

4487 Dec 2  
1-16



Mr. *Mac Gregore's*

S E R M O N

At the O R D I N A T I O N

O F

Mr. *Alexander Boyd.*





*The Christian Soldier.*

---

A  
S E R M O N

Preached at *Newbury,*

A T T H E

ORDINATION of the Reverend.

Mr. *Alexander Boyd* ;

To the Pastoral Office at *New-Castle*, in the  
Province of the MASSACHUSETTS-BAY,  
*September 24th, 1754.*

---

By the Reverend  
Mr. DAVID MACGREGORE,  
Of *Londonderry.* *k*

---

Rev. ii. 10. *Fear none of these Things which thou shalt suffer.*

2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith.----Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day: And not to me only, but unto them also that love his appearing.*

---

B O S T O N :

Printed by B. EDES and J. GILL, at the New-Printing-Office  
in *King-Street*, for S. KNEELAND in *Queen-Street.* 1755.

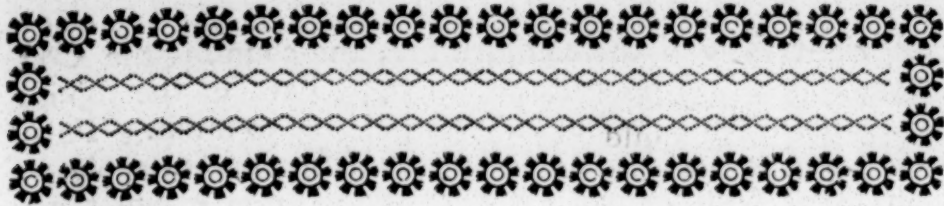




1753  
ad

BRITISH MUSEUM  
1753





A N

*Ordination* S E R M O N.



2 TIM. ii. 3.

*Thou therefore endure Hardness, as a good  
Soldier of JESUS CHRIST.*

✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ CONSIDERING the vast Importance of the  
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ Ministerial Office, and what are like to be the  
✱ ✱ C ✱ ✱ happy or unhappy Consequences of a faithful  
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ or unfaithful Discharge of it; there is great  
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ Need that every Argument be used, that  
✱ ✱ ✱ ✱ may most powerfully excite to Ministerial  
Faithfulness.

And, as on the one Hand, a just View of the glorious Reward, consequent upon a right Discharge of the Duties of that important Office, will, (its likely) prove an animating Motive to Ministerial Faithfulness; So on the other, to consider aright the many and great Difficulties which attend the faithful Exercise of this Office, may have the like Tendency.

Such a View seasonably taken at the Entry of the sacred Office, may prevent Ministers from repenting of their Undertaking, or from looking back after having put their Hands to the Plough.

A

A right View of these Difficulties, and counting the Cost before Hand, may prevent the unhappy Fate of the foolish Man, who began to build, but was not able to finish. This, by the divine Blessing, may quicken Ministers to apply to their Work with Vigour and Resolution; may excite them to put on the whole Armour of God, and to take all due Care to be well equiped for the important Service they are to be engaged in. With a View therefore to promote these good Effects, I propose by divine Help, to introduce the present Solemnity, by saying somewhat of the Difficulties that attend the faithful Discharge of the Gospel-Ministry; and to that End, have chosen the Words now read, as the Subject of Discourse, where the Apostle says, *Thou therefore endure Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.*

This Text and Context, contain an Address of the Apostle Paul, to the Evangelist Timothy; in which, he gives him a Number and Variety of necessary and seasonable Directions, with Respect to his fulfilling the several Parts of his important Office; particularly the first Verse, he applies to him in these Words, *Thou therefore my Son, be strong in the Grace which is in Christ Jesus. Be strong*: i. e. be stout and courageous, fear not any Enemy, or Opposition thou mayst meet with in the faithful Execution of thine Office. *In the Grace which is in Christ Jesus*; q. d. don't depend upon thy own Strength, or natural Courage; but place thy whole Confidence in the gracious Influence and Spirit of Christ Jesus. Remember that it is in him that thou hast both Righteousness and Strength; that all thy Springs are in this blessed Head of Influence; and that without Him thou canst do nothing. Then in the second Verse, he gives the Evangelist Direction concerning the important Work of setting apart fit Persons to the Office of the Gospel-Ministry. *The Things that thou hast heard of me before many Witnesses*; i. e. The Doctrines of the Gospel, and the Office of the Ministry, which have been by me committed to thy Trust: the many Witnesses before whom this was done, has Respect to the numerous Spectators who were present at the Evangelist's Ordination. *The same commit thou to faithful Men*: q. d. Take good Care, not only how thou fulfillest thy own Ministry, but also who thou introducest into the Ministry; that they into whose Hands the sacred Depositum is committed, be not only faithful, but able Labour to have all the Evidence that the Nature of the Case will admit of, not only that they be Persons who have an honest Intention, but also that they are in some good Measure qualified



qualified to speak as becomes the Oracles of God, and to perform the other Parts of that weighty Trust.

Then in the Text he proceeds to say, *Thou therefore endure Hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.* Here's a Duty exhorted to, and the Manner in which it is to be done. The Duty we have in that Precept, *endure Hardness*, or as it might be literally rendered from the original *Super-evil*, viz. the Evil of Affliction : q. d. Expect a Number and Variety of Difficulties in the faithful Exercise of thy Ministry, and be ready to encounter them with Christian Fortitude, and to bear them with Equanimity and Patience.

The Manner in which the Duty is to be done, we have in these Words, *As a good Soldier of Jesus Christ.* q. d. to excite thee to endure Hardness with the more Patience, Thou must remember that the Life of a Minister, is not a Life of Ease and Pleasure ; but on the contrary, a Life of Warfare, the Life of a Soldier ; that Ministers in the faithful Exercise of their Ministry, may rationally lay their Account with the Dangers, the Fatigues and Encounters of a long and hazardous Campaign.

The Subject being thus introduced and explained, in discoursing more largely upon it, I shall

Ist, Point to some of those Things that Ministers may rationally lay their Account to meet with, in the faithful Exercise of their Office ; which will require their *enduring Hardness*.

IIdly. I shall mention some of those Qualifications which are mainly necessary, in Order to their *enduring Hardness*, or encountering the Difficulties they may expect to meet. And then make Application.

And according to the proposed Method,

I. I am to point to several of those Things, that it is likely Ministers will meet with, in the Exercise of their Ministry, which will require their *enduring Hardness*.

And here I would observe in general, that they may in the whole of their Ministerial Work, expect to meet with those Things which will require their *enduring Hardness*. For  
consider,



consider, that the present State of the visible Church is militant ; Christ's Disciples while here in this World, are in a State of War, and need to put on the whole Armour of God, that they may fight the good Fight of Faith. The Church in the present State is like a Flock of Sheep among Wolves ; she has her Situation among Lions Dens, and the Mountains of Leopards. Believers, at present, are in a World that hates them, *Joh. 15. 19. They have many Enemies, and these hate them with a cruel hatred, Psal. 25. 19.* This Enmity began to break out very early in the Murder of righteous *Abel*, by his own Brother : *and wherefore slew he him ?* The Apostle tells us, *1 Joh. 3. 12. Because his own Works were Evil, and his Brother's Righteous.* And it has been manifesting it self in every Age since these Words of God were pronounced. *Gen. 3. 15. I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed :* in so much, that in every Age, there has been Occasion for the Apostle's Observation, *Gal. 4. 29, But as then he that was born after the Flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.*

Our Lord tells his Disciples, that in the World they shall have Tribulation ; *and that through much Tribulation they may expect to enter into the Kingdom of God :* And what he told them, they have found true. Hence it is observable, that the World has proven an unkind Step-Dame to our Lord himself, and to many of his dearest Followers. The Psalmist was not the only Saint who has had Reason to complain, as *Psal. 120. 5. Wo is me that I am in Meshech, and that I dwell in the Tents of Kedar ;* or to say as *Psal. 57. 4. My Soul is among fierce Lions, and I dwell with them that are set on Fire.* Believers in the present State have not only Men, but Devils to oppose them ; they have to encounter all the Legions of Hell, with Satan at their Head ; *they wrestle not against Flesh and Blood only, but also against Principalities and Powers, against the Rulers of the Darknes of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places.* *Eph. 6. 12.*

And as the present State of the Church is militant, so Ministers are Officers in this War, under Christ the Captain of Salvation : It is their Business to animate and direct Christ's Soldiers to lead them out to Action ; and while they are doing so, not to shrink back themselves for fear of Danger ; but to jeopard their Lives in the high Places of the Field, and if Need be, bravely to expose themselves in the Fore-front of the hottest Battle, and to make a resolute Stand against the united Powers of Earth and Hell.

And

And as in the heat of a Battle, we see that the Enemy do endeavour principally to slay their Adversary's Officers, so it is not to be doubted but that the Devil and his Party will bend their chief Force against the Officers in Christ's Army. What our Lord says to *Peter*, is applicable in a peculiar Sense to every faithful Minister, *Luk. 22. 31. Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat.* He who was bold enough to attack the Captain of our Salvation, in the Manner we read of, *Matt. 4. 1--11*, will no doubt, as far as he is permitted, try every Method with Ministers, that he may either over-power them by Force, or circumvent them by Fraud.

From this general View of the Case, you may easily see that Ministers in the Exercise of their Office, will need to *endure Hardness*. But I would be larger on this Head, endeavouring to point to several of the particular Things which will require their *enduring Hardness*. And,

1st. The Opposition, and the bitter Scoffs they may expect to meet with, in their faithful laying down the Scheme of Salvation by Jesus Christ, will call for their *enduring Hardness*.

It is true, there is nothing in this Scheme of Salvation which deserves Opposition, or which is by any Means a fit Object of Ridicule: On the contrary, it is the most benevolent, and withal the wisest Design. It is full of *Benevolence* and breathes nothing but Love and Compassion to guilty polluted perishing Creatures, in next Subordination to the Glory of God, according to *Luk. 2. 14*; Peace and Pardon, and Holiness, high Honours and special Favours, to the most unworthy Rebels. In a Word, considering the Benevolence of the Design. it might reasonably be expected that the Gospel, instead of Opposition, would meet with a universal Welcome; that every House, and every Heart would be open to receive the Saviour. *It is certainly a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save the chief of Sinners.* 1 Tim. 1. 15. And as it is a benevolent, so it is a *wise* Design: the Device of Salvation by Jesus Christ, contains in it the brightest Display of divine Wisdom that ever the World was acquainted with; so far is it from having any Thing foolish or weak in it, any Thing that is a proper Object of Ridicule: Every Thing in the glorious Plan of the New-Covenant, is so well ordered, as to be worthy of a Being of infinite Perfection. Here's Wisdom enough and enough, to



employ the richest speculative human Mind. Nay, the Angels of Heaven, though not so nearly interested as Men are, yet they admire the manifold Wisdom of God herein manifested, and love to pry into it. *1 Pet. 1. 12.* But then it is likewise true, that the Glory and Beauty of the New-Covenant-Way of Redemption, and the excellent Wisdom therein displayed, are not discerned by carnal Eyes : With Respect to them, it is called *hidden Wisdom, the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, which none of the Princes of this World knew. 1 Cor. 2. 7.* Hence the Apostle had Occasion to say as he does, *1 Cor. 1. 23. We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness.* He who said so, altho' perhaps one of the best Preachers that ever opened a Mouth, was yet counted a Babbling, when he preached Jesus, and the Resurrection from the Dead.

And as the Minds of Men are naturally the same now that they were seventeen Hundred Years ago, so the Gospel is apt to meet with the same Treatment ; and this not only from *Jews, Mahometans and Heathens*, but also from profess'd Christians. Natural Men, however they may be born and brought up under a Christian Dispensation, yet they cannot see into several of the important Doctrines of Christianity. As for Instance, they can't see into the Doctrines of absolute Decrees, or Original Sin : How an absolute Predetermination is consistent with human Liberty : How it is just or possible that by the Disobedience of one many should be made Sinners : Or that by the Offence of one Judgment should come on all to Condemnation. How it is consistent either with infinite Wisdom or Justice, that a Sinner should be justified by imputed Righteousness ; or that the Just should suffer for the Unjust, that he might bring Sinners to God. They can't see into the Doctrine of Regeneration, as importing the Supernatural Production and instantaneous Implantation of a new living Principle of Action in the Soul, operating so powerfully as to produce an immediate Change in all the Faculties.

These, and other the peculiar Doctrines of our holy Religion, are Foolishness to them, and the Objects of their hearty Aversion. And therefore he who will preach them up, with faithful Boldness, and apply them with Closeness, may expect the Trial, at least, of cruel Mockings ; and very probably will meet with such Opposition and Contradiction, as will demand all the Christian Fortitude he is Master of, to bear up under them.



2. The close and painful Application they should give to their private Studies, will require their *enduring Hardness*. There is a Number and Variety of Acquirements, needful to qualify for the Work of the Gospel-Ministry, which cannot be attained, without close Application to Study. It were to be wished, (if practicable) that Ministers of the Gospel were vers'd in all the various Parts of solid, useful Learning: That they were expert in the whole Compass of Science, and what is known by the Name of universal Scholars. But this, with Respect to Ministers in general, is, (I own) rather to be wished for, than expected; especially in a young Country, where Things are yet, as it were, in *Embrio*, or in an infant State. But even in our present State, Ministers should have some Competency of human Learning: as for Instance, It is at least highly expedient, that the Gospel-Minister understood so much of Grammar and Rhetorick, as to know somewhat of the Congruity and Elegancy of Language: That he have such an Insight into Logick and Metaphysicks, as that he be capable of making proper Distinctions of knowing when an Argument is, or is not conclusive; of reasoning with some Pertinency and Clearness of detecting Sophisms, and of Abstracting: That he did at least know so much of Mathematicks, as to render him capable of reading Books of natural Philosophy, with Understanding: That he be well acquainted with moral Philosophy, and with History, ancient and modern, civil and ecclesiastic; especially, it is needful that he be acquainted with Divinity, Polemick and Systematick, as well as Practicall.

Now these Acquirements are not to be attained without Study, yea, much Study, which *Solomon* observes, is a Weariness of the Flesh. Many an one has endured that Hardness, by close Application to Study, that has brought on Disease, and hastned Death in the Meridian of Life.

But this is not all: as the Study he prosecutes in order to attain ministerial Qualifications, will require his *enduring Hardness*; so also will that, to which he behoves, to apply himself in the Exercise of his Office. A consciencious Minister can't allow himself to put off People with a rude impremeditated extemporary Effusion: On the contrary, he considers that the Interest of Souls is at Stake; one of which, is of more Value than a World besides: That his Preaching is about Matters of infinite Moment; that he is like to be the Saviour of Life unto Life, or of Death unto Death; the most glorious Life, or the most dreadful Death, to them that hear him. And

under the Influence of such Considerations, he dare not offer to the Lord what cost him Nothing ; but though it should be a Weariness to the Flesh, he gives himself to close Study, that by this Means he may bring beaten Oyl, to cause the Lamps to burn. The Foresight that this may soon wear out animal Nature, and hasten temporal Death, don't at all deter him ; he had much rather it should be work'd out in such Employment, than in any other ; and hence he gives himself to Reading, to Meditation and to Doctrine ; and deeply sensible that he can't prepare for the publick Service of the Sanctuary by his own Study, he's much in Closet Devotion, often pleading with the Father of Lights, that he would enable him to find out acceptable Words, directing him to seasonable Subjects, and the most profitable Way of prosecuting them. In a Word, he who will make Conscience of private Preparation for the publick Exercise of the Ministry, will find Need to *endure Hardness* in this Respect.

3. Faithful Reproof is another Part of his Work, in the Exercise of which the Gospel Minister will need to *endure Hardness*, and has Occasion for much holy Courage. Reproving and Rebuking are Parts of the Ministerial Office, as well as Exhorting, 2 Tim. 4. 2. *He must cry aloud, and not spare, lifting up his Voice like a Trumpet in shewing God's People their Transgressions, and the House of Jacob their Sins*, Isai. 58. 1. Yea, if there be Occasion for it, he must rebuke sharply, Tit. 1. 13. Yea, he must not only reprove publicly from the Pulpit, but when there is Occasion for it, he is to practice private personal Rebuke. The faithful Minister must not allow himself to respect Persons, or to give flattering Titles to Men ; but must faithfully reprove the Vices of the great, as well as of the small. Though the Person that needs the Reproof be one in great Power ; one who has the Estate, or even the Life of the Reprover at his Disposal, yet this must not hinder him from a faithful Discharge of his Duty. The Baptist is herein a shining Pattern ; he was no Stranger to the tyrannical Disposition of *Herod*. It is not unlike that he was sensible that he ran the Risque of losing his Head ; and yet all this don't deter him from reproving the Tyrant, on Account of his abominable incestuous Marriage. Ministers must follow such an Example as this at their Peril ; they must put their secular Interests, and even their Lives in their Hand, leaving the Consequence to God. They must sometimes minister those Reproofs which perhaps will be galling to the Consciences of wicked Men, though they should like the Murderers of *Stephen* be cut to the



the Heart, or angry even to Madness. It's true, the faithful Minister is to take Care that his Reproofs be wisely dispensed, with Respect to Time, Place, Manner and other Circumstances. He is also carefully to avoid Bitterness, to shun the Spirit even of a *Moses*, when he said, *Hear now ye Rebels, must we bring you Water out of this Rock.* In a Word, he should endeavour to apply these Cauſticks, with all that Tenderness, that the Nature of the Operation will admit of. But on the other Hand, he had Need to take Care, least under the Colour of Prudence or Tenderness, he should be unfaithful.

This is another Branch of the sacred Office, in which the Gospel Minister will have much Need to *endure Hardness*. He will be apt sometimes (it is likely) to have the Mortification of finding, that altho' the Reproof has been administred with all possible Wisdom and Tenderness; yet by his Faithfulness, he has lost the Good-will of the Reproved, who is become his Enemy for telling him the Truth, and ever after bears him a Grudge, and is ready to do him a Mischief.

4. The Gospel Minister needs to *endure Hardness*, in opposing Errors and Errorists. The Apostle tells us, 1 Cor. 11. 19, *That there must be Heresies, that they that are approved may be made manifest.* Sometimes we see the sovereign and all-wise God, whose Ways are past finding out, does for some End worthy of himself, see fit to permit false Teachers to enter into his Church; Persons who make it their Business to corrupt the Word of God, and who are industrious to draw away Disciples after them. It may be, the Errors they promote, though of a very dangerous Nature, eating like a Canker, and threatening the Vitals of Christianity; yet are so speciously guiled, that the Poison is not easily discerned; fair Pretences are made of Zeal for God; and such guileful Methods used, that with good Words and fair speeches, the Simple are in great Danger of being deceived.

In such a State of Things, that Minister who would expect to be owned *as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ*, must exert himself; he must not see grievous Wolves entering in, not sparing the Flock, or the little Foxes spoiling the tender Vine: and in the mean Time stand by as an unconcern'd Spectator; but when he sees Men arising, and hears them speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples, he should consider himself as set for the Defence of the Gospel, and not fly, leaving Christ's Sheep in the Power of Wolves; but to contend earnestly



neftly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, endeavouring with all Learning and found Doctrine, to convince the Gain-fayers ; using his best Skill to establish the Flock in the labouring Truths of the Day, and to reduce any that are wavering, and begin to be drawn aside from their Stedfastness.

5. Ministers need to *endure Hardness*, in that careful Watch they are to keep over the Flock. Christ's Flock have much need of a careful Watch over them, considering what foolish Sheep they are, how apt to go astray, and what vigilant, subtle Enemies are engaged against them : And hence, although their chief Safety is owing to the omniscient Eye of him that slumbers not, nor sleeps, which is constantly exercised about them, without which, the Watchmen would watch in vain ; yet it has pleased the great Keeper of *Israel*, to appoint his Ministers in the Station of Watchmen, Ezek. 3. 17. *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman to the House of Israel.* So likewise, Isa. 62. 6. *I have set Watchmen on thy Walls, O Jerusalem, that shall never hold their Peace, Day nor Night ;* and in the Exercise of this Part of their Office, they are to guard against Drowsiness. That's a sad Character which we have of the Watchmen of *Israel*, Isa. 56. 10. *viz. Sleeping, lying down, loving to Slumber.* As the Minister of Christ would be owned by his divine Master at last, he should take Care that this Character be not applicable to him. And in order hereto, he should have his Eyes where *Solomon* tells us the wise Man's are, *viz.* in his Head ; carefully observing the State of the Church, what are the Practices of her Enemies against her. In a Word, heedfully noticing what are the Phenomena of the natural, the moral, and the religious World ; so as to be always qualified to give a right Answer to that Question, *Watchman, what of the Night ?* Now this is a Work which will require great Steadiness and Application of Mind : And those who will discharge it faithfully, will, (I believe) be often awake in a natural Sense, when the Flock in that Sense are asleep.

6. There is a great Variety of Labours belonging to the Ministerial Office, besides what we have already touched upon, which will require their *enduring Hardness*. Preaching the Gospel is a very laborious Work, as might be easily seen, had we Time to view the Nature of it. To hold forth the Love of God to Sinners in it's Origin and first Spring, *viz.* free sovereign Grace ; to open up the Nature of that Redemption purchased by Christ ; to shew what a wise, gracious, glorious Device the New-Covenant-Way of Salvation is ;  
what

what a glorious Constellation of divine Perfections do shine forth in it ; how well ordered it is in all Things ; how worthy in every Respect of it's divine Author : To display aright the Manner of the Application of this precious Redemption : To preach the Terrors of the Law to awakened Sinners ; representing Hell naked before them, and Destruction without a Covering ; shewing them what a fearful Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God : To direct awakened enquiring Souls the right Way to Christ, steering them safe by those fatal Rocks, upon which many Souls have been wrecked and finally lost : To preach so as to suit a great Variety of Cases among Believers, feeding Christ's Sheep, and feeding his Lambs ; giving Milk to Babes, and strong Meat to them who have their Senses exercised : To make a judicious Choice of pertinent Subjects, well adapted to the Times, that may lead not only to Truth, but seasonable Truth : To be instant in Season, and out of Season, not willingly losing any Opportunity that presents of serving Christ and Souls : To take due Care not only as to the Matter, but also as to the Style and Manner of delivering divine Truth ; with the Preacher seeking to find out acceptable Words, using all the Arts of persuading and animating ; and leaving no Mean unessay'd to convince the Judgments, and gain the Hearts of Men. This is Labour ! this is Work ! And he who will follow it faithfully, must *endure Hardness*.

But this is not all : they who think the Whole of a Minister's Work is confined to the Pulpit, and his Preparations for it, do greatly mistake the Nature of it : How shall he know what to preach, except he know the State of the Flock ? And how can he know this sufficiently, without taking Pains to know it ? 'Tis needful therefore that he spend some convenient Part of his Time, not only in occasional Visits to the Sick, and upon other Emergencies ; but also in stated Visitation and Catechising, examining the Flock as to their Advances in Knowledge, and conferring freely with them about Soul-Matters ; stirring up the ignorant and careless, warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded, supporting the weak ; teaching not only publickly, but also from House to House, *Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*.

I might also have mentioned the Exercise of the Key of *Discipline*, a Part of the ministerial Office, which is often attended with great Difficulty, and which requires much holy Courage, Impartiality and Faithfulness, as well as Wisdom :



as likewise, the administering the Seals of the Covenant, which supposes an Enquiry into the Qualifications of the Subjects of these Seals : A Work this, which some Ministers I know find very weighty and difficult. In a Word, he who will faithfully apply himself to the various Labours of the ministerial Office, will be apt to find it a Work of great and fore Labour and Fatigue.

7. The Gospel-Minister will need to *endure Hardness*, in bearing up under sinking Discouragements, which are apt to attend him in the Exercise of his Office. Some Ministers have more of these than others ; but I believe none are intirely exempt from them, and some feel these to be many and great : Sometimes they feel the Weight of Souls lying on their Spirits, with an almost insupportable Pressure ; they feel a Degree of the same catholic Concern, which the Apostle speaks of, *2 Cor. 11. 29.* The general Interest of Christianity lies near their Hearts ; and it may be, they have the Affliction to see Religion low, corrupting Errors prevailing, practical Godliness much decay'd, and Matter daily tending from bad to worse ; so that the Things that remain, are even ready to die. Upon such a melancholly View of Things, the faithful Minister cannot stand by as an unconcern'd Spectator : His seeing *Zion* in this Condition, will cause him to *hang his Harp on the Willow* ; his Heart trembles for the Ark of God ; he cannot prevent a good Deal of Dejection of Soul, and it may be, he feels scarce enough of Faith in Exercise, to breathe out faintly such a Petition as that, *Amos 7. 2. O Lord God, forgive, I beseech thee : By whom shall Jacob arise ? for he is small.* Again, sometimes his Heart is ready to die within him, to see so little Appearance of Fruit following his ministerial Labours ; to think that there is a sad Probability that he shall prove the Savour of Death unto Death to some Persons, that are very dear to him ; that he must appear before Christ's Judgment-Seat, and bear Witness against them, that they despised the Grace of the Gospel, and trampled under Foot the great Salvation. O ! it is a cutting Thought. Sometimes he is sorely exercised with the Fear that he hath already proved, or shall prove unfaithful, in the Execution of some important Branch of his Office ; that he shall not be able to give any good Account of the weighty Trust committed to him ; that such Souls shall perish by his Neglect ; and that he shall neither save himself, nor them that hear him. Sometimes he has unreasonable and wicked Men, Men that have not Faith, Men of Beast-like Dispositions, to deal with ; some-  
times



times all Men seem to forsake him, and none to stand by him; and what is worse still, sometimes his Master hides his Face. In a Word, his Discouragements are innumerable, both from without, and from within; so that on this Account also, he has Need to *endure Hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ*. And thus I have shewn (as I propos'd) some of the Difficulties attending the Exercise of the Ministerial Office, which will require *enduring Hardness*.

I proceed next to the other General Head; which is,

Idly, To mention, and a little to insist on some of those Qualifications which are mainly necessary, in Order to the Gospel-Ministers *enduring Hardness, as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ*.

And 1st. It is needful in order to his *enduring Hardness*, that he be a Man of Faith. Without Faith it is hardly to be suppos'd, that he will *fight the good Fight*, and steadily adhere to his Master's Interest, in the midst of Difficulties, so many and great: But if he have some good Measure of this divine Grace, it will have an happy Efficacy in enabling him to face and surmount Difficulties. Faith enables him to balance the Things of Time and Eternity, so as to give each its proper Weight; to put the Sufferings of the present Time in one Scale, and the Glory which is to be revealed in the other; and by this Means, evidently to discover that the light Afflictions of the present Time, are but as it were for a Moment, and so not worthy to be compared with the Glory that is to be revealed. Faith sometimes enables him to see his divine Lord standing by him, and to hear him addressing him in such Words as once he did one of his faithful Ministers, Act. 23. 11. *Be of good Cheer Paul*. Faith sometimes opens up the eternal World before him, and gives him such a View as Stephen had, when he said, *I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right Hand of God*, Act. 7. 56. By Faith he hears the Captain of his Salvation saying, as Rev. 3. 12. *To him that overcometh, will I give to sit down with me on my Throne; even as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father on his Throne*. In a Word, Faith so fortifies the Soul, that he is at Times carried in a Manner quite above Discouragement; so that on a Prospect of the worst that can happen, he is able to adopt the Language of the Apostle, Act. 20. 22, 23, 24. *And now I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the Things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every City, saying, That Bonds and Afflictions abide me*.

C

But

*But none of these Things move me, neither count I my Life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my Course with Joy, and the Ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.*

Let those Ministers who would *endure Hardness, as good Soldiers of Jesus Christ*, put on the whole Armour of God; above all, let them take the Shield of Faith; let them who have Faith, labour for an Increase of that divine Grace, let them often pray the Disciples Prayer, *Lord increase our Faith.*

2. It is needful in order to his *enduring Hardness*, that he have a hearty Love to Christ and Souls. Where this Grace is wanting, the Person will be apt to do his Work grudgingly, and as of Necessity. Where Love is wanting, there will scarcely be any Motive strong enough to engage him to adhere closely to his Master's Cause, when his doing so is attended with peculiar Danger and Difficulty. He'll hardly be contented to expose his Life, or even his Estate, or his Name, for Christ and his Interest: On the contrary, his Behaviour will be apt to be like that, Joh. 10. 12, 13. *The Hireling fleeth, because he is an Hireling, and careth not for the Sheep.* But where this sweet Grace of Love is, it has a constraining Influence on the Gospel-Minister; it ties him by the Heart to the Service of his glorious Captain, so that he never thinks he can do too much, or enough in his Cause. Under the powerful Influence of this Grace, he can cheerfully risque his Life, when his Master's Interest requires it, with him who said Act. 21. 13. *I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die for the Name of the Lord Jesus.* We see what a powerful Principle natural Affection is in Parents toward their Children, with what Pleasure (under the Influence of it) they go through a World of Fatigue and Sufferings to provide for them; such a Disposition do those Ministers, who love the Lord Jesus Christ, feel towards the Souls of their Flocks: So that the Expression of *Paul*, with Respect to *Timothy*, is applicable to them, that they naturally care for their State, Phil. 2. 20. *Naturally, i. e.* As a Parent under the Influence of natural Affection, cares for his Children. A faithful Minister, when Love is in Exercise, does really feel the Bowels of a Parent, and can say with Respect to the Flock of Christ, as the Apostle does, Gal. 4. 19. *My little Children, of whom I travel in Birth again, 'till Christ be formed in you.*

3. They should be Persons who have made some considerable Advances in Mortification. This likewise is a very needful



ful Qualification for a good Soldier of Jesus Christ. If a Minister have an inordinate Love to his carnal Ease, he'll hardly be willing to follow his Master in a thorny Path, or to engage with great Difficulties in the Cause of Christ: When Tribulation or Persecution arises because of the Word, by and by he'll be offended. If he love the World with a prevailing Love, it will be apt to take him off from the Cause of Christ: See a sad Instance, 2 Tim. 4. 10. *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present World.* Hence that of the Apostle, 2 Tim. 2. 4. *No Man that warreth, intangleth himself with the Affairs of this Life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a Soldier.* If he be excessively fond of worldly Honour and Applause, he'll hardly be willing to be accounted a Fool, to have his Name cast out as evil, and to have all Manner of Evil spoken against him for Christ's Sake. Hence that of our Saviour, Joh. 5. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive Honour from one another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God only.*

He then who would behave himself as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, should be one who has made some Progress in the difficult, but necessary Duty of Self-denial; one who has learned to make Poverty welcome, if it should fall to his Lot; who knows how to be abased, as well as how to abound; one who can deny his Appetites and Passions, when they become importunate and over-eager in their Cravings; or as the Apostle says, who keeps under his Body, and brings it into Subjection; one who contrary to that Character, Joh. 12. 43. *Loves the Praise of God, more than the Praise of Men.* In a Word, The good Soldier of Jesus Christ, is one who has learned to follow his Captain in Honour and Dishonour, through good and evil Report; so that he thinks not strange of the fiery Trial, but closely adheres to his divine Lord in Times of the greatest Danger and Suffering.

4. Christian Courage and Steadiness of Mind, is a Qualification much needed in Order to enduring Hardness. I join these two because they are near a-kin, and often where the one is, the other will be found also. For want of the Grace of Christian Courage, even faithful Ministers are apt sometimes in the evil Day to give Way to sinking Dejection of Spirit: They faint in the Day of Adversity: when Things have a discouraging and threaten-like Appearance, they are ready to give all up for lost: they can scarcely think of any Thing but of leaving their publick Station, and flying into some hiding Place, where they may have Shelter from the impending



Storm. When Courage is wanting, every Difficulty is viewed on the darkeſt Side. For Inſtance, a Miniſter ſees little or no Appearance of Fruit following his Labours : On the contrary, it ſeems as tho' Sinners grew daily more ſecure and ſtupid ; in this Caſe, he is apt to look on his dealing with Sinners as to no Purpoſe, and perhaps is juſt on the Point of reſolving that he will make no more mention of the Name of the Lord. Or it may be, he is ſituated as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, ſo that he ſees groſs Sins of almoſt every Kind abounding, and his righteous Soul is vexed from Day to Day with their unlawful Deeds : In this Caſe he is ready to ſay with *Jer. 9. 2.* *Oh that I had in the Wilderneſs a lodging Place of wayfaring Men, that I might leave my People and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, an Aſſembly of treacherous Men, &c.* Or perhaps he beholds evident Tokens of divine Anger ; it ſeems as if the Lord were about to come forth againſt his People with a Sword inſtead of a Rod ; that the Cloud gathers black and dreadful, and the Enemy is about to break in like a Flood : In ſuch a Caſe, through defect of Courage, he is ready to think of Nothing ſo much as of flying from the Storm. But when Chriſtian Courage is in Exerciſe, it will improve all theſe diſcouraging Appearances, as ſo many Arguments to diſſuade from an inglorious Retreat. Chriſtian Courage will by no Means admit of Flight in any of the Caſes above-named.

Are Sinners very ſecure and ſtupid, ſo that nothing that can be ſaid appears to have any abiding Impreſſion on them? Says the good Soldier who has this Grace in Act, " I'll nevertheless continue in the Uſe of Means with theſe ſtupid Sinners, tho' at preſent they ſeem to be Hammer-hardned under the Word ; he with whom is the Reſidue of the Spirit, can ſend a divine Influence, which will ſoon and effectually ſoften them ; perhaps the Captain of Salvation, who is a King mighty in Battle, may lend me a choſen Shaft from his Quiver, which will reach the Joints and Marrow, ſo as to rouse them that are at preſent ſleeping on the Sides of the Pit, with a dreadful Sound in their Ears : But whatever the Event may be, I'll (thro' Grace) do my Duty, whether theſe Sinners will hear, or whether they will forbear : I have Reaſon to think that the ſovereign Will of God concerning them will have Effect by my Miniſtry, and that I ſhall be a ſweet Saviour of God in them that periſh, as well as in them that are ſaved." Or is it a Time when groſs Sins prevail to a high Degree? Though ſuch a ſad Scene ſhould open as that, *Hoſ. 4. 1, 2.* *When there*

is little or no Truth, nor Mercy, nor Knowledge of God in the Land; when by swearing and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out and Blood toucheth Blood. In this Case says the courageous Soldier, The more the Torrent of Wickedness prevails, the more need I have to stand firm in my Station, endeavouring to stem the rapid Stream. Or is it a Time when Things appear with a threatening Aspect; when the Lord seems to have forsaken his People, and there are sad Tokens of his Anger; or when the Enemies of Zion appear to be hatching some formidable Plot; yea, though he should have Reason to think that their chief Aim is against his Person: In either of these Cases says the good Soldier with Neh. 6. 11. *Should such a Man as I fly?* Nay, rather let me look on all these threatening Appearances as so many loud Calls to keep my Station; let me stand between the Living and the Dead, and do my utmost to appease incensed Heaven, and so avert impending Judgments: Shall I fly for fear of the Plots of Enemies, and leave Christ's Flock exposed? how then shall I look my glorious Captain in the Face? how shall I clear my self of that Character he has given of an Hireling, who fleeth because he is an Hireling, and careth not for the Flock? rather let me put my Life in my Hand, and venture my all in the Service of my divine Lord; firmly believing that he will stand by me, while he has any Work for me to do, and then will receive me to himself: That he'll make me a fenced brazen Wall, against which, though mine Enemies fight, yet they shall never prevail.

5. The good Soldier is one who is acquainted with his Weapons. Being skilful in the Knowledge, and expert in the Use of the Christian Armour, is a necessary Qualification of such an one as would expect to *endure Hardness*. That a Soldier should know his Weapons, every one will grant: Nor is it enough that he be a good Theorist in this Knowledge, but his Knowledge should be practical: He should be capable of handling his Weapons, especially he should be dexterous at the Use of his Sword. Even so every Christian Soldier (but especially the Officers in Christ's Camp) should be acquainted with the Christian Armour; particularly, they should know the Use of the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; they should be able to adopt the Experience of him who said, *Psal. 119. 97. O how love I thy Law; it is my Study all the Day.* They should love not only to study it as a Science, but to feed upon it: And while they receive it in the Love of it, and derive Nourishment & Delight from it, to say as *Pf. 119. 103. How sweet*



*is thy Word unto my Taste, I find it sweeter than Honey to my Mouth.* The good Soldier of Jesus Christ should be so well acquainted with the Doctrines, the Precepts, the Promises and Threatnings of God's Word, as that he may have a ready Recourse to it in every Time of Need ; and know how to use this spiritual Sword, either to defend himself and his Flock, 'or offend the Enemy, as Need shall require : And if he has such a Knowledge as this, of the Sword of the Spirit, he shall be enabled to stand in the evil Day, able to master every Difficulty, to overcome every Temptation : He shall be an over-match for all the Power of the Enemy ; he shall both do great Things, and shall still prevail.

Having spoken to the two General Heads proposed in the Doctrinal Part ; I pass on to the *Improvement*.

*Inference 1.* May Gospel Ministers lay their Account to *endure Hardness*, or to meet with great Difficulties in their Work ? Then it may be inferred, that Persons should not be rash or hasty in running into the Ministry ; it would certainly be wise in them first to count the Cost, and to weigh maturely the Difficulties, as well as the Encouragements which attend the sacred Station ; to make a close Enquiry about what are their Views in engaging in this Office ? Whether they have sufficient Ground to conclude, that therein they have a single Eye ? Whether they have those Qualifications, by which alone, they shall be enabled to acquit themselves, as Workmen that need not to be ashamed ? To think of our Lord's Question to *Peter and John*, Matt. 20. 22. *Can ye drink of the Cup that I shall drink ; and be baptized with the Baptism that I am baptized with ?* And to examine what Answer they are qualified to give.

*Inf. 2.* Are the Difficulties attending the Ministerial Office so many and great ? Then People should take Heed that they do not by any Part of their Conduct, render them greater. It would be cruel to add a Load to a heavy Burden : People may do this many Ways ; as when they appear dispos'd to watch for Ministers halting, to expose their human Frailties ; representing every lesser Infirmary in the blackest Colour, as though it were the grossest Crime ; when they expect that a Minister should perform the whole of his vocational Labours with the utmost Exactness, and yet do not afford him a competent temporal Support ; like the cruel *Egyptian* Task-Masters, who would allow no Straw, and yet demanded the full Tale of Brick ; or when they won't endure sound Doctrine and ministerial



ministerial Faithfulness, but count him an Enemy who tells them the Truth ; but especially, when they give a deaf Ear to the great Command of God in the Gospel, to believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and so leave Ministers lamenting their Want of Success with heavy Hearts, saying, *Who hath believed our Report ? And to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed ?* People would do well to consider that faithful Ministers are the Ministers of Christ ; and that he'll resent the Neglect, and practical Contempt, or the ill Treatment of any Kind, that they meet with ; that he who despiseth them, despiseth not only Man but God. Beloved, Ministers are engaged in difficult Posts, and they much need your Sympathy and Prayers, and friendly Assistance : If you knew how hardly bestead they often are, while without are Fighting, and within are Fears ; you would surely pity them, and do all you could to lighten their Burden.

Omitting other Uses which the Subject might afford, I proceed to the last, *viz.* The Use of Exhortation : In which, I shall address my self (1.) to Ministers. (2.) To Candidates for the Ministry. (3.) To the Candidate now to be set apart.

And 1st. To You, *My Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry* ; Permit me to say, That God who has chosen us from among our Brethren, to come near to him, and to minister in Things Sacred, has in so doing, highly honour'd us. We are engaged in a Calling, which tho' mean and despicable in the Eye of a carnal World, yet would be no Disgrace, but an Honour to Angels, to be employ'd in. To be workers together with God in that Building of Mercy, the Plan of which was projected in the Depth of infinite Wisdom, from the Morning of Eternity : to be employed in the Quality of Ambassadors, to negotiate between the King of Kings, and immortal Souls, about Matters of the greatest Moment : What higher Honour ! And as ours is a Station of high Honour, so of high Trust and Importance ; the great Head of the Church has intrusted us with Souls which are his choicest Jewels, and on whom he set so high a Value, as to shed his precious Blood for them : He puts such Confidence in us, as to employ us in the Quality of Officers, to head his Soldiers in the War against Earth and Hell. Let us think of the Honour, and be humble ; and let us think of the Trust, and be faithful : Let us remember that all is Grace, that we have nothing but what we have received ; that one main Reason why we are thus highly honour'd, is, that by our Meanness God might take Occasion the more illustriously

illustriously to display the Glory of his Grace ; That he has put his Treasure in earthen Vessels, that it might the more evidently appear, that the Excellency of the Power is of God, and not of Man. Let us beware of any Action which looks like betraying our Trust ; on the contrary, let us be faithful to God and Souls ; let us labour daily in the Use of Means, for an Increase of Faith, for more Love to God and Souls, more Mortification and Self-denial, more Christian Courage and Steadiness of Mind, more Skilfulness in the Knowledge and Expertness in the Use of our spiritual Weapons : In a Word, more of all those Qualifications whereby we shall be fitted to *endure Hardness, as good Soldiers of Jesus Christ.* And whatever ministerial Qualifications it has pleased the Giver of every good Gift, and perfect, to bestow on us, let us not bury them in the Earth, nor hide them in the unprofitable Napkin : On the contrary, let us stir up the Gifts that are in us ; being instant in Season, and out of Season ; not thinking much of our hard Study or Toil, or bodily Fatigue and Expence of Spirits, if so be, that thereby we may do any Service ; not counting even our Lives dear, so that we may finish our Course with Joy, and the Ministry committed to us of the Lord Jesus. Let us remember that there will be Time enough to rest in Heaven, and hence, let us be willing now to labour ; and let us not only be willing to work our selves, but let us do what we can to encourage others in their Work : Let all Christ's faithful Ministers endeavour to strengthen one another's Hands.

If the Soldiers, but especially the Officers in Christ's Army, begin to turn their Swords against one another, they are like to be an easy Prey to the common Enemy. O that this were duly laid to Heart ! It would powerfully Influence us to cultivate that strict Unity, which (through the divine Blessing) would greatly strengthen the common Cause, which would render us fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, terrible as an Army with Banners.

And to animate us to exert our selves to the utmost in our Master's Cause ; let us consider that our Charge is weighty ; our Account will be solemn ; and that the Time when we must make it up, is fast approaching. Let us with the blessed Apostle *Peter*, remember *that we must shortly put off this our Tabernacle.* Some of us, (it's likely) have almost done ; a few Years, or it may be Months, and the present Scene with Respect to us, will for ever shut. O then, let us do speedily and with our Might, whatever our Hands find to do : Let



us crowd in as much Service as we can, in the few remaining Days we have yet left. And to keep up our Spirits under the Coldness and Ingratitude of the World, the Contradiction and Opposition of unreasonable Men, all our Unsuccessfulness in our Work, all the Temptations that arise from Satan and our own Hearts; In a Word, all the Difficulties of the Campaign; let us look forward by Faith to that happy approaching Day, when Christ who is our Life shall appear, and we also shall appear with him in Glory; when they that be wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.

2. To Candidates: I would say, *My dear Brethren*, we who have been acting our Part as Officers in Christ's Camp, must soon move off the Stage: These Mouths that now speak to you, must in a short Time be stop'd with the Dust of Death; and we have our Eyes on you to succeed us. 'Tis you, and such as you, that must fill up our vacant Places, in the Camp of the Saints. Blessed be God, for some agreeable Prospect of a Succession! Be exhorted, *Brethren*, to labour for those Qualifications by which you may be fitted to endure *Hardness*, as good Soldiers of *Jesus Christ*: and in order hereto, give your selves to Reading, to close Study, and to Prayer; and let all your Endeavours be used in Subserviency to the promised Aids of the divine Spirit. Beware of a proud, self-sufficient Disposition: Remember that a scriptural Bishop must not be a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil: Don't esteem your selves to be already well enough qualified for the great Work of the Gospel-Ministry; but on the contrary, endeavour to maintain a low Opinion of any Attainments you have already arrived at; and forgetting the Things that are behind, be pressing forward. Let it be your daily Labour, to add to the Fund of Knowledge, either by getting some new Ideas, or those you have, better digested: And let the governing Principle in all your Endeavours, be love to God, and Concern for his Glory.

3. I'd address my self to the Candidate now to be solemnly set apart to the Work of the Ministry.

You are now, *Sir*, about to engage in a Station of great Importance, and great Difficulty: You are to have the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, and the administering the Seal of the New-Covenant committed to your Trust: You are to have the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven put into your Hand,

D

with



with Authority ministerially to open and shut, in the Name of him who openeth, and no man shutteth, and who shutteth, and no Man openeth : You are about to take the Charge of a Number of immortal Souls, each of which is of more Value than a World ; on this Condition, that if any should perish by your Neglect, it is to be requir'd at your Hand. I trust you have known these many Years, what it is to be a Soldier of Christ, which is a Character that belongs to every Christian; and that you are not now to begin the War with the Devil, the Flesh and the World : But that you are this Day, in somewhat of a peculiar Sense, taking up Arms against Satan and his Kingdom, *viz.* as an Officer in Christ's Camp. And you may reasonably expect to have the Power and Policy of Earth and Hell engaged against you. You are engaging in the ministerial Work, in an evil Day, a Day of Trouble and of Rebuke, and of Blasphemy ; a Day when Religion appears to be low, and the Enemies of Christ and his Cause are apparently prevailing ; when a Spirit of Conviction seems to be much withheld, and the Waters of the Sanctuary to have lost (in a great Measure) their healing Virtue ; so that the Ways of *Zion* mourn, and faithful Ministers with heavy Hearts complain, that they have laboured in vain, and spent their Strength for nought : A Day, when many real Christians appear in a sad Degree, to have lost the lively affecting Views of divine Things ; when a worldly Spirit prevails, so that there's too much Reason for the Apostle's Complaint, That all Men mind their own Things, and none the Things that are Christ's : when Instances of awful Impenitency and Hardness of Heart abound ; when Sinners sin with a high Hand, make light of their Danger, mocking at Fear, and laughing at the shaking of God's Spear. In a Word, the Charge is weighty, and the Days are evil ; and to undertake such a Charge, at such a Time, is enough to make a frail Mortal tremble.

And I make no doubt, *My Brother*, but your Spirits are weighted with it, and have been so before this Day ; that you have been carefully counting the Cost, and revolving the Difficulties in your Mind. I mention these Difficulties not to discourage you, but on the contrary, to animate you to apply to your Work with the greater Vigour and Resolution : And for your Encouragement, I shall propose a few animating Considerations.

1. Consider

1. Consider that though it is a very difficult, yet it is withal, a very honourable Work you are engaged in. In the Time of the flourishing of the *Roman* Common-Wealth, it was thought a high Honour to fight under their Banner : But you have the Honour of being enlisted this Day, and this, in a Place of some considerable Distinction too, under the Banner of him who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ; the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, who esteems of the Monarchs of the Earth, as Grasshoppers. The Apostle *Paul* esteem'd this Honour, an high Favour conferred on him, when he said, Eph. 3. 8. *To me who am less then the least of all Saints, is this Grace given ; that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable Riches of Christ.*

2. Consider that you are to have your Master's Presence with you in the whole of your Ministerial Work. It's true, the Work is great and difficult, and you may apprehend your self weak and very unequal to it : But remember you have a strong Lord to depend upon ; and that as the Work you have to be employ'd in, is his Work, on him therefore you may with a humble Confidence depend, for all that Assistance you have need of ; for who goeth a Warfare at any Time at his own Charges ? He can give you the Wisdom of the Serpent, as well as the Simplicity of the Dove ; whereby you shall be able to countermine and baffle the most insidious Plots of the Devil and his Instruments, though they should work like Moles under Ground, and dig deep as Hell to accomplish their Designs. He can furnish you with a brave, heroick, undaunted Spirit ; whereby you shall be enabled to set your Face like a Flint, and with a calm intrepid Courage, to face the most formidable Assaults of the Enemy. He can make you a fenced brazen Wall, against which, though your Enemies should fight, yet they shall not be able to prevail. He can temper your Zeal and Courage with Humility and Prudence, and Self-denial : In a Word, he can give you the Christian Temper in all its lovely Branches ; so that you shall be able to contend for the Faith of Christ, with the Spirit of Christ. Did I say he can ? I may add, he will, if you look on him by Faith, or depend aright upon him ; for he has said, *My Grace is sufficient for thee*, 2Cor. 12.9. This Promise belongs to every faithful Minister to the End, as well as to him to whom it was first made.

3. Consider that if you be faithful to your Colours, you are sure of the Victory. What Soldier would not fight with  
Courage,



Courage, who is sure of a compleat Victory at last? But this is the Case of the *good Soldier of Jesus Christ*. It must be so, for he has Omnipotence on his Side; the Captain of his Salvation, is a King mighty in Battle, he will tread his Enemies in his Anger, and trample them in his Fury; their Blood shall be on his Garments, and he will stain all his Raiment.

The most formidable Party they can possibly make, is but as Briars and Thorns, before devouring Flames: If then he erect his Banner in the Name of Christ, he shall do valiantly; if he be strong in the Grace which is in Christ Jesus, he shall both do great Things, and shall still prevail.

4. Consider that there is a glorious Reward consequent upon ministerial Faithfulness. It's true, I cannot propose any great earthly Reward for your Encouragement: on the contrary, many faithful Ministers have been obliged to endure Hardness, in this as well as in other Respects, to content themselves with mean Fare, and some have been pinched for want of pure Necessaries. And altho' Ministers should have a Competency, God having ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel; yet it would be unreasonable for them to expect to live in the Pomp and Splendor of temporal Princes, seeing their Lord has told them, *That his Kingdom is not of this World*. But consider, that altho' you have no great secular Inducement, yet you have a Reward of a higher Nature than the Crowns of Princes, and the peculiar Treasure of Kings and Provinces, *viz. A Crown of Glory that fadeth not away*. Think my Brother of that Day which is approaching, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, and you shall appear with him in Glory; when you shall have a Number of saved, glorified Souls, all shining in the Beauties of Holiness, like so many radiant Gems to adorn your Crown of Glory. O think of that happy approaching Day! *when they that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever*. Or though it should be your hard Lot to labour all your Days in vain, and spend your Strength for nought, and never to be instrumental of turning any to Righteousness, (which I cannot think your Master will suffer to be the Case); Yet even in this Case, remember that your Judgment is with the Lord, and your Work with your God; and that your faithful Endeavours will be well accepted.

5. Consider



5. Consider that the more you do in your Station, and the more Hardness you are called to suffer in the Cause of your glorious Captain ; it is likely the more you'll enjoy of his gracious spiritual Presence. When the Apostle *Paul* was called before *Nero*, no Man stood with him, but all Men forsook him ; yet he tell us, *that then the Lord stood by him, and strengthened him, so that he was delivered out of the Mouth of the Lion*, 2 Tim. 4. 16, 17. It was when the Apostle *John* was banished into the obscure remote Isle of *Patmos*, for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which he held, that he was favoured with those glorious Visions and Revelations, which you have on Record in the last Book of the New-Testament. If your Lord call you to great Trials, you shall have proportional Incomes of Grace ; you shall be able to adopt the Experience of the Apostle, and his Fellow-Soldiers, 2 Cor. 1. 5. *As the Sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our Consolation also aboundeth by Christ* : So that you'll be qualified from what you feel, to unriddle these Paradoxes, 2 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *As dying, and behold we live ; as chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all Things.*

These, *Sir*, are animating Considerations : under the Influence of them address your self to your Work, with a cheerful Courage and Vigour. Take Heed to your Ministry, that you fulfil it : Take Heed to your Self, and to your Doctrine ; for in doing this, you will both save your self, and them that hear you.

I should next address my self to the *People*, who are about to receive the Candidate for their Minister, were they present. They had appointed some of their Number to act in their Name, on the solemn Occasion ; but it pleased that wise Sovereign, who does every Thing for the best, to prevent their coming. However, altho' not personally present, we have their Concurrence in the Matter. Had they been here, I should have said to them ; That after a sufficient Time for Trial, they had proceeded to give a Call to this our Brother ; and that said Call had been proceeded in with as much Order as their Situation and other Circumstances would admit of : that we rejoice with them, in that after a Series of Events, in which they have been liable to a Variety of Difficulties, and in which many Changes have passed over them ; that a bountiful Lord is at Length about to bestow on them a Minister, who we believe has obtained Help of God to be faithful ; and who we trust will be enabled to *endure Hardness as*

*a good Soldier of Jesus Christ* : That as they had been hearing that he is engaging in a difficult Work, so we hope that they will not by any Part of their Conduct, wilfully add to his Difficulties : On the contrary, that they would yield him that limited Subjection and Obedience in the Lord, which they had solemnly promised in their Call ; regarding and obeying him as having the Rule over them, and who watches for their Souls as one who must give an Account : That they would remember whose Name he comes in, and whose Message he is charged with ; and would esteem him very highly in Love for his Master's Sake, and for his Work's Sake ; especially, that they would receive that Christ and Salvation he offers to them, as they would not oblige him to appear as a swift Witness against them at the great Day of Accompts : That they would be tender as to the exposing any Frailties they may see in their Minister ; especially such Things as they have Reason to think are no more then Indiscretions, proceeding from meer Inadvertency, without any criminal Intention ; that they would kindly draw the Veil of Charity over such Things : That they would wrestle with God in Prayer on his Behalf, that he may be in every Respect an able and successful Minister of the New-Testament. And finally, that as he ministers to them in Spirituals, that they would do to their utmost, cheerfully and liberally to minister to him in Temporals.

May the Lord make Ministers and People mutual Blessings to one another ; that so the happy Day may come, when both he that soweth, and they that reap, may rejoice together.

*F I N I S.*





earing  
t they  
to his  
n that  
they  
eying  
s for  
they  
Mel-  
ighly  
Sake ;  
vation  
ear as  
mpts :  
ailties  
gs as  
tions,  
minal  
harity  
od in  
ect an  
And  
t they  
inister

effings  
when  
rejoice