary to give Success to the former. The brightest Ministers (*those burning and shining Lights, in the golden Candlesticks*), may consume away to a snuff and not give a spiritual discerning of divine Truths. For *the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, nor can he till he becomes spiritual*; because *they are spiritually discerned*. But the Spirit of Christ opens the Understanding to understand the Scriptures: The Spirit chases away the dark clouds of ignorance and prejudice, rarifies the gross medium, strengthens the visive Powers, and steadily fixes the mental Eye; by which means the Soul will not only *see* but *relish* Truth; and this internal teaching being peculiar to Christ, who only has the *Eye-salves*, speaks him a more eminent Prophet than *Moses* his Type, though he was *learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, and was mighty in word and in deed.

BY this time (I suppose) I have perform'd my task in proving this *Doctrine, That Christ as a Prophet is truly Excellent, and altogether lovely*.

I shall now close with some *Reflections* upon this Truth, and the Excellencies of it.

Infer. 1. IF

Infer. 1. IF CHRIST be the great Prophet of his Church, *We are indispensably obliged to receive his Doctrines.*

HE is the *truth* that he might be the *life*. And *he teaches the way of God in truth*. His adversaries confess it, and his Office implies it. For how should he be the *great Prophet*; if a false one? And if he be indeed the great *Teacher come from God*, we must receive him as such; recounting all his sayings to be faithful and true. If not we dishonour Christ, thwart the dictates of Conscience, deprive our Souls of the only light that can guide them to Heaven, and upon the whole break the double bond of duty and interest, and incur the imputation of base ingratitude, and egregious folly,

2. WE are hence also informed, *That no Doctrines but those of Christ must be received.*

IF CHRIST be the great Prophet, 'tis presum'd he has laid foundation enough for inferior Prophets to build upon; and *other foundation can no man lay* than that. His word is the full declaration of his Will. The *sacred Canon* is now compleat; and in the hands of the Spirit able to make us wise unto Salvation. And as 'tis an *adequate*, so 'tis the *only* rule of Faith and Manners. Whatever Doctrines are found to correspond with it, command our best regards. Whatever expressly contradicts it, or can't by
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natural consequence be inferr'd from it, deserves as much to be rejected. And then where is the force of *human Authority* in matters purely conscientious? National Establishments and Ecclesiastical Constitutions cannot alter the nature of Christianity, nor cause any opinion or mode of Worship that has no foundation in Scripture, however presented under the specious names of Order and Decency. For what is this but boldly to impeach the Wisdom of Christ, & to oppose his Authority, *by teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men?*

3. WE have *there the Character of Christ's Ambassadors.*

AS he taught so will they teach. Not with equal perfection, but in great degrees of imitation, which makes it unnecessary to enlarge here, referring the Reader to the foregoing heads in the Explication of the *Doctrine*.

4. *HOW heinous is the Sin of abusing the Persons or rejecting the Counsels of Christ's faithful Ministers?*

MINISTERS must be considered under a double view: They are *Men*, and they are *Men of God*. Under the former notion they are no more than other Men, nor can they challenge any superior respect: but in the last sense they are Ministers of Christ, and may claim the regards

gards due to them that represent his Person and come cloth'd in his Au·hority, and the indignities you offer them terminate in *Christ*; for says he to his Disciples, Luke 10. 16. *He that despises you, despises me.* A thing seldom thought of in our degenerate Age.

5. *THIS affords encouragement to the weakest abilities.*

FOR if GOD be the Teacher, who may not learn? If others out-strip us in their powers, we have an able Instructor, which makes large amends for that defect. Hence 'tis that we sometimes observe Men of contemptible Parts so well furnished with the best of Christian Knowledge; while the Eagle-eyed Philosopher perishes with all his progressive Learning for want of Vision.

6. *'TIS incumbent on a People to ascribe their Proficiency entirely to Christ.*

HE is the *San of Righteousness* from which Ministers have derived their renowned Lights. He first qualifies and then succeeds them, whenever they prosper in their Ministrations. And all the reason in the World, he should have the sole Glory of it. Should we pretend our own efficacy, and claim a share in his Praises, you may justly rend your Cloths and take up Stones to cast at us.

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7. *'TIS*

7. 'TIS our common Interest to apply our selves to Christ for the teachings of his Spirit.

WE must endeavour a Conviction of Sin, and when so far inlighted as to see we are blind, must repair to this fountain of light. Wrestle with him like *Jacob*; urging and repeating that request, *Lord that we may receive our sight.*

AND now having gone so far in a more general Improvement of this excellent Office, I must gather up some instructive Lessons from it, which have a peculiar Reference to the Business of the Day, in a more immediate Application of them to my self.

1. THE Honour conferred upon me is what I stand engaged to admire.

THE title and office of a Prophet are not disdained by Christ the King of Glory. He styles himself the *Shepherd of the Sheep*. The Evangelical Ministry is a Work Originated in Christ. *Moses* wrote of him, but was inspired by him. Not only so, but 'tis a Service which the brightest Intelligences above are employed in. For are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of Salvation? A Service 'tis that honours Christ while we are preaching his unsearchable Riches; the eminent appearance of his divine wisdom, power and grace exhibited

ed in Redemption. — 'Tis a Service designed for the honour of Mankind. And unspeakable must be their honour, who are *workers together with God*.

SUCH honour have all the *Prophets*. And *am I also among them ! Who am I ? And what is my Father's house !*

2. IF Christ be the great Prophet, *I must carefully peruse his Instructions, and closely adhere to his Doctrines.*

FROM him I derive my Commission, though instrumentally conveyed by the *Presbytery*. And I dare not utter any thing inconsistent with what he has revealed. Neither courting the smiles nor fearing the frowns of Men. But *teaching them to observe all that he commands*, however disagreeable to carnal passion and secular interest. In order whereunto I must consult and obey the *Scripture* as my Oracle, For *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.*

3. CHRIST *must be my Pattern.*

I must as far as I am able to imitate, preach and live as he did. I must not confine my work to the Pulpit, but on all occasions go about doing good.

good ; being *instant in season, and out of season* ; consider the necessities of the people under my Charge, and make suitable applications to them. I must teach them *fully* without any secret reserves from sinister views, not acted by the inferior motives of favour and respect ; but regarding their Souls more than their Persons. My Discourses must not be framed for applause, to gain repute from men of parts and distinction. My style must be as free, simple and easy as the nature of my subject will allow : Endeavouring a free access to men's Consciences, rather than touch their fancies, and gratify their humours. I must be unweariedly diligent in repeating and enforcing the principles of Religion and essentials of the Gospel ; as delighting in the work. My Sermons must carry an affection with them. I must preach as for *Eternity*, and make nothing so much the subject of my joy as the success of my Ministry. Nor is it sufficient that I preach as Christ did. I must further add a conformity of *life* ; be the same person in and out of the Pulpit ; my Conversation should witness for me in the eye of the world, and *my light must shine before men*. And though I cannot teach with the *Spirit*, yet must *my spirit* go out with my work ; vigorous, lively and active ; till Death or other Obstructions shall make me incapable of Service.

4. THE Glory of my gifts and success must be ascribed to Christ.

ALL

ALL ministerial *Accomplishments* are derived from him ; and if I am any thing, by the *Grace of Christ*, I am what I am. And for *success*, could I plant as *Paul*, and water as *apollas*, Christ by his Spirit must give the increase. Not unto me then, not unto me, but unto Him be the *Glory*.

5. LET your *Prayers* prevail with Christ to qualify me for the solemn action I am now entering upon : to go with me by his presence, and to make me an extensive Blessing in so sacred a Station.

YOU need not be told the importance and difficulty of this Work, which merits and requires the application of all my powers. I need therefore all your interest in Heaven to be improved for me, for strength equal to my burthen : That I may abound with gifts sanctify'd by Grace : That I may be mighty in the *Scriptures*, and mighty in the *Spirit* : may have special as well as speculative Knowledge : That my Youth may may not be despised, and that my weakness may manifest and commend the excellency of Christ's Power. Were it not for that Promise (*Lo, I am with you*) and the expectation of it's being fulfill'd, I should never presume on so great a Charge. But whatever be my difficulties, for number, kind and degree, my dependance is all on the *Prayer of Faith*. Let Christ but touch
my

my lip and heart with a live coal of his Altar,
and then make the Enquiry, *Whom shall we send?*
And who will go for us? I will chearfully answer, *Here am I, send me.*

FINIS.
