

FIFTEEN
S E R M O N S

PREACHED ON VARIOUS
IMPORTANT SUBJECTS.

By GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B.
LATE OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

CAREFULLY CORRECTED AND REVISED
ACCORDING TO THE BEST LONDON EDITION.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A SERMON,
ON THE CHARACTER, PREACHING, &c. OF
THE REV. MR. WHITEFIELD.
BY JOSEPH SMITH, V. D. M.

P A I S L E Y :

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THE
CHARACTER, PREACHING, &c.

OF THE
REVEREND
Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD,

Impartially represented and supported, in a SERMON, preached in Charlestown, South-Carolina, March 26th, *Anno Domini*, 1740, by JOSEPH SMITH, V. D. M. With a Preface by the Reverend Dr. COLMAN, and Mr. COOPER, of Boston, New-England.

TO THE
READER.

THE following Discourse, was inclosed to us by our dear Brother, the worthy Author of it; and we have read it with high pleasure and satisfaction. The design is sufficiently intimated in the Title-page. It is, indeed, a Sermon of an extraordinary nature. To give from the pulpit, the personal and ministerial character of a living Preacher, is very unusual, or, perhaps altogether new. But so is the occasion. And the Discourse must be looked upon to be apologetical rather than encomiastic. The manifest design is, to support the Cause by vindicating the man; not a private and party cause: but that of Primitive Piety, and Catholic Christianity; the Cause of Christ and Truth, if the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, the asserting and clearing whereof, was the glory of the Reformation, may be so called? A cause this, in which zeal is certainly a virtue.

As to the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, the person referred to, and named, he is the wonder of the age; and

no man more employs the pens, and fills up the conversation of people, than he does at this day : none more admired and applauded by some, contemned and reproached by others. The common lot of the most excellent men the world has ever had to shew !

While so many others are speaking and publishing their sentiments concerning him with all freedom, Mr. Smith thought himself not precluded. He hath had as much opportunity as most, to inform himself concerning Mr. Whitefield's doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, charity, long-suffering, patience, persecutions, and afflictions which have come unto him : and what he has seen and heard, that declares he unto us ; and we receive his testimony, because we know him to be a Gentleman of good sense and strict veracity ; and also free from enthusiastic impressions, unless serious religion and experimental piety are so called, as we have melancholly occasion to observe they often are. There appear to us plain marks of sincerity and impartiality in the following account. And the same things have been reported to us by our Reverend Brethren, of the like character, whom we know and correspond with, in places where Mr. Whitefield hath visited and preached in.

And, as to his thoughts, respecting the views of Providence, in raising up men of this stamp and spirit in our day, he expresses them with great modesty and caution, and we cannot but apprehend they are countenanced from Scripture, reason, and observation.

When God is about to carry on salvation-work with any remarkable success, he will raise up suitable instruments to work by. He will form and spirit men for great and extraordinary undertakings, when he has any great and extraordinary purposes to serve.

Thus when God's time for the great and good work of building the second temple was come, Joshua and others were animated to undertake it; and though they were men wondered at, for the warmth of their zeal and the boldness of their enterprize; that in the face of so many opposers and difficulties, they should undertake to rebuild the holy city and the temple; yet they were raised above all discouragements, and stood firm against all opposition, being fortified with a special promise of the MESSIAH, in whose strength, and by whose influence they should be successfully carried on in their work. "Hear now, O Joshua the High-priest, Thou and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. Behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. I will engrave the engraving thereof, saith the LORD of HOSTS; and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day," Zech. ii. 8, 9.

So when the gospel-church was to be set up in the world; and the Gentile nations to be converted to the knowledge and faith of JESUS, a dozen, poor, illiterate fishermen, were endued with power from on high; and sent forth to open men's eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. And in them was fulfilled that which is written, Psalm viii. 2. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger."

And when the church was overspread with Popish darkness, superstition, and idolatry, and the Romish tyranny was at its very height*, it pleased God to enlighten some Ecclesiastics gradually in the knowledge of his truth, and then animate and assist them to lay

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* In the 16th century.

open the errors and corruptions of Popery, and boldly to assert and maintain the pure truths of the gospel. Of this number were Zuinglius in Switzerland, and Luther in Germany; names that will be had in everlasting remembrance in the records of the Church.

The resolute opposition that was made against them, and the contempt that was poured upon them, instead of cooling, enflamed their courage. The further search they made into the depth of those corruptions that had overspread the Church, the more light still broke in upon them. They found its doctrines poisoned with heresy, and its worship corrupted with superstition and idolatry; and Christianity grown very like to Paganism. Under this conviction they loudly called upon all that had any concern for their souls to go out of Babylon; as they would not be partakers of her plagues. And multitudes of people were influenced by their preaching and writings, to renounce the Romish doctrines and superstition; and many of the princes of Europe were inclined to favour and fall in with the Reformation.

As for Luther in particular, he was a wondrous man, and the almighty power of God was eminently manifested in him. When he first appeared, "What could be expected from a poor friar, creeping out of a cloister? He was advised by his friends to get into his cell again, and to ply his prayers, and not venture upon so hazardous an undertaking, as to preach against the Pope, or attempt so impossible a work as the reformation. But not by might, nor power but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."... This single, inconsiderable man, was more than a match for the powers of Rome, and was instrumental to produce one of the greatest changes the world has ever had to marvel at.

And when it pleases God to renew the face of reli-

gion; when primitive Christianity, and the power of godliness, shall be revived in the reforming churches; when the professors of the gospel shall be recovered from the false principles they have embraced, raised above those dead formalities they have so long rested in, and awakened out of that lethargy they are fallen into; when these expected times of reformation shall come on, is it not reasonable to suppose that God will raise up those to effect it, whom he will furnish with a good measure of the primitive apostolic spirit; whose hearts shall be inflamed with a burning zeal for the honour of the Redeemer, and love to the souls of men; and who shall therefore be willing to deny themselves in these things which are dear to the most; shall not scruple to go out of the common road, to spread the triumphs of the gospel, and fetch in souls to Jesus Christ; and will not be discouraged by any opposition they may meet with? Considering the present state of things in the Christian world, how can we expect any great change for the better, but in a way that shall be extraordinary.

And if there is any appearance of such a work at any time, or in any place, surely we should take care not to slight and undervalue it; much less should we reproach and censure it, or those who are used as instruments in it, so far as it seems to be from heaven, and further it with our prayers, as those who are waiting for the kingdom of God.

We would therefore bespeak the prayers of the faithful in Christ Jesus, into whose hands these papers may come, both for our dear brother and the author of this discourse; who is with great zeal contending for some important points of the faith once delivered unto the saints, against some who openly oppose them, and labouring to promote practical godliness, in the place where divine providence has appointed his present station; that he may be assisted and succeeded

in all his faithful services for the Redeemer's kingdom : and also for the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, that he may, (as he has well expressed himself in some of his letters to us) " be kept humble and dependent on our " dear Lord Jesus ;" be preserved in his travels ; strengthened to his uncommon labours, and fortified against all opposition : that Satan, (who cannot but have a peculiar enmity at those who so set themselves against his kingdom) may never get advantage of him, to the blemish or hindrance of the great and good work which we hope is begun and going on ; that God would cause him always to triumph in Christ, while he makes manifest the favour of his knowledge by him in every place, and uses him as an instrument to bring back many wandering sheep to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls ; and very particularly that his purposed coming to us, may be with as full a blessing of the gospel of Christ as other places have experienced, and much more abundant by the will and grace of our God !

Boston, N. E. }
June 7, 1749. }

BENJAMIN COLMAN.
WILLIAM COOPER.

THE
CHARACTER, PREACHING, &c.

OF THE REVEREND

MR. GEORGE WHITEFIELD,

IMPARTIALLY REPRESENTED AND SUPPORTED.

JOB xxxii. 17.

I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew my opinion.

MY design from this text, is to shew my impartial opinion of that Son of Thunder, who has lately graced and warmed this desk; and would have been an ornament, I think, to the best pulpit in the province. Happy shall I think myself, if I can only clinch the nails, this great Master of Assemblies * has already fastened.—Like Elihu, the gallant youth before us, “I am now full of matter; the spirit within me constraineth me: my belly is as wine which hath no vent it is ready to burst like new bottles, I will speak that I may be refreshed.”—Others have freely spoken their sentiments of the wondrous man before me; and I have heard the defaming as well as the applause of many.-----“I said therefore, I will answer also my part, I will also shew my opinion”——In this, I design no offence, nor would I give flattering titles to any man, lest my Maker should take me away.

The scheme proposed is,

I. To shew my opinion of the doctrines he insisted upon, and well established.

II. To speak something of the manner of his teaching.

* That ministers of the gospel are called masters of assemblies, &c. Annotations on Eccl. xii. 11.

III. To offer my sentiments upon his personal character.

Lastly, To give my thoughts, what Providence seems to have in its view in raising up men of this stamp in our day, almost every where spoken against, yet crowded after and justly admired.

I. I shall give you my opinions of the doctrines he insisted upon among us.

To speak more generally, They were doctrines, I am of opinion agreeable to the dictates of reason; evidently founded upon scripture; exactly correspondent with the articles of the establishment; of great use and necessity in forming the Christian life; which I had early imbibed from the best writers and systems; from which I had never yet seen reason to recede, and which therefore you are witnesses, I have not failed to introduce and inculcate, in the course of my ministry among you.

To be more particular;

One of the doctrines, which he has hardly passed over in silence in any single discourse, is that of original sin. A truth so manifest in scripture, that I am almost of opinion, it is impossible any sincere, diligent and unprejudiced inquirer should miss it: for it is written in sun beams that a man may run and read.

By original sin I mean nothing less than the imputation of Adam's first sin to all his posterity by ordinary generation; which imputation is the resultance of his being constituted to act for them in the extensive capacity of a legal representative; the consequence of which is, that inherent corruption of nature, and those sinful propensities, we are now born with into the world.-----As to the point of imputation, it is a doctrine, it must be confessed, of more intricacy; about which, it is therefore possible; a well-meaning man may labour under some scruples, while perhaps he allows the depravity of

human nature. Though I must beg leave to express my surprise, that any person of judgment should maintain this depravity, and not immediately discover its necessary connection with the imputation, and how impossible it is to secure the justice of God, without having recourse to it: for certainly, the corruption of human nature, so universal and inseparable, is one of the greatest punishments that could be inflicted upon the species; and that it is inflicted, appears from hence, that *God made man at first upright*. Now, if there be no previous imputation, to lay a legal foundation for this punishment, then God has inflicted an evident punishment upon a race of men, perfectly innocent, and which had neither sinned personally, nor yet by imputation; and thus, while we imagine we honour the justice of God by renouncing imputation, we in fact pour the highest dishonour upon that sacred attribute.---This, I fear, is the grand reason, why the adversaries of original sin labour so hard to explode the depravity of nature; for should they once admit that, they are conscious they must admit imputation too. I say, I fear this is the grand reason.-----How else is it possible a man should question a truth, written in capitals upon the moral world! A truth, we feel in every power of our souls; what we read upon our own hearts; and is indeed stamped upon universal nature, within our horizon: and which the more righteous any man is the more he feels and groans under.-----We need not wonder then, our late incomparable Preacher should insist upon original sin, when we consider, not only in what an incontestible manner he proved it, but of what vast importance it must be. For to give my opinion freely; I cannot think, I can't see, how the Christian scheme can be consistent with itself, or supported with honour, without this basis. I look upon it, not merely as a doctrine of the Scriptures, the great fountain of truth, but a very fundamental one; from

which, I hope, God will suffer none of you to be enticed, by any sophistry of the subtle disputers of this world, or charms of language.

But to proceed.—

Another doctrine we have lately had in the warmest language impressed upon us, is that Pauline one of justification by faith alone. And here you will remember, how the preacher vindicated himself from all suspicions of Antinomian error, and opening a door to licentious manners: for while on the one hand, he earnestly contended for our justification as the free gift of God, by faith alone, in the blood of Christ, an article of faith delivered to the saints of old; so on the other hand, he took special care to guard against the licentious abuse of it, and would not make void the law, when he asserted that good works were the necessary fruits and evidences of true faith; telling us plainly, and with the clearest distinction, that a man was justified these three ways; meritoriously by Christ, instrumentally by faith alone, declaratively by good works. And believe me, my brethren, this is the true gospel of Jesus Christ, and the writings of the apostles. For when Abraham believed God, was not it (his faith) imputed to him for righteousness? And yet, was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar! How shall we then reconcile this? Why very easily. The act of this faith justified him through Christ, and the offering of Isaac justified that faith: the first in the sight of God, the other in the sight of man. In justification faith precedes, works follow after; for if works precede, or had any casual influence into our justification, we might seem to have whereof to glory before God. But here it is the free gift of God, and boasting for ever excluded. God, when he justifies a man, never finds, but makes him holy; without any previous merit, of which there can be no shadow in an apostate creature. No; By

by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. And, could I live the most exact life ever man lived; could I even excel the virtues of the pious preacher himself; could I produce as many good works as the saints in all ages collected together; I would not for ten thousand worlds put my justification upon them: I would only consider them, as bright and pleasant evidences of the truth of my faith in Christ. Good works are valuable things; God forbid we should lisp a word against them, in their proper place; we plead for them, we press the practice of them, as incumbent upon all Christians; but we cannot allow them any share in our justification before God. They may prove we are justified; but they cannot justify us. No verily: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his own mercy, God saveth us.* Hitherto then our preacher is orthodox in his doctrine, which both excludes licentiousness, establishes the law, and exalts free grace; the evident design and language of the gospel, and which, I am of opinion, every minister of Christ should earnestly contend for: because the sinner must first see himself naked, before he will come to Christ for his white raiment; the pure and fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints, and which I counsel you all to buy of him.

Regeneration was another great doctrine, which the excellent man much insisted upon; hardly a single sermon, but he mentioned it, sometimes more than twice; and one, and perhaps the best of his discourses, was *ex professo* upon this subject. Nor can any man be surprised, that a minister of the New Testament should so heartily espouse a principle, which our Lord himself began to speak, and asserted as a fundamental point of Christianity, indispensibly requisite to eternal life; and this with so much vehemency, and earnest repetition. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again (from above) he cannot see*

the kingdom of God. He assures us, *We must be born of water and of the Spirit.* Our regeneration results in its necessity, from original sin. They that are *sworn in iniquity, and conceived in sin*, must be washed and cleansed.---By which is not meant the mere forms and rites of Baptism; not the washing away the filth of the flesh, as the corrupt Pharisees might wash their hands, and the outside of the cup; but the answer of a good conscience towards God, purged by the blood of Christ. For we can only be *saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*: the infusion of a new life, a divine, heavenly, and prolific principle. As we are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, God must quicken us by his Spirit, and through that we must *mortify the deeds of the body, and crucify the flesh with its lusts and affections.* For until we know (until we feel the exceeding greatness of) the power of Christ's resurrection, we have no part in him: we cannot enter into heaven; or, if we should, our first petition would be, to be discharged as soon as possible. Pleasure is the result of harmony; the nature must agree with the object: there must be a great change upon the nature, to make us susceptible of the pleasures of God's presence.----

Cavillers and scoffers, I know, there are enough, in these last days, against this doctrine. Some master of Israel may ask, *How can these things be? Can a man, when he is old, enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born.*----Who ever said he could? Or what would it avail, if he should? But, I hope, there may be such a thing as a spiritual birth, subsequent to the natural.----*May we not be again begotten to a lively hope? May not God, of his own will, do it by his Word and Spirit? And may we not then become as little children and new born babes.*----Born not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God? Are we not told, in the most express language,---*that which is born of the flesh, is*

flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit, Are not here two births, one natural, the other spiritual?—I am really astonished, any man should read his Bible and his own heart, and be a stranger to this doctrine of the new-birth; without which all our boasted morality, and ethical virtues, however splendid and rhetoricated upon, can never adorn us in the sight of God, nor qualify us for his redeeming love.

True religion is an inward thing, a thing of the heart; it chiefly resides there, and consists in a right disposition and sanctified temper of the will and affections; and as we have been lately told, *in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Which naturally introduces another doctrine, nearly allied to this, and which was very strongly insisted on, *viz.*

The impressions or (which was the preacher's own phrase) inward feelings of the Spirit. And here you remember, how he guarded against the invidious censure, of assuming the character of an apostle.

He renounced all pretensions to the extraordinary powers and signs of apostleship, gifts of healing, speaking with tongues, the faith of miracles; things peculiar to the age of inspiration, and extinct with them. He also allowed these feelings of the Spirit were not in every person, or at all times, in the same degree; and that though a full assurance were attainable, and what every one should labour to attain, yet not of absolute necessity to the being of a Christian.—Only he asserted that we might feel the Spirit of God, in his sanctifying and saving impressions, and witnessing with our own spirits. And what is there in all this repugnant to reason? What is there in it, but what is perfectly agreeable to scripture! How can we be led by the Spirit, or have joy in the Holy Ghost, without some sensible perceptions of it!—Can I at any time feel my soul in sacred raptures, burning with the love of God, and of Christ, and all my best passions alive? Can I feel a secret pleasure in the word, ordi-

nances, and communion of God? Can I *taste the powers of the world to come*? Can I feel the threatenings of God impressed upon my conscience, or promises of paradise working upon my hopes? Can I groan under the burden of my corruptions, or exult in the liberty of spirit, I may sometimes have, in a calm and retired hour, in the meditation of my pardon, and the contemplation of heaven and immortality? I say, Can I have all these things in me, and do I feel them upon my soul, and yet this doctrine of feeling the Spirit be burlesqued and ridiculed, in an age of infidelity, and of men who love to speak evil of the things which they *know not*? Indeed a sinful and adulterous generation may seek after a sign. But what sign can we give them of things that must be known by being felt? Or what ideas can I convey of light to the blind, and of harmony to the deaf?—Let God touch their hearts as he has done ours, and they shall feel what we feel; and what I would not but feel, for millions of worlds. But till then it is impossible in nature to represent it, in a full adequate light to them; and they may as well ask for mathematical demonstrations in a point of pure morality.—This is a doctrine I have been acquainted with these many years; it is not new or surprising to me; you have heard me preach it scores of times, though perhaps, clothed in other expressions, and the influences of the Spirit, the impressions of grace. And however derided by some, who set up and carels a system of rational religion, I hope to have always enthusiasm enough to maintain that the Spirit of God may be felt.—To conclude this head, all the doctrines now mentioned, are primitive, protestant, puritanic ones; which our good fathers, conformists and dissenters, have filled their writings with: and as Dr. Watts has well observed, “They fill heaven apace, for God was with them.”

Yet all that vast reverence, with which I heard these doctrines from the mouth of our famous

preacher, could not win my applause or approbation of some few harsher epithets and expressions (you know what I mean) which dropt from his lips. These in my opinion, may be pronounced failings; but such as often attend a warm zeal for orthodoxy, in the points of the last importance; arise from a principle of conscience, and are found interwoven with the brightest characters: and he that has none, let him cast the first stone.

II. I shall next give you my opinion of the manner of his preaching.

And here I need not say, nor can my pen describe his action and gesture, in all their strength and decencies. He is certainly a finished preacher, and a great master of pulpit-oratory and elocution, while a noble negligence ran thro' his style. Yet his discourses were very extraordinary when we consider how little they were premeditated, and how many of them he gave us, the little time he was with us—Many, I trust, have felt, and will long feel the impressions of his zeal and fire, the passion and flame of his expressions: which were such, that I cannot think my public character of him *, in the least exceeds the bounds of truth and strict verity; only making that allowance for figures of speech, which is always expected, upon extraordinary occasions, and in the portraiture of great characters.

He appeared to me, in all his discourses, very deeply affected and impressed in his own heart. How did that burn and boil within him, when he spake of the things he had made, touching the King? how was his tongue like the pen of a ready writer? touching as with a coal from the altar! With what a flow of words, what a ready profusion of language, did he speak to us upon the great concerns of our souls? In what a flaming light did he set our eternity before us? how earnestly did he press Christ upon us? How did he move our passions with the constraining love of such

a Redeemer? The awe, the silence, the attention, which sat upon the face of so great an audience, was an argument, how he could reign over all their powers. Many thought, *He spake as never man spake* before him. So charmed were people with his manner of address, that they shut up their shops, forgot their secular business, and laid aside their schemes for the world; and the oftener he preached, the keener edge he seemed to put upon their desires of hearing him again! How awfully, with what thunder and sound did he discharge the artillery of Heaven upon us? And yet, how could he soften and melt even a soldier of Ulysses, with the love and mercy of God! How close, strong, and pungent were his applications to the conscience; mingling light and heat, pointing the arrows of the Almighty at the hearts of sinners, while he poured in the balm upon the wounds of the contrite, and made broken bones rejoice? Eternal themes, the tremendous solemnities of our religion, were all alive upon his tongue! So methinks (if you will forgive the figure) saint Paul would look and speak in a pulpit, and in some such manner, I have been tempted to conceive of a seraph, were he sent down to preach among us, and to tell us what things he had seen and heard above! How bold and courageous did he look? He was no flatterer, would not suffer men to settle upon their lees; did not prophecy smooth things nor sow pillows. *He taught the way of God in truth, and regarded not the person of men.* The politest, the most modish of our vices he struck at, the most fashionable entertainments; regardless of every one's presence, but his in whose name he spake, with this authority—He delivered his own soul, very sharply rebuked our balls and midnight assemblies, that bane of all that is serious and religious: and I dare warrant, if none would go to these diversions, till they have answered the solemn questions he put to their consciences, our theatre would soon sink and perish.

You may be sure I was not displeased with this part of his conduct, when I have so often myself mentioned these things, as of pernicious tendency to our morals, religion, and prosperity. And who can blame a minister's freedom and zeal; what hard measures, what cruel treatment would it be to censure our plainness of speech; when our very commission requires us to lift up our voice like a trumpet, to cry aloud, and not spare, to shew people their transgressions; and when the blood of your souls, the most insupportable thing in the world, must be required at our hands, if we be afraid to warn! I am sure, would people consider this, and that we cannot possibly propose any temporal advantage to ourselves, by striking at the right eye, they would applaud, and not censure, our warmth and freedom. I must tell you, over and over again, such things are dangerous to your souls; this cannot consist with your Christian profession and baptism; they tend to devour the seeds and weaken all the young springs of virtue, and to craze the most pious impressions.

But if the voice of ministers cannot be heard, at least let the circumstances of our country, and the louder roarings of providence, awe and restrain us; for sure I am it is now a time to mourn, and not to dance: and the scripture severely threatens a people, that disregarded the operations of God's hands.

III. I now proceed to shew my opinion of our preacher, in his *personal character and behaviour*.

Here I may take courage, and challenge his worst enemies to lay any thing to the charge of his morals, or to straign his sincerity, so visible in his whole deportment.

While he preaches up faith alone, in our justification before God, yet he is careful to maintain good works, and denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly. These things the grace of God teacheth us; and how much of thi

doctrine has he transcribed into his life? How rich has he been in all good works? What an eminent pattern of piety towards God? How holy and unblameable in all conversation and godliness? How seasoned, how much to the use of edifying, all his discourses? How naturally does he turn them to religion? How much is he given to meditation himself, and how does he labour to excite it in others?

It is indisputable with me that he affects no party religion, nor sets himself at the head of any: had this been his aim, no man living has had fairer occasions offered; but he abhors the spirit, he endeavours to suppress it. He is always careful to time his Sabbath discourses, so as not to interfere with the stated hours of worship, in that church, of which he is a professed member and minister, and in the opinion of many people a very bright ornament; because, as he told us, he would not tempt away hearers from their proper and respective pastors. And is not this a noble and generous, a catholic and Christian spirit! He is not bigotted to the modelities and lesser rites and forms of religion, while zealous enough and very warm and jealous in all its essentials, especially in the divine honours and Godhead of his Saviour. He professes love to good men of every denomination, and told us, that the *kingdom of heaven consisted not of meats and drinks*. He appears to me a man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. Though his prayers, in this pulpit, were all extempore, yet how copious, how ardent, with what compass of thought? The spirit of grace and supplication seemed to be poured out upon him in plenty, and to kindle and animate his devotions. He prays in public, with that spirit, variety, and fluency, which could only be expected from a man, who was no stranger to the sacred duty in private.—He lives much by faith, and above the world: despises preferments and riches; of which last, I am told, he has had great offers in Europe—His heart

seems set upon doing good. He goes about his great Master's work with diligence and application; and with such cheerfulness, as would make one in love with a life of religion, which has so many inward springs of the best comforts, and is not that gloomy, melancholy thing, which prejudice and imagination make it. He is proof against reproach and invective. When he is reviled, revileth not again, but prays heartily for all his enemies, and that such as oppose the truth, may be converted to it. He professes himself to lay down his life for Christ, and to spend and be spent in the service of souls.—Such a man has all imaginable claim to our highest love and honour. I freely own he has taken my heart, and I feel his reproaches.—God seems to be with him of a truth; has set his seal upon him: his rod has budded, and he has many to whom he can say, *Ye are my epistle*. Wherever he has preached he has been thronged, and many have come to him pricked in their hearts, saying, *What shall we do to be saved?* He has put a new face upon religion, my letters inform me, in some populous cities and parts of our neighbouring continent; given new life to ministers and people; made sermons, once a drug, a vendible commodity among them; evening and weekly lectures are set up, and always crowded with persons of different persuasions; while he has put a damp upon their polite diversions, which always dwindle as Christianity revives. Surely no man could do these things, I had almost said, these miracles, unless God were with him, who gives the increase, *even when Paul plants, and Apollon waters*. Had ecclesiastic preferments been his idol, fame and reputation his motive, as he has taken a preposterous way to acquire them, so I can never suffer myself to think God would have owned him so visibly, or given him so many seals of his ministry. Our Saviour himself makes good fruits the general characteristic of good ministers. *Ye shall know them by*

their fruits. Either the fruits and success of their ministry, the design and tendency of their doctrines, or the fruits of the Spirit in their lives. And which of these have been wanting in this extraordinary man? Who can object against the tendency of his doctrines? And for success, his enemies know it to their own confusion. And who can say his life is unfruitful, or that he has appeared like an immoral man? He renders to all their due. While zealous for the things of God, he is a friend to Cæsar; a loyal subject to King George, heartily prays for him and his royal house; "*May it abide before God!*" A prayer, to which, I doubt not, you are all ready to say, *Amen.*

But to proceed with our character of the preacher, whom hath he wronged or defrauded? *Whose ox or whose ass hath he taken?* Say, if any man hath found ought in his hands: so far from it, that he seems to live, not by bread alone, but by the word and promise of God; without taking thought for the morrow, *what he shall eat, or drink, or put on.*

And for charity, as it consists in compassion and acts of beneficence, we have few men like-minded. In this grand circle of practical religion, he seems to be a second Job, as well as for patience; and deserves a good report of all men, and of the truth itself. Had he been under any criminal influence of a mercenary, covetous temper, had he collected money for himself, in his journeying often, and itinerant preachings, under the pretext of doing it for the poor, as he was slanderously reported, he had certainly a fair opportunity to enrich himself. But we have seen a plain fact cannot be denied, that he cast all into the treasury, and serves the table of the poor with it.—Strolling and vagabond orphans, poor and helpless, without father, without mother, without purse, and without friend, he seeks out, picks up, and adopts into his family: He is now building accommodations, and laying the best foundation for their support and religious instruction,

without any visible fund; encouraged to go on in faith, from the shining example of the great professor in Germany, who began a like pious work with almost nothing; and raised it to such perfection, as is the wonder and astonishment of all that hear it. This is a sacrifice well-pleasing to God! The loins of the poor will bless him, *The blessing of him that was ready to perish, will come upon him!*—He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness ought to endure, and be celebrated among us. After this, let none call him an uncharitable man: for what brighter evidence of pure religion than this, to visit the fatherless in their affliction.

And permit me here, to join in my thanks to you, and the other charitable disposed Christians, who have shown their bowels of mercy in the late very large collection for the * orphan-house in Georgia. This is an honour to our whole town. And, believe me, you will never be a penny the poorer, for helping the poor: *Them we have always with us, and inasmuch as we have done unto them, we have done it unto Christ,* and cannot fail of a reward; at least the reflection we make upon it, on our last bed, will give us more satisfaction, than what we contribute to the support of balls and assemblies of music, to the pride and luxuries of life; nor can it fail to occasion many thank-givings unto God.

I now proceed, under the last head, to give my opinion, what views providence may have in raising up men of this stamp, now among us.

And this I desire to do with all humility and modesty.

I pretend to no spirit of prophecy, and can only conjecture, and offer the result of observation, reason, and the usual tendencies of things, corroborated by the great promises scattered up and down in our Bibles, wherein *glorious things are spoken of thee, O Jerusalem, city of our God!* The prophecies are usually to these

* Six hundred pounds.

and mystic to be fully understood: the seals of that book are seldom broken, until the several periods of accomplishment, which makes time the best and surest expositor. But certainly, if we can discern the face of the sky in the morning, we might make some humble and faint conjectures at the times and seasons, which the Father keeps in his own power. Now we are none of us ignorant, how far the primitive spirit of Christianity has sunk into a mere form of godliness. Irreligion has been rushing in, even upon the Protestant world like a flood: the dearest and most obvious doctrines of the Bible have fallen into low contempt; the principles and systems of our good and pious fathers have been more and more exploded. And now, behold! God seems to have revived the ancient spirit and doctrines. He is raising up our young men, with zeal and courage to stem the torrent. They have been in *labour more abundant*; they have preached with such fire, assiduity, and success; such a solemn awe have they struck upon their hearers; so unaccountably have they conquered the prejudices of many persons; such deep convictions have their sermons produced; so much have they roused and kindled the zeal of ministers and people; so intrepidly do they push through all opposition, that my soul overflows with joy, and my heart is too full to express my hopes. It looks as if some happy period were opening, to bless the world with another reformation. Some great things seem to be upon the anvil, some big prophecy at the birth: God give it strength to bring forth! May he especially water the good seed his servant has plentifully sown among us; may we remember how we have heard, and hold fast; may we cherish conviction; be fixed and rooted in our Christian faith; not rebel against the light, nor make shipwreck at last, by the various winds of doctrine which are blowing upon us!

Thus have I answered for my part, and shown my

opinion : I have done it in the integrity of my heart ; I have designed no offence ; only supported the doctrines and character of a preacher, which love and duty constrain me to honour and defend ; while I preclude no man from shewing his opinion, who shall do it with the same impartiality.