by a holy life and conversation, to "adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things." Such characters are at present our "hope and joy;" and will hereafter, we trust, be "our crown of rejoicing." "Be not, then, weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." (Gal. vi. 9.)

But *I cannot contemplate our separation*, without looking forward to *the years that are to come*, and endeavouring once more to offer you my affectionate, my parting advice.

1. Then let me urge upon you *a more devout observance of the sabbath-day*. Consider it, as it truly is, *not your own time* to spend as you please, but as the Lord's day: and be careful that every portion of it, from the morning to the evening, may be devoted to his service. Let all worldly business (except such as is of *absolute necessity*, such as you can *justify to God and your own consciences*) be laid aside. See, too, that *all your household, your children, and your servants* profitably employ this season of holy rest. Take them with you to the house of God; and let the remainder of the day be spent by them and yourselves in private reading of the Scriptures, in meditation, in religious converse, and in prayer.

2. But think not that *Sunday religion* is all that is required of you. Let *every* day behold you and your household assembled around the *domestic altar*. Let *every* day witness the due performance of that most

important duty of FAMILY WORSHIP, in the *family reading of the Scriptures, and family prayer.* Remember the awful curse denounced upon the "families that *call not* upon the name of the Lord." (Jerem. x. 25.) Imitate the example of Abraham, and command your children and your household after you, that they may keep the way of the Lord. (Gen. xviii. 19.) Say with Joshua, (xxiv. 15.) "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

3. But let not your religion be confined to your *own* house, or to the house of God. Let it accompany you *into the world*, and regulate every part of your conduct. Let it teach you to be diligent in your various callings, that so you may have to honor the Lord with your substance; to be sober and temperate: to abstain from lying, swearing, drunkenness, and from all appearance of evil: to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness:" to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." In short, (to adopt Saint Paul's summary of Christian practice) "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. iv. 8.)

AND NOW, BRETHREN, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace." A considerable portion of the prime of my life has been spent among you.

Almost ten years of mingled trials and comforts, from the day that the providence of God first opened the door for my labours among you, have glided silently away; and, like the tree over which many summers and winters have passed, I have, in a manner, struck my roots deep among you. Many of my parishioners I have seen summoned away into the momentous realities of the eternal world; and others I have beheld growing towards manhood under the callings and warnings of my ministry. My voice has committed to the grave the dearest relatives of many among you;—the partner of your life, your beloved offspring, an aged parent, a fond brother and sister, or your friend which was as your own soul. My hands have received "into the congregation of Christ's flock" the tender infants of many more; and united others among you in the closest of all earthly bonds. In many houses of mourning, too, have I knelt with the afflicted inhabitants by the beds of the sick and the dying, and have endeavoured to bind up the bleeding breast by pouring in the rich consolations of the Gospel of peace.

Whatever good has been done by my ministry, I would ascribe *all the glory to the grace of God.* I would reject with abhorrence the idea that *any part* of the praise belongs *to me.*

As an ambassador of Jesus Christ and a messenger of salvation, I have, I trust, endeavoured to promote your spiritual welfare. I have (though with much imperfection) "testified the Gospel of the grace of

God." I have shown you that man is a fallen, guilty, depraved creature, exposed to the just wrath of a holy God; that he is utterly unable to recover himself from this state of sin and damnation: that it is only by a living faith in the atoning sufferings and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that man can be reconciled to his offended God; that this faith must be wrought in his heart by the powerful agency of the Holy Spirit given in answer to prayer; and that every one must *be born again* of this spirit, in order to his admission into the kingdom of heaven, and will evidence his *new birth by a new life*, by a walk and conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ. Such are the doctrines which I have declared unto you, firmly believing them to be the doctrines of the Bible, and of the church to which we belong. Nevertheless, (conscious as I am of my own infirmities and want of zeal for God) I dare not confidently "take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." I would rather adopt the prayer of the Psalmist, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." (Ps. li. 14.)

Finally, brethren, farewell! "Be perfect: be of good comfort: be of one mind; live in peace; and may the God of love and peace be with you!" (2 Cor. xiii. 11.) So "that whether I come and see you or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." (Phil. i. 27.) "Forsake not

the assembling of yourselves together" *in the house, and at the table of the Lord.* Daily call upon God in your *families* and in your *secret chambers;* and when you have nearest access to the throne of grace, forget not to pray for him who has often prayed for you, and who still bears you up on his heart before God. "Search the Scriptures" daily. Live as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, as those who are seeking a "better country, that is, a heavenly." Keep your eyes steadily fixed on your eternal inheritance: in the bright prospect of this, every trial will appear light, every effort be accounted easy. What shall be our lot during the remainder of our earthly pilgrimage, God alone knows. Into his hands, and to his keeping and direction, let us commend ourselves. Let us live for God, and for eternity: let us live as we shall wish we had lived, when we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive our eternal doom. Let us go forward in the path of duty, assured that the rest which awaits us will richly repay our labors, and the joys of triumph abundantly recompense the toils of war.

Unto those who love and fear the Lord, may grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied. Often have our hearts been touched, and melted, and comforted, under the sense of God's presence and love; but all that we have hitherto enjoyed is but the foretaste of a more entire and more blessed communion with the church above. Soon shall we join that blessed company. In the intervening time may the bond of prayer still unite us; often may we meet at the throne of grace, and at length

for ever sing the praises of him "who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever! Amen."

I remain, Dearly Beloved,

Your affectionate Friend

and Servant in Christ,

WILLIAM MASON.

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