

Success a great Proof of ST. PAUL's Fidelity.

SACRED TO THE
M E M O R Y
O F

The REVEREND

GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. M.

CHAPLAIN to the Right Honourable the Countess
of HUNTINGDON.

Who departed this Life, at NEWBERRY-PORT, on
Lord's Day Morning, September 30, 1770.
ÆTATIS 56.

DELIVERED OCTOBER 28, 1770,

At CHARLES-TOWN, in SOUTH-CAROLINA,

By J O S I A H S M I T H, V. D. M.

2. SAM. 3 Chap. 38 Verse. *Know ye not, that there
is a great Man, fallen this Day in Israel?*

DAN. 12 Chap. 3 Verse. *And they that turn many
to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

ZACH. 1 Chap. Verse 5. *Your Fathers, where are
they? and the Prophets, do they live for ever?*

MATT. 7 Chap. Verse 20. *Wherefore by their Fruits
ye shall know them.*

CHARLES-TOWN:

PRINTED BY CHARLES CROUCH. 1770.

To pay my last respects to the memory of that man of God the Rev. Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD—who has been occasionally a bright and shining ornament to this pulpit, I shall preach from

II COR. iii, ii. *Ye are our Epistle.*



THE best and most satisfactory evidence that can be given, to our mission and ministry, is the success of it; the impression it makes upon the hearts; the fruits it produces on the lives of our hearers—this is more to a faithful minister of Christ, than all the loud applause of men; than all their commendatory epistles, and flattering testimonials—this therefore was the medium, by which our apostle, the great St. Paul, would prove his apostleship, and the orthodoxy of his doctrines—he, as well as many others of his spirit, was slandered and traduced by some, who called themselves apostles, but were found liars.—They envied the apostles, and had recourse to the ancient methods of calumny and defamation.—They made use of every artifice, to sink his character among the Corinthians—to retrieve which, he solemnly appeals to the success of his preaching with them. Do we begin again to commend ourselves, or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation, from you? what occasion of all this formality, when ye yourselves are *our epistles*—you know, what marvellous effects my

A ? ministry,

ministry, under God, has produced among you : Your understandings have been directed—your wills influenced—your hearts have been warmed—your lives reformed, by me, as an instrument in the hand of God—and surely *this* is the best epistle, I can have from you—'tis a living and permanent epistle—" 'tis' written in our hearts"—I rejoice more to see you edify under my preaching, than the most pompous titles you can give me—I had rather read the influence and impression of my labours upon your hearts, than be honoured with a thousand panegyrics from your pens—this epistle pleases me—this lies near my heart—and this is the most universal, legible epistle, in the world, and most tends to every man's conviction, who seeks a "proof of Christ, speaking in me—'tis an epistle known and read of all men : " Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared, to be the epistle of Christ—I don't assume the glory of your conversions to myself—I confess you are the epistle of *Christ*, but then, 'tis ministered *by* us. He has honoured and blessed my doctrines, with saving fruit among you ; and all the reasonable part of mankind will allow, this as a good, yea, and of the best attestations, that can be given, to my character, as a true minister of Christ ; and that the doctrines I have dispensed to you, come from God.—This, I think, is a natural construction of the apostle's words—and 'tis plain he argues the *divinity* of his doctrines from the *success* and power of them. But, to prevent mistakes, and to place the argument in a fairer light—I must observe here,

1st. That we can't turn this argument to prove, that those ministers, and doctrines, are *not* from God, which are sometimes without success and efficacy.—No verily ! good seed, may be sown, in barren ground—and to some, ministers, tho' never so zealous and faithful, may be the savour of death unto death, as well as of life unto life, to others.—Men may perish under our ministry, while we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish too. Pride, prejudice, sloth, and infidelity, may shut up the avenues of the understanding and heart, against a preacher of the greatest zeal, ardor, and diligence ; and of the most finished oratory—as, in the case of the eloquent preacher, who was, “ as a lovely song in the ears, but could not prick the hearts of his hearers—they heard his words but did them not”—and yet, he was a prophet of the Lord of Hosts, and spake the words, that God himself had put into his mouth.—Many a faithful and pious minister, when he has preached, and inculcated, the true doctrines of the gospel, has had reason to complain—“ who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed—I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought”—what but this, can our blessed Saviour mean, in that citation from one of the prophets—“ By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand : And seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive ; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears.”—Our blessed

Saviour himself, tho' "he spoke so as never man spake"—tho' he must be an absolute master of all the powers of language—tho' his words were spirit and life, animated with force and authority—yet *sometimes* preached without success, yea, met with opposition, and slander—and grieved for the hardness of men's hearts—complaining of their unbelief, that they would not come unto him.—Now, if such doctrines, from such a preacher, delivered with such a pathos and power, did not always command men's assent and obedience, even, when backed and enforced with the signs of his omnipotence, and miracles, to awaken and keep their attention alive—certainly the best of his ministers, may preach *without* success.—This is indeed a most melancholy reflection, when "light is come into the world, and men love darkness"—when ministers preach to men condemnation—and their labours have no other effect, than to be a witness against their hearers—but, they have this, at least, to support them—that, "tho' Israel be not gathered, yet they shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord"—and if he doth *not* succeed, he will not *forget* to reward their labours of love, for his name's sake.

2d. I must allow that the barely making of proselytes, and bringing men over to our peculiar sentiments and religion, is not an argument for the orthodoxy of our doctrines, or the validity of our ministry—for if this were the criterion, by which to judge of these things, nothing could be left more precarious and undetermined.—There are hardly any set or sort of men, but would lay claim to it, in their own favour—and even doctrines of a diametrically

trically opposite tendency, must be established by the same rule ; which is of all things the most absurd.—The generality of mankind, are so unstable and fluctuating, in their religious principles, that they are like children, “ carried to and fro’ by every wind of doctrine”—they may be seduced away, “ from the simplicity that is in Christ, and turned aside to fables and errors, by the slight and cunning of men, who ly in wait to deceive—of whom was *Hymenen* and *Philetus*, who concerning the faith, had erred—and had overthrown the faith of others.”—So the *Galatians* were some of them bewitched, and allured away, by the insinuations of false teachers, and turned to quite another gospel, from that, which the apostle Paul had preached among them. Designing men, of superior talents in reasoning or rhetorick, even the greatest heresiarchs, that are celebrated in history, have made proselytes to their respective tenets.—I may beguile a man, with my sophistry and artifice, into my particular schemes of religion ; while these very schemes are contrary to the gospel of Christ—’tis not therefore the change, that may be wrought in men’s sentiments, and profession, which will make them *our* epistle, or manifest us to be the apostles, and true ministers of Christ—for we may turn men only from *one* error to *another*, and change their way of thinking, in the speculative parts of Christianity, without working any real change upon their hearts ; without “ turning them from darkness to light, from the power of sin and satan, unto God.—A minister may excell in reasoning, and pulpit oratory, and be thronged after by the multitude, and

yet, if this be all the fruits of his ministry, it does not amount to a full proof of its validity—or the truth and divinity of these doctrines he dispenses—and had our great preacher, rested the matter *here*, when he appealed to so many instances, as *his* epistle, I confess, it had been such an epistle as I could not have *read*—but he laid the whole stress of his appeal, upon the same foundation, which the apostle Paul does.

3d. The evident success of his preaching, upon the *hearts* and *lives* of many of his hearers. When a controversy arose once in *Israel*, about the right of priesthood, we find, that only *Aaron's rod budded*, among all the competitors, to convince us, that *Aaron* was called and chosen of God—and it was a noble type, or illustration of my present argument, where doctrines of a different tendency are preached up, and every preacher challenges *orthodoxy*; how can people desire a more satisfactory decision, than the *fruit* of their ministry? “By their fruit, saith our blessed Saviour, you shall know them.” The change that must be wrought, in an unregenerate heart—the stubborn habits of darling lusts, that must be conquered—the variety of temptations, that must be overcome, before a carnal man is made a Christian, plainly shews, 'tis the work of *God*, and not of *man*—and therefore, where this work is wrought, we may be sure, 'tis from the concurrence of divine grace, from the special blessing of Heaven, upon our ministry; which God can't be supposed to honour any man's ministry with, and thus set his own seal upon him, were he not faithful to his cause, and did he not “preach the truth, as it is

in Jesus." This argument stands in a much stronger light, when we see a particular scheme of doctrines, from the mouth of a particular man, crowned with uncommon, constant *success*---while a contrary scheme, may perhaps be insisted on, by another preacher, without any apparent success at all.---Yet here, I beg leave to make one necessary distinction--the success of a man's preaching is *no* proof of that man's orthodoxy, in every *little* sentiment, he may have in religion, but surely 'tis a very moving attestation, to the sincerity of his intentions, and to the divinity of his doctrines, in *general*---and where any man, of the ministerial profession, sees his doctrines producing fruits of holiness, in the lives of his hearers, he must certainly be animated, and encouraged to insist upon the same doctrines, and to pursue the same methods of preaching.---Did not the *success* of our Saviour's preaching, give a glorious attestation, both to the divinity of his person and doctrines? was not St. Peter, think you, encouraged to go on, in preaching the same divine themes, when a single sermon upon them, pricked thousands to the heart! and may not St. Paul therefore *here*, justly appeal for his divine mission and doctrines, to the *success* of them, among the Corinthians! Yes, 'tis a glorious proof! 'tis an easy intelligible proof! 'tis a universal proof! a proof, accommodated to men of all capacities--*We are our epistle*, and "he that runs may read it," 'tis known and read of all men, and stands like "a city upon an hill, which can't be hid"---in a word, if this *success* be not a good *proof* of our ministry, St. Paul singled out a very fallacious argument, and

put his ministry on a foundation, that could not support it; which to suppose, is to cast the highest dishonour upon his character, yea, to reproach the very spirit of God, by whose inspiration and dictates, he was led to such an argument.---And if this be a sure and safe rule, by which to measure a man's sincerity, and the truth and propriety of his doctrines---I know what opinion we must conceive of the dear preacher, who is every day entertaining us, with such agreeable discourse, from *this desk*, which, I apprehend, has not been more honoured, these several years past---if envy or prejudice call him *a sinner, emphatically so*-----I can't help it---but this I know, that he has been an instrument of opening the eyes of many, *born blind*.---I say, an instrument, because 'tis God's work---but he is pleased to do it, by such *clay*, as we are---“how could a ~~man~~ do such miracles unless God were with him!” but God has been with him of a *truth*, and he has many epistles to shew, in the *hearts*, and *lives*, of his hearers---so apparent and evident, that, I think, every one must *read* them, who is not blind, with the most invincible prejudice.---He has been “in labours more abundant,” and they have not been *in vain* in the Lord---he evidently, I think, preaches from his heart, and preaches as much to it---and how many hearts have his sermons *pierced*! what multitudes throng after him, in his journeying, and how many of them, have been ready to pluck out their eyes, and give them to him, after they have felt the power of his ministry, upon their *hearts*---I will allow, there may be something very attractive in his

his gesture---his voice---and happy elocution.---But it is plain to me, this is not all---such impressions usually vanish, as soon as the engine is down, that produced them.---But we know there are instances, who have given the most lasting proof of a *real* change and conversion, under his ministry! Yea, “Hell seems, as one has observed in print, to tremble before him whenever he marches, and a new-face of religion to appear!” Happy, happy, should I think myself could I appeal to *such* an epistle among you! ’tis some comfort to me, that I have always preached the doctrines of *grace*, which God has honoured with so much success in *him*?---I must honour him myself, and set my seal, where the *Holy Ghost* has set *his*!----But---is *Whitefield* DEAD!----I might cry after him----“I am distressed for thee my brother *Whitefield*, very pleasant hast thou been unto me---lover and *friend*, O God! hast thou put far from me, and my acquaintance into darkness.”---Yes, I have reason to say---he was my *bosom-friend*.----The friendship commenced in the year 1739, and it has grown brighter and brighter, till the day of his death---how much I was *his* friend, appears by my sermons I printed, on the character of Mr. *Whitefield*, in vindication of him---especially, in the *Ecclesiastical-court here*, whence he appealed HOME----besides, my letters in the *Gazette*.---The friendship was reciprocal, when he treated me with all due respect, and much more, at his *Orphan-House*---a scene, that made me think, I was in *Heaven*.---But he is *gone*---gone “to the spirits of just men made perfect”---and left us *here*, “sorrowing most of all, that we shall see his face

face *no more*"---the face of an *angel*.---We shall hear his silver tongue *no more*.---The natural decencies of his gesture; his flowing oratory; his striking rhetoric; his doctrines of *grace*; his powerful discourses on the *law*; his natural talent of coming to the conscience, and awakening the secure---we shall hear and see *no more*.---He was a *Boanerges*, a son of *thunder*; and a *Barnabas*, a son of *consolation*---he was the same man *in*, and *out* of, the desk.---In his conversation, he was a polite *gentleman*, and a devout *Christian*.---He is gone, and "having finished his course, and kept the faith, henceforth, there is laid up for him a *crown* of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto him, at that day"---a *radiant crown*!---when he shall shine, as the *stars* forever.---Let me go, and die with him.---*Weep* not therefore for *him*---but *weep* with tears of blood for *yourselves*, and for your *children*---*weep* for *England*---*weep* for *Scotland*---*weep* for *Ireland*---*weep* for *Bermuda*---*weep* for *New-England*---and almost all the *continent*---but especially--*weep* for *Georgia*.---Did I say, you should see his face *no more*---I must retract it---you shall see his face *again*---when he shall come, with his mighty *Redeemer*, and ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all, that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their *hard* speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.---What a comfort will it be, to hear him say---ye are *my* epistle---this pulpit is witness to many fervent admonitions-----ye have had a great share in the abundant labours of

of

of that *able* minister of the *new testament*, who has but *just* taken his leave of us.---* “ And shall he leave us barren and unfruitful? shall we have no fruit of his labours? shall we be content to admire his oratory and address? shall we satisfy ourselves, that we have every day attended his lectures? that we have been gratified and pleased, with his amiable manner of opening the scriptures to us? that we have been charmed with the grateful turns of his voice; that he has been to us, as one that hath a pleasant voice, and could play well on an instrument of music?---that we have expressed our esteem, by shewing kindness to his person?---this indeed is just! this is laudable!---but if we content ourselves with this, we shall put a terrible cheat upon our souls---we have perhaps, for every opportunity *drank* in, the sweet and musical accents of his voice?---but have you drank *in* his *subjects*, into your hearts! has he spoke to us, as one having authority! has the words, armed with the *divine* power, reached our *conscience*---indeed, my friends, it will not do, to applaud the *preacher*, and forget the exhortation that has been spoken to us; *practise* is the design of preaching---and every sermon he hath delivered, all his zeal and *fire*, all the efforts he hath made, to come to the springs of our passions, to turn us from those idols, to which too many hath been joined; to form our minds, our wills and affections, to an holy and divine temper---I say, all these things, stand now recorded in
the

* See the *sermon*, I printed, on *the rain imbib'd, an emblem of grace*, repeated *here*, in order to shew my sentiments, of the *war* man, above *twenty* years.

the book of God's remembrance, and when ~~this~~ book is opened, even, the admired *Whitefield*, will appear as a *witness* against us, if we do not frame our lives, agreeable to his doctrines, and that form of sound words, which he hath taught us---better ten thousand times better were it, that such a *Boanerges* had never been raised up, in the churches---better were it, *this Angel* of the churches, had never brought everlasting gospel to us---if we do not obey it!---though his loud calls may not awaken us *now*, they will make us *tremble*, at the day of judgment---but, let us above all things admire *him*, who is *greater* than *Whitefield*---“ who holds the stars in his right hand”--though “ *Paul* plant and *Apollos* water; yet, God gives the increase”---“ the residue of the spirit is with him”----he can raise up *another Whitefield*---his charming voice; his clear head; his warm heart; his gesture to the life; and *all* his accomplishments, for the work of the ministry among us.---I cannot conclude without writing----“ blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord, yea, saith the spirit, for they rest from their labours; and their *works* do follow them.”---

AS a specimen, of his indefatigable labours; in the work of the ministry, says Dr. *Pemberton* of *Boston*, I set down an account, of the sermons he preached, after his arrival at *Newport, Rhode-Island*, to the time of his death.

He sailed from *New-York*, Tuesday July 31, P. M.

Arrived at *Newport*, Friday August 3, A. M.

Preached	
Aug. 4. <i>Newport</i>	24. <i>Boston</i>
5. <i>Newport</i>	25. <i>Boston</i>
6. <i>Newport</i>	26. <i>Milford</i>
7. <i>Newport</i>	27. <i>Charlestown</i>
8. <i>Newport</i>	28. <i>Cambridge</i>
9. <i>Providence</i>	29. <i>Boston</i>
10. <i>Providence</i>	30. <i>Boston</i>
11. <i>Providence</i>	31. <i>Roxbury-Plain</i>
12. <i>Providence</i>	Sept. 1. <i>Milton</i>
13. <i>Attleborough</i>	2. <i>Roxbury</i>
14. <i>Wrentham</i>	3. <i>Boston</i>
15. <i>Boston</i>	5. <i>Salem</i>
16. <i>Boston</i>	6. <i>Marblehead</i>
17. <i>Boston</i>	7. <i>Salem</i>
18. <i>Boston</i>	8. <i>Cape-Ann</i>
19. <i>Boston</i>	9. <i>Ipswich</i>
20. <i>Boston</i>	10. <i>Newberry-Port</i>
21. <i>Boston</i>	11. <i>Newberry-Port</i>
22. <i>Boston</i>	12. <i>Rowley</i>
23. <i>Boston</i>	13. <i>Rowley</i>

From the *thirteenth* of September to the *seventeenth* ---he was detained from public service, by a severe indisposition.

Preached	
17. <i>Boston</i>	19. <i>Boston</i>
18. <i>Boston</i>	20. <i>Newton</i>

The *twenty-first* of September he departed from *Boston*, upon a tour to the *Eastward*, pretty much indisposed.

Preached

23. *Portsmouth*
New-Hampshire

24. *Portsmouth*

25. *Portsmouth*

26. *Kittery*

27. *Old-York*

28. *Portsmouth*

29. *Exeter*.

In this last place he preached in the morning, in the open air, to accommodate the multitudes that came to hear him---no house being able to hold them—he continued his discourse an hour and fifty-five minutes, was greatly fatigued, in the afternoon set out for Newberry-Port, where he arrived that evening, went early to bed it being Saturday night, intending to preach next morning---he awaked several times in the night, and complained much of a difficulty of breathing, at six o'clock on the Lords day morning, he expired in an asthmatic fit, and entered upon an everlasting sabbath, September 30, 1770.
