

THE WORKS

Of the REVEREND

Mr. *SAMUEL BLAIR*,

Late Minister of the Gospel at *Fogs-Mannor*, in
Chester County, in *Pennsylvania*.

CONTAINING

A Collection of SERMONS

On various SUBJECTS:

Some of which are Reimpressions from Copies printed in the
AUTHOR's Life-time; and others done from Manuscripts
found among his Papers after his Decease.

TOGETHER WITH

Several TREATISES,

VIZ.

A VINDICATION of the BRETHREN, &c.
The DOCTRINE of PREDESTINATION truly
and fairly stated; with an APPENDIX, relating
more particularly to the Doctrine of *Reprobation*.

A short and faithful NARRATIVE of the late remark-
able *Revival of Religion*, &c.

The *Author's* LAST ADVICE to a Number of his
Congregation, &c.

To which is added,

A SERMON preached at Mr. *Blair's* FUNERAL by
the Rev. Mr. *Finley*; and an ELEGY wrote by the
Rev. Mr. *Davis* on the Occasion.

PHILADELPHIA, Printed and Sold by W. BRADFORD,
at the Sign of the BIBLE, in *Second Street*, MDCCLIV.

THE
LAST ADVICE

Of the late REVEREND

Mr. *SAMUEL BLAIR*,

TO

A NUMBER of his CONGREGATION,
convened at his House, a few Weeks before
his DEATH;

CHIEFLY RESPECTING

Their *future Conduct*, as to their CONGREGA-
TIONAL AFFAIRS.

BY

ROBERT SMITH, Minister of the Gospel
at *Pacquet*.





THE
LAST ADVICE

Of the late REVEREND

Mr. SAMUEL BLAIR, &c.

APRIL 7, 1751, Mr. Blair perceiving that his Disorder encreased, and, in all Probability, would soon issue in his Death, earnestly desired to communicate some Thoughts to his People, which he apprehended would be serviceable to them; and being his dying Sentiments, might influence them the more. He would gladly have spoken to the whole Congregation, but knowing that to be impossible in his then low State, he sent for the Elders, and two out of each Quarter along with them, to meet at his House the Day following; who accordingly came, and to them he addressed himself, designing that what he said should be communicated by them to the rest of their Brethren: As I was present myself the whole Time, and can readily recollect the Substance of what he spoke, at the Desire of some, I here deliver it, as near as possible, in his own Words. But as his Sayings on each Particular can be remembered with more Certainty than his Transitions, I therefore divide his Discourse into several Heads.

First, He introduced his Discourse with some Remarks on his former and present declining State of Body: ‘ I found myself (*said he*) on the Decline two or three Years before my sore Sickness in *Philadelphia*. In the Time of my Illness there, it was my Desire and Request to God, that he would recover me to so much Strength, as I might be able to speak to you once more in his Name. It pleased *him* to grant my Request; and, over and above, to continue me, and enable me to preach to you for a considerable Time, though with Difficulty, because of my Weakness. Now the Lord has laid his Hand on me again; and though I do not pretend to prophesy, or determine absolutely respecting the Event, yet I am very apprehensive my Sickness is unto Death: And lest this should be the Issue, I desired to communicate a few Thoughts to you *now*, and give you my last Advice, chiefly with Regard to your future Management of the Affairs of the Congregation.’

Secondly, As to the Congregation’s Behaviour towards him, and his Family-Concerns, he said, ‘ I have Reason, with Gratitude, to acknowledge the Kindness of the Congregation to me, especially in sympathizing with me in my Sickness; one Instance of which I cannot but particularly notice, That, notwithstanding I have been frequently prevented from performing the Duties of my Office through weakness, yet I have not known the least Instance of any Grumbling at me on that Account. But though the Congregation has been kind to us in several Respects, yet my Wife was obliged to be particularly frugal and industrious, for the better Support of her numerous increasing Family. And now being about to be removed from being a Head over them, I recommend to your Care my disconsolate Widow, and half a Score of small Children. Not that I desire they should be a continual Charge to you; that would be an extravagant Desire indeed: But my Mean-

ing is, 1. That you would take Care to collect the
 Remainder of my Debts, for their Support. 2. That
 you would discover a good Countenance to them; which
 I should look upon as the best Testimony of Respect
 to my Memory.'

Thirdly, In respect of his own Conduct, as a Christian,
 and a Minister, he said, ' Though I have to lament
 many Infirmities, yet, I think I may say, without
 Ostentation, that my Conduct has been becoming the
 Gospel. I have Reason to bless God, that he has so
 kept me from Falls and Blunders, that I have not been
 a Reproach to Religion, nor given the Enemies of it
 Occasion to blaspheme. As a Minister, I have indeed
 Cause to be ashamed before God, for my poor Man-
 ner of serving him in that Office: Yet, blessed be his
 Name, that I have, by his Grace, studied to be faith-
 ful. My Conscience bears me Witness, that I have
 honestly endeavoured to explain to you the various
 Doctrines of Religion agreeable to the Mind of God:
 I studied them, that I might preach them to you; and
searched the Scriptures, to see whether those Things were
so; and am willing to attest the Truth of them with
 my last Breath; and could, with the utmost Freedom,
 urge upon you the Belief and Practice of them, were
 I sure that I was immediately to appear before the
 Bar of God.'

Fourthly, With respect to his spiritual State, God-ward,
 he said, ' I trust I may say, to the Honour of divine
 Grace, that my Peace with God is not left to be
 made up till this Day. It is a Thing of no new
 standing. This would be an uncomfortable Bed to me,
 if that great Business was yet to be performed. But,
 upon Searches and Researches into the Foundation, I
 cannot but hope that I shall stand acquitted in the
 Z z 2 ' Judg-

Judgment: Blessed be God! Death is not a Terror to
 me; for, not entertaining the least Scruple of God's
 eternal Love and Favour to me, I can with Cheer-
 fulness, and Peace in my Soul, embrace it, in full
 Expectation of a blessed and glorious Immortality:
 Yet, what Advantage Satan may be permitted to ob-
 tain over me before I die, I know not; but I hope,
 that, as my Extremity encreases, my Strength will be
 also encreased.'

Fifthly, In respect of the late glorious Revival of Re-
 ligion, and the Differences arising thereon, he said, ' It
 pleased the Lord to make me, and a Number of my
 Brethren, instrumental in promoting what I always be-
 lieved was a Work of his Power and Grace; and in
 that Faith I can depart into an eternal World. But
 some how or other our Mother's Children were angry
 with us who were the Instruments in carrying it on;
 and unjustly excluded us from Communion with them:
 Therefore I advise you to adhere to your own Pres-
 bytery, and make Application to it in order to obtain
 Supplies, and the Settlement of the Gospel Ministry
 among you. But if the two Synods unite again, be
 not obstinate against the Union, nor thereupon sepa-
 rate from the Church, or endeavour to make any Rent
 or Schism in it.'

Sixthly, For their Direction in the Choice of a Mi-
 nister, he said, ' That you may obtain a useful Minister,
 who may be likely to promote the Interests of Reli-
 gion among you, endeavour to obtain rational Satis-
 faction respecting the Man you may have your Eye
 fixed upon, in the following Particulars,

I. ' Observe whether his Conversation and Deport-
 ment be such as favours of Piety, and becomes the
 Gospel: For if a Minister's Conversation be light, vain,
 and

‘ and unfavoury, though he could speak with the Tongue
 ‘ of an Angel, his Labours would not have a Tendency
 ‘ to promote Godliness.

I I. ‘ His tender Care, and Ability to solve Cases of
 ‘ Conscience, should be observed. For if a Minister is
 ‘ unexperienced himself in the Exercises of Piety, he can-
 ‘ not natively and readily take up the Cases of Christians,
 ‘ nor will he faithfully endeavour to promote their Ho-
 ‘ lineſs and Comfort. He will not be faithfully engaged
 ‘ for his own Salvation, and how then can he be so en-
 ‘ gaged for the Salvation of his Hearers? His Dispoſi-
 ‘ tion being ſelfiſh, himſelf will be his higheſt Aim.
 ‘ Moreover, ſuch a one will be ſubject to Blunders, to
 ‘ the Wounding of Religion.

III. ‘ Obſerve his Ability to preach, and defend the
 ‘ Doctrines of Grace. But if he be a young Man, and
 ‘ appears capable of good Improvement, do not reject
 ‘ him, becauſe, as you might poſſibly apprehend, he can-
 ‘ not explain the Doctrines of Religion as I have done:
 ‘ For it is not to be expected of a Youth, though inge-
 ‘ nious and learned, that he ſhould be as clear and full
 ‘ on thoſe Doctrines as one of greater Experience in
 ‘ Preaching. It would be a Shame to me, if, after I
 ‘ have been above ſeventeen Years in the Miniſtry, I could
 ‘ not open Goſpel Doctrines more clearly than a Youth
 ‘ juſt entered on the Office. Now, though you may poſ-
 ‘ ſibly be deceived in a Man, and need not pretend to
 ‘ an abſolute Certainty in theſe Things; yet try to get
 ‘ a competent rational Satisfaction, 1. By obtaining a
 ‘ previous Trial of him, that you may hear him frequently
 ‘ preach, may converſe with him, and know his Con-
 ‘ verſation. And, 2. Leſt you ſhould be miſtaken, en-
 ‘ quire, concerning him, of thoſe who are acquainted with
 ‘ him, and able to form a Judgment of his Suitableneſs for
 ‘ you, and who are moſt likely to give a true and unbiassed
 ‘ Account of him: And be not too raſh and haſty in taking

‘up with any, but proceed cautiously in so very important
‘an Affair.’

Sermon, To engage them to Union and Peace among themselves, he said; ‘ While you live vacant, keep together
‘ in one Body, and do not break off, and join with other
‘ Congregations; for in so doing you would do what you
‘ could to lop off this Branch of Christ’s Vineyard. Vacant
‘ Congregations are exposed to many Dangers; therefore
‘ as long as you remain without a Minister settled among
‘ you, you have need to take special Care that you do no-
‘ thing that may weaken your Strength, or hinder the ge-
‘ neral Good of the Body. And for this Purpose, see that
‘ ye endeavour to maintain Peace, Harmony, and brother-
‘ ly Love among yourselves in all your Proceedings. But
‘ beware of Heats and Contentions, for they have a native
‘ Tendency to divide and separate; and Divisions are the
‘ Bane of Society. If any Difference shall at any Time
‘ arise among you, reason the Point with one another calm-
‘ ly, and in the Spirit of Meekness: And if, after all, a
‘ Part are obliged to dissent from the Judgment of the Ma-
‘ jority, let it appear to be with Reluctance: If they can-
‘ not obtain Satisfaction, but still must look on themselves
‘ as aggrieved, let mutual Forbearance be exercised, and
‘ let them not separate from their Brethren, but continue in
‘ Union with them, though some Grievance subsist.’

At the Conclusion he expressed the Desire of his Soul very pathetically thus, ‘ Oh! that none of you may be wanting
‘ in the Day of Christ, when we must appear before the
‘ Judgment-seat; I, to give an Account of my Steward-
‘ ship; and you, how you received.’

In this solemn Manner did Mr. Blair take Leave of his People: And if they conscientiously observe his dying Ad-
vices, which are now published with a particular View to
their

their Benefit, they may expect the Blessing of indulgent Heaven, and that they shall continue a flourishing Congregation, united in Love, and walking in the Faith and Fellowship of the Gospel. But it would be an Instance of daring Hardiness, if any of them should disregard the last Words of One who has left a Testimony of his Fidelity in their Consciences; One who fell with the Dignity of a Minister of Jesus, and gave such striking Proofs, in his last Moments, of the Truth of Christianity, on which he cheerfully ventured his eternal All; and of the Reality of his personal Religion.

The E N D.

