

THE  
GLORIOUS MINISTRATION  
OF THE  
SPIRIT OF GOD;

A SERMON,

DELIVERED AT THE  
CITY CHAPEL, GRUB STREET;

BY THE

*REV. WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S. S.*

LATE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S INN LANE.

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But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones was glorious, which glory was to be done away;  
How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?  
For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.

2 Cor. iii. 7, 8, 10.

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1813.

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J. INNES, Printer, Wells Street, Oxford Street, London.

TO ALL SPIRITUAL MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,  
LATELY ASSEMBLING AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, GRAY'S  
INN LANE.

Christian Readers,

THIS Sermon was written off and presented to me, unsought for and unexpected, by a member of your own body, whose conduct in life confers a lustre on, and honours the cause of God, in which you are so deeply engaged; and this can be witnessed by many of you, to whom he is known. The Sermon, when delivered, made a particular impression upon his mind, so that he were enabled to commit it to paper. Upon the perusal of it, I was satisfied of its being a genuine production, and in this confidence commit it into your hands; but as I approve of no deed done in a corner, I have published the letter that accompanied it, in which his name and place of residence appears; and that you also may have the satisfaction of knowing to which member of the body you are indebted, for the labour of love manifested on this occasion.

When it was put into my hands, the words of Leah, uttered by her at the birth of Simeon, were strongly impressed on my mind; "Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also." He will still continue to work; and the question asked by a prophet of old, "Who shall let it?" hath never received an answer as yet. In the experience of most of you it hath been clearly manifested, "That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment;" whilst of Israel, prevailers with God, it shall be said, "What hath God wrought?"

Feeling an anxious interest in your welfare, and imploring the blessing of Heaven upon this, I rest,

Your's, in all Christian services,

E. HUNTINGTON.

*High Street,*  
Sept. 18, 1813,

MR. EBENEZER HUNTINGTON,  
55, High Street, Bloomsbury.

SIR,

I HERE present you with a copy of a discourse that your Father preached at the City Chapel, Grub Street, on the twenty-sixth of May, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eleven, which I leave to your consideration whether you approve of publishing it in your "Gleanings of the Vintage." At the time of taking it down, it was greatly blessed to my soul, as it also hath been in reading since; and if it should be attended with the same blessings to others as it hath been to me, it will, as you observe in the preface of the above work, be 'a peculiar treasure' indeed.

A few weeks prior to the preaching of this sermon, I had been greatly exercised with sickness in my family, and a circumstance occurred the week before which was by no means pleasant; yet it had the effect of weaning me from the world, causing me to esteem reading, and prayer, and the word preached, as great blessings, and from which I was enabled to draw great consolation. I well remember the solemnity and power that attended this discourse, and when

the Doctor adverted to sharp-scented believers being able to smell the odorous perfumes of those garments, which smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, it revived my soul. When he took notice of the following words of John, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us," then were my affections gathered up into one object; so that I believed the love which God hath to my soul, through my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that he would bring me to a world of everlasting happiness: and when I was writing down these words in the latter part, 'Ever blessed and adorable Immanuel,' I had such a sense of his sacred presence, such confidence of his good-will towards me, and such love to his person, that I cannot describe. I conclude, Sir, therefore in saying, that your Father was to me a minister of the Spirit, whose counsel, rebukes, exhortations, instructions, and sympathy, in the hand of God, have many times been profitable to my soul, and as such I loved him and revered him: and when I heard his spirit was fled to his Saviour, I grieved on the account of my loss; and as my tears marked the ground, I sighed out in the grief of my soul, 'Sacred to the memory of William Huntington, whose name will be dear to me as long as I am in the world.'

I congratulate you, Sir, on your late deliverance, which, when I heard it, occasioned joy in my heart, and gratitude to God, because he had heard the desires of his people. I have, I thank God, been more favoured this day than I have for some time before; Christ has been precious to my soul, and in exstasy of love and affection, I could say to my dear Lord, with Peter, Whom having not seen I love, in whom though now I see him not, yet believing, I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I remain, Sir,

Your sincere well-wisher, and  
obliged servant,

CORNELIUS TOZER.

Hartshorn Court, Leadenhall Street,  
Sept. 1813.





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ISAIAH lxi. 6.

But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall  
call you the ministers of our God.

THE first verse of this chapter out of which I have taken my text, you will find is that from which our dear Lord preached in the synagogue of Nazareth, when he first declared to the Jews his office as a minister; "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek:" and this sheweth you that as man he was anointed for this sacred office, and that you may learn to distinguish between his godhead and manhood. For as man he was anointed by the Holy Ghost, and made an able minister of the new testament. The Holy Spirit had anointed him with all his

gifts and graces, and this work was to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison-house to them that are bound; and with this agrees what in the Psalms is said of him: "Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia;" and those believers who are sharp scented can quickly smell him. This myrrh, aloes, and cassia, are the graces of the Holy Spirit, set forth by these things, which was not given by measure unto him, for in him all fulness dwelt, and out of his fulness we all receive; for, "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord," Isai. xi. 2.

Thus our dear Lord was anointed for his sacred office, as a minister of the new testament, to preach glad tidings to the meek. And when he appeared among them, he took notice of those, and bestowed his heavenly benediction on them, saying, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven:" and thus he comforted those meek ones. He was to open the blind eyes, and to let them see the

glory and the fulness of his salvation; and to cause the sun so to shine, as to make the shadows fly away, for him whom they sought had now made his appearing, for they had not waited in vain for the consolation of Israel. To bring out the prisoners from the prison house, and them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death; that is, those who were shut up in unbelief, and who were tied and bound with the chain of their sins: but the power that attended his ministry constrained those prisoners to go forth, and those who sat in darkness they were to shew themselves, that others might see their faith, and glorify the giver. "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," which by Paul is called to-day; "Exhort," says he, "one another daily whilst it is called to-day," that is, whilst it continues a day wherein grace is freely dispensed to sinners, without money and without price: "This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation;" and to preach this acceptable year, is to preach a release from spiritual bondage. This was typified under the Mosaic dispensation, by the blowing the jubilee trumpet on the day of atonement, when liberty was proclaimed to the inhabitants throughout the land; and so it is now, when the gospel trumpet sounds, and is heard and felt by the sinner, liberty is sure to follow; he is brought

trials, temptations, perplexities, and oppositions? Yes: but, brethren, under these circumstances it is a hard thing to believe.

However, "God is love," and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us;" and, "We love him, because he first loved us," 1 John, iv. 10, 19; therefore to worship him in the beauty of holiness, is to worship God in love; and higher than this we can never rise. Thus the Lord was anointed to give beauty for ashes, as he also was anointed to give the oil of joy for mourning; but no man can administer joy that never received it himself. Joy sometimes comes from reading the scriptures, as the prophet tells God, "Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart," Jer. xv. 16. Sometimes it comes under the word preached; sometimes from the light of the Lord the Spirit, enlightening our dark understandings; "In thy light we see light." Sometimes from the peace we find ruling in our hearts, and from our consciences being purified, and purged, through faith in a Redeemer's blood. But the oil of joy is what springs from an ardent, and powerful love to God, loving him with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, in the gift of his dear Son. Christ was anointed to give us this oil of joy for

mourning, and when we receive it, we receive an earnest of that promise which will be completely fulfilled beyond the grave, that is, "The Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended," Isai. lx. 20. And thus our dear Lord was anointed to give comfort to all that mourn in Zion, that mourn on the account of the evils of their depraved nature, the plague of their hearts; that sincerely mourn to the Lord under the sense of the evil of their inbred corruptions, which at times they feel powerfully to work against them, and under the burden of which, like the apostle, they are constrained to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death," Rom. vii. 24. This keeps us low in our own eyes, and exalts the Saviour of sinners, for there is no other way of deliverance but through him, as the apostle concludes; "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord:" who, blessed be his name, hath declared, that, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," Isai. lxii. 1.

Now as a minister, Christ was anointed to give what is here in this verse called a lamp that burneth, which is beautifully set forth again by our

Lord, in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, in the parable of the ten virgins. Take it thus, their setting out signifies the beginning of their profession of Christ; the lamp signifies pardon; the fire signifies love; the flame signifies the joy of salvation; by the wise having their lamps, signifies those who really and sincerely experience pardon of sins through the blood of Christ, their love to God, and joy and rejoicing in his salvation. By the foolish taking their lamps, signifies those who hypocritically profess to have those blessings, who never had life in their souls; and as soon as the midnight cry comes, their false confidence and their profession dies; and how can we wonder at this, when, as Job saith, it is no more than the hope of the hypocrite?

But our dear Lord was anointed, and made an able minister of the new testament, and empowered to give to his family pardon, and remission of sin, the love of God, and the joy of the Holy Ghost; and as truly as he did in his ministry give those things to his followers, so he always hath, and ever will, bear testimony to the word of his grace, in those whom he sends to preach it; and thus he hath done to all his servants since the world began. Hear what he said to Paul; "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness; to open their eyes, and

to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins," Acts. xxvi. 16, 18. The same commandment gave he unto all the apostles and ministers that he sent, he confirmed them in their sacred office by signs and wonders, and it is said, "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." Christ was anointed to comfort all that mourn in Zion, and to give them the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and this garment is nothing else but his righteousness and justification. The reason why it is called a garment is, because whilst we are without it, we are said to be naked; and this the Lord sent and told some in the Laodicean church, that they knew not their wretched condition, and counselled them to buy of him white raiment that they might be clothed, and that the shame of their nakedness might not appear.

In the nineteenth chapter of the Revelations, it is called white linen, which is expressly said to be the righteousness of saints: and in Daniel it is called an everlasting righteousness, which the angel told Daniel should be brought in by Messiah the Prince, when he came to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity. Agreeable to this, the

Lord exhorts the church, saying, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem the holy city:" which when it is done, and she feels the blessed effects thereof, she says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Now all the time that a poor soul is without this, being quickened to feel the anger of God against sin, if he reads the law he is condemned, if he reads the gospel he is condemned, if he attends to the word preached he is condemned under the sermon, and he ever is under the condemnation of his own conscience; but if the Spirit makes this righteousness known, and by faith applies it or puts it on, then that soul can praise God. As he hath received it, so he is to walk in it, and this it is that gives us a title to heaven, for whom he justifies them he also glorifies; and this is the work of the Holy Ghost to silence all accusers and accusations, by applying the righteousness of Christ to our poor naked souls. Thus Christ was anointed to give the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; and what can make our souls heavy like sin, and the anger of God for sin? I know of nothing; then you may depend on it that the righteousness of Christ is an antidote for both.



“And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen, and your vine-dressers.” As the Lord according to the flesh descended from the stock of Abraham, so did also his apostles; and as the Jews were distant from the rest of the nations of the earth, therefore they called the people of other countries, strangers, sojourners, and aliens, being as Paul says alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, Ephes. ii. 12; without the ceremonial law, oracles, worship, and the national adoption of the sons of God. This was the middle wall of partition that parted them; and their advantage over other nations was, because unto them were committed the oracles of God. But the time came when those who were called the forsaken, being without God, or hope in the world, were made nigh by the blood of the Lamb; and chosen for plowmen, and for vine-dressers; and when the apostles were made instrumental in converting souls to God, and had planted in different parts of the world christian churches, then these strangers had the care of them, to stand and feed them with knowledge and understanding. They became spiritual plowmen, vine-dressers, and feeders; they were made ministers of the grace of God, and of the gospel of Christ; amongst whom were Titus, Philemon,

Onesimus, Epaphroditus, and many others. These fed and nourished the converts that the apostles had made, and some of these strangers were left by Paul to feed the flock of Christ that he had redeemed with his own blood, who once were not a people, but now are a people chosen to bring forth fruit unto God. Christ Jesus was first anointed to preach glad tidings; after him the apostles and Jewish ministers; and then ministers from amongst the Gentile nations: and it is of these my text speaks, "But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you the ministers of our God."

First, Under the law every priest must be a Levite, one that sprung from the tribe of Levi, for it was unlawful for one of any other tribe to take upon him the office of a priest. It was contrary to the express command of God; the man that presumptuously forced himself into the priest's office, was to be put to death: "The stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death," Numb. iii. 38. Now this name, Levi, signifieth joined, meaning, joined to Christ, for it is with him the union must be; and although this tribe is completely mixed with the rest of the Jews, all their genealogies being lost, insomuch that there is not a Jew in all the world that can tell from what tribe he descended, yet this name is

never to cease. Although the Lord by Hosea foretold the calamities of the Jews, saying, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim," Hos. iii. 4; yet this name can never cease. For the Lord made a covenant by oath unto Noah, that whilst the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease; and afterward when the Jews for their idolatry were about to be carried away to Babylon, the Lord told the Jews by Jeremiah, if his covenant with Noah, of day and night, could be broken, then might also his covenant with David his servant, and with the Levites, the priests, his ministers, Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21; therefore these Levites must continue as long as there is day and night.

Now what we call joined, signifies to be made willing, which may be seen in the Lord's parable of the two sons, where it is said, "He repented, and went," and did the will of his father; that is, they were of one mind, the will of the son and the will of the father was one; one will was between them two. So says Paul, "We have the mind of Christ;" we are made willing to take his strength, we have received faith to rest in his

power, agreeable to the Father's promise to Christ, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," Psalm cx. 3. When Paul was brought before Nero, and all men forsook him, then says he, "The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me;" here was one power between them both; Paul embraced the strength of Christ, and thus they were joined. Do you understand this? has the power and strength of Christ been communicated to you? have you enjoyed it? If you say Yes, then you are joined to the Lord, and made one spirit with him: but love crowns the whole, and without love this union cannot be complete; "He that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God," 1 John. iv. 7.

Secondly, Under the law, every priest was adorned with a linen vesture, and without this linen vesture being put on, no Levite dared to approach, to wait on the ordinances of God; and it is the same now. Every priest that is equipt for the work which is to be performed by a gospel minister, is adorned with the righteousness of Christ; this is our vesture, and without this no man is permitted to draw near to, nor accepted of God: but with this, a priest under the gospel may draw near, and will be accepted. This linen vesture under the law, is a true type of the righteousness of Christ; and in it Aaron and

his sons stood before God, and with it Moses adorned them, which represents Christ, adorning his ministering servants, and the saints. It was with this vesture that our Lord adorned Joshua, the high priest; "Take away," says the Saviour, "his filthy garments from him. And unto Joshua he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment," which was his own righteousness. It was with this, the prodigal son was adorned: "Bring forth," says the Lord, "the best robe, and put it on him," Luke xv. 22; and this best robe, is the perfect and complete righteousness, of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is imputed freely to the sinner; and this righteousness every spiritual priest, or minister, receives; in this he is accepted of God; and this righteousness is to all, and upon all that believe.

This is the best robe, the linen vesture, the change of raiment, which can never be abolished, because it is called an everlasting righteousness. The angel assured Daniel, that when the Messiah came, his errand into this world should be, to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and therefore, says Paul, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift

came upon all men unto justification of life," Rom. v. 18; that is, the free gift of Christ's righteousness, imputed unto all the saints of God.

Thirdly, Under the law, the Lord would not admit that any priest should administer before him, in a robe or vesture, being a mixture of linen and woollen together; this was abhorred of the law; it must be a robe of pure linen. The apostle James told the carnal, self-righteous Jewish priests, under the law, that their garments were moth-eaten; and this moth is the law, which their righteousness could never fulfil; and this woollen, is the righteousness of the hypocrite, which can never keep out the sentence of the righteous law of God. This robe a spiritual priest must not have to appear in before God, nothing but the robe of righteousness will make him accepted when he draws near before the searcher of hearts; and it is in this robe the hypocrite will presumptuously boast, and even against his own conscience, which at the same time assures him he is not right. It is the desire of Satan that such should persist and be damned, rather than they should be able to put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and the whole armour of God; but it will be dreadful work with such, when fearfulness and trembling taketh hold of

them, and when God surprizeth the hypocrites in Zion; that is, such who have a name to live in the church, who make a fair shew, who deceive their fellow-men, but who are dead before God, a plant not of the right-hand planting of God, that he may be glorified.

Fourthly, Under the law, the priests were anointed with an holy anointing oil, being of the appointment of God; with this Aaron and his sons were anointed, that they might administer unto the Lord in the priest's office. This oil was composed of various spices, such as myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and of olive oil; with this anointing the priest was to draw near before God; there was no imitation of it to be made amongst the people, it was to be reserved strictly to God; and if it was put upon any stranger, that person was to be cut off. It is the same under the gospel, every priest or minister of the new testament is anointed with the graces of God's Spirit, and no man can administer those graces to others if he never received them himself; and as this one anointing oil was composed of various ingredients, so the soul that is anointed by the Holy Ghost partakes of his distinct graces; and every minister or spiritual priest, and every one of the family of Christ, are made partakers, through this anointing, of life,

hope, faith, love, joy, peace, comfort and consolation; and whosoever hath not been made a partaker of these graces, cannot be instrumental of conveying it to others.

The Lord's declaration to his church is, "All my springs are in thee," therefore whatsoever is to be found in the fulness of Christ, is to be found in the church; and whatsoever he hath to bestow in this world we have received; for we have received of the Lord, life, light, hope, faith, joy, peace, love, meekness, humility, repentance, and contrition, &c.; these are his gifts, and these are to be found in the church. All these things Christ brought from heaven with him; he left them with us poor wretches, that we might be carried safely through this world, in order that we may receive the full enjoyment of his gift in the world to come; for he will give grace and he will give glory; and when he comes, he will receive his own with usury; for he never intended that his grace should lie dormant in a child of his, so as never to be in exercise, but the contrary; for out of his fulness we are to receive, and grace for grace.

Fifthly, The priest, under the law, was girt about with a curious girdle, and this girdle to a believing soul is the consistent links of God's promises and truth. The apostle Paul recom-



mends the Ephesian church to have her loins girt about with truth; and observes, that all the promises are yea and amen, in Christ Jesus; and these promises will gird about every believer and bring the whole family to heaven, whom Christ hath redeemed by his blood; therefore this girdle that adorned Aaron and his sons, was typical of God's promise and truth, which girds about the ministering servants, and the saints of God, which came to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, and these promises are the consistent links of this girdle. Now for instance, all the time a man is a minister or teacher of the law, his heart being at Horeb, and his face towards Moses' law, his counsel is, Do this and live; and, with a dismal and ghastly countenance, he drives his hearers to merit heaven by their works; he seeks to be justified by the works of the law, by which the Lord hath declared that no flesh living can be justified; and all this time he is going point blank against the purpose of God, which is, that all men must come to the Son for salvation.

Such a man is beloved of the world, he gains the esteem of men, he is highly spoken of by those who have no spiritual life; now all this is agreeable to the promise, that "The world shall love its own," and they love him because his back is towards Christ, and the unconditional promises

in Christ, which are made to us through him. Now then we see that this is according to the word of God, the world loveth its own, and this is a consistent link. But that minister who is a partaker of the grace of life; who is a priest anointed of God for the work; who testifies a man must be regenerated, or begotten to a new life, by the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost; that he must receive the gift of living faith before he can do works acceptable to God, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin; if he declares the whole counsel of God, and is faithful to him who hath called him: such a one is hated of all men, he is despised by the world, persecuted and reviled, and this is consistent with the promise, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake;" and, "If they have hated me, they will hate you also." "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Matt. x. 25. And for our further comfort, and encouragement to bear their reproach, he adds, "They hated me, before they hated you." Well then, this is consistent with the promise of God, it is part of our Lord's legacy to his people, it is a consistent link in this girdle: "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins," Isai. xi. 5. "But ye shall be named

the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of our God."

Sixthly, Under the law, the priests were appointed to bring beasts in their offerings to God; and every one that is a priest of the Lord, must bring an offering before him. But it is no longer beasts, it is now people instead; and if I have been a priest to either of you, you are the sacrifice I bring unto the Lord; if I have been instrumental in the Lord's hand in benefiting your soul, then I am your priest. This agrees with the promise; for now instead of beasts, as it was under the law, the believing Gentiles are brought as an offering unto the Lord: "The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee," Isai. lx. 5, 11. "That men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles." "Ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles;" and the apostle Paul declares, that he was appointed a "minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God; that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost," Rom. xv. 16. "Men shall call you the ministers of our God," therefore ye shall bring your brethren for an offering to the Lord; and it is to be a pure offering in righteousness. This offering was made in gold and silver dishes; it was to this the good old protestant bishops in England had an eye, and on

which account these things were brought into the church; and under the law these all had their meaning, as the apostle Paul observes, "Having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," Heb. x. 1. You are to understand, that by gold is meant faith, as it is written, "That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth," meaning thereby, that although it is set forth by so valuable a part of nature, for which some men lose both body and soul, yet after all, faith, which is thought nothing of by thousands, is much more precious than gold that perisheth.

By silver, you are to understand that purity or holiness is meant, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to prepare us Gentiles, that we may offer up spiritual sacrifices, that are acceptable and well pleasing to God. It was long ago that the Lord told the carnal Jewish priest, that he had no pleasure in their solemn assemblies, their new-moon feasts, their persons, nor their worship; neither, said he, will I accept an offering at your hand. "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man: he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood," Isai. lxvi. 3; and he let them to know, that notwithstanding he had rejected their offerings, yet his sacrifices should still be carried

on by us Gentiles. "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts," Mal. i. 11. Now if I have been instrumental in bringing any of you off from confidence in the flesh; to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for life and salvation, for time and eternity, then I offer you up, as Paul did his converts, on the service of my faith; "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace;" it is to him I offer you up, to him I leave you: and thus I am the priest, and you are the sacrifice which I offer to God.

The Saviour tells us, "The law and the prophets were until John," the sacrifices and offerings were continued; but, "since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it," Luke xvi. 16. When our Lord came, he came to abolish death, and to bring life and immortality to light by the gospel; for the law was only a ministration of death and condemnation, and was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; that is, the law was but a type and shadow, the gospel is the truth of that type, it is the substance of that shadow, it sets forth Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law

for righteousness to all that believe. The law was a covenant of works, the gospel is God's free gift of Christ, and of life in him.

“Men shall call you the ministers of our God;” then as ministers they are to sow spiritual things, and in return are to reap carnal things. Agreeable to this, under the law, the priests and Levites were appointed a tenth part of the produce of the land, for their service before the Lord, in the tabernacle of the congregation; and it was on this account that Constantine, the Roman emperor, fixed the tythe for the ministers, under the gospel dispensation, which have been and are continued to our established clergy unto this day. And if a man is made a minister of the new testament, his work is, first, to administer life to the dead in trespasses and sins; this may be seen by the first sermon that Peter preached, after the apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost. In this sermon Peter proved by the word of God, that Jesus Christ whom they had crucified, and before his crucifixion had cruelly insulted and blasphemed, was the very Messiah, the promised Saviour, both Lord and Christ. Those things being conveyed to their hearts by the Holy Spirit, they effectually felt the stroke; for, being convinced of the truth of what Peter had been saying, they were pricked to the heart by a powerful

conviction of their guilt, and not being able to contain any longer, they gave way to the force of truth, and cried out to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Thus the Holy Ghost made use of these men, to be instrumental in preaching the word of life to others. The power he himself at the same time conveys; he clothes the word with power, and sends it with authority to the heart. Thus they have the great honour to be called ministers of the Spirit, because God bears testimony to the word of his grace. Such was Paul, who, in writing to the Corinthians, exhorts them to use prophesying, and to prefer it before strange tongues; for, says he, "If all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth," 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25.

This is the work of a gospel minister; and when a man is thus convinced, he is strong in the faith of the justice of God; he views things in a different light from what he viewed them before; he is convinced that the law is spiritual, but he is carnal, sold under sin, Rom. vii. 14; and he

would put his mouth in the dust, if so be he might have hope. And when he is once convinced, he will attend to a preached word, and what is from time to time dropt from the preacher; he begins to feel hope arise in his heart, and begins to take courage from God's word, that he will not reward him according to his iniquities; that he desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he would turn from his wickedness and live. He receives light insomuch that he is able to see God's way of salvation, and therefore says, "Turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned;" he sees that his safety is to believe in Christ crucified, yet for want of faith, he cannot apply the benefits of his death unto himself; a sense of this is attended at times with great restlessness, like a bull in a net he struggles to get free, he fears he shall die in the pit. Sometimes he is helped with a little help, at other times he fancies he shall never see light, and in this place some have stayed long; now it is the work of a gospel minister to administer comfort to such, to comfort them that mourn in Zion, that mourn on account of their sin, for such shall sooner or later be comforted, for the Lord will attend to their cry; they are not always to be forgotten before him, therefore do not conceive because he comes not at such a time, or under such a sermon, that he will not come at



all ; he waits that he may be gracious unto you, and will come, and will not tarry beyond the time he hath appointed to favour Zion.

It is the work of a minister of the Spirit to administer pardon, to this work our dear Lord was anointed ; " Son," said he to one, " thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace." To the woman taken in adultery, he said, " Hath no man condemned thee? she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee : go and sin no more," John viii. 10, 11. Of Mary, he said, that woman's sins were many, and they are forgiven her, and she loveth much. It was the same with Paul, he was a preacher of reconciliation, he preached pardon and the remission of sins by the blood of Christ, and he was honoured with many seals to his ministry. He was not a letter preacher, as many are in our days, for the Lord bore witness to the word he preached, and confirmed it with power, and so he doth with them that he appoints now ; there is a power and majesty that attends their admonitions, reproofs, exhortations, and sympathy, that will either strike terror, or else afford comfort as the case requireth, that a man cannot gainsay nor resist, and which testifieth such to be ministers of the Spirit.

Yet there were some in Paul's day who wanted

a proof of Christ speaking in him ; but Lydia, and the Jailer, and numbers of others, found it to be the power of God that attended his ministry, as we have felt his epistles profitable to us; and under such a minister as this, the pardoned soul is astonished at the light that shines, he sees such a glorious beauty and harmony in the word of God when explained and opened up, he longs for the return of the Lord's day, for it is desirable unto him; he enters into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; he is thankful unto the Lord, and will bless his name. He cannot live without prayer, he is often found in it, it is his meat and drink to be pouring out his heart before God, he esteems it more than his necessary food; and at times he is so very much indulged at a throne of grace, as to make all the world a blank to him, and he finds the truth of this text in Isaiah fulfilled in his experience: "He shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks, bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off," Isai. xxxiii. 16, 17. He is blest with a tender conscience, and hath the honour and the cause of Christ at heart; he feels a love to all the family of God, for "We are taught of God to love one another;" and the

Spirit teacheth us that what we have got, we have received from him; and he doth it by bringing us into trials, difficulties, perplexities, troubles, sickness, and afflictions.

In these we sometimes discover his love to us, we find hope, we feel patience hath had her perfect work, and we find a strong faith in exercise; he doth it that in answer to our fervent prayers he may deliver us, and shew us how near he is to those who feel after him, that rely on him, and that trust in him. "I sought the Lord and he heard me." Thus in prayer the psalmist sought him; he heard my prayer, and delivered me from all my fears; and every fresh discovery of his mercy and faithfulness melts us down at his feet, it makes us highly prize him, and gratefully adore and admire our kind benefactor and best of friends; we feel such holy solemnity, such gladness of heart, and in reading his word we have such astonishing light given us, that we can with readiness say, Old things are passed away, all is become new; and happily find that, "Godliness with contentment is great gain," 1 Tim. vi. 6.

"Men shall call you the ministers of our God." A minister of God administers peace; "Having," says Paul, "your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" and such

who seek peace and ensure it, to them it is written, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace," Isai. lii. 7. Every minister is a peace-maker if he is anointed of God, for his work is to make reconciliation between offended parties: "Behold," says God, "I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," Mal. iv. 5, 6. And how is this done? Why, Christ Jesus is set forth as the mediator between God and man, who was to make reconciliation for iniquity, according to the promise.

"He took on him," saith Paul, "the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behoved him in all things, to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," Heb. ii. 16, 17. And he says in another place, "He hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" by which the hearts of the children are turned to God the Father, who, through his dear Son, hath placed his affection on his adopted family. And thus our Lord Jesus

made peace by the blood of his cross, he made intercession for the offenders, he amply satisfied his offended Father for the injustice done to his holy commands, and hath for ever sanctified all that believe, insomuch that they can never more come under his vindictive wrath; therefore every one that is a minister of Christ, is an ambassador of peace. Our Lord was anointed for this work, and he bestowed it on those who believed on him; and when about to leave his followers, he bequeathed them this legacy, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." After his resurrection, when at any time he was pleased to appear among his disciples, he generally saluted them with, "Peace be unto you;" he knew their sorrow and dejection, and confusion of mind, and that they stood much in need of the peace of God to rule in their hearts.

This is oftentimes the case with you now, you much need peace to reign and rule in the soul, for you are often under fears, troubles, and disquietude; you are often disturbed by the world, by temptations, by satan, by slips in your walk, by evil thoughts, and particularly from those things which are so nearly in union, I mean our indwelling foes. Yet when our Lord appears he puts all these to flight, and he gives us that peace

that passeth all understanding, by believing and confiding in him; for, "This man shall be our peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land," Micah v. 5.

He is not only to be our peace, but he is also to supply all our wants, and these are manifold, yet says David, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;" he means, he will supply all my wants. Do you want pardon for past, present, and future guilt? he can supply you, and pardon brings peace into the soul; "Purge me with hyssop," says David, "and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow," Psal. li. 7. The Lord requireth truth, yet say you, All in me is sinful; then I tell you Christ was anointed as a minister of the new testament, and came to call sinners to repentance: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and he declares, he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. The blood of beasts, sacrifices, and burnt-offerings will not do, we want mercy, these shadows are of no avail; this David found out and said, if sacrifices would do, he would have given it; and would soon have compensated for his sin, if burnt-offerings would have appeased the wrath of God. But he knew these shadows were not sufficient, therefore he cries out, "Have mercy

upon me, O God;" and this mercy the Lord was anointed to shew, and it is only through mercy we can be saved.

Our wants as creatures are manifold, they are to be supplied from our Lord Jesus Christ; a little of this world is sufficient for a good man, but a great deal is not sufficient for a covetous heart. The condition of mankind is deplorable, they are in much need, and they are in great want, and through the fall every good thing is far out of their reach, as well for the body as for the soul; but every mercy from God comes to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We feel hunger, therefore we want food, we want rest, we want shelter, we want raiment; but as believers in Christ, we are to take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; and as we are necessitous creatures, Christ who gives us life will supply all our wants. We want knowledge, we feel the need of an enlightened understanding, we want washing and justifying, to fit us for heaven. As sinners, we want a fountain, a mediator, a surety; we want an atonement, a sacrifice, and we want absolution; we have need of patience, to wait in all things for God's appointed time.

A man who is a minister, anointed of God, is

like Ezra, who wanted oil, salt, corn, and wine, and who was acquainted with the priest's necessities; and these being supplied by their enemies in answer to the prayers of the saints, they glorified their God. And so it is now, a minister knows the want of faith, hope, love, and every grace of the Spirit in his heart, to worship God aright; and if he is destitute of these himself, he cannot profit the church; but the man that is anointed of God, finds a fresh supply of these good gifts, and the Holy Spirit's help in every time of need. David was poor and needy, yet said he, "The Lord thinketh upon me;" but this is not the case of those who are in the same state as the Laodicean church, being in conceited ignorance they think they have need of nothing, such do not know their wants, but boast of their riches, and know not, says the Lord, that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, then how deplorable is the case of such. The excuses of those perishing hypocrites, mentioned in Luke's gospel, the fourteenth chapter, from the eighteenth to the twentieth verse, were all opposite to religion; thus some are too rich, too idle, or too happy, to follow Christ, and whose hearts are too closely engaged with the things of this world, to come to



the gospel feast ; yet the power that attends the preaching of a minister of the Spirit, will constrain them to come in who are the redeemed of Christ Jesus.

But this life is only the days of our pilgrimage, this is not our rest, we are not to abide here for ever, therefore we have wants as it respects our immortality. Death sometimes takes a friend, then we want strength communicated to the soul, that we may not grieve as those who have no hope ; for what can friendship, riches, or earthly possessions avail us, when we are near the end of our race, and about to enter into the presence of God ? We groan for the hope of a future mansion and eternal rest, which sometimes is administered by the servants of the Lord, who are often instrumental in delivering them, who through the fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage ; therefore we want, as depraved and sinful creatures, to be assured of future glory and immortality, which is given to us through our ever-blessed and adorable Immanuel. In him only rest is to be found, from him it is procured ; “The Lord God is a sun and shield : the Lord will give grace and glory ;” Who is like unto him ? “Happy is he who hath the God of Jacob for his help.” To him the

apostle Paul often applied, and asserts with confidence, I know in whom I have believed." "The Lord is my shepherd," says David; and those words are as a cordial from heaven to them that fear and love him: this I speak from heart-felt experience, and admire him when I look at his works, and consider that in wisdom he hath made them all; and that he so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Thus every minister of Christ is an ambassador of peace. "Men shall call you the ministers of God." If a man is anointed for this office he will be instrumental of conveying love, for whilst they declare unto you the love of God to sinners, in sending his dear Son into this world to suffer and die for their sakes; whilst they declare how he bore with patience the rebukes and contradictions of sinful men; how low he stooped to deliver Jonah from the belly of hell, David from the deep waters, where there was no standing, Manasseh from the dungeon of guilt and horror, Mary Magdalen and the mad Gadarene from the tyranny of devils; and when with a powerful application he comes to your own souls, and points out what he hath done in delivering you

from the reigning power of sin, from blindness of mind and unbelief, which are two strong pillars in the kingdom of Satan, from past iniquities, future wrath, and endless misery—I say, when you hear all this, with faith in exercise, will it not excite fervent love and unfeigned gratitude to that Holy Being, who is above all, and blessed for ever and ever? and bring us to this faithful conclusion of the apostle, that, “We love him, because he first loved us.” I add no more.

THE END.