

*THE Excellence and Importance of the saving Knowledge
of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the GOSPEL-PREACHER,
plainly and seriously represented and enforced: And
CHRIST preached to the Gentiles in Obedience to the
Call of G O D.*

Benjamin A. Goulds
S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

EAST-HAMPTON, *August 29, 1759;*

AT THE

O R D I N A T I O N

OF

Mr. SAMSON OCCUM, *Walden*

A MISSIONARY among the INDIANS.

BY SAMUEL BUELL, M. A.
Pastor of the Church of CHRIST, at EAST-HAMPTON,
LONG-ISLAND.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. DAVID BOSTWICK, Minister
of the PRESBYTERIAN Church, in NEW-YORK, giving
some Account of Mr. OCCUM's Education, Character, &c.

1 COR. ii. 2. *For I determined not to know any Thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST
and him crucified.*

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PSALM cxix. *I made Haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commands.*

ROM. i. 16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of CHRIST.*

N E W - Y O R K :

Printed by JAMES PARKER, and COMPANY,
M.DCC.LXI

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A LETTER, TO THE Rev. Mr. DAVID BOSTWICK. At NEW-YORK.

Reverend and dear Brother,

MOST gladly I embrace the present Opportunity to answer you Request, viz. That I would give you a brief Account of the Rev. Mr. Occum's Education, Character, and fitness for his designed Mission:—Most gladly,—because, I am not without Hope, that it may have some Influence, to promote one of the most important and beneficent Designs in the World: As I am well assured it will, if by Means thereof, any well disposed Persons shall be excited to contribute the more liberally toward upholding and supporting Mr. Occum, in his Mission among the aboriginal Natives of America; and any of them by the Blessing of God upon his Labours, for that Purpose should be truly evangelized.

To make Use of Mr. Occum's own Phraseology, He was brought up a Heathen till he entered upon the eighteenth Year of his Age: At which Age, he began to seek after an increasing Acquaintance with the English Tongue; and to labour after being indoctrinated in the Christian Religion. But before the Expiration of this Year, (which he calls the Year of Salvation to him) he says, that he can but hope, "it pleased GOD to reveal his Son JESUS CHRIST, in him and to him," in a spiritual and saving Manner. He had at this Time, a clear, powerful, and practical Conviction of the moral Pollution of his Nature, and of the great Defilement of his Life, by actual Sin; of his lost, miserable and undone State by Nature; of his utter Inability to liberate himself from this deplorable Condition; of his Unworthiness to be help'd, and of the Justice of GOD in his final and eternal Rejection. And having with deep Solitude, and Anxiousness of Mind, turned every Stone, and tried every Expedient within the Compass of his Power, by the Use of Means, in order to obtain Salvation, found thereupon, an absolute Necessity of resigning himself up to GOD, as rightful Lord, and an infinite Sovereign, who might save or destroy him forever, as he pleased: And thus submiting to GOD, as merciful, and could save, and just if he cast off and destroyed; at this solemn Season, he believes, the holy Spirit illuminated his Mind, and enabled him to behold the divinely glorious Objects of Faith, and inclined him to elect and choose GOD, as his last End, and chief Good, through the divine Mediator CHRIST JESUS. From which Time to the present, he seriously professes, to have found a great Change wrought in the Temper, Bias, and Inclination of his Soul; turn|ing of it from Sin to Holiness, from the Creature to GOD. He observes, that among other Things, opening to View at this Time; he saw in an affecting Light, the infinite Reasonableness of dedicating himself, entirely and absolutely, to GOD the FATHER, SON and HOLY GHOST, as his Owner, to be disposed of by him, as his Ruler, to obey him, as his Benefactor and chief Good, thankfully to depend on him, and love him, and live to him, as his ultimate End. And also, that while he looked upon his Kinsfolk, "as perishing for Lack of Vision," he found within himself a bleeding Tenderness of Heart, and un|uterable Bowels of Compassion toward them: Which excited in him, ardent Desires after becoming under Advantage to promote their Instruction, in the Knowledge of the Christian Religion, and to befriend them with Regard to their eternal Salvation.—Hearing that the Rev. Mr. Eleazar Wheelock, Minister of the Gospel at Lebanon, had a Number of Youth under his Care and Tuition, Mr. Occum, earnestly requested of him, the Favour of becoming one of the Number; which, after some Examination was readily granted. Mr. Occum, lived about three Years with the Rev. Mr. Wheelock, and one Year with the Rev. Mr. Pumroy, Minister of the Gospel at Hebron,—prosecuting the Study of the English, Latin and Greek Languages; and also contracted some Acquaintance with the Hebrew.—During this Time, Mr. Occum, made such Progress in Learning, that he was so well fitted for Admittance into College, (which was designed) that he doubtless would have entered upon his second Year, at his first Admission. But through intense Application to Study, he very much weakened his Eye-

Sight, so that 'twas judged prudent for him to desist from severe Study for a Time: After some Months Trial, finding his Eye-Sight still remained so weak as not to admit of hard Study, 'twas thought adviseable, that he should enter upon the Business of keeping School: Which he accordingly did among the Indians at Montauk, who live upon the East End of this Island, to whom he has been very beneficial, especially to the Youth and Children there.

ABOUT a Year and a Half before Mr. Occum's Ordination, the Reverend Association of Windham County, in the Colony of Connecticut, gave him a Licence to preach, as a Candidate for the Gospel Ministry, and referred him to our Presbytery for Ordination, in case we thought proper. While these Things were transacting, several Letters came to Hand, from our worthy and dear Friend, the Rev. Mr. Davies, (since President of New-Jersey College, and we trust now in Glory) warmly urging Mr. Occum's Ordination, with a View to his going upon a Mission among the Cherokees; but they taking an unhappy Turn, and engaging in a War with us, that Design was obstructed. We received the Information of the perfidious Conduct of the Cherokee Nation, a few Days before the Time appointed by the Presbytery

for Mr. Occum's Ordination; nevertheless, that was not preventive of it; for a Motion had been made for his entering upon a Mission among the Mohawks; and there are several Tribes of Indians on the Continent, and also upon this Island, that he could minister unto occasionally; and it was hoped that GOD in his Providence, in due Time, would open an effectual Door for his Usefulness, among them who dwell in the Wilderness.—Whereupon, the Presbytery finding of him, upon due Examination, possest of a hopeful Measure of necessary Qualifications therefor, proceeded to separate him to the Work of the sacred Ministry, according to Gospel-Rule and Order.

FROM which Time to the present, he has principally preached to the Indians at Montauk; who, I fear will soon perceive some lamentable Effects of his Departure from them.

'TIS now eleven or twelve Year since Mr. Occum has officiated in the Quality of a School-Master; during which Time, he has been making Proficiency in the various Parts of Learning, which serve to qualify, in their Place, for preaching the Gospel, which all along he has had in View. But his Progress in Learning has been much retarded, and his Usefulness greatly embarrassed, for Want of due Support, and thereby Freedom from wordly Cares and Avocations; yet he has improved Time with so much Vigilance and Industry, as to become possest of a good Degree of useful Learning; and has been improving to good Purpose in the Christian Life. He is endued with no small Degree of Knowledge in the holy Scriptures; and in the whole of his Department, he exhibits ample Evidence, that he has a living Faith within, of divine Truths.

As a Preacher of the Gospel, he seems always to have before his Eye, the great End of the Ministry, the Glory of GOD, and the Salvation of Men. As the Matter of his Sermons is designed for the good of Souls; so his Way of Expression is proper to that End. He uses great Plainness of Speech, and makes close Application of Truth to the Conscience; which you well know Sir, that although this is not so agreeable to those, who are loth to have their Minds impressed with a just Sense of the Weight of Things eternal; nor so pleasing to them who form a Taste rather for the Flowers of Oratory, than for the substantial Food of the Sanctuary; yet 'tis that Method of preaching which is best adapted to do good to the Souls of Men; and upon which, the LORD is pleased to command his Blessing. Those, who have had Opportunity to observe, take Notice, that his Manner of Expression, when he preaches to the Indians, is vastly more natural and

free, clear and eloquent, quick and powerful, than 'tis wont to be, when he preaches to others. As an Instructor of the Indians, he makes frequent Use of apt and significant Similitudes, to convey and illustrate Truth: Such a Method of conveying Ideas, you know, Sir, is natural to Indians in general, and therefore, doubtless, as pleasing as 'tis natural.

IN Prayer, his Solemnity and Reverence are becoming one that beholds him who is invisible: He appears eminently enrich'd with a Spirit of Adoption; and seems often indulg'd with much holy Freedom of Access to the Throne of Grace. His Mind is chiefly intent upon, and his Heart much drawn forth, in Desires after those Blessings which are infinitely the most excellent and important.

HE adds Force to the Doctrines he preaches, by the prevailing Charms of an unspotted Life, and a Conversation as becomes the Gospel. From the Time that he hopefully experienced a saving Change, to this very Day, he has been preserved from that Sin, which seems to be the Indians' Constitution Sin; and from every Sin, that is commonly called scandalous: In all Respects, he has a negative Goodness; and shines in the positive Beauties of Holiness. In short, he is an Ornament to the Christian Religion, and the Glory of the Indian Nation,

MR. Occum is well acquainted with the Nature and Essence of Religion, as it eminently consists in a Conformity of the whole Soul to the moral Excellencies of GOD, and his Will. He is sound in Principle, and well established in the Belief of divine Truth; and is far from resting in a naked and cold Assent thereto, he labours after, and appears actually possess'd of a good Degree of the Life and power of Godliness; as a Man, judiciously zealous and happily free from an enthusiastick Turn of Mind; an Attainment, we believe, Sir, as truly excellent as 'tis useful and rare. He is indeed well pleas'd with rais'd and holy religious Affections, as the Result of a proportionable Degree of Illumination of Mind, and as they powerfully influence to practical Holiness, and excite to a permanent Devotedness to the Service and Glory of GOD. There is therefore, just Ground to believe, that as an Instructor of the Heathen, he will teach them the Truth as it is in JESUS; that he will be far from resting of them in the Form of Knowledge, and mere external Reformation; without pressing upon them the absolute Necessity of Regeneration, by the holy Spirit's Operation; and thereupon, the Fruits of evangelical and universal Holiness.

AND now, Sir, from these broken Hints, and that agreeable personal Interview, I suppose you will likely have with Mr. Occum, when these Lines come to Hand, you will no Doubt, judge for yourself, as to his Qualifications and Fitness for the Mission he is entering upon.

MY known Affection to Mr. Occum, may perhaps incline some to conclude, that I am prejudic'd in his Favour, and therefore am excessive in giving these Sketches of his Character: 'Tis true, that I am not ashamed the World should know, that my Heart loves him; that I rejoice in the Grace of GOD conferred upon him; that I admire the Pearl of Gospel Grace, that is set, not in the Heart of a Nobleman, but in the Heart of an Indian, born a Pagan; where it displays a sprightly Beam, may be of signal Service, and afford a Fund of Usefulness; and that I seek to promote his being under Advantage to do much Service in his Day, by what I now write; but then I risque my Character upon it with those Ministers of the Gospel, and private Christians, who are most acquainted with Mr. Occum, that, (so far as I know) I have written no more than what is just, and the real Truth, with Respect to him.

I am apt to believe, Sir, that in the Request you exhibit,—you seek not so much your own Satisfaction, (having before now heard so much in Mr. Occum's Favour) as the Information of those, who would gladly be informed what Encouragement there is to promote him in his Mission, on Account of his Qualifications therefore: And that you propose as a special End, an Incentive to the benevolent and truly generous Spirit of Christianity, that nothing of an outward Nature may be wanting, which may be conducive to promote his important and glorious Embassy. This, Sir, I hope will sufficiently justify your Request, and my Compliance, in giving so much of the Character of a Man yet in the State of so great Imperfection, and in a World of so much Temptation, as this in which we at present live. We have, doubtless, often thought, when we have beheld for a Time, shining Appearances, and hopeful resplendent Virtues, at length overcast with the dismal Gloom of Error in Doctrine, or Scandal in Practice; that 'tis enough to say of the best Man upon Earth, by Way of Encomium, "All Things as yet appear well and excellent, and we have sufficient Reason to hope they will do so:" And thus much I may truly say, with Respect to our dear Brother Mr Occum. Amidst all that Respect and Honour he receives from many, I am well assured, that he has some particular Friends, who observe to him the Danger he is in of receiving Injury by that busy Sin Pride; not because they see the Appearance of it in him, but as supposing Satan very active in his Temptations, and that he would exert himself more to effect his falling into Sin, preventive of his Usefulness, than he would to procure the Fall of twenty other Christians, not Half so likely to act a Part destructive to his Kingdom. Mr. Occum, is not unapprehensive of Danger from this Quarter; he receives with becoming Respect, and retains with a watchful Eye, that needful Exhortation to all Christians, "Let him that stands take Heed lest he fall." His Heart says Amen, to that divine Sentence, summarily expressive of the whole Design of the Gospel, "Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord." With Pleasure he adapts that Declaration of the Apostle, so descriptive of Self-emptiness,—"I am, what I am, by the Grace of GOD:" May such Grace-exalting Language ever have a genuine Flow, from his and our Hearts!

IT yet remains that I observe, that Mr. Occum has a Family, consisting of a Wife and six Children; he has one Son at School, under the Care and Instruction of the Rev. Mr. Wheelock: (who has a considerable Number of Indian Lads under his Tuition, that promise well for eminent Usefulness in their Day, by the Blessing of GOD.) From the first of Mr Occum's coming to Montauk, he has been so faithfully engaged in keeping School, that he has been able to do but little for the Support of his Family: He has indeed received about Twenty Pounds per Annum, from the Gentlemen Commissioners in Boston;—and a few private Donations, from particular Friends, all which, hath in no due Measure been equal to the necessary Expences of his Family; so that in order to it's Support, he is become much involv'd in Debt; and therefore he stands in Need of considerable charitable and liberal Donations, in order to the Discharge of Debts already necessarily contracted, as well as for the present Support of his Family, and for his own Expences, while engaged in his Mission.—It verily seems a Thousand Pities, that Mr. Occum's Usefulness should be flung away, for the Want of his due Support; especially in this Day, in which a very glorious Prospect opens to View, for evangelizing Multitudes of the Heathen, and thereby, for his doing much for GOD's Honour, and Men's Salvation. While there are so many Christians, who daily ply the Throne of Grace, and pray for the magnificent Enlargement of the divine REDEEMER's Kingdom among Men; we hope, we must in Charity hope, that their liberal Donations, to promote the Propagation of the joyful Tidings of Salvation among the Heathen, will agree and correspond with their solemn Prayers: Surely we need not hesitate a Moment, whether 'tis possible to honour GOD, in a more excellent Way, with our worldly Substance.—

AND now, my dear Sir, I can scarce lay my Pen aside, 'til I have taken the Liberty, and received the Pleasure, of expressing some of our joyous Prospects, our harmonizing Hopes, and our hearty Wishes. We receive the Information as well authenticated, that the Oneida Indians (to whom Mr. Occum is going) make the first Motion themselves, and earnestly request that a Gospel Minister may be sent among them; they promise to receive him with Joy, to treat him with Respect, and to hear him with Candour. They have already collected two or three Hundred Dollars, which they Design, (with others to be collected) to improve for erecting a Meeting-House, that therein they may unite in the Worship of the true and only GOD. They hope their Cousins the Tuscaroras will join with them in receiving the Gospel: So that the Prospect is hopeful, that GOD has a Design of special Mercy towards them. And upon the agreeable Supposition, that the Gospel should become the Power of GOD to their Salvation, 'tis quite hopeful the blessed Leaven will spread, and be diffused far and wide among the Heathen Nations: And how "this Grain of Mustard-Seed may grow, and increase and spread," GOD only knows. When we take a View of the signal Successes the LORD OF HOSTS, hath given to British and American Forces, especially when we call to Mind the moral Impediments that were in the Way thereof, and the Manner in which GOD hath wrought, the Wonder and the Prospect grows upon us; that he hath a Design at this Time, to spread the the Name and Fame of the glorious and dear IMMANUEL among the Heathen, in these Ends of the Earth.

WE rejoice in Hope, that all those who are replenish'd with generous and active Zeal for the Glory of GOD, the Honour of CHRIST, and the Salvation of Men, will soon share in the sublime Joy and Satisfaction of hearing, that they "who dwell in the Wilderness," hear of, trust in, bow before, and yield unfeigned Subjection to the exalted King of Zion. And as conducive thereto, may we not hope, that a generous Scheme will soon be set on Foot, for forming a Society in these Parts, to receive Subscriptions and Contributions, with Design to promote the Education of Indian Youth, the Support of School-Masters among the Indians, the Distribution of useful Books, and in due Time Bibles, &c. and especially, with a Design to promote the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen, by the due Support of well qualified Missionaries, for that beneficent and glorious Purpose.

WHEN we recollect the tragic Scenes of Years past, our Forts demolished or burnt to Ashes, our Armies cut to Pieces, our Countrymen, in Numbers, butchered and mangled;—and call to Mind, how the Voice of Lamentation and Woe was heard in our Streets! How the Hearts of Multitudes were failing them for Fear, while they heard the confused Noise of War, saw Garments rolled in Blood, and the insulting Foe, spreading Desolation and Ruin all around! And when we remember, what a dismal Storm seem'd gathering fast upon us, big with awful Fates, threatening of us with Privation of our wordly Substance, our inestimable Privileges, civil and sacred, and all in this World, that ought to be the most dear to us! Ill-boding, as if Ignorance and Superstition, Slavery and Persecution, would soon overspread these Regions of Light and Liberty; and when at the same Time, we recognize, that notwithstanding the Demerit of our Crimes, just at this momentous Crisis, the GOD of Armies, the GOD of Salvations, by Miracles of Providence, scattered mighty Forces, diverted the Storm, and wrought an admirable Train of glorious Deliverances, and positive Salvations for us; I observe, when we view and review these Things, we can but hope, that furnished with an irresistable Train of Motives and Obligations, Praiseworthy Charity will be reflected from Breast to Breast: And that we shall see Christians, though in some lesser Matters of differing Opinions, agreeing harmoniously in this truly generous, interesting and important Work, viz. contributing liberally toward promoting the Propagation of the glad Tidings of Salvation among the Heathen.

WE heartily wish, for the Comfort of having Reason to believe, that all who have Interest at the Throne of Grace, are much in Prayer to the great LORD of the Harvest, that he would raise up, qualify Men therefor, and spirit them to carry the Light of the glorious Gospel among perishing Savages, and crown their Ministrations with glorious Success.

WE wish, that in Answer to a Spirit of Prayer pour'd out in a Kind of caelestial Torrent upon Believers, the Kingdom of our Lord CHRIST among Men, may be enlarged intensively and extensively; that the Heathen Nations, who have been for Length of Time, overcast with rayless Gloom, and benighted with Shadows of Death, may be enlighten'd and enliven'd, by that glorious Gospel, which hath brought Life and Immortality to Light: That they, who have long been resident "in the Pit in which there is no living Water," may see Rivers open'd in high Places, and Fountains in the Desert, that they may taste the Sweetness, and feel the salutary Refresh|ment of the Fountain of Life, that they may drink copi|ous Draughts of those heavenly Streams, the living Waters of the Sanctuary; and by them be quickened, purified, comforted, and live for ever. That Prodigal Pagans, who, for numerous Ages, have been wandering far from the Father of Mercies, and living without spiri|tual Food for their Souls, may now behold "a barren Wilderness turn'd into a fruitful Field," and find them|selves furnished with living Bread from Heaven, in order to nourish them up in the divine Life, and secure them the Possession of immortal Blessedness and Glory: And thenceforth celebrate the divine Praises, 'till the Praise reaches Heaven, and joins the Songs of Angels and glo|rified Spirits, and the Courts above eccho back the Ho|sannas, 'til all that hath Breath shall praise the LORD, in that the eternal SON of the eternal FATHER, according to Promise made to him as Mediator, hath the Heathen for an Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for a Possession.

King JESUS reigns, and spreads his glorious Fame,
The savage Nations know, and trust his Name;
Triumph ye Saints! Ye Angels strike the Lyre!
In everlasting Praise, let ALL conspire!

DEAR Sir, I forget myself, the pleasing Theme has transported me beyond the Limits I had prescribed to my Mind: Pardon Prolixity, and the Inaccuracy of my Thoughts and Pen; and I shall add no more, only that you are at Liberty to make such Use of what I have now written, as you shall judge proper; from the Hand of,

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother, In the Work of the Christian Ministry; And ever faithful Friend, And Servant, SAMUEL BUELL.

EAST-HAMPTON, May 9, 1761.

THE PREFACE.

ALTHO' soon after the Delivery of the ensuing Sermon, undeniable Importunity prevailed upon me to consent to its Publication by the Press, yet I deferr'd for a Time, as hoping divine Pro|vidence would open a Door for Mr. Occum, to enter upon a Mission among the savage Nations in the Wilderness: And that Hope not being in vain, the Sermon under Pro|mise, as now more fitly timed, comes to Hand from the Press. Having asserted therein some Things diametri|cally opposite to that Scheme of Principles which some Men embrace, I shall meet with

no Disappointment, if I come under their Censure. All Men don't see Things in the same Point of View; yet 'tis a common Profession, we must think for ourselves.

Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.

IN the following Sermon I have freely declared it as my Opinion, that Men who enter upon the holy Ministry, ought to know the LORD JESUS CHRIST savingly. If any should censure me, as chargeable with Arrogancy, think that I assert Points too boldly, and that I affect Singularity: I have this to 〈◇〉 in general, that had I aimed at being a Man-pleaser, I might have escaped their Censure.

I freely acknowledge, that many who agree with me in point of Principle, would doubtless have done far greater Justice to the Subject, and have handled it to vastly better Advantage, I said that Days should speak, and multitude of Years should teach Knowledge. I found no Answer; the Stage being clear, I said I would shew mine Opinion.

In publico discrimine omnis Homo miles est.

When I preach'd the Sermon, I had just Reason to fear, that a Decay of the Life and Power of Godliness among us, and the Prevalency of Arminian Principles in some Places, would unhappily prepare the Way for some Men to grow more bold than ever, in opposing divine Truth, and experimental Religion; and as a native Consequence, the next Thing would be their open and warm Opposition to the Examination of Candidates for the Gospel Ministry, as to their experimental Acquaintance with Religion. For if Men can once imagine, that the Gospel does not require saving Grace, or which is the same Thing, the saving Knowledge of the LORD, as a necessary Qualification in Candidates,—what should hinder, but that, as Arminians, they drop all Pretence to the Examination of Candidates, upon the Point of their experimental Acquaintance with divine Truth, by efficacious and sovereign Grace. In the View of these, and such like Things (sadly ominous to the Church of Christ,) I was, and am willing, according to my small Ability, and Sphere of Influence to give a Caveat against threatening Errors, to declare Truth for the Establishment of some, and to offer Matter of Conviction to others: And whether it be judged too assuming, or not, I am as yet apprehensive, that I did not fear where there is no Danger.

IF censured as asserting this, and other Points too boldly, small Apology must suffice. I own real Modesty in asserting Points properly dubious, to be graceful; but false Modesty, concealing or betraying the Truths of the Gospel, is abominable. "I have believed," and assign'd the Reasons why I thus believe, and have spoken plainly, and whosoever will, may call this speaking boldly. As a Christian Minister, I think myself under the strongest Obligations to speak our my Principles openly, and so honestly: And as a Believer to dec●●●● the important

Truths of the Gospel of my LORD and SAVIOUR, boldly. Let him that hesitates, and cannot answer this Question, "What is Truth?" Speak doubtfully. Let Arminians sculk and peep in the Dark, and as well as they can by unsanctified Reason, defend their unhallowed Principles, which cannot bear the glorious Light of Divine revealed Truth. Let Trimmers with the Times, observe their needful Decorum, and be sure to speak modestly, and with a bright Eye watch narrowly, or they may lose their beloved Popularity. But let the Ministers of the enthron'd SAVIOUR CHRIST JESUS the LORD, who know Gospel Truths in their Life-giving and transforming Power, as illuminated by the HOLY GHOST, "Preach the Kingdom of GOD, and teach those Things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST with all Confidence." When pernicious Errors are advanced and

disputed for, and important Truths rejected and disputed against; with Zeal awaken'd to Flame we will to speak our Opinions, with the Reasons of them, with an undaunted Parrhesia, with a noble Boldness, whilst we plead the precious Cause of GOD, and dear Zion. When Truths that greatly concern the Honour of GOD, the Glory of CHRIST, and the Salvation of Men, are concealed or betrayed, given up or oppose; can the Ministers of the living Word, appear as void of sacred Fervor, as lifeless Statutes? Can they imagine that GOD or his Prophets, that CHRIST or his Apostles, instructed Men in the modish Art of keeping Silence? Or can they dream, that Love Divine sent Preachers among Men to palliate Gospel Truths? No; surely. We have renounced the hidden Things of Dishonesty:—We speak as in the Sight of GOD:—We have the Testimony of JESUS to keep us in Countenance, and are not ashamed of his Gospel,—which giveth Boldness against that universal Fire, which shall melt the Elements, and shrivel up the Heavens like a Roll of Parchment.

IF censured, as holding an Opinion for the sake of Singularity, I discard the Thought, as I do being a Latitudinarian, for the gain of Popularity. I am quite sure, that in the present Case, I am far from being singular in my Opinion: Many of my Fathers and Brethren, I well know, hold the same Principle. And all Men of any tolerable Reading in Divinity, know that numerous Divines, in various Ages, most renowned for Wisdom and Piety in the Church of GOD, have been of the same Opinion, I own indeed, that in the Compass of my small Reading, I have not, that I remember, seen the Point handled by way of methodical Argument, yet casual Hints, and plain Declarations, in Authors, give us their Opinions: To quote, would be endless. If numerous Authorities may add Force, and serve to confront Opponents, the Balance is in my Favour.

Vis unitur fortior.

IN Consequence of the foregoing Principle; in my Sermon, I have insisted upon the strict Examination of Candidates,—as to their Acquaintance with experimental Religion: For 'tis quite beyond me to comprehend, how to separate here, with Consistency. Nevertheless, we find that Men will sometimes make the Concession, that Candidates for the Gospel Ministry ought savingly to know the LORD, and yet don't care to admit that they should pass an Examination, as to their experimental Religion. Here I would take the Liberty to observe: That upon this Concession, that the Gospel does require saving Grace, as a necessary Qualification in a Candidate for the Holy Ministry, then he has not a solid Foundation, of Right to engage therein, unless he is possest thereof. And of Consequence, Ministers ought not to separate him to the Work of the Ministry, without Evidence sufficient to found a Judgment of Christian Charity upon, that he is truly gracious: For Faithfulness to our LORD, does necessarily require, that we have all Reason to believe that the Candidate to whom we commit the Ministry, is qualified as the Gospel does injoin: And therefore we must have all the moral Evidence, and Satisfaction, the Nature of the Case will admit, that the Candidate is truly gracious. The Point then seems to turn upon this Hinge, or upon the Solution of this Question, viz. "How shall we have all the Evidence the Nature of the Case will admit, in order to exercise a Christian Judgment of Charity, that the Candidate is truly gracious?" Now, for a Person to appear blameless, as touching the Law, as St. Paul tells us he did before Conversion, or as strict a Legalist as the young Man in the Gospel, who yet lacked the main Thing; will this, or in other Words, will an Appearance of outward Holiness of Life, sufficient for a King of mere negative Charity, afford all the Evidence for the Exercise of a Christian Judgment of Charity, that a Person savingly knows the LORD, that the Nature of the Case will admit? If it will, nothing farther must be sought. But if the Nature of the Case will admit, that a Profession of the Essentials of Christian Piety, or an honest Declaration of experimental Religion, as affording some Degree of Evidence, for the Exercise of a Christian

Judgment of Charity, that a Person saving|ly knows the LORD; then, in the present Case, such Pro|fession, or experimental Religion, must be sought. Now whether experimental Religion has in it, ordinarily, any Thing of the Nature of Evidence; and is of Use, or use|less, as to a Judgment of Christian Charity towards a Per|son, let all judge who profess to believe there is such a Thing as experimental Religion, and that the Bible in|forms us what it is.

THAT I may be the better understood by my common Reader, I will suppose, that he and I were Present the other Day, at a Session of the Presbytery, when the Can|didates Theodorus and Popularus were examined: We had some previous Knowledge of them both, so as to have an equal negative Charity.—They were asked as to their Aims and Views;—As to what they had experienced of the Power of Divine Truth, convincing, sanctifying and comforting.—As to a Life of Faith, and Devotedness to GOD.—And, 'tis needless to repeat,—we remember Questions and Answers.—To be short, so far as we could judge, (and we could not help forming some Judgment) Theodorus gave an Account of his experimental Religion, and a Life of Holiness, as a Fruit of Faith in CHRIST, well agreeing with the Word of GOD: But Popularus could give no such Scriptural Account of experimental Religion and Holiness, for he had none to give. Now if my Rea|der will acknowledge, that he has more Evidence for a Judgment of Charity, that Theodorus is truly gracious, than he has that Popularus is so, I have gained the Point I have pursued.—'Tis not my Design at present to answer Objections; "What saith the Law and the Tes|timonies?—However, as there is one that is Chief, and is thought by some unanswerable, and as bearing all, that can be said, down before it, it may not be improper here to give it a brief Consideration, The Objection is this, viz. If saving Grace is required in the Gospel, as a necessary Qualification in a Candidate for the Ministry, the LORD CHRIST would have given some certain Rule, whereby Ministers might assuredly know whether they have such Grace, or not; but no such Rule is given, therefore the Gospel does not require such Grace in the Candidate. Now, if there is any Strength in the Objec|tion, it lies in the Truth of his Proposition, viz. That whatever Qualification the Gospel requires in a Candidate, the LORD CHRIST has given some certain Rule, whereby Ministers may know whether he has such a Qualification, or not. If this Proposition is not true, than there is no Force at all in the Argument. But is there a Divine upon the Face of the Earth, that will assert and stand to it, that this Proposition is true? No; not one: For all will own that some internal Qualifications are required, some King of Faith and Sincerity, and all must own they have no certain Rule whereby they can assuredly know the hid|den Things of the Heart: And this is to disown the Pro|position, as to its Truth, and consequently to give up the Objection, or Argument. I suppose all who make the above-mentioned Objection, against what I have asserted, are agreed, to a Man, that the Gospel does re|quire in Candidates for the Ministry, what they call moral Sincerity, moral Seriousness of Spirit, and soundness in the Faith, as necessary Qualifications. I will now suppose, that some one, lax in Principle, and rude in Speech, be|comes and Objector against my Objectors, saying, Gentle|men, you hold a Set of rigid Principles indeed: You assert that the Gospel requires that Candidates for the Holy Ministry, must have these Qualifications, moral Seriousness of Spirit, and Soundness in the Faith: But the LORD CHRIST has given you no certain Rule, by which you can assuredly know that a Candidate has such Quali|fications; therefore the Gospel does not require them. Now, what will my Objectors do? To profess they have such a Rule, they know they cannot; to say that CHRIST has been unfaithful to his Church they dare not; infalli|bility they have not; to give up their Principle they must not, for the Gospel expressly requires these Qualifications: What can they, what must they do! There is but one Thing that can be done consistent with common Sense, and that is to acknowledge, that their grand and beloved Objection, brought against the Truths I assert, has no Force at all in it. Should they imagine any, it lies as much against them, as others: In short the

Argument proves too much, if any Thing, and therefore nothing at all. I am quite sensible that the Things I assert fall heavy upon those Candidates, who are not what they ought to be, and dislike to be told what they should be:—I expect their Displeasure, however, they have my Com|passion, and my Prayers. They no doubt greatly applaud the Conduct of those Ministers who look upon it needless to examine Candidates for the Gospel Ministry, as to their experimental Acquaintance with Religion: Yet I take the Liberty to tell such Candidates, that if ever a Sovereign GOD is pleased to give them sanctifying Grace, and impresses their Hearts with a due Sense of his glorious Attributes, the Holiness of his Law, the Purity of the Gospel, the Weight of Things Eternal, and the immense Worth of Souls, they will then be very far from an Approbation of the Practice of such Ministers, upon the Point of which I speak; (not to say of their experimental Religion also) or I am greatly mistaken.

As to what 〈...〉 said; with respect to the gracious Presence of the LORD with his Ministers, and Co-opera|tion of the Holy Spirit with their Ministrations; whatever some think; yet the Ministers of CARIST well know, that if He withhold his Help, no Part of his Work can be rightly perform'd, if He deny his Blessing, the best Performances are in Vain.

I have no Apology to make for the Length of my Sermon, but the Importance of its Contents; nor for the Length of my Preface, but with Relation thereto; and the Times that are, and are to come.

AND now, oh my Soul! With the Friends of Zion, stretch forth the Arms of intense Desire, and by Faith take Flight, over Darkness, Impurities, Altercations, and Confusions; and salute the Dawnings of that glorious Day of Zion's Light, Purity, Harmony, and Regularity, when the Church of the Living GOD, will approve of nothing short of that Gospel Furniture in Gospel-Ministers, which has been insisted upon.—

MEAN while, my Work is with the LORD, to whom I trust my Motives are approved; I commit it with all Humility to his Blessing, and to the Prayers of my Chris|tian Friends,

S. BUELL.

EAST-HAMPTON, May 10, 1761

N ORDINATION SERMON.

GALATIANS, i. 16.

TO reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen; and immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood.

THE Glorious Immanuel, the Messenger of the Covenant, the everlasting Covenant between the Persons of the holy Trinity, first pro|claimed the eternal Secret of redeeming Coun|sel and Love, unto trembling Man in the Garden: This Revelation the Apostle remarkably termeth the glorious Gospel. Thus it will appear, if consider'd as the unalterable Dispensation of GOD, toward a complete Display of the Perfections of his Nature and Will; and as the grand Mean for bringing about the Glory of the adorable Trinity, and as the only Contrivance for accom|plishing the Salvation of lost Man; and also, that its infinitely important and amiable Truths, will furnish the redeemed, and even all the bright Intelligences above, with sublime Praise and Admiration to all

Eternity. If we seriously consider Things in this Point of View, we shall be apt to conclude, that the Gospel must surely be a "scheme of Doctrines" worthy of devout Meditation, deserving the most cordial Reception; and also, calling for the most solemn Manner of Dispensation; as by Men enrich'd not only with doctrinal and speculative Know|ledge concerning our Lord Christ, and the important Truths of his glorious Gospel, but also truly adorn'd and embellish'd with that Knowledge, which is experi|mental and practical; or in other Words, that Jesus Christ be revealed in, and savingly manifested to them, by the Illumination and Operation of the Holy Spirit.

THE great Apostle of the Gentiles, that excellent and noble Pattern of Ministerial Qualifications and Perfor|mances, was brought up at the Feet of Gamaliel; and not only so, God from Above revealed his Son in him; thereby making up a most accomplishing Mixture of saving divine Knowledge, and solid human Literature. He had an extraordinary Call to preach the Gospel, and was furnished with extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Powers, the proper Credentials of such a Call. Having preach'd the Gospel for a Time to the Jews, and their Proselytes, without receiving Ministerial Ordination; when the appointed Time came, for the Gentiles to be|come "Fellow Heirs with the believing Jews," St. Paul, and Barnabas his Colleague, were made Ministers by Divine Designation, submitting to Gospel Ordination, according to the Direction of the Holy Ghost.* But the Things which at present especially call for our Notice, are, That as a necessary Qualification for preaching the Gospel, the Apostle had Jesus Christ revealed to him, and in him; and that the great and glorious Subject of his Sermons was Jesus Christ; and that he instantly obey'd the Call of GOD, to preach Jesus Christ to the Heathen.

IN discoursing upon the Words, as I hope not un|suitable to the present Occasion, by the Divine Assistance, I shall attempt to shew;

I. What Revelation and Manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, which those ought to have who preach Him to others.

II. Shew what is intended by preaching the Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

III. I shall observe that the Calls of GOD to engage in his Service, are to be obey'd without Delay. And lastly.

I shall make some Application, by Way of Address.

1. THEN, I am to show what Revelation and Mani|festation of our Lord CHRIST that is, which those ought to be the Subjects of, who preach Him to others.

PREACHERS of the Gospel, entrusted with the Holy Ministry, as a necessary Qualification, ought to know the Lord Jesus Christ, not only by objective Light, or the external directive Light of Divine Revelation; but also by an internal, powerful and saving Illumination of the Mind, by the Irradiation and Operation of the Holy Spirit. And so to become possess'd of a Knowledge, that is not produced by the Power of human Reason, or the common Methods of Education or Instruction; and therefore a Knowledge not confin'd to the Head, but seated in the Heart. An affectionate and fiducial Know|ledge; disposing the happy Subject of it to an intire Reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ for Righteousness, Grace, and eternal Life; and to love Him superlatively, as discerning his incomparable Beauty, Glory, and Ex|cellency. A Knowledge that is Soul-humbling, Self-emptying, Soul-transforming, Christ-exalting; and pro|ductive of Hatred to all Sin, and of a sincere, cheerful, solemn Consecration of the whole Man to the Service, Honour, and Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is that Knowledge, which disposed St. Paul to improve all

his Abilities to holy Ends and Purposes; which put him upon subordinating all his natural and acquired, intellectual and moral Accomplishments, unto the Glory of Christ, and the Good of his Church: And according to the Measure of it received, will always have an answerable Effect upon Ministers of the Gospel. This is that Knowledge, which the Apostle in Distinction from the Form of Knowledge, calls the Savour of Knowledge;* and with Respect to which, he accounted all Things but Loss and Damage, as in the View of it's vast Importance, and transcendent Excellence;† and in Comparison with which, he determined to know nothing, even in Corinth itself, the Seat of Learning and Politeness‡. This is that Knowledge by which all the Divine Perfections are beheld, as they shine forth in their united Glories, with a bright and charming Lustre, in the Person, and Mediation of our Lord Christ; and transform the Spectator, in Heart and Life, into his Holy Image.

THUS the Apostle had Jesus Christ revealed in him, and savingly manifested to him, before he preach'd Him to others: And this supernatural, experimental, and practical Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, every Man ought to be possess'd of, that enters upon the Evangelical Ministry.

FOR, unless the Lord Jesus Christ is thus revealed in, and savingly manifested unto a Man, he cannot be qualified for the Gospel Ministry, as the Word of GOD does require; nor in any due Measure answer the Characters and Epithets given to Gospel Ministers, in the sacred Pages. The Word of GOD requires, that Men be Holy who are put into the Holy Ministry;|| and the Holiness required is not merely relative, but real, and enjoined as a necessary Qualification for a Gospel Minister. The Ministers of Christ's Church, have a sacred Rule of Direction given them, that will abide tho' Heaven and Earth pass away; that they put faithful Men into the Ministry:* And 'tis required of Men in the Gospel Ministry, that they be faithful;† and Faithfulness in this Case, includes pure and spiritual Aims and Intentions for GOD; and necessarily implies the saving Knowledge of our Lord Christ, and the Derivation of Divine Grace from him. Amongst the many Characters of the Ministers of the Gospel recorded in Scripture, we repeatedly find this given them, viz, the Man of GOD:‡ This honourable Compellation or Title imports, that a Gospel Minister ought to be a Man greatly conformed in his Nature to the moral Excellencies of GOD, and in a sincere Manner devoted to his Service and Glory: And therefore implies saving Illumination in the Knowledge of our Lord Christ. The Holy Spirit gives the Character of Gospel Ministers, and the Character of Men in a State of unrenewed Nature, as extremely diverse and exceeding opposite, the one to the other. Men in a State of unrenewed Nature, and without the saving Knowledge of Christ, He calls blind, dark, ignorant, ungodly, &c. But ascribes to Gospel Ministers the Titles and Epithets of Watchmen, Stars, Angels, Men of GOD, &c. Now can there possibly be a greater Solecism in Nature, a more absolute Inconsistency in Terms; than to say, a blind Watchman, a Star of Darkness, an ignorant Angel, an ungodly Man of GOD? Men, nor Angels, can't render these discordant, jarring Terms and Characters correspondent and harmonious. If without the saving Knowledge of our Lord Christ, Men can't be qualified for the Gospel Ministry, as the Word of GOD does expressly require; nor answer the Characters the Holy Ghost gives to Gospel Ministers.—The Consequence is plain.—

I proceed, unless Men savingly know the Lord, they can't covenant with Him, after the Manner He requires, at the Time of solemn Separation to the Work of the Holy Ministry, by Prayer, and the Imposition of the Hands of the Presbytery. At this Time, there is a Covenant enter'd into the GOD, call'd the Covenant of Levi;* the Person ordained vows and swears Allegiance to the Lord, that he will be faithful in the Work now devolved upon him, as sincerely consecrated to the Service of GOD. Now, how can a Person thus declare before GOD, Angels, and Men, that he

sincerely gives up himself to GOD, and promise all good Fidelity; when at the same Time he keeps back his Heart, and has not the least Spark of Grace to enable him to be sincere and faithful? Nor does it avail here to suggest, that altho' he has not gracious, yet he has moral Sincerity; for in this Covenant, GOD calls for the Heart, for Uprightness of Heart; and will accept of nothing short thereof. There is not one Word in all the Bible that tolerates us, in substituting moral Sincerity in the Place of gracious; nor that permits us to play the Hypocrite or Parasite with GOD: The Consequence again is plain.

MOREOVER, if Men who know not the Lord savingly, enter upon the Work of the Gospel Ministry; they can | not perform the Duties of the sacred Function after the Manner he requires, nor meet with his Approbation or Acceptance therein. 'Tis often, and truly said, that not Nouns; but Adverbs make good Works; that 'tis not merely doing Bonum a good Thing, but doing that good Thing Bene well, which is what the Apostle calls Well-doing. For a Work to be good, as to the Man | ner of Performance, and circumstantially consider'd; it must be done, not only according to the declared Will of GOD; but also must proceed from the noble Evange | lical Principles of Faith and Love, and be perform'd with an ultimate View to the Glory of GOD: But this never can be, 'till a Person savingly knows the Lord Christ; consequently the Person destitute of Evangelical Obedience, cannot meet with the Acceptance and Ap | probation of the infinite Majesty of all Worlds; and if not his Approbation, then of Consequence disapproved by Him: A Thought infinitely shocking! The Minister who knows not the Lord savingly, will necessarily and unavoidably seek himself, supremely and ultimately. He sets up himself in the Room and Place of GOD; and the grand Idol Self, is prefered to the GOD of Heaven and Earth, and his Glory. He undertook the Ministry under the Power of selfish Views; and let him study, try to pray, and preach; in all he does, the grand Object Self still terminates his Views. He acts the Part of down right Rebellion, against his infinite SOVEREIGN; and, as it were, disputes the Rights of God-Head with Him. Becomes guilty of a sacrilegious Robbing of GOD, and the vilest Idolatry under the Sun; and the Violation of infinite Obligation to his glorious and dread Sovereign. Now, let those who impartially read the ancient Gospel, judge, whether Men thus disapproved of GOD, and such Self-seekers; can be Christ's duly qualified Ministers.

I go on to observe, That the Nature and Reason of the Ministerial Office, and Service, requires that Men engaged therein, should savingly know the Lord. The Laws of God required the Priests under the Law to be holy Persons, in the most strong and vehement Expres | sions, founded on the special Relation they stood in, to God; and the Nature and Reason of their Office, abso | lutely and repeatedly enjoining Holiness upon them.* The Obligation is as express and strong under the Evan | gelical Dispensation. Does it not appear reasonable and fit in the Nature of Things, that they who are call'd to serve the holy GOD, in a high and holy Station; to stand before Him, to minister in holy Things, for high and holy Purposes; should be truly Holy, his hearty Friends and Servants, wishing well to his Cause and Interest in the World? Are not known Enemies in Heart, to the Person and Interest of the Prince, unfit Persons to be entrusted with negotiating the important Affairs of his Kingdom? There is no Man who is not either a true Subject to Christ, or his Enemy. That Man who don't truly know Christ, and submit to him as his King and Lord, by bearing true Faith and Allegiance to him; is the Enemy of Christ, and his Kingdom.

DOES it not appear inconsistent in its own Nature, to beseech others to become reconciled to God; and at the same Time to be irreconciled to God, and an Enemy to the exalted King of Zion? A Preacher going forth to evangelize others; and yet a Stranger to real Gospel Holiness, and incapable of performing any one Act of Duty evangelically? A Preacher of that Word which is

pure and holy, of that Gospel which is glorious in its Light, Life, and Power; himself unholy and impure, in Darkness, legally and spiritually dead? As a Minister, the Servant of Jesus Christ by Legation; and yet seeking himself with a supreme Affection? The Chariot and Horseman of Israel; yet unable to promote the Protection of God's People, by Zeal and fervent Prayer, unskilful in wielding the Sword of the Spirit, by which the Devil is not invulnerable? The Glory of Christ; yet himself in Darkness, and under the black Banner of Wrath Divine? The Salt of the Earth; yet unsavoury? The Light of the World instrumentally; yet never truly illuminated by transforming Beams of Light from the Sun of Righteousness? I say, is there not an incongruity, and an unfitness in these Things, in their own Nature and Relation considered.

AND does it not appear as having a Sort of Impropriety in it, that the Minister who is the Mouth of the People to GOD in Prayer, leading the Devotion of the Assembly, in which, we would charitably hope, there is ordinarily a Number of gracious Souls in a spiritual Frame, breathing forth a Spirit of Adoption; and the whole Assembly greatly needing Blessings for both Worlds, Blessings to be given in Answer to Prayer, "the inwrought Prayer of the righteous Man;" but the Minister himself destitute of a Spirit of true Devotion, assisting Grace, and real Adoption?

HOW many, and how various, are the Temptations, Desertions, Trials, spiritual Conflicts, and Exercises of the People of GOD, in this twilight-State of the Imperfection of Grace, and probation-Season for Eternity? And how much in such Cases they need a spiritual skilful Guide? Unexperienced Ministers will be miserable poor Casuists, in such Cases. And also with Respect to Sinners; if by some Means, any are awaken'd, and solicitous to know how they must be saved; now, now, for a Messenger of the Lord, one of a Thousand, to speak a Word in Season. But the Minister that knows not the Lord savingly; in preaching, and in converse with such poor distressed Souls; will most likely place Duties, in the Room of Christ; and after all the Help he can obtain by Books and Reading, he will be a blind Leader of the Blind; and the Consequence of such Conduct, our Lord has told us.

IF we cast an Eye upon the final Hour of Life, and behold the Sick and Dying, among a People professing the Christian Religion; we shall see them, ordinarily now, very desirous of the Presence and Prayers of a Minister: (peradventure in some Instances before slighted) The very Verge of Time is now come, the eternal Judgment is at the Door, unmeasurable Eternity opens with a growing View; the Exchange of Worlds appears an Affair of great, of solemn, of infinite Weight; the Angel's dread Trumpet sounds, "Time shall be no more;" the immortal Spirit must enter upon the unutterable interminable Joys of Heaven, or be plunged into the intolerable eternal Torments of Hell In this final Hour, some few, a special, little, happy Number; are highly favour'd of the Lord, with copious Measures of divine Light; with the Triumphs of Faith, with the joyous prospect of the substantial, untarnish'd Glories of the Sanctuary of Immortality: Altho' these do not stand in so much Need, yet they rejoice, greatly rejoice, in the Presence, Converse, Prayers, and Praises "of the Man of GOD." Others who hopefully "have the Root of the Matter in them," have the Evidences of their gracious Sincerity much clouded over.—Some are terribly harrassed with Temptations—Others are under the Power of Self-Flattery, and a vain Confidence; and need to have their Foundations shaken.—Some are awfully secure, and need an alarming Word.—Others are full of Anxiety, as perceiving themselves tottering, not only upon the Verge of Life, but on the very Brink of Hell: Alas for them! What a dying Paleness invades their Cheeks? What Agonies of Fear rend the Heart? What tumultuous Throbbings seize the Breast? Millions, Millions of Gold, were too cheap a Purchase for Health to be restored, for the Day of Grace to be prolong'd: The Voice of pardoning Mercy, would now sound in sweeter

Accents than the Musick of the Seraphic Choir; the Weight of Worlds eternal, is suspended upon the Event of one momentous decisive Hour. Now, altho' all real Sanctification, and Preparation for eternal Glory, depends upon the holy Spirit's Agency; yet as Means are the Appointment of Heaven, without an undue Dependence upon them; the Presence, spiritual Conversation, Counsel, and Prayers of "the Man of God," at such Times, and in such Cases, must surely be of no small Importance, and ought to be much desired and prized. And O! how sad the Calamity, when the Minister is unfit to deal with Persons understandingly in Soul-Cases, especially at such a Time; as whatever Attempt he may make, is not able to offer up one Petition to GOD, in a right Manner for them; having no special Interest in the Redeemer, nor Access to the Throne of Grace. In short, the more closely we view the Nature and Reason of Ministerial Office and Service, and the various Duties of the sacred Function; the more evident it will appear, that Men who enter upon the holy Ministry, ought to be Men who have a saving Knowledge of the Lord; and an experimental Acquaintance, with the Power and purifying Influence of divine Truth upon their Hearts.

LASTLY here, those, and only those, who savingly know the Lord Christ; have Warrant to expect his gracious spiritual Presence with them in their Work. As Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, we can neither look for Assistance in our Work, nor Success unto it; but from the promised Presence, and special Influence of the holy Spirit alone. The Gospel is call'd "the Ministry of the Spirit,"* as it is that Ministry which the Spirit makes effectual unto all the Ends of it; or because 'tis that Ministry whereby the Spirit, in his Gifts and Graces is communicated unto Men. The Kingdom of our Lord Christ is spiritual, and the animating Principles of it invisible. If we fix our Minds only on outward Order, we lose the Rise and Power of the whole; 'tis not an outward "visible Ordination by Men," tho' that is necessary by Rule and Precept, but Christ's Communion of the Spirit according to Promise; that gives Being, Life, Usefulness, and Success to the Gospel Ministry. 'Tis only those Ministers who savingly know the Lord, that have any just Ground to hope for his Presence with them, and his Blessing upon their Labours: To them He hath said,—"And lo, I am with you to the Consummation of all Things." Lo, I am with you, to qualify, protect, assist, and succeed you, by the Aids and Influences of the Holy Spirit. 'Tis a Point of Truth that may be evidenc'd, as Mr. Fleming observes, That now under the

New Testament, there are Ministers of the Spirit, and not of the dead Letter and empty Sound. That with the Word there goes a Ministration and Life. It is very discernable, what a great Difference, and another Appearance, there is both on Ministers and Christians at one Time, from what they are at another, in the Discharge of Duty, as if these were not the same Persons; which appeareth not only in the Enlargement, and straitning of their Gifts, but also in Power and Life. Is it not seen, with what Liberty these do sometimes pray, and are as a Ship with a full Gale before the Wind? That 'tis then easy to preach.

—When Ministers have the Grace of GOD in them, and the special Presence of the Spirit of GOD with them, they are wont to preach so as they could not if left to themselves, destitute of Divine Influence and Assistance. We pretend not thereby to immediate Revelations and Inspirations of new Truths, no; there is an exact Agreement between the Works of the Spirit, and the Word of GOD; and therefore all Impulses, Revelations, or pretended Operations of the Spirit, which are contrary to, or have no Foundation in the Scriptures; are to be rejected as enthusiastic Fancies, or satanical Delusions. But we suppose, that the holy Spirit "takes of the Things of Christ, and shews them unto us;" illuminates our Minds, and helps us to discern the moral Beauty and Amiability of Things Divine; draws forth our Graces into lively Exercise while we are preaching; increases our Views of the infinite Importance, as well as surpassing Excellence of

Divine Truth; and thereby enlarges our Hearts, and helps us to speak with Power and Freedom, concerning the Things of GOD. And I see not why, we may not freely own, that the holy Spirit frequently helps us, in the Time of preaching, to seasonable Thoughts, which upon a quick and due Scanning, we perceive to be important Truth, and pertinent to present Purpose; and hereby we enlarge upon some Branch of our Discourse, and urge some Points home upon the Consciences of our Hearers, beyond what we thought of in the Time of Composition; and so as to exceed what we have done at some other Times, when under the best Advantages by preparatory Thought. But this is not the Point I mean to pursue at present. That which we insist upon to our present Purpose, is, That the assisting Influence of the holy Spirit in preaching the Gospel, is a Blessing of great Importance; and that ordinarily the Lord works by, and improves those Men, as Instruments for the Conversion of Sinners, and the progressive Sanctification and Consolation of his People; whom He hath qualified and fitted for his Service, by conferring upon them, both the Gifts and Graces of his Spirit: And thereupon granting them present divine Influences, and crowning their Labours with his efficacious Blessing. Of this we are firmly assured, from the Word of GOD; and as accessory Evidence, from Church History; and some Degree of Observation. At the same Time, we do not imagine, that the Efficacy of the Word dispensed, depends upon the Worthiness and Holiness, or Good-will and Intention of him that speaks, no; the Lord is an infinite Sovereign, He hath not limited himself, tho' He hath us: He may bless Truth by whomsoever spoken; and sometimes displays his absolute Sovereignty in this Respect. Nevertheless, we insist upon it, as a Point never to be given up; that Ministers eminently need the Spirit of the Lord with them, and in them; in order to preach, and to perform Ministerial Duties, as they ought, and in a due Manner. By the Aids and Influences of the holy Spirit granted to Gospel Ministers, they are endued with Zeal for God's Glory, the Honour of Christ, and the Salvation of Souls; and are disposed to study and preach such Things as do especially tend to promote those important Purposes; thereby they are prepared to declare the Word of GOD powerfully and faithfully; are saved from the ensnaring Fear of Man, and the superficial downy Touch of Conscience; now they become Boanerges, proclaiming the Terrors of Horeb's fiery Law, in the shocking Accents of Sina's dreadful Thunder; they lift up the Voice like a Trumpet, and will not spare to declare important Truth, whether People will hear or forbear; and Barnabas like, they sound the jubilee Trumpet of the Gospel; proclaiming Liberty to the Captives, and offering the Oil of Joy to the broken-hearted and disconsolate Christian; and hereby they become wise to win Souls to Christ, and to conduct them on their Way to eternal Glory. Now, when the Lord is thus present with his Ministers, and affords them special Assistance; He ordinarily associates the Influences of his Spirit with the Word preached, and makes it powerful to Salvation. But the Preacher that knows not the Lord savingly, can lay no claim to his gracious Presence, by any Word of Promise; nor has he any just Ground to expect a Blessing upon his Labours. The true State of the Case is, the Institution of the Gospel Ministry is eminently the Work of the Holy Ghost; (I mean not exclusive of the Father and the Son, the Works of the Trinity, towards the Creatures, being undivided) 'tis his Work to confer on Men Gifts and Graces, as necessary Furniture for, and to put them into the Ministry,* and to assist and succeed them therein; making them able Ministers of the New-Testament, and thereupon crowning their Labours with glorious Success. Therefore, the Man that has not an experimental Knowledge of the sanctifying Operations of the holy Spirit in and upon his Heart; cannot honestly, and with a well informed Conscience, engage in the Gospel Ministry: If he does, he enters upon this arduous and difficult Work alone; and alas for him, abides in it alone! As he goes on therein without a saving Knowledge of the Lord, he can't prove himself call'd of GOD to preach the Gospel, nor can he in Faith pray for a Blessing upon his Labours, having no Word of Promise for that Purpose, nor any just Ground to expect the Lord's Blessing.—And what ever

shining Appearance he may make in his own Eye, and in the Judgment of some; there is great Deficiency in all his Performances, a main Excellency is wanting. We must hence conclude, that if the gracious Presence of GOD, the assisting Influence of his Spirit, and his Blessing are important and excellent; that such Men, and only such, ought to engage in the Gospel Ministry, who savingly know the Lord: And surely we must believe, that the Divine Influences to sanctify, assist, and bless; are of the last Importance, and highest Excellence. The whole Success of the Ministry in propagating the Gospel in the World, and building up the Church; depends intirely upon the Mission, Presence, Assistance, and Influence of the Holy Spirit. Upon the whole then, if the Preacher who knows not the Lord savingly, is thus left alone, without his Assistance and Blessing;—if the Nature and Reason of Ministerial Office and Service, require that Men who enter upon the holy Ministry, should truly know the Lord;—if they cannot serve GOD aright, nor meet with his Approbation in their Work, unless they thus know Him;—if without such Knowledge of Him, they cannot transact a Covenant with Him, as He requires; if they cannot answer the Title and Characters of a Gospel-Minister, nor be qualified for the Work of the holy Ministry, as the Gospel does expressly require;—we conclude thus, that Men who enter upon the holy Ministry, ought to be Men who have had the Lord Jesus Christ revealed in, and savingly manifested to them.

2. I am to show what is intended by preaching the Lord Christ to the Heathen or Gentiles.

THE great Apostle of the Gentiles, often speaks of it as a mysterious Dispensation of GOD, that our Lord Christ should be preached to them; and he intimates thus much in our Text. Altho' we find that Prophecies and Promises, respecting this grand and marvellous Event, lie thick in the Old-Testament; yet in former Ages it was not so clearly made known to the Jewish Nation: The Time when, the Manner how, and Means by which, were not well understood, 'till now revealed by the Holy Ghost. When GOD gave his Word to Jacob, and his Statutes to Israel, "He dealt not so with any other Nation;" other Nations were left to walk after their own Ways, but to them Himself came down, Angels attending Him, Clouds and Darkness covering the Place, Voices and Flames diffusing the Law and Authority of infinite Majesty. All along from that very Time, when GOD revealed that Promise, which was blooming Gospel; that "the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head," 'till He came, who was the Desire of all Nations; He was narrowing the Interest of Religion, by every new Dispensation of the Covenant, 'till the Gospel came to be preached in the last and best Edition. Every new Dispensation, though it made the Covenant brighter, yet it made the Application of it straiter. The Empire of Christ for many Ages, for Thousands of Years, appear'd only in a narrow Compass, as if He loved not a Diffusion, but a Confinement of his Kingdom and Glory; 'till by his Cross he broke down the Wall of Partition between Jew and Gentile, and broke up the Enclosures of his own making; and as Almighty Lord and Conqueror, arose from the State of the Dead, and thereupon gave Commission, and Orders to his Disciples, his flaming Ministers, on this wise, Go, saith He, and disciple all Nations, preach the Gospel to every Creature. From this Period of divine Mercy and eternal Wonder, according to ancient Prophecies, BEHOLD! "The Wilderness and the solitary Place are glad, the Desert rejoices and blossoms as the Rose! The Gentiles see the Glory of the Lord, and the Excellency of the God of Israel!" But why was GOD so long silent to the Gentiles? And why did He speak out at last? Whence was it, that the Love He used to keep within Bounds, now shone out at large, and became the Glory of the Universe? Even so it seem'd good in his Sight! The Jews train'd up for so many Ages, and by all Kind or Preparations for a Redeemer, reject him; and the Gentiles who were no Way prepared, receive him; He who was the Desire of all Nations, becomes the Contempt of his own.—Without any preparatory Dawn, the Light of the glorious

Gospel is darted among the Gentiles, like a sudden Rush of Light in a cloudy and dark Day. And among those who have the Province of preaching Christ to the Heathen, assign'd them, behold Paul! Who was Saul the Persecutor, apprehended by Grace Divine, when on the Brink of Hell, be-miracled with sovereign Mercy; Christ is revealed in him, and he commences a Preacher of him to the Gentiles! In the View of these, and such like Things, no Marvel that St. Paul so often, and with so much seraphic Praise, speaks of the Preaching of Christ to the Gentiles, as a mysterious Dispensation of GOD: For verily it expresses his Wisdom, his Sovereignty, and universal Goodness; its full of his Glory, it bears his Image, its wondrous in our Eyes; 'tis rather to be admir'd than explain'd, we can neither leave the Subject with Indifference, nor comprehend it with Knowledge.

IN Pursuance of the Method proposed, I would briefly observe, that to preach Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, intends, that we make him the grand Subject of our preaching: That we declare him to be the only Mediator between GOD and Man; and as Mediator, invested with a prophetic, priestly, and kingly Office; and thoroughly furnish'd for his Work of Mediation, as wanting nothing to render him successful therein; that we represent him as sufficient to answer all the Danger our Souls are in, and all the Necessities they labour under, both by Way of Atonement for them, and of Conquest over them; that we proclaim his infinite Willingness, as well as Almighty Power to save; that we assert his Authority over the whole Creation, and especially over the Churches. That we declare, that He of whom we assert these Things, is by Nature GOD; essential and eternal God, possessor of all infinite Perfections; and that as God-Man Mediator, having by his Obedience and Death purchased Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption; He must certainly be a most perfect and complete Redeemer. Thus the Gospel exhibits Christ to our View, in his personal Glories and mediatorial Fulness, and thus He is to be the main Subject of our preaching.

To preach Christ, is to preach the Gospel, and to preach the Gospel, is to preach those Things declar'd in the Gospel; there are those Things which are proper and peculiar to the Gospel, and are its own, and are no where else to be found. Of this Nature are all Things concerning the Love and Will of God in Jesus Christ; the Harmony and Glory of the divine Attributes, as most conspicuous in the Person and Mediation of Christ; his Natures, Offices, and whole Mediation; of the Dispensation of the Spirit, and our Participation thereof, and Union with Christ thereby; our Adoption, Justification, and effectual Sanctification thence proceeding. In brief, every Thing that appertains to the Purchase of Redemption, and the effectual Application thereof as by the Holy Spirit. These Things are purely and properly evangelical, peculiar to the Gospel alone. I add also, to preach the Gospel, is to preach the Precepts and moral Duties, with their Sanctions therein declared and enjoin'd, with an evangelical and proper Reference to Christ. The Gospel first proposes and declares the Things which are properly its own, lays them as the Foundation of Faith and Obedience, and inlays them in the Mind, thereby conforms the whole Soul unto them; this Foundation being laid, it then grafts all Duties of moral Obedience on this Stock of Faith in Christ Jesus; directs unto a right Performance of them, from a right Principle, by a right Rule, and to a right End and Purpose; and by a Communication of the Spirit, if supplies with Strength for their Performance, in the Manner it prescribes; and so to their Acceptance with GOD: Hereby the Gospel gives them a new Nature, and turns moral Duties into evangelical Obedience. And this is Christian Morality; a Morality springing from Faith in Christ, and animated by Gospel-Principles and Incentives, governed by Gospel Rules, and directed to Gospel-Ends. These Things are the appropriate Glory of the Gospel: And for a Missionary among the Heathen, thus to preach them, is for him to preach Jesus Christ to them. The Case is just the same, with Respect

to us, who preach to those that are apt to call themselves gospellized; to them we must thus preach the Gospel. We have no just Warrant to look for the Presence of Christ with our Sermons, if Christ be not thus in our Sermons: "The Things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ," the Principles of his Religion, must live upon our Lips, must reign in our Sermons, or it can't be truly said, that we preach Christ; without which, we can't hope for a divine Blessing to attend our preaching. This is the Way to preserve the Christian Religion in its full and evident Distinction, from every false Religion; this is the Way to make Christ crucified appear "the Wisdom and the Power of GOD;" this is the Way to keep Professors sound in the Faith, and to make them obedient to the Faith; and this is the Way to advance the Kingdom of GOD, and to promote the true Knowledge of GOD, and of Jesus Christ which is Life Eternal.

BY the Way, these Things present to our View, the main Difference between legal and evangelical Preaching. Men who have no true Knowledge of Christ, and his Gospel, in its Spirituallity; yet have some Notion about moral Duties, which have their Foundation in the Law and Light of Nature. These moral Duties taught in the Gospel, the legal Preacher pretends to embrace, as esteeming them full as good, or rather better, than Seneca's Morals; and having his Mind principally fix'd upon them, he makes them the reigning Topicks of his Discourse. He professes indeed to admit the Gospel Scheme of Doctrines, and resolves to appear a warm Advocate for it's enjoin'd Duties; he thereupon cries up moral Duties, but alas, not in their proper Place, nor to their proper End! These he makes the Foundation, according to the Place they held in the Law of Nature, and the Covenant of Works; whereas the Gospel allows them to be only necessary Superstructions on the Foun|dation. And by advancing Morality above the Mystery, and Grace of the Gospel, thereby the Gospel is rejected; and strictly speaking, Morality is destroyed also; for take it from its proper Foundation, and it falls of Con|sequence. Such a Preacher, will sometimes have a cold and casual Hint relating to the Merits and Grace of Christ; but is evidently so defective therein, that he can|not justly escape the Compellation Arminian, or legal Preacher; tho' he may for the present, the more odious Epithet, Infidel. The evangelical Preacher dwells much upon those very glorious Topicks, which are Matters of pure Revelation: He is indeed fully assured, that the Scripture Doctrine of Salvation, by free and sovereign Grace, is a Doctrine according to Godliness; he urges, he warmly urges, the Performance of all Duties enjoin'd in the Gospel, and this in their proper Place, and to their proper End; always taking Care to have a beautiful Intertexture of References to Jesus Christ. And thus to make Jesus Christ the Sum and Substance, or subject Matter of our preaching, either directly or reductively, is that which is intended by preaching of Him to Jew or Gentile.

I might also observe, that to preach Christ to the Gen|tiles, intends that we make Him the End and Design of our preaching: That herein, we do not principally pro|pose our own Honour and temporal Interest, but that we have in View the Honour and Glory of Christ, as our ultimate End; "Preaching not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."—But the Time would fail to enlarge here.

3. To observe, that the Calls of GOD to engage in his Service, are to be obeyed without Delay.

"IMMEDIATELY, says the Apostle, I confer'd not with Flesh and Blood:" The Apostle had an extraordi|nary Call to preach the Gospel to the Heathen, and Evi|dence thereof, by extraordinary Gifts, which we look not for at this Day. But it holds as a general Rule, that the Calls of GOD should be instantly obeyed; and that, because of the infinite Wisdom of GOD;—the supreme Authority of GOD;—and the infinite Reasonableness of his Calls.—Omitting Enlargement here.

THE Question will occur, how shall the qualified Preacher obtain Evidence and Satisfaction, that he is call'd of GOD in a mediate Way, to enter soon upon a Mission among the Heathen? As preliminary to the Solution of this Question, it may be observed, that preaching the Gospel to the Heathen, seems to be a Sort of moral Duty, and a Work of Benevolence, compris'd under that general Precept of doing Good unto All; and a Work, in some Respects, much to be desir'd, as appears evident from the Apostle's Declaration, "Yea, so have I strove to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another Man's Foundation.* As to a particular Call,—special Circumstances must have their due Weight in the Scale, in order to determine how it preponderates. Ordinarily we refer not the Decision of the Case to a Lot; nor are we to expect an immediate Revelation to make known our Duty; nor to give Way to Impulses, or Impressions made upon the Mind with, or without Scripture; nor to wait for the Furniture of an extraordinary Measure of Gifts; these belong not to a Call in an ordinary Way.

IT may help to lucidate and clear up a Call to engage in a Mission,—if those whose Work and Business it more especially is▪ to promote an Affair of this Kind, and who are proper Judges of meet Qualifications for a Work of this Nature, unitedly and warmly apply to a Man to engage therein;—If a more effectual Door seems to open hereby for a Man's promoting the Redeemer's Kingdom, than he is under Advantage for, by his present Situation; If the present Events of Divine Providence give growing hope, that the Lord is preparing his Way for the Salvation of the Heathen;—If they among whom the Mission is design'd, make the Motion therefor themselves, and promise to give a Missionary a candid Hearing.—And as a Circumstance among others, at the present, not to be omitted; if 'tis highly probable, that the Person engaging in the Mission, will meet with an uncommon welcome Reception among the Heathen, in that He is "their Kinsman after the Flesh." And if in Concurrency with other Things, a Man finds within himself a strong Desire after, and powerful Inclination toward engaging in this Work, 'tis of no small Weight in the present Case; provided He is conscious to himself that in this Undertaking, he has the Glory of GOD, the Honour of Christ, and the spiritual and immortal Interest of Souls chiefly in View; and is thereby able to surmount Objections, Difficulties and Discouragements, that may seem to be cast in the Way; and finds that Desire and Inclination, is not accompanied with an unaccountable Violence, but with a calm Submission to the Will of GOD, as made known; and is answerable to the outward Rules of the divine Word, and concurring Circumstances of that Providence which ruleth over all: I say, these and such like Things, may in a Measure conduce to afford Evidence and Satisfaction to a Man, that he is call'd of GOD to preach the Gospel to the Heathen. And that as soon as may be with Convenience, he ought to be on his Way, to spread the joyful Tidings, and good News of Salvation among them.

The Application of my Discourse remains;

AND here, would the Time admit, many useful Inferences might be drawn from the preceding Topicks of this Discourse; but having already been so prolix, I must make, and pursue such Inferences no otherwise than they will naturally fall in, under the several Addresses, which I shall now proceed to make, and with which, I shall conclude the Discourse.

IN the first Place, permit me, therefore, with all Humility, to address myself to those of the sacred Order here present.

My reverend Fathers, and dear Brethren!

I need not inform you, nor this Assembly, that the reverend Person we expected to stand here, in the Province of a Preacher, to perform the present Service, has by some Means failed us. "You have thereupon de|volv'd preaching Service, upon a Person younger, and much more unworthy; and who hopes you will permit him to use great Plainness and Freedom of Speech.

I am well assured that your Candour and good Sense, will not allow you to imagine, that by what I have said in the preceding Discourse, I suppose every one that savingly knows the Lord, is thereby fitted for the Work of the holy Ministry, and that human Learning is an unnecessary Endowment in the Gospel Minister; and that regular Induction, according to the standing Order of the Gospel, is not to be observed; no, thus you do not receive what I have said: Nor that I Countenance Separations from Ministers, merely upon Suspicion of their Want of the saving Knowledge of the Lord. If a Minister of the Gospel is guilty of moral Scandal, or unsound in Point of Doctrine; or but more rarely preaches upon the more important Doctrines of the Gospel, and when he does, gives them but a superficial Handling; or is some how notoriously deficient in his Work▪ in such Cases, I will not deny, but People have Liberty to seek a Redress of Grievance, according to the Method the Gospel prescribes.—Nor will you sup|pose, that I mean to insinuate, that the Want of the saving Knowledge of the Lord in a Minister, absolutely invalidates his Administrations, and renders them un|lawful, and ipso facto void; no, a Man being consti|tuted a Minister of the Gospel, according to the known and standing Laws of Christ's visible Kingdom, found in his Word, and thus invested with Office Power, according to Gospel Order; he has lawful Right and Authority to perform all Parts of the Ministerial Work. But then, may I not here apply that Maxim, in use both by Civilians and Divines? "Quod factum fieri non debet, factum valet;" at least so far avails, that there is Validity in Ordinances administer'd by such a Man; tho' it might have been well, if such a Man had not been permitted to enter into the holy Ministry; for an unconverted Ministry is one of the greatest Calamities.

HAVING thus presumed upon your Candour and Judgment, I am apt to imagine you have gone before me, in drawing this native Inference, from what has now been said, viz. That it greatly concerns us, to use utmost Care and Caution in putting Men into the Mini|stry, lest we commit the holy Ministry to such Men as known not the Lord savingly. Our blessed Lord and Master has charged us, not only to "lay Hands sud|denly on no Man," but also "to commit the Ministry to faithful Men." I am well assured, that we are una|nimous in this Opinion, that Men ought savingly to know the Lord, who engage in the holy Ministry. We take the Liberty to think for ourselves, as well as others, who are not of the same Opinion: And 'tis at once con|ceded, that we have all the same Liberty of thinking for ourselves, yet no Man has Liberty to think contrary to Truth, be that what it will. As for those who de|clare there is no such Thing as forming any Judgment about Men, whether they are truly gracious, or not; and think it needless to make any Inquiry after a Can|didate's Acquaintance with experimental Religion; as supposing, that if he has a competent Measure of Lite|rature, and is not grossly ignorant, or scandalously pro|fane, he is fit to be put into the sacred Ministry; upon their Principles, whole Clusters, of light, airy, graceless young Men; who are far from a savoury Relish of the Things of GOD, and a serious, solemn Sense of Things Eternal; may be introduced into the holy Ministry: Is not this to throw down the sacred Enclosure our Lord hath set about his Vineyard, and to Act the Part of Opposition, to that solemn Prohibition, "Lay Hands suddenly on no Man?" Some there are who in Terms profess, that Candidates for the Gospel Ministry, ought to be godly or gracious Persons; and yet, when they explain their Profession, we find it does not amount to holding, that a Candidate ought to be gracious, or a real Convert, in order to give him Right to undertake the

Work of the Gospel Ministry. Their Meaning seems to be this, that they ought to be truly gracious; for so ought all that hear, as well as all that preach the Gospel; adding thus much, that renewing and sanctifying Grace, is a very useful Qualification in the Candidate; but then tis not their Opinion, that it must be insisted upon as such a necessary Qualification, as that the Want of it shall be preventive of engaging in the holy Ministry. They plead Necessity, in Justification of Principle; that there are a great many vacant Churches and Congregations, and perhaps more in Number, than there are truly godly young Men to afford a Supply; that that which is wanting can't be number'd, that they must take up with such as they can get. —I would at present only observe here, that whatsoever the Circumstances of Christ's Church are, Men whom we set apart to the Work of the holy Ministry, should be such as his Gospel does require them to be. The Question in Debate, in plain Terms, is this, viz. Does the Word of GOD so require sanctifying Grace, in a Candidate for the holy Ministry, as that being destitute thereof, he has not a solid Right of Foundation to engage therein? Now, if a Person who has not sanctifying Grace, or a saving Knowledge of the Lord, cannot lawfully undertake the Work of the Gospel Ministry, as I have endeavour'd to prove from the Word of GOD, and the Reason of Things; then Ministers of the Gospel ought not to separate a Person to the Work of the holy Ministry, without having Evidence sufficient to found a Judgment of Christian Charity upon, that a Person does thus know the Lord: For Faithfulness to our Lord and Master, will not suffer us to commit the holy Ministry to a Person that we do not judge qualified therefor, as his Gospel does require: Therefore, in putting Men into the Ministry, we must seek all the Evidence that the Nature of the Case will reasonably admit, that Men savingly know the Lord, and cautiously avoid taking up with any Thing short of this.

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

YOU will allow me to speak out our Opinion freely. In them whom we introduce into the Ministry, we look for and expect to find, a Competency of natural Endowments, acquir'd Improvements, Orthodoxy, or Soundness in the Faith, visible Holiness of Life, as 'tis commonly call'd, and that they give us some Account of their Acquaintance with experimental Religion, such as shall appear to us sufficient for the Exercise of a rational Judgment of Christian Charity, that they savingly know the Lord. We pretend not to immediate Revelation from Heaven, and Infallibility of Knowledge in this Case, no; but we seek such Evidence, as the Nature of the Case will admit, and as Faithfulness does require. We are to form a Judgment of the spiritual State of our Fellow-Men, in the Case before us, by what they profess with the Mouth, and the Influence such a Profession has upon the Life. Men without an Intention to deceive, may impose upon themselves, and upon us; yet this is no Argument against an Examination as to these Things; yea, tis an Argument that we should be the more strict upon the Point of Examination. If we consider Faith as appearing in the Profession of it, we find the Apostle accounting the Influences of the holy Spirit, necessary to enable a Man to make such a Profession of the Faith, as was to be admitted by Christians: "No Man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." A Man may so explain himself about his Faith, and give such an Account of his experimental Religion, and his Faith may have such Influence upon his Conduct in Life, as to leave no reasonable Ground to suspect but that he savingly knows the Lord. For a Man to appear free from those Sins, commonly called openly scandalous, and to have a Life so harmless as to afford a Kind of meer negative Charity, is not enough in the present Case: We therefore seek a Profession of Faith, expressive of the Essentials of real Piety, or that the Candidate give a rational, scriptural, and satisfying Account of a sanctifying Work of God's Spirit upon his own Heart; and that his Belief, and Experience of the Power of Divine Truth, influences him to live the Truth, so that his Light

shines before Men: These Things are included in the Nature of Evidence, in the present Case, and therefore Ministers have full Authority, and just Right to demand them, and are bound in Faithfulness so to do; and of Consequence the Candidate is obliged to exhibit such Evidence, if 'tis in his Power honestly so to do. Until we have sought and found such Evidence, as now mentioned, we have not satisfying Evidence that a Man is qualified for the Gospel Ministry, nor dare we separate him thereto. Let us then hear what the Candidate has to say for himself, as clearing up his Call to enter upon the Work of the Holy Ministry? What his Views and Aims are? What his Faith, and experimental Acquaintance with Divine Truth, or Religion: With Tenderness and Candour, we would gladly hear him upon these Points; and seek Satisfaction, as to the Influence of his Faith upon his Conduct in Life.

'TIS verily to be fear'd, that many Candidates for the Gospel Ministry, were they to be duly and properly examined as to Qualifications therefor, such as the Gospel doth require, would be found evidently deficient.

BUT we desire to bless the Lord, we sometimes find a hopeful Measure of all Gospel Qualifications, in the Candidate under Examination; and thereupon, when called, with unutterable solemn Pleasure, proceed to separate him to the Work of the evangelical Ministry, according to Gospel Order. Sometimes the Candidate appears possess'd of a Measure of all necessary Qualifications, but 'tis dubious whether in a Degree equal to what ought to be judged sufficient;—sometimes there may appear great Deficiency as to some one Qualification, ex.▪ gr. aptness to teach;—sometimes we are greatly exercised, as in Doubt, about the Reality of the Candidate's experimental Religion: It may be, he has more Confidence than Evidence, or honestly tells us, that he has near upon an equal Measure of Fears and Hopes, as to his saving Knowledge of the Lord▪ and upon due Examination of him, with Respect thereto, 'tis much so with us, so that our judgment of Charity, seems in a Measure suspended. We are full of Tenderness toward hopeful Youth, are unwilling to damp any agreeable Appearances, and to prevent Usefulness; at the same Time, fear to run before the Call of Providence, tremble at the Thought of giving the Ark a wrong touch; and upon the Whole, are ready to say, we know not what to do! To which permit me to reply, That when we know not what to do, we must not do we know not what. In the present Case, our Hopes must exceed our Fears, or we can't proceed to promote the Candidate, with a good Conscience. He who supposes his Judgment in equilibrio, is in the Quality of a non Liquet, and nothing can be done by him actively: And should this be the Case with the greater Part of the Examiners, the Candidate must stand by, 'till he becomes possess'd of brighter Evidence of Divine Grace. And now, where is the seemingly great Difficulty and Perplexity? Does it not abate, or rather vanish? Is not Duty plain before us? Does our Lord require more of us than is reasonable? He neither requires, nor expects that we should be infallible Judges of the spiritual State of Men, but that we exercise a rational, Christian Judgment, according to Light; and that we be faithful to the Trust deposited in us, keeping our Consciences void of Offence toward Him.* Our Lord has devolved upon us, the sacred Trust of putting Men into the holy Ministry, "the same commit thou," thou Timothy, a Minister, a Man in Office: And He has charg'd us, not only "to lay Hands suddenly on no Man;" but also "to commit the Ministry to faithful Men;" and our Fidelity in this Case, is of the highest Importance.

To commit the Ministry to an unconverted, an un|experienc'd Man, is to commit it to a Man that is not likely to answer the important and excellent Designs and Purposes of the Gospel Ministry. A very shocking Thought! He may indeed help to keep up the Form of Religion for a Time; but if Religion should revive and flourish, by the out-pouring of the holy Spirit from on high; partly

through Ignorance and Enmity, and partly from Pride and Envy, (which breed a Hell in the Bosom where they dwell) at the Success of others; (unless he receive Conviction of his awful State) he is quite likely to oppose, not only some Imprudences, common in such a Day, but also the Essentials of the Work of GOD.

HE will probably commit the Ministry to others, like himself; and in Process of Time, now unborn Ages may feel, forever feel, the Weight of that HAND, which we lay upon the Head of the Man that has an unsanctified HEART. And how dangerous the Enterprise for the Man himself! Upon the dreadful Supposition, that he should never be converted, what Tongue can express, what Thoughts conceive the dreadful Aggravations that will attend his eternal Perdition! No Doubt, if Ministers of the Gospel are finally found Christless and Graceless, of all Men living they will be the most miserable. What Horror, Tribulation, and Anguish, will seize upon their guilty Hearts? and what Shame and Confusion will cover their Faces, when the dreadful Judge shall come in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance upon the Disobedient, and the Blood of lost Souls shall cry for Vengeance against them! In a Word, as we Regard the Lord's Honour, the Prosperity of Zion, the Salvation of Men, and Peace of Conscience; let us take Care that we commit the Ministry to faithful Men.

AND let us also be often engaged in an accurate Examination of our Knowledge of the Lord Christ, and seek renew'd Manifestations, and the fullest Assurances thereof. And, oh! how importunate we should be in Prayer, for the gracious Presence of the Lord with us, and for the divine Influences to accompany our Ministrations. Let us labour to see and feel ourselves living in a State of constant Dependence upon the Lord Christ, for the Reception of suitable, seasonable, and sufficient Grace, for all present Needs and Duties. The Purposes we serve are so high and God-like, our Work so important, so spiritual, so difficult, and so much above our Strength; how is it possible to go on in it, without much of the Presence of the Lord with us? Most of the Work allotted us, is with God and Souls; it's about what is mysterious and supernatural; it's of vast Compass and great Variety, and Eternity is concern'd in what we are about; we had need therefore to be fill'd with the Spirit of Grace and Holiness, to have a double Portion of his Gifts and Graces, of his Aid and Influence. Thereupon we shall become wise to win Souls, and hopefully successful; and finally, shine as the Stars yea, as the Sun, in the Kingdom of our GOD and Father, for ever and ever.

'Tis more than Time to turn my Address, Secondly, to him who is now to be consecrated to the immediate Service of Christ, and the Souls of Men.

My dear Brother,

UPON this solemn Occasion, you expected that "Man of GOD" would have spoken to you, who has been as a Father to you from your early Days; and that he does not, you are not more disappointed than I am. But inasmuch as 'tis a Service assigned me, let me drop a few Words to you, by Way of Exhortation and Encouragement, in the Work to which you are now to be consecrated. WE are glad, and rejoice, that this Day the Lord Jesus Christ calls you to bear his Name, plead his Cause, deliver his Message, spread his Fame, and display his Glory among the Gentiles. We charitably hope and believe, it hath pleased GOD to reveal his Son in you; and we trust, not only that you may finally be brought to eternal Glory, but also that you may preach him to the Heathen. We adore the GOD of Nature and Grace, who has confer'd upon you the Gifts and Graces of his Spirit, and a hopeful Measure of Furniture for the Work to which he calls

you. We look upon it a Token for Good, that the Love of Christ, constrains you to compassionate your Kindred after the Flesh, who dwell in Darkness, and the Shadows of Death, so that you are a Volunteer in a Mission among them. You need eminent Degrees of Wisdom, Patience, Self Denial, Courage and Zeal, in the Prosecution of the Work assigned you. Perils, Hardships, Fatigues, Labours and Sufferings, no Doubt, attend your important Embassy. But, my dear Brother, let none of these Things affright you; remember, always remember, who hath call'd you to this Work; and that your Sufficiency is of, and from Him, who is your GOD, and hath said, I am that I am. His infinite Wisdom will be your Guide,—his almighty Power your Shield,—and Himself your exceeding great Reward. Take hold of that precious Promise by Faith; plead it, live upon it for Protection, Light, Support, Strength, Success and Comfort, "Lo, I am with you alway."—Often Refresh your Heart, with a believing Remembrance of the many ample Promises, which have Respect to the magnificent Enlargement, Light, Purity, Glory and Felicity, of the Divine Redeemer's Kingdom, in these last Days. King Jesus shall have the Heathen for an Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession. He shall call a Nation that knew him not; and Nations that knew him not, shall run unto him; his Dominions shall be from Sea to Sea; they that dwell in the Wilderness shall bow before him; his Name shall be great among the Gentiles, to whom he is given for a Light; there shall be one Lord, and his Name one; the Ends of the Earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; all Nations shall flow unto the Mountain of the Lord's House; the Knowledge of the Lord shall fill the Earth, as the Waters do the Sea; and all Flesh shall come to him who heareth Prayer."—You have heard how the GOD of Israel did not choose a Diffusion, but a Confinement of his Name for Thousands of Years; as designing now, under the Gospel Dispensation, amazingly to widen and extend the Knowledge of himself; and to put that Honour upon his Son Jesus Christ, which he eternally design'd to confer upon him, by spreading his Name and Fame the World over. And this Honour, he this Day confers upon you, SIR, of bearing his Name, and proclaiming his Glory, divine and mediatorial, among the Gentiles. You are call'd to assist in bringing in an immense Revenue of Honour and Glory to GOD, Father, Son, and Spirit: And this too, in a Day in which we have Reason to believe from Scripture Prophecy, and the present Aspect of Divine Providence, that the Latter-Day Glory is dawning; a Day also, in which, by the Smiles of Heaven upon our Forces, and the Success of our Armies in America, a joyous Prospect opens to View, far beyond all that ever appear'd before, for evangelizing the Heathen in these Ends of the Earth. At this very Day of growing Wonder and refreshing Hope, the Lord calls you to preach the Gospel to those, who from Time immemorial, have been wandering out of the Way of Salvation, "without Christ, and without GOD in the World." With Regard to the Mission before you, you may say unto GOD, with Humility and adoring Thankfulness, as Samuel said, in another Case, "Here I am, for thou dost call me." Methinks there is now a Voice utter'd by the adorable Trinity, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"* And how should your Heart echo back, "Here I am, send me!" Has Jesus Christ been reveal'd in and to you? And does the Lord now call you to preach the Gospel to the Heathen? Surely you will not confer with Difficulties and Dangers, or carnal Interest; but seek to be on your Way to the Heathen Nations as soon as may be, to let them hear of your Lord and Saviour. While you feel the Love of our dear Immanuel glow in your Breast, how, oh, how! your Heart akes and bleeds within you, for your poor benighted Kinsmen after the Flesh, that are perishing for Lack of Vision! How long? How much? And how often it has done so? I give you Joy, my dear Brother, for the Door of Hope for their Salvation, opens to View with a promising Appearance. At one and the same Time, Opportunity presents for you to vent your Love to the divine Jesus, and your Compassion to the perishing Souls of your Nation.

NOW then, our dear Brother, go, go; and may the Lord go with you, and now send Prosperity! Go in the Spirit of an Apostle, go do the Work of an Evangelist; Go lift up your Voice in the Huts of Savages, and cry aloud to the People that dwell in the gloomy Shades of Death! And let them "hear the joyful Sound." Go tell them of Jesus, tell them who the Saviour is; tell them, "He is GOD over all, blessed forever more;" tell them of his divine and mediatorial Glory, alluring Fulness, and perfect Excellence; tell them he is the only Mediator and Saviour, and that he is both able and willing to save them; tell them King Jesus Reigns, God's own almighty Son, and they who dwell in the Wilderness must bow before him, submit to him, believe in him, love, worship, and adore him, as Lord of All. And whether they will hear or forbear, know thou, our dear Brother, your Judgment will be with the Lord, and your Reward with your GOD; glorious in full Pro|portion to your Diligence and Fidelity.

In the Third Place, as I observe at present, a Number of Candidates for the Gospel Ministry, I take the Liberty of making an Address to them.

My young Friends,

I always feel great Tenderness toward hopeful Youth, who have serious Thoughts toward engaging in the Gospel Ministry; especially toward you, who have most of you, for a Time, sojourned under my Roof, principally pursuing Theological Studies. Suffer me therefore to address you by Way of Exhortation, to see to it that you know the Lord JESUS savingly. Presume not to rest in the charitable Opinion of others, as your Evi|dence, that you savingly know the Lord: You may have the Sanction of the charitable Hope and Judgment of Presbyteries, or Associations, and yet be eternally rejected by the Lord. The eternal Judge, "whose Eyes are as a Flame of Fire," and whose Prerogative alone it is to search the Heart; will one Day say to many, to Multitudes, that have prophesied, that have preached in his Name, I approve you not, depart from me.—If they who have preach'd in his Name, may perish in his Wrath, how greatly it concerns them that preach, to have satisfactory Evidence, by the Actings of Grace, that they truly know the Lord! To some, it may possibly seem a very bold Assertion, but I declare it in plain Terms, that no Man can ever prove to himself, that he was call'd of GOD, to engage in the holy Ministry, who has never been effectually call'd by divine Grace, so as to know the Lord savingly. And unless you thus know the Lord, with what Heart, with what Confidence, can you enter upon the sacred Ministry? If you should run the Risk, the awful Risk▪ void of such Knowledge, what Comfort can you take therein? Or what of Success can you expect thereupon? Without Controversy, it will one Day be a Soul puzzling, Soul confounding Question to many, "Man, who made you a Minister?" Who gave the Commission to treat for Christ? And to whom, but them, who preach an unknown Christ, and and who run before they were sent, as regardless of Gospel Order? I beseech you therefore, my young Friends, that in the first Place you be well satisfied that you savingly know the Lord. Ply, warmly ply the Throne of Grace, that you may become rich in Experience of divine Grace, and that you may enjoy copious Measures of divine Influence. Go on indeed to seek all useful and suitable Furniture for the great Work you have in View, and never imagine you have come to a ne plus ultra. Amidst other Parts of useful Learning, study Oratory, and artful Method of Address; but rest not here. If you had all Knowledge, and understood all Mysteries, and could use all the Force of Persuasion, and Charms of Eloquence; were you furnish'd with all the flowing Oratory of Cicero, and all the Thunder of Demosthenes; and could you employ them in every Sermon you preach; yet, without the gracious Presence of the Lord with you, you would in Reality be but as the sounding Brass and tinkling Cymbal, that makes an empty Noise and useless Musick. I pray GOD, that the Day in which we live, may not be

a Day in which the true Spirit of preaching becomes lost, for want of due Regard to the Influences of the holy Spirit. While the Study and Use of fine Language and Oratory are so much in Vogue among Preachers, and so pleasing to many Hearers, as at this Day, and tend so much to recommend the Preacher, and to promote his Reputation, the Temptation, to the young Preacher especially, is prodigiously powerful to substitute these Things in the Room of the Divine Presence and Assistance, and to rest in them. But alas, for us that preach! alas for them that hear, when it shall become thus! In the Eye of a judicious spiritual Hearer, can it look like preaching the everlasting Gospel, and having to do with the eternal GOD, and immortal Souls, for Time and endless Worlds, to make the Pulpit a meer Stage, and just to flourish out a pretty pert Harangue, top'd up with one or two general jejune Inferences? How much soever this may please the vitiated Taste and Humours of some, the two distant Poles are not more remote from each other, than such Manner of Pulpit Work from a genuine Aptitude and Tendency to pierce the Heart, to awaken the Conscience, and to do good to the Souls of Men. 'Tis true indeed, Men have their various Gifts, Talents, and Turns of Mind; 'tis natural to some Men to communicate their Thoughts in a correct, masculine, nervous, striking and charming Stile and Diction; as truly natural, it appears beautiful. Some such there are, who from the spiritual Frame of their Hearts, are zealous, lively and practical Preachers, and excel in making the most warm Applications and earnest Addresses to the Hearts and Consciences of them that hear. Their Delivery and Gestures are natural, grave and decent, Action is lively and significant, void of Affectation; their Sermons are evidently calculated, not to gratify Men's Curiosity with pleasing Speculations, but to pierce their Hearts with pungent Convictions; not to please their Fancies, but to awaken their Consciences, and to convert and save their Souls. They appear as Men who have been with GOD in private, and thereupon speak by his special Assistance in publick; these are doubtless justly celebrated Preachers of the Gospel. If we would act the Orator, the Minister, or the Christian, we must endeavour to know and to cultivate the peculiar Turn of our own Mind, and not indulge a vain Affectation, nor Attempt a forced Imitation of any Man. It will appear unnatural and disagreeable to a judicious Hearer, when it becomes too evident, that the Preacher who has not a natural spontaneous flow of ready and elegant Expressions, has labour'd hard to polish his little Composition, by the constant Glitter of shining Phrases, by arranging his Words, beautifying his Language, rounding his Periods, so as really to stiffen his Discourse: When by minding little Things over much, he has betray'd the Want of a Heart deeply aw'd and impress'd with a Sense of what he is about, and the Want of a due Regard to divine Influences, and a pointed Form of Address, such as is generally to be found in the Sermons which our Lord Christ preached. While loose and general Harangues are now grown so fashionable in Pulpits, that the true Spirit of evangelical Preaching may not be lost, let young Preachers learn true Oratory from Jesus Christ, and seek copious Measures of his gracious, spiritual Presence with them. That Preacher has hit upon the true Master-Key of sacred Eloquence, and obtain'd the best Part of a Pulpit Orator, who is Master of a good Discourse, and is skilful in applying of it, in its full Weight home upon the Consciences of Men, who knows how to lay open the human Heart, and trace it's Windings, it's Disguises and Corruptions, and how to draw Voice and Passion from the Heart, so that everyone shall hear, see, and recognize himself, and stand acquitted or condemn'd in his own Breast, according as he deserves one or the other: But no Man is like to do this to Purpose, unless the Lord is with him, and speaks by him. Labour and Art may make a Man an elegant and correct Speaker, so as to be much admir'd by himself, and by those who seek nothing farther; but I will be bold to say, that no Man can become a real powerful Christian Orator, unless the Lord is with him, impresses divine Truth upon his Heart, and helps him in some good Measure to preach as he ought, "even in Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power." I beseech you, Sirs, labour to be Master of the Subject you handle, to be full of it, to be thoroughly enlighten'd and

warm'd with it, to feel every Sentiment you deliver, and every Passion you mean to inspire. Remember the Pulpit is a Place in which Men ordinarily affect to shine, in Brightness of Sentiment, Fineness of Composition, and a Gracefulness of Elocution; and if the Preacher does but think, (and 'tis a Wonder if he don't) that he has obtain'd the Reputation of a fine Speaker, great is the Force of Temptation, to bring him under the Power of Pride and Self-Admiration. And that he may now despise the Smiles, as well as Frowns of the People, and by Humility be kept safe, as not forming big Ideas of his own Importance, and his own Performance; and that he may have a Mind xalted in all Respects above this World, and above itself how much he needs a Combination of grand and solemn Views of divine Objects, and Things Eternal, by the gracious Presence of the Lord with him? The Lord being thus with you, you will sink into Nothing; feel less than an Atom, as struck with the Majesty of his Perfections, and transported with the Wonders of his Love: Now you will see the Beauty, Glory, and Excellence, now Taste the Sweetness, and feel the Power of divine Grace and Truth upon the Heart; and now you will be filled with Bowels of Compassion and Godlike Pity toward the Souls of Men: And now your Manner of Preaching, will necessarily be instructive, warm, casuistical and pathetic; addressed often to the Consciences, and frequently to the Affections of your Hearers; the most hopeful Method to enlighten and vivify others. After all, ever remember, that the saving Efficacy of all Means, depends upon the Co-operation of the holy Spirit; powerful Paul may plant, and eloquent Apollos water, 'tis God giveth the Increase: Therefore you must be very conversant with Heaven, importunate, incessant at the Throne of Grace, praying the Lord to grant divine Influences to the People, as well as to yourselves: And if he so does, and works by you, ascribe all the Glory to him, to his free and sovereign Grace. In fine, my dear Sirs, be sure that you always give due Honours to the Aids and Influences of the holy Spirit; and thus, 'tis hopeful, you will become powerful and successful Preachers of the Gospel; and thus may the Lord be with you and bless you, and make you Blessings in your Day, and finally Crown you with immortal Glory!

Fourthly and lastly, I turn the Address, in few Words, to the Body of the People.

My Friends,

YOU have heard what for Preachers Men ought to be; and thereby what for a Man you ought to choose, when Occasion calls for your choice, such a Man, who in a Judgment of Charity savingly knows the Lord Jesus Christ: And does it not argue the Worth of your Souls, and the Importance of your Salvation, that Men must be endued with such rich Furniture, in order to preach the Gospel to you. As for those of you, who savingly know the Lord Christ, and thereby have the first Dawning's and Pledges of an immortal Day of Glory, shout forth the Praises of sovereign Grace, and labour to grow in the Knowledge of him, and thereby to increase in Holiness and Blessedness. Ye that are secure in Zion, know ye, that to know the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ, is eternal Life; and that to remain secure and ignorant, is eternal Death. Ye awaken'd Sinners, (for blessed be the Lord there are some such) know ye, that the holy Spirit will strive with you, but for a limited Time; your eternal All depends upon his Influence and Agency, therefore grieve him not. You appear solicitous to know what you must do to be saved, know ye, that you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, so shall ye be saved.—In a Word, to conclude, may we All, Ministers, and People, old and young, high and low, rich and poor, Negroes and Indians together, One and All; account all Things but Loss and Damage, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and thus become truly blessed now, and be inconceivably blessed, through the unmeasurable Revolutions of Eternity; which GOD of his infinite Mercy grant! For the divine Mediator's Sake. AMEN, and AMEN.

FINIS.